

~~Top Secret~~

POLAND: A Warning to Walesa

*The detention of Lech Walesa yesterday was intended as a warning that he would have to abide by the regime's rules to remain free, but it also showed the authorities' concern about his ability to stir up workers.*

Government officials reportedly used alleged irregularities in the financial accounts of the Gdansk chapter of Solidarity--which Walesa headed--as a pretext to detain him. Spokesmen for the regime emphasized that he was not arrested but only questioned for a few hours.

Police in Gdansk also briefly detained as many as 50 journalists and employees of Western news media who were trying to gain information on Walesa's whereabouts. The journalists were told to stay away from trouble spots. According to the Western press, the regime began jamming BBC and Voice of America medium-wave broadcasts to Poland last weekend.

A short official ceremony was held yesterday at the shipyard monument in Gdansk to commemorate slain workers, but the government later sealed off the area and used percussion grenades and tear gas to disperse two small crowds of workers. Civilian security forces circulated throughout the city.

Comment: The authorities clearly did not want to allow a precedent for Walesa and other union activists to claim the right to speak out. They almost certainly also were concerned about many parts of Walesa's message, which amounted to a call for renewed commitment by workers to a free trade union.

Whether intended or not, Walesa's determination to speak may help win back the support of union activists who considered some of his letters too conciliatory. He is likely to continue trying to convey his message to the workers.

The detention of Western journalists could portend the expulsion of those who continue to cover politically sensitive events. The intensified radio jamming may be intended to prevent broadcast of Walesa's statements back into Poland.

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