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**Report, Discussion with Supreme Commander of the  
Combined Military Forces of the Warsaw Pact on 7  
April 1981 in Legnica (PR Poland)**

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**Summary:**

German military commanders meet with Marshal Kulikov following the evaluation meeting by the joint operative-strategic Command Staff Exercise "SOYUZ-81." Kulikov states that the military exercise was called to support Polish leaders Jaruzelski and Kania and so "a certain pressure should also be exerted upon the leadership of 'Solidarity.'"

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#### Report

regarding a confidential discussion with the Supreme Commander of the Combined Military Forces of the Warsaw Pact countries on 7 April 1981 in LEGNICA (PR Poland) following the evaluation meeting of the joint operative-strategic command staff exercise "SOYUZ-81"

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In accordance with the instructions of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the SED and the Chairman of the National Defense Council of the GDR, Comrade Erich Honecker, and on the basis of the tasks as given by the Minister for National Defense, Comrade Army General Hoffmann, Comrade Lieutenant General Keßler, and Comrade Lieutenant General Streletz, had a confidential discussion with the Supreme Commander of the United Military Forces of the Warsaw Pact countries, Comrade Marshal of the Soviet Union Kulikov on 7 April 1981, following the evaluation meeting by the joint operative-strategic Command Staff Exercise "SOYUZ-81."

Comrade Marshal of the Soviet Union Kulikov began with thanks for the greetings communicated from Comrade Erich Honecker and Comrade Minister Hoffmann and emphasized that he had obtained authorization for the discussion from Politburo member and Minister for Defense of the Soviet Union, Comrade Marshal of the Soviet Union Ustinov.

Comrade Marshal of the Soviet Union Kulikov continued:

He had been in the PR Poland now already a month and, due to personal cooperation with the leadership of the Polish party and government was able to obtain a picture of the situation in the PR Poland.

For the duration of his stay, he had been in constant contact with the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the PUWP, Comrade Kania, as well as the Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Minister for National Defense of the PR Poland, Comrade Army General Jaruzelski. Usually, the bilateral meetings took place without witnesses in an open, party-minded atmosphere. Due to this it was possible to explain openly and directly the point of view of the Soviet comrades to the leadership of party and government as well as to the army leadership of the PR Poland.

For the past four weeks, the Soviet side has placed an array of specialists in WARSAW, e.g. members of the State Planning Commission, the organs of committees for State Security, General Staff of the Military Forces and of the Department of Rearward Services [Bereich Rückwärtige Dienste] of the Soviet Army. They have all received instructions from Comrade Brezhnev to help the Polish comrades.

All of the work that Marshal of the Soviet Union Kulikov and the other Soviet comrades in WARSAW have conducted in the past weeks is based strictly on the results of the consultations with the General and First Secretaries of the fraternal parties in MOSCOW.

Marshal of the Soviet Union Kulikov has continually reported to Comrade Marshal of the Soviet Union Ustinov on the activities and the situation in the PR Poland, who in turn periodically has informed the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, Comrade L. I. Brezhnev.

The prolongation of the exercise "SOYUZ-81" came explicitly as a result of the requests of comrades Jaruzelski and Kania. They wanted to utilize the exercises to strengthen their position. Simultaneously they hoped to exert a positive influence on the progressive forces in Poland and to show "Solidarity" and "KOR," that the Warsaw Pact countries are prepared to render Poland help all around. Thereby a certain pressure should also be exerted upon the leadership of "Solidarity."

It was of great political significance that Comrade Minister Hoffmann and Comrade Minister Dzur [of Czechoslovakia] participated in the joint exercises "DRUSHBA-81" of the Soviet army and the Polish army on the territory of the PR Poland. With that, proletarian internationalism was demonstrated in action for friend and enemy.

