

October 19, 1981

## *THE POLISH DILEMMA: SOVIET VULNERABILITIES AND WESTERN OPPORTUNITIES*

### INTRODUCTION

Since August 1980, Soviet and East European officials have become increasingly alarmed at the mounting tension within Poland and the effects of this turbulence on the stability and continuity of the Soviet Bloc. Especially significant is the parallel which these officials have drawn between events in Poland and the "anti-socialist" forces during the 1968 Czech crisis. Allusions to the possibility of providing "fraternal assistance" (which, in the Soviet lexicon, means "invasion") to the Polish people in defense of socialist achievements have become commonplace.

During the past several months, the propaganda campaign directed towards Poland by the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact nations has become noticeably sharper and more explicitly condemnatory. Such verbal onslaughts might well serve as a prelude to an actual intervention in Poland. If such an invasion were to take place, it would be costly, bitter and extremely dangerous.

In the past thirty years, the Soviets have intervened on three occasions in Eastern Europe in defense of "socialist achievements": Berlin (1953), Hungary (1956), and Czechoslovakia (1968). In all instances, the military intervention was swiftly performed, skillfully executed, and extraordinarily well-coordinated, with respect to well-defined military and political objectives. The Western response, on the other hand, was uncoordinated, inadequate, and ineffectual.

While the previous interventions stabilized and solidified the Soviet Bloc, a Soviet/Warsaw Pact invasion of Poland could have the opposite effect: it would expose the vulnerabilities and weaknesses rather than the strengths of the Soviet Bloc. Such an intervention might well offer the West opportunities to

discipline, limit, and possibly even reduce Soviet and Soviet-surrogate power throughout the world. The West, and most particularly the United States, should stand ready to respond to the challenge and opportunity that an invasion of Poland might present.

#### THE SOVIET DILEMMA: PROS AND CONS OF AN INVASION

While the Soviet authorities and their East European counterparts (particularly the Czechs and East Germans) have drawn parallels between the current crisis in Poland and that in Czechoslovakia in 1968, the situation is hardly analogous. In the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia, most of the Warsaw Pact participated. In addition to a Soviet force estimated at 500,000, there were 10,000 Bulgarians, 20,000 Hungarians, 20,000 East Germans, and 50,000 Poles. From all reports, however, these combined forces gave only the appearance of unity. With the exception of the Soviets, only the Bulgarians seem to have fully supported the action. In this regard, two prominent authorities on the Warsaw Pact armies, Dale Herspring and Professor Ivan Volgyes, observe:

There are rumors, for example, that the East German forces aroused considerable resentment on the part of the local populace and had to be quickly withdrawn; that serious morale problems existed among Polish troops (who were embarrassed at being involved, even against a traditional enemy); and that the Hungarians had little heart for the exercise.<sup>1</sup>

The performance of such soldiers is even more remarkable given the fact that the Czech population, on the whole, was quite passive.

Commenting upon the East European contribution to the Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia, A. Ross Johnson, an expert in Soviet-East European military relations, accurately observes:

The invasion of Czechoslovakia demonstrated that the Soviet Union could mobilize some of its East European allies to interfere in the internal affairs of one of them; it did not demonstrate, however, that East European forces could contribute effectively to military operations against one of their number.<sup>2</sup>

Given the past performance of the East European armies, the prospects for a multilateral Warsaw Pact invasion appear minimal. For one thing, the inclusion of East German forces in an invasion is highly unlikely because of the widespread German-Polish animos-

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<sup>1</sup> Dale R. Herspring and Ivan Volgyes, "How Reliable are Eastern European Armies?" Survival, Vol. 22, No. 5 (September-October 1980), p. 213.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Herspring and Volgyes, op. cit., p. 213.

ity. The Polish feeling against the Germans, is, as the British Sovietologist John Erickson notes, "so intense in the light of historical experience...that any German move into Poland would cause a tremendous national explosion against them."<sup>3</sup> Similarly, the participation and reliability of Czech armed forces in an invasion is, at best, questionable since the Czech military establishment "has yet to recover from the trauma of 1968."<sup>4</sup> Its current size, cohesion, and quality are still considered below pre-1968 levels.

