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INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

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The Implications of Gomulka's Ouster

1. Wladyslaw Gomulka resigned yesterday as party first secretary and has been replaced by Edward Gierek, party chief of Silesia, Poland's industrial heartland. The new leader will probably strive for a more open and responsible style of government, but basic policies will remain the same.

2. The new party chief made a radio and television speech to the nation shortly after the announcement of the change. Gierek was critical of the steps taken by his predecessor which had led to the crisis during the past week. He promised to remove badly thought out conceptions in economic policy which had led to the situation. He indicated sympathy with the peoples' problems, and announced that the politburo will in the next few days examine how to improve the lot of families in the lowest income category.

3. Gierek did not indicate any intention of rescinding the price increases on consumer goods which had touched off the disorders. Nevertheless, he held out hope of amelioration in a statement that next year's economic plan, and that for the entire five-year period, would have to be reviewed. He promised to work for improvement of the lot of women and youths, who were leading demonstrators in the past week, and of the chronically poor housing situation, but simultaneously stressed Poland's limited resources for these tasks.

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4. Gierek made no allusions to outside causes for the recent disturbances, a sign of realism which could auger well for the future. Instead he promised to consult with the lower echelons of the party, "the working class," before taking major new steps. He also indicated that active participation of all strata of society outside the party will be sought. These promises will be hard to fulfill, at least initially.

5. Gierek said all the proper things concerning loyalty to the Soviet Union. He was, however, neither effusive nor fulsome. The population will understand that Poland's relationship with the USSR is not changed. TASS has broadcast a summary of Gierek's speech for home consumption.

6. So far there has been no indication of reaction to the changes, but if the majority of workers return to work today, the departure of Gomulka will have served its purpose. Yesterday, even before the political changes, the country generally was quiet.

The New Leadership's Takeover

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7. The process of Gomulka's replacement may

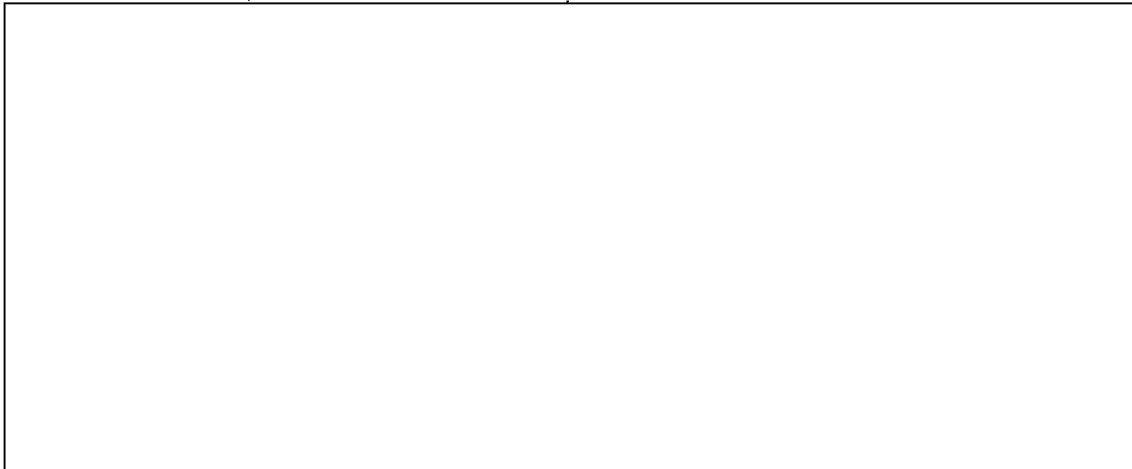
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into session. To the newly convened central committee the situation looked grim. Anarchy still reigned in Szczecin, and workers were still on strike there as well as in the riot-torn tri-city area. A variety of work stoppages and protest demonstrations were reported nationwide, and rioters in Gdansk had been calling for Gomulka's scalp, but the regime had given no sign of backing down on the price and wage changes which had been the proximate cause of the disorders.

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9. Shortly after the changes were announced, the minister of health reported that Gomulka was gravely ill and would be hospitalized "for a lengthy period of time." His statement cited circulatory troubles, which do in fact figure in Gomulka's medical history. We cannot confirm, however, the minister's statement that the illness "struck forcibly" on Saturday. In any event, the simultaneous departure of Gomulka's closest colleagues clearly shows that politics as well as health was involved.

Character of the New Regime

10. The new leaders are clearly worker-oriented. Half of the 12-man politburo, which makes policy, have been party bosses of key industrial districts or associated with industry and labor on the national level. Four of them hold key posts in the party leadership's executive arm, the secretariat, thus assuring control there.

11. Together, the two bodies constitute a "government of national unity," representing all shades of party opinion. Indeed, East Germany's Ulbricht, who was the first publicly to congratulate Gierek, sent "cordial good wishes" to the "collective leadership."

12. Gierek reportedly has a good reputation in Moscow, and the Soviets probably welcomed him as

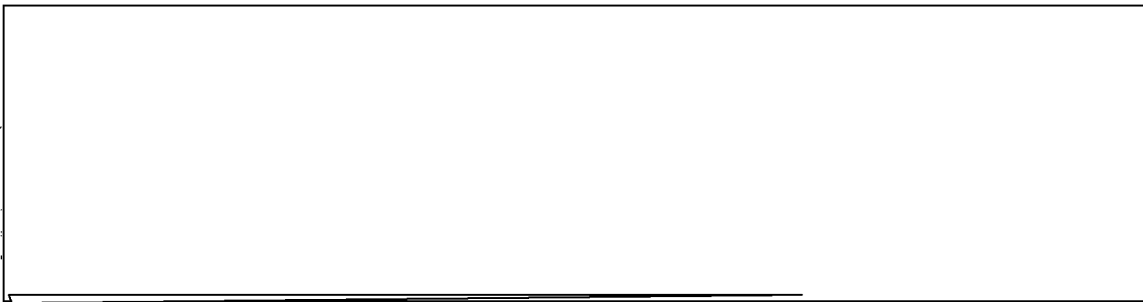
the party's new chief. Some of the Soviet leaders probably do not know him very well on an individual basis. In any case, they probably were reassured by the choice of some of the other new leaders, including the defense minister, who are strongly pro-Soviet.

Foreign Policy Prospects

13. The development of relations with West Germany, which was getting off to a fast start after Brandt's treaty-signing visit to Warsaw ten days ago, is likely to slow down now as the regime devotes its attention to domestic affairs. Gomulka had taken a vigorous role within Warsaw Pact councils in favor of positive response to Bonn's Ostpolitik, often crossing swords with Ulbricht on this issue. Gierek's first statement on this subject is brief and cautious; he says merely that, with the aim of promoting peace and security in Europe, "we entered together with other socialist countries the road of normalization of relations with the German Federal Republic." The East Germans for their part are certain to claim that the Polish - West German treaty, by blurring the ideological line between East and West Europe, contributed to the upheavals in Poland, and this argument may have some effect upon nervous conservatives in Moscow.

14. Polish policy toward the United States is not likely to change in the immediate future.

Military Developments



the Polish party, and the success of Polish security forces in containing the disturbances, it is unlikely that the USSR has thus far given serious consideration to armed intervention.

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