Overall, Comrade Kania and Comrade Jaruzelski correctly assess the situation. They view the causes for the crisis, however, in the political, ideological, and economic spheres, particularly in the mistakes that were made in the past; primarily in mistakes in party work, in the neglect of ideological work and in work among the youth, as well as in other spheres. A realistic evaluation of the counterrevolution in Poland from a class standpoint is unfortunately not to be found with either. They do not see the entire development in Poland as a socio-political process with profound class causes. They also do not see that "Solidarity" is increasingly gaining power, and has the goal of ending the leading role of the party. The counterrevolution in Poland is carefully planned, orderly prepared, and supported in many ways both by the FRG and the USA. The goal of the counterrevolutionary machinations in Poland in particular is to bring the GDR, the CSSR, and the Soviet Union into a difficult situation so as to shake violently the entire socialist bloc.

Up until the 9th Plenum of the Central Committee of the PUWP, the work proceeded more or less normally during every meeting of Comrade Kulikov with Comrade Kania and Comrade Jaruzelski. It was frankly explained to the Polish comrades how the work should continue to proceed, to which they all agreed.

Meetings with Comrades Erich Honecker , Gustav Husak, and János Kádár had made a lasting impression on Comrade Kania .

Before the 9th Plenum the Polish comrades were made aware that it was absolutely necessary to present clearly the general line of Party work before the Central Committee, to define and fix the phases of the future work and the ways the Polish party and government leadership want to settle the situation. It should be made clear how the battle against "Solidarity" and "KOR" can be led offensively and how a proper relationship towards the Church could be produced.

The course of and results from the 9th Plenum of the Central Committee of the PUWP prove, however, that these hints and suggestions, that were until then agreed upon, were not given the necessary attention. The 9th Plenum took the decision to arrive at a stabilization of the situation in the PR Poland through military means. The statements, however, lacked objective conditions.

There was no unity within the Politburo, although it still formally existed after the 9th Plenum. The Gdansk party organization demanded a report regarding the fulfillment of the decisions of the Central Committee. Since the decisions until then had not been fulfilled, the Party leadership was to be dismissed due to incompetence.

Negative forces were to establish a new Politburo. Consequently, Politburo member and Secretary of the Central Committee of the PUWP, Comrade Grabski spoke up, emphasizing that the Politburo should not capitulate and he would not resign. His determined and positive appearance brought a turning point in the meeting of the Central Committee. A vote of confidence in the Politburo was brought about. There

was, however, considerable criticism of the performance of the Politburo leadership.

One worker who came before the Plenum spoke better than all the leading party functionaries. He brought to attention the fact that everyone waits for instructions from above. Since the situation in every region is different, the lower party cadres must show more initiative, and not constantly wait for instructions from above.

The demand was once again stated in the 9th Plenum to convene a party conference within a short time, to begin with the electoral meetings in the local organizations, and to convene a meeting of the Sejm in the following days in any case.

Comrade Marshal of the Soviet Union Kulikov had spoken with Comrade Kania for that reason, and he had to concede that the goal of the 9th Plenum had not been achieved.

After the 9th Plenum of the Central Committee Comrade Kania declared surprisingly that

- the party is too weak to lead an offensive against "Solidarity"
- many party members are organized within "Solidarity", and defend its ideas
- an open confrontation, an open attack through the organs of the party, government, and instruments of force is not possible at this point
- while it is true that there are a number of "bridgeheads," they are not sufficient however for an open counterattack against "Solidarity" and "KOR"
- While the balance of power has changed now in favor of "Solidarity," three to four months ago it still seemed to be considerably favorable, and that it would have been good had certain offensive measures been conducted at this time.

Comrade Kania further stated that the Polish army in the present circumstances can only fulfill its tasks in the interior of the country with great difficulties. The organs of state security would have little success fighting offensively either.

Up until the 9th Plenum, Comrade Kania and Comrade Jaruzelski had always agreed with the estimate of Marshal of the Soviet Union Kulikov that the Polish Army and the security organs were prepared to fulfill any assignment given to them by the party and state leadership.

Following the 9th Plenum, however, Comrade Kania took the position that they could not rely on the army and the security organs, and was not certain whether they would uphold the party and state leadership in a critical situation.