In light of the past performance and questionable utility of the Warsaw Pact during the Czech invasion and the current probability of only limited participation by East European countries, the most likely script would have the Soviets essentially "going it alone" in an invasion of Poland.

Another significant difference between the Czech crisis and the present situation in Poland concerns the intensity of the conflict. The Czech army in 1968 was ordered not to fight and no significant military resistance was offered. On the other hand, there is a strong expectation, based on temperament and historical precedents, that at least sizeable segments of the Polish Armed Forces will resist an invasion.

After the Soviets, the largest armed forces in the Warsaw Pact are the Poles. Polish Armed Forces consist of:

Army	210,000 (154,000 conscripts)
Navy	22,500 (6,000 conscripts)
Air Force	85,000 (25,000 conscripts) (12 brigades with some 700 combat aircraft)

Because 73 percent of the Polish Army are conscripts (serving a two-year term) and undoubtedly have been deeply affected by Solidarity, the free trade union movement, most observers believe that a sizeable element of the army will resist any occupying force.

Of similar concern to the Soviets must be the post-World War II experiences of the Polish Armed Forces. For example, in 1956 important segments of the Army rebelled against their Soviet superiors and willingly supported -- with force when necessary -- the party leadership's resistance to Soviet opposition to the appointment of Wladyslaw Gomulka as first party secretary.

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<sup>3</sup> Quoted in "How Moscow Would Invade," Newsweek, December 15, 1980, p. 41.

<sup>4</sup> A. Ross Johnson, Robert W. Dean and Alexander Alexiev, "The Armies of the Warsaw Pact Northern Tier," Survival, Vol 23, No. 4 (July-August 1981), p. 175.

Similarly, during the 1970 riots in Gdansk and Szczecin, the army, for the most part, maintained "neutrality." Though some army units did participate in actions against the demonstrators (over 45 people were killed), the Army has not been used since. During the 1976 price riots, neither Army nor police or riot troops were used and the government retreated on its decision to raise prices drastically on all basic foodstuffs.

Only last June, according to a recent report by Tad Szulc,<sup>5</sup> major figures within the Polish Armed Forces (namely General Jozef Urbanowicz, deputy minister of defense; General Florian Siwicki, chief of staff of the Polish Armed Forces; Rear Admiral Ludwick Jaszczyszyn, commander-in-chief of the Polish Navy; and General Jozef Baryla, deputy defense minister and chief of the Army's political department) warned the Soviet-backed hardliners that they would oppose any attempt to dismantle the 1980 national revolution. Obviously, such words reached Soviet ears.

Unlike Czechoslovakia in 1968, an invasion of Poland now would involve considerably more men, be of much longer duration, and be more costly in terms of lives. Such considerations are only part of the argument that could be mounted against intervention. Additionally, an invasion of Poland would have many immediate and long-range adverse consequences and implications for the Soviets in their conduct both at home and abroad.

If there is a prolonged Polish resistance, most analysts believe that the Soviets would be committed to maintaining a large occupation force in Poland for years. John Erickson believes that some sixty divisions would have to be deployed by the Soviets to hold down Poland for any length of time.<sup>6</sup> When this is added to the estimated 100,000 Soviet troops in Afghanistan, it is clear that there would be a significant drain, at least in the short-run, on Soviet military manpower. Moscow then almost surely would have to divert economic resources from civilian needs to support the powerful military organization required by the Polish occupation.<sup>7</sup>

In the short term, a Soviet invasion and occupation of Poland would probably curtail Soviet "adventurism" elsewhere in the world and would expose significant deficiencies in Soviet military planning vis-a-vis the NATO alliance. The maintenance of a large occupying force would seriously affect the utility and capability of the Warsaw Pact in a potential struggle with NATO. With so many men tied down, and with the ever-present possibility

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<sup>5</sup> Tad Szulc, "When Poland's Generals Stood Up to Soviet Might," The Washington Post, Parade Magazine, September 20, 1981, pp. 4-9.

<sup>6</sup> "How Moscow Would Invade," p. 41.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Alfred L. Monks, The Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan (Washington and London: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1981).

of an uprising in the rear and on the main East-West communication supply line, there is less likelihood of a Warsaw Pact/Soviet confrontation with NATO, at least for several years.

In economic terms, the implications and consequences of a Soviet invasion are both alarming and hazardous for the Kremlin. For one, Moscow would almost certainly have to bolster Poland's failing internal economy and assume her massive debt to the West (currently exceeding \$27 billion). One could also expect that the Soviets would have to feed the Polish populace to stabilize the situation. This would be all the more difficult given recent poor Soviet harvests, the virtual inevitability of a Western grain embargo and a predictable lack of cooperation from Polish workers and farmers. Some banking officials claim that it would cost the Soviets between \$3 to \$5 billion a year simply to maintain a "depressed standard of living" in a post-invasion Poland. Another serious economic problem posed by an invasion is the probability that the Poles will be even less productive than before. With industrial production down significantly, agricultural output at its lowest in twenty years, and coal production reaching only 1974 levels, the prospects for an economically viable, post-invasion Poland are dramatically bleak.

Moscow may decide, however, that despite these tremendous costs, it has to take strong action -- even military action -- to stop the deterioration in Poland and to prevent the "Polish Disease" from spreading. In Moscow's eyes, this disease is the outbreak of popular demands challenging the Communist Party's absolute control of Polish society. Thus it is not so much that socialist gains -- few, if any -- are being undermined in Poland or that an "anti-Soviet orgy" is sweeping the countryside that causes concern within the Kremlin as much as it is the inescapable fact that the communist system itself may be endangered in Poland and elsewhere in the Soviet Bloc. From Moscow's perspective, if the "Polish Disease" is not arrested in time, it could infect other East European states and -- ominously -- the Baltic states, Belorussia, the Ukraine, and other western regions of the Soviet Union. The result could well be dismemberment of the Warsaw Pact and perhaps the Soviet Union itself. Fears of such consequences provide the ideological leitmotif in any invasion scenario.

From Soviet and East European perspectives, a stable, dependable, and ideologically correct Poland is a vitally important and integral element in their security schemes. If Poland, at some future date, were to pursue an independent, non-Soviet-oriented policy and threaten withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact (as Hungary did in 1956), such an action could well end that alliance. Both East Germany and the 19 Soviet divisions stationed in that country (9 tank and 10 motor rifle) would be isolated from the U.S.S.R. Similarly, the military organization of the Pact would be radically altered and the credibility of the Pact's challenge to the NATO alliance would be seriously diminished.

In like manner, an independent Poland could have deleterious and potentially disruptive effects on other East European economies, dependent as they are on intra-Bloc trade and cooperation. These economies are already burdened with slower economic growth rates, rising levels of hard currency indebtedness, a general scarcity of domestic energy supplies, stagnating labor productivity, and widespread harvest failures. Further shortfalls or even a cessation in Polish deliveries of manufactured goods, machinery and equipment, and raw materials -- particularly coal, coke, sulfur, and the like -- would be calamitous to these economies.

Finally, Poland serves as a "buffer state" for the Soviet Union against possible "Western encroachments." The western regions of the Soviet Union offer little to hinder a military invader, as Germany demonstrated in 1941. There are also few barriers to cultural encroachments. The Baltic states, western Belorussia and the western Ukraine are the least sovietized parts of the European U.S.S.R. There is some evidence to suggest that a resurgence of Catholicism, social and economic disaffection, and anti-Soviet and anti-Russian sentiment are spreading throughout these regions.<sup>8</sup> An independent Poland would greatly exacerbate the potentially volatile situation.

To preclude such possibilities, the Soviets and their East European allies might well decide to intervene in Poland.

#### WESTERN RESPONSE: ANTICIPATED MOVES AND PAST ACTIONS

In weighing the pros and cons of invading, an important factor will be Moscow's perception of anticipated Western -- particularly American -- responses. Given recent statements by U.S. government officials and Common Market leaders warning of "very serious consequences" in East-West relations, the Soviets ought to anticipate that the reaction of the West to the invasion of Poland would be strong and restrictive initially -- but would weaken over the long term.

There is no doubt that an invasion and occupation of Poland would serve as a coup de grâce to proponents of detente. If, as Le Monde correspondent Michel Tatu observes, the occupation of Afghanistan signalled "a return to a Cold War climate,"<sup>9</sup> then an invasion of Poland would undermine East-West relations still further to the point where they would regress to the frostiest days of the Cold War.