Comrade Marshal of the Soviet Union Kulikov tried to dissuade Comrade Kania from this view, showing him positive examples of the Polish army, and underlined that Soviet comrades were of the opinion that the army and security organs were prepared to end the counterrevolution at the order of the party and government leadership. Comrade Kania did not share this opinion.

That had generally negative consequences. The very next day Comrade Jaruzelski also defended this view that the army and security forces were not prepared for internal deployment, and that one could not rely fully upon them. This position of

Comrades Kania and Jaruzelski is their own invention. Comrade Kulikov said to Comrade Jaruzelski "You have now broken off the branch upon which you sit. How will things go for you now?"

Due to the view of the Polish party, state, and army leadership, the subordinate generals and admirals up to division commanders immediately joined their superiors in their estimate. Even those commanders who had previously affirmed to Marshal of the Soviet Union Kulikov that they and their troops would follow any order of the party and state leadership, now swore that at once that they could not rely upon 50 to 60 percent of their soldiers and non-commissioned officers. Following the 9th Plenum, the commander of the air-land division in KRAKOW also advanced the view that he could only rely upon 50% of his personal forces.

It was also subtly brought to Comrade Marshal of the Soviet Union Kulikov's attention that it could even be possible that, in the event of an invasion by other Warsaw Pact troops, certain units might rebel.

In this connection, Marshal of the Soviet Union Kulikov emphasized and made clear that one could not lead an army or make policy with sharp appearances, boot-heels clicking, and a good posture, but that one rather needs a realistic evaluation of the situation and a clear class position.

The view of Comrade Jaruzelski that the Polish party and state leadership had won a strategic battle in BYDGOSZCZ was also incomprehensible for Comrade Kulikov. In order to correctly evaluate the situation, one must understand that Comrade Kania and Comrade Jaruzelski are personal friends and lay down the course of the party. Comrade Jaruzelski is the theoretical brain who lays the direction for the further work.

Regarding the health condition of Comrade Jaruzelski, Marshal of the Soviet Union Kulikov called to attention the fact that he is currently stricken by the flu and is physically and mentally exhausted. The estimate by the Foreign Minister of the GDR, Comrade Fischer, was totally correct, even though there were some who did not want to admit it.

During the last conversations with Comrade Jaruzelski one could notice that he did not always have control over himself. He always wore darkened eyeglasses even on official occasions, in order to conceal nervous eye movements.

Marshal of the Soviet Union Kulikov concluded that Comrade Jaruzelski is very self-confident, and that he is not expecting his eventual removal, for he assumes that the people trust him. Regarding how the situation should develop after the 90 days agreed to by "Solidarity," he did not say.

A part of the Politburo is for Comrade Jaruzelski and supports him completely. He acts extremely liberally and enjoys therefore a reputation through broad segments of society.

The Soviet comrades believe that Comrade Jaruzelski is not the man who can turn the course of events. Until now he has made great concessions in all areas, for instance with respect to:

- the events in BYDGOSZCZ
- the work among the youth
- Russian instructions in school as well as
- with respect to the Catholic Church.

He has very frequent discussions with the Polish Cardinal Wyszyński and hopes for the support of the Catholic Church. Wyszyński also holds Comrade Jaruzelski in high esteem, which is evident from many of his statements.

One must frankly admit that the Polish United Workers Party is currently weaker than the Catholic Church and "Solidarity."

No one knows yet exactly how many members "Solidarity" has. One estimate is from 8 to 10 million, of which one million are supposed to be party members.

On 10 April 1981, a meeting of the Sejm is to be convened. One should not count on any fundamentally new questions. There are two papers on the economic situation provided by Comrades Jagielski and Kiesiel. Afterwards Comrade Jaruzelski wants to give an evaluation of the situation in Poland. The adoption of decisions regarding the limitation on the right to strike, censorship and the utilization of mass media is further on the agenda. It would be in any case desirable if the Sejm were to make decisions that would set specific limits on the counterrevolution.

Leading Polish comrades unfortunately believe that they can solve all problems through political means hoping especially that everything will clear up on its own. One cannot share such a view. It must frankly be stated that the moment to act was not taken by the Polish party and state leadership.