Initially, the Soviets could expect a dramatic reduction in the economic relationship between themselves and the industrialized

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. Roman Solchanyk, "Poland's Impact Inside the USSR," Soviet Analyst, Vol. 10, No. 18, (September 9, 1981), pp. 3-5.

<sup>9</sup> Quoted in Monks, op. cit., p. 31.

West -- a grain embargo, trade restrictions and the like. In the long run, however, they probably could anticipate a return to normalcy. Similarly, the Soviets could anticipate an immediate increase in NATO defense budgets, but they would be correct in questioning the durability of such decisions. As for the U.S., Moscow might well figure that the Americans will increase their defense expenditures and strengthen ties with the People's Republic of China.

From the Soviet perspective, it is critically important to properly evaluate and measure the West's ability and determination to resist, individually and collectively, their military actions. If the past is a guide, the Soviets have little to fear.

The Western response to past Soviet invasions (Germany 1953, Hungary 1956, Czechoslovakia 1968, and Afghanistan 1979) has been a conglomeration of disparate diplomatic, political, and economic actions and sanctions, but never military operations. On the whole, these actions have been decidedly weak, poorly coordinated, and markedly ineffectual.

Following the death of Stalin in 1953, the East German government, on the advice of Soviet leaders, permitted a number of economic concessions to the peasants and to the former middle classes. They did not, however, repeal what the regime euphemistically termed "raised work norms" (in effect, a cut in wages) for industrial workers. The result was a workers' strike in East Berlin on June 16; uprisings soon flared up in some sixty East German cities. Security forces were unable or unwilling to suppress these disorders. At this point, three Soviet divisions rolled into East Berlin and saved the regime from collapse. The Western response to such actions was, for the most part, negligible.

Three years later, more than 200,000 Hungarians demonstrated in Budapest, denouncing government policy and Soviet control. Shortly thereafter, Soviet tanks moved into Budapest. On October 24, 1956, members of the Soviet Presidium arrived and set about to defuse the crisis by vowing that they would withdraw Soviet troops as soon as possible. Intoxicated by what seemed a tremendous victory, the Freedom Fighters pressed for other concessions: free elections, restoration of a multi-party system, and inclusion of non-communists within the government. On November 1, Imre Nagy, the new premier, announced that Hungary would withdraw from the Warsaw Pact and adopt neutrality. At daybreak on November 4, the Soviets stormed into Hungary with at least 200,000 troops and 4,000 tanks.

The West offered sympathy -- but not much more. It was only on Friday, October 26 -- several days after the first Soviet tanks moved into Budapest -- that President Eisenhower directed his staff to prepare an "immediate, comprehensive analysis of the events in both Poland and Hungary, with the possible types of

American action considered.<sup>10</sup> The use of force was immediately dismissed.<sup>11</sup> In fact, the position paper that emerged from the October 26 White House meeting reaffirmed Washington's assurances to the Soviet Union that the U.S. had no intention of making Poland and Hungary into American allies. In the case of Hungary, the United States authorized food and other relief (\$20 million initial allocation), assisted refugees "fleeing from the criminal action of the Soviets,"<sup>12</sup> and generally condemned the aggression. This was the full extent of the American response -- nothing more.

During the August 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia, the United States and its European allies found themselves equally unprepared and similarly disinclined to act. The American and NATO commands first learned of the invasion from an Associated Press dispatch out of Prague. Though General James H. Polk, Commander of the U.S. Seventh Army -- the major military component of American forces in NATO -- authorized the alert measures permitted him,<sup>13</sup> additional precautionary steps were forbidden by higher authorities. The Seventh Army was specifically forbidden to: 1) launch its reconnaissance aircraft (which in any case never flew closer than 20 miles of the Czech border); 2) increase the number of ground patrols and helicopter flights in West Germany; 3) recall members of its four mechanized cavalry squadrons who were either in school, on leave or on other authorized absence; and 4) dig foxholes or weapons emplacements that could be observed by Czech border guards. This last order was, as General Polk observes, "a thought that had occurred to no one this side of the National Command Center in Washington."<sup>14</sup> It was sixty hours after the invasion, on August 23, that NATO Command finally issued a "Military Vigilance," the lowest official measure of increased readiness. Such actions stand in stark contrast with that taken by "neutralist" Austria, which called a serious Red Alert and moved its troops to the border.

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<sup>10</sup> Dwight D. Eisenhower, The White House Years: Waging Peace 1956-1961 (Garden City: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1965), p. 68.

<sup>11</sup> This decision was due in part to the virtual geographic isolation of Hungary and to the fact that both France and Great Britain were then involved in military actions in Suez. Eisenhower recalls: "I still wonder what would have been my recommendation to the Congress and the American people had Hungary been accessible by sea or through the territories of allies who might have agreed to react positively to the tragic fate of the Hungarian people." Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>13</sup> Among the alert measures permitted General Polk were: alerting the major commands, calling up additional communication and monitoring stations, reviewing and preparing to implement certain contingency plans when and if authorized, and generally getting the senior commanders on their toes.

<sup>14</sup> General James H. Polk, USA (Ret.), "Reflections on the Czechoslovakian Invasion, 1968," Strategic Review, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Winter 1977), p. 37.



Other than strongly-worded diplomatic protests, the abrupt cancellation of scheduled meetings between Soviet and Western officials and the shelving of negotiations concerning mutual and balanced reduction of forces in Europe, there was no attempt to impose any real diplomatic or economic penalty on the Soviet Union and the other participating East European states. In fact, three weeks after the invasion, Senator Mike Mansfield repeated his January 1967 call for American troop cuts in Europe.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, just five months after the invasion, the French government had no qualms in signing an agreement doubling Soviet-French trade by 1975.<sup>16</sup> On the whole, U.S. and West European policy towards the invasion was, as General Polk observes, "quiescent in the extreme."<sup>17</sup>

U.S. and Western response was a bit tougher thirteen years later when Soviet divisions stormed into and occupied Afghanistan on December 27, 1979.<sup>18</sup> Denouncing the Soviet intervention as a "grave threat to peace" and a "blatant violation of international rules of behavior," President Carter on December 31 urged other world leaders to join with the United States to "make it clear to the Soviets that they cannot take such action as to violate world peace without severe political consequences." Soon after, Carter recalled Ambassador Thomas J. Watson, Jr. from the Soviet Union, asked the Senate to postpone indefinitely consideration of the SALT II agreement, and promised to accelerate delivery of arms already "in the pipeline" to Pakistan.

On January 4, 1980, when it became apparent that American warnings were being ignored by the Soviets, Carter imposed a number of sanctions. Besides cancelling contracts for the sale of 17 million tons of U.S. corn, wheat and soybeans to the Soviet Union,<sup>19</sup> Carter announced an indefinite delay in the export of high technology and strategic items; Soviet fishing privileges were to be severely curtailed; the United States would postpone opening new American or Russian consular facilities; most cultural and economic exchanges were to be deferred; and the U.S. would withdraw from the 1980 Olympic Games scheduled for Moscow.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. "Europe Troop Cuts Sought by Mansfield," Los Angeles Times, September 14, 1968, p. 10.

<sup>16</sup> Roger E. Kanet, "Czechoslovakia and the Future of Soviet Foreign Policy," in E. J. Czerwinski and J. Piekalkiewicz, The Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia: Its Effects on Eastern Europe (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1972), pp. 100-101.

<sup>17</sup> Polk, op. cit., p. 37.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. an excellent analysis by James Phillips, "The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan," The Heritage Foundation Backgrounder, No. 108 (January 9, 1980).

<sup>19</sup> Carter undermined the effectiveness of the embargo by allowing the delivery of another 8 million metric tons of U.S. grain which he felt were obligated to the Soviets under the 1975 U.S.-Soviet Grain Agreement. For a further analysis of the Carter action, cf. Paige Bryan, "The Soviet Grain Embargo," The Heritage Foundation Backgrounder, No. 130 (January 12, 1981).

While these sanctions cut across a broad spectrum of Soviet-American interaction, they were, for the most part, "limited in scope, symbolic in nature,"<sup>20</sup> and had little impact on either the Soviet economy or policymakers in Moscow. The boycott did tarnish somewhat the international prestige which the Kremlin unquestioningly anticipated from hosting the games.