Altogether one has the impression that Comrade Kania and Comrade Jaruzelski do not wish to use force in order to remain "clean Poles".

Both fear utilizing the power of the state (army and security organs) to restore order. They argue formally that the Polish constitution does not provide for a state of emergency, and that Article 33 of the Polish constitution only refers to the national defense. Although Marshal of the Soviet Union Kulikov repeatedly called to their attention that in such a situation Article 33 on national defense could and had to be used, both remained unwilling to take such a decision.

The entire documentation for martial law was prepared in close cooperation by Soviet and Polish comrades. This cooperation proceeded in an open and candid atmosphere. The Soviet comrades did not have the impression that the Polish generals and officers were concealing anything from them. Nevertheless, this documentation remains only on paper for it has not yet been implemented.

Marshal of the Soviet Union Kulikov tried to make it clear to Comrades Kania and Jaruzelski that they do not need to fear a strike. They should follow the example of the capitalists in reacting to strikes. Since "Solidarity" knows that the party and state leadership of the PR Poland fear a general strike, they utilize this to exert pressure and implement their demands.

A difficulty exists in the fact that a great part of the workers in Poland are also independent farmers and would not be greatly affected by the strikes, for they would be working in their own fields during this time. The size of the well-organized working class in Poland is small.

In the countryside, current production is limited to what is necessary for one's own needs, which means that only private fields are cultivated. How national food supplies will develop no one knows.

Comrades Kania and Jaruzelski estimate that the greatest economic support by the capitalist countries comes from France and the FRG. The USA drags its feet when it

comes to aid.

The sooner the phase of obliterating the counterrevolution would begin, the better for the development of Poland and for the stabilization of the socialist bloc collectively. Not only Comrade Kania, but also Comrade Jaruzelski, however, lack the determination and resoluteness in their work.

Half a year ago, Comrade Jaruzelski had announced at the meetings of the commanders that he would not give any orders for the deployment of the army against the workers.

Marshal of the Soviet Union Kulikov made it clear to him that the army would not be deployed against the working class, but rather against the counterrevolution, against the enemies of the working class as well as violent criminals and bandits. He did not answer the question in a concrete manner. Marshal of the Soviet Union Kulikov hopes that Comrade Jaruzelski would revise his standpoint. Although Minister Jaruzelski combines all the power in his hands, he does not wield it decisively. Since the Poles, being devout Catholics, all pray on Saturday and Sunday, the weekend would present itself as an opportunity to take the effective measures.

The Polish army remains at this time, however, in the barracks, and is not allowed on the exercise grounds and accordingly therefore does not conduct marches - for fear of the people (in reality of "Solidarity").

Upon the suggestion by Marshal of the Soviet Union Kulikov that columns of the Polish army be permitted to drive through the big cities in particular as a demonstration of power, he was told that this would only unleash more criticism.

On 12 April 1981, 52,000 Polish soldiers were to be dismissed. The Soviet comrades suggested to the Polish army leadership postponing the dismissal until 27 April 1981. They did not agree and the dismissal took place on 12 April 1981. It was stated that five battalions comprised of 3,000 men were always ready to accomplish any mission. That would be sufficient. A suspension of the dismissal would only cause negative moods among the army.

Among the leading cadres of the army, the following things are currently notable:

The chief of the General Staff, General Siwicki, makes a helpless impression in decisive matters, and waits for orders from above.

He's always winding himself in circles. He was at first proactive, but is increasingly showing an attitude of surrender.

General Melczyk, seen as a positive force, is always kept in the background by the Polish comrades.

The chief of the Head Political Administration, Division General Baryla is a loyal comrade, but does nothing, and hides behind the orders of Minister Jaruzelski .

The chiefs of the military districts SILESIA and POMORZE, Division General Rapacewicz and Division General Uzycki follow in the wake of Minister Jaruzelski.

The most progressive soldier at this point is the chief of the Warsaw Military District, Division General Oliwa.