#### AN INVASION SCENARIO

If an invasion of Poland were nonetheless to take place, it would most likely -- though not necessarily -- be preceded by a major confrontation between Solidarity and Polish authorities in which limited force (e.g., police action) would be employed by the government. Such a confrontation could well be precipitated and orchestrated by the Kremlin through provocative propaganda campaigns and a variety of political, economic, and military threats.<sup>21</sup>

The possibility also exists that an invasion might coincide with scheduled or unscheduled military maneuvers in or about Poland.<sup>22</sup> Though such maneuvers certainly would be advantageous in an invasion scenario, they are not essential to a successful operation. All thirty Soviet divisions in Eastern Europe<sup>23</sup> and most of the thirty-three in the western military districts of the Soviet Union bordering Poland<sup>24</sup> stand at the highest stage of combat readiness. They constitute more than enough force for invasion. And they would be aided by at least token forces from most members of the Warsaw Pact, as was the case in Czechoslovakia in 1968.

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<sup>20</sup> Phillips, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>21</sup> An example of such threats was issued on September 22, 1981 by Stefan Olszowski, a leading conservative member of the Polish Politburo. In a speech delivered on national television, Olszowski warned that the Soviet Union might cut back on shipments of strategic raw materials, including oil, unless "anti-Soviet" activity in Poland ceased.

<sup>22</sup> The most recent maneuvers, which "technically" ended on September 12, involved approximately 100,000 Soviet regular troops and reservists operating in Belorussia and the Soviet Baltic Republics in conjunction with naval units (in excess of 100 ships) training along the Baltic coast.

<sup>23</sup> Within Eastern Europe, the Soviets currently deploy the following divisions: East Germany -- 9 tank, 10 motor rifle; Poland -- 2 tank; Hungary -- 2 tank, 2 motor rifle; and Czechoslovakia -- 2 tank, and 3 motor rifle. Also in Eastern Europe are four Soviet Tactical Air Armies numbering some 1,700 aircraft.

<sup>24</sup> Three Soviet military districts border Poland. In the Carpathian district (southeast of Poland), 2 tank and 9 motor rifle divisions are deployed. In Belorussia (east of Poland), there are 9 tank, 2 motor rifle and 1 airborne divisions. The numbers for the Baltic district (northeast of Poland) are 3 tank, 5 motor rifle, and 2 airborne divisions.

Though speculating on the time of an invasion is risky, there is the possibility that it might occur during what Harrison E. Salisbury recently called the "Polish Window" -- a period in which the conditions for military action in Eastern Europe are at their prime.<sup>25</sup> The period from early August to early November (the interval between early harvests and the onset of the autumn muds) is the traditional time for the outbreak of war in Eastern Europe -- witness the invasions of Hungary in October 1956 and Czechoslovakia in late August 1968. While this period is obviously critical in any invasion scenario, Salisbury's assertion that "if Warsaw reaches November 1 without seeing the Red Army, it probably can draw a free breath until around May 1982" may be too sanguine. If the Polish situation were to deteriorate after November 1, and if the Communist Party and government were to significantly forfeit their powers, the Soviet Union would be forced to intervene whatever the climatic conditions are at that time.

Soviet military doctrine and the precedents of Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968 provide a blueprint for action. With Soviet military doctrine emphasizing prompt seizure of the initiative and rapid penetration throughout the depth of the theatre, an actual invasion of Poland would most likely include the following:<sup>26</sup>

- An immediate seizure by airborne units of the most important airfields throughout Poland, particularly those in and around Warsaw, Lodz, Poznan, Wroclaw, Katowice, Krakow, Rzeszow, and Gdansk (see Map 1). Such action would thwart a possible counterattack by the Polish air force and would secure these bases as "beachheads" for a further infusion of light tanks (e.g., PT-76s), armored personnel carriers (e.g., BMDs), and other military equipment.
- A swift attack upon the major naval ports, particularly those at Gdansk, Szczecin, and Gdynia (see Map 1), as well as the installations at Hel (light naval forces) and Jastarnia (supply base). Securing and sealing such installations would: 1) neutralize the Polish Navy; 2) prevent Polish merchant ships and fishing vessels from aiding rebellious, resistance forces; and 3) effectively deprive the Solidarity opposition of its major stronghold at Gdansk.
- An immediate seizure of Poland's State Radio and Television network and/or destruction of transmitters to prevent early notification to the public of the invasion.

<sup>25</sup> New York Times, September 20, 1981, p. E21.

<sup>26</sup> The scenario presented is based in part on the excellent analysis entitled "How Moscow Would Invade" in Newsweek, December 15, 1980, pp. 40-41.

- A prompt securing of the "German Connection," particularly the rail links between the U.S.S.R. and East Germany and the autobahn network joining East Germany and the Polish road system (see Map 1). Specifically, one might expect the following actions:
  - East German forces would move to the border area providing what John Erickson calls "the anvil against which the hammer of the Russian Army would crush the Poles."<sup>27</sup>
  - Soviet troops would guard the critical city of Frankfurt an der Oder while other Soviet troops would move into Poland from Germany to guard roads, rails, and bridges from potential saboteurs. Many analysts believe that the Soviets could easily move as many as five divisions from East Germany without seriously weakening their position there with regard to NATO.
  - The two Soviet tank divisions within Poland -- the 20th Tank Division stationed in the Pomeranian area in the northwest and the 38th Tank Division in Silesia to the south -- would swing west to secure bridges and rail links on the Oder and Neisse rivers.
  - Soviet troops stationed in the western military districts of the U.S.S.R. would drive westward towards Warsaw on main roads through Brest, L'vov and Grodno. Military opposition in this sector would be minimal at best because most of Poland's fifteen divisions are in the west.

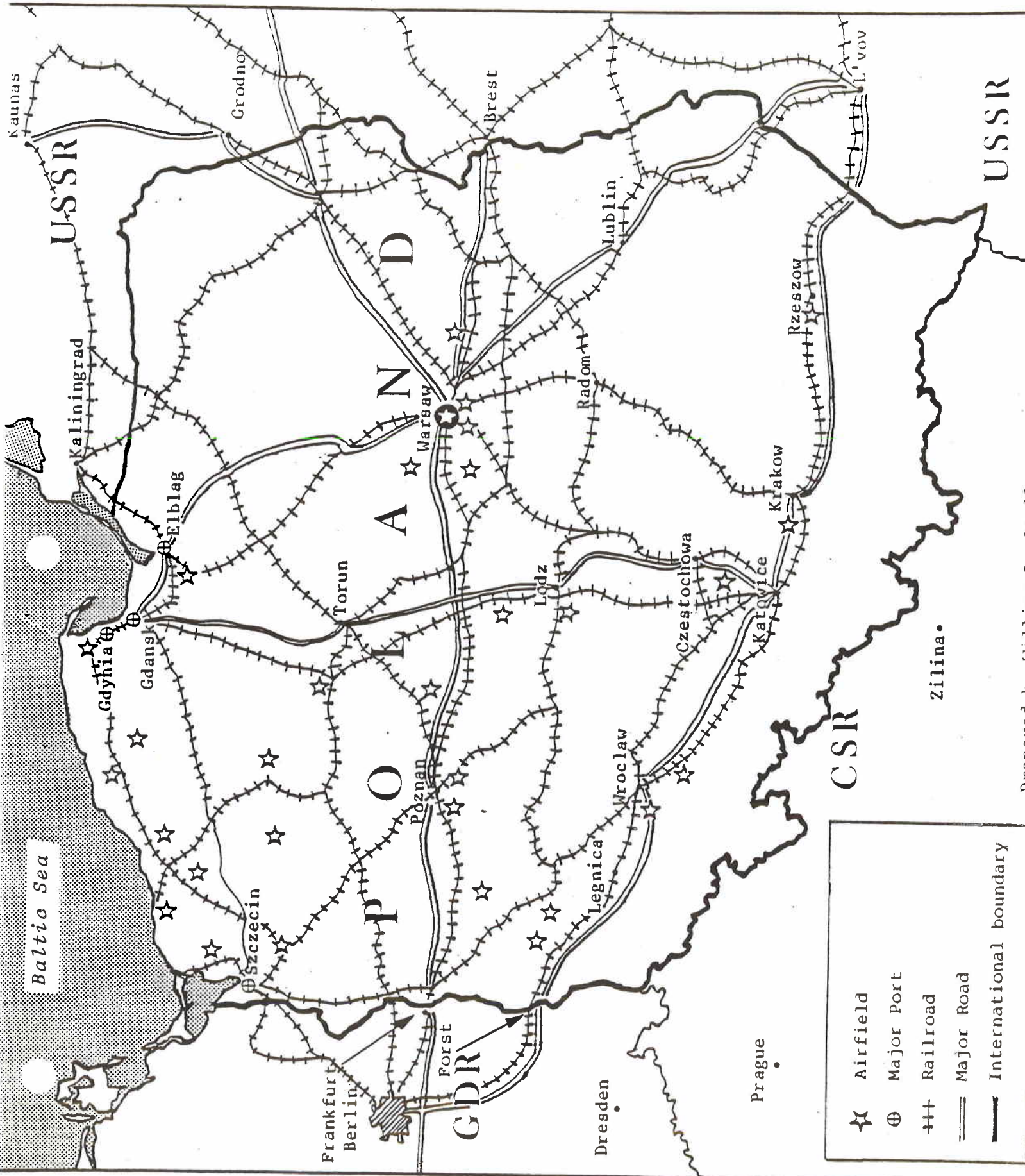
Once key airfields, ports, roads, and rail lines have been secured, the Soviets would probably send in their main occupation force. In total, an invading and occupying force would range in size from 1.0 to 1.5 million men. While most of them would come from the western military districts of the Soviet Union, others would be deployed from East Germany and Czechoslovakia.