The chief of the Navy, Admiral Janczyszyn, first was in favor of "Solidarity", suddenly, however, is taking a different standpoint. This is not seen as honest. The leadership of the security organs confronts sizeable difficulties, since it receives no support from party and state leadership.

Within the rank and file, occurrences of resignation and capitulation are spreading in the face of difficulties.

The reported situation notwithstanding, the Soviet comrades are of the view that we should continue to support Comrade Kania and Comrade Jaruzelski, for there are no other alternatives at this point.

Comrades Grabski and Kiesiel are currently the most progressive forces within the Polish leadership. They do not, however, succeed with their demands.

Comrade Barcikowski who is the Second Secretary within the Central Committee of the PUWP, is a comrade without a particular profile. His statements and his overall appearance during the 9th Plenum of the Central Committee of the PUWP prove this.

Comrade Olszowski also does not live up to expectations.

Comrade Pinkowski, the second-in-command to Comrade Jaruzelski, should be released from his duties, but remains in office.

Central Committee member and Minister of the Interior, Comrade Milewski, who possesses a clear position on all questions, and is prepared to shoulder responsibility, impressed Comrade Marshal of the Soviet Union Kulikov in a positive way.

The greatest share of the intelligentsia is reactionary and supports "Solidarity." For example, the director of the Institute for Marxism/Leninism, Werblan, should be dismissed due to his reactionary views but he still remains in his position.

Now more than ever we must exert influence upon the Polish comrades using any and all means and methods. The situation in Poland must be studied thoroughly and demands constant attention. An estimate must be based on the fact - and one has to face this truth - that a civil war is not out of the question.

Marshal of the Soviet Union Kulikov finally stressed once again that the common goal should be to solve the problems without the deployment of allied armies into Poland. All socialist states should exert their influence to this end.

The Soviet comrades assume that unless the Polish security organs and army would be deployed, outside support cannot be expected, for otherwise considerable international complications would result. Marshal of the Soviet Union Kulikov emphatically brought it to the attention of the Polish comrades that they have to try first to solve their problems by themselves. If they cannot do so alone and then ask for help, the situation is different from one in which troops had been deployed from the outset.

As far as a possible deployment of the NVA is concerned, there are no longer reservations among the Polish comrades. There were increasing public musings as to how long the Soviet staffs and troops would remain in Poland.

If the Polish comrades were prepared to solve their problems on their own, the Soviet leadership organs and troops could be withdrawn. Except for empty words, however,



nothing concrete has been done. Presently the counterrevolutionary forces are regrouping.

He does not know how much longer Marshal of the Soviet Union Kulikov and parts of the staff of the Allied Military Forces as well as the other organs of the Soviet Union will remain in Poland. For now, an order to withdraw will not be given, since one should not relinquish the seized positions.

According to the wishes of Comrade Kania and Comrade Jaruzelski , the exercise "SOYUZ-81" should not be officially terminated on 7 April 1981, but rather continue for another few days or weeks. The Soviet comrades, however, took the point of view that this was not possible and would create international complications. It only proves that the Poles think that others should do their work for them.

Regarding international aid in the suppression of the counterrevolution, both Comrade Kania as well as Comrade Jaruzelski spoke with great caution.

Comrade Kulikov strongly emphasized again that this discussion took place with the approval of Comrade Minister Ustinov. He had told everything that was known to him as a communist and as the Supreme Commander of the Allied Military Forces, because he has complete faith in Comrade Lieutenant General Keßler and Comrade Lieutenant General Streletz, and is convinced that the substance of this conversation would only be conveyed to Comrade Erich Honecker and Comrade Minister Hoffmann.

At the end, he asked that his most heartfelt greetings be conveyed to the General Secretary of the Central Committee and Chairman of the National Defense Council of the GDR, Comrade Erich Honecker , and to the Minister for National Defense, Comrade Army General Hoffmann . At the same time he extended his thanks for the generous support provided during the preparation and implementation of the joint operative-strategic commander's staff exercise "SOYUZ-81."

The conversation lasted two hours and was conducted in an open and friendly atmosphere.