#### PRESENT AND FUTURE OPTIONS FOR THE WEST

From the perspective of Moscow, the United States and the West probably seem to lack the political determination and military credibility to deter Soviet aggression in many sectors of the globe. Such perceptions, based in part on previous Western responses to Soviet military initiatives, help to determine the nature and extent of Soviet military actions. Such perceptions can and must be radically altered. The West, and the United States in particular, should adopt a unified, resolute, and credible stance against present and future Soviet and Soviet-surrogate encroachments, particularly in Poland.

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 41.



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There exist today a wide range of options that the West might take if the Soviets were to invade Poland. In the short-term, besides issuing strongly-worded diplomatic protests and airing condemnations in the General Assembly and Security Council of the United Nations, consideration should be given to the following:

- Extended use of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and the Voice of America broadcasts to beam ongoing news of the Soviet invasion and the attendant casualties of the occupation both to Poland and to the other member states of the Warsaw Pact. A substantial increase in Voice of America broadcasts could be similarly beneficial in mobilizing Third World support for the Polish cause. The broadcasts could stress that the invasion violates, in principle, the United Nations Charter and the Helsinki Agreements to which the Soviet Union was a principal signatory. Article VI of the Agreement reads:

They will accordingly refrain from any form of armed intervention or threat of such intervention against another participating State.

They will likewise in all circumstances refrain from any other acts of military, or of political, economic, or other coercion designed to subordinate to their own interest the exercise of another participating State of the rights inherent in its sovereignty and thus to secure advantages of any kind.

- The immediate establishment of a United Nations Commission or Task Force to document the behavior of the Soviets in Poland; a similar document on Soviet behavior during the Hungarian crisis in 1956 is remarkably scathing.
- The formation of a variety of governmental and non-governmental (religious, ethnic, labor and the like) agencies to channel economic assistance and foodstuffs to the beleaguered people of Poland. While much of this aid probably would not get to the intended recipients, such actions would show Western concern in contrast with the harsh and ruthless actions of the occupying forces.

All of the above actions are necessary to counter expected Soviet propaganda justifying the invasion and to reinforce the image of the Soviet Union as an aggressor state bent on subjugating helpless people.

In addition to the above "propaganda" weapons, the West might also consider economic options:

- A total trade embargo against the Soviet Union and those East European nations participating in an invasion of Poland.

- (1) All grain shipments, for example, would be halted to the Soviets and their East European allies. Unlike the January 1980 embargo, this action would cover grain sales already contracted. In January 1980, President Carter cancelled contracts for the sale of 17 billion metric tons of corn, wheat and soybeans, but permitted delivery of some 8 million tons already agreed upon under terms of the 1975 U.S.-Soviet Grain Agreement. Very strong efforts should be made to insure that Argentina and Canada, who have agreed to sell the Soviets 47.5 million metric tons of grain over the next five years, join in this sanction. Similarly, Brazil should be persuaded to embargo soybeans. With the 1981 grain yield in the Soviet Union amounting to less than 185 million metric tons (21.6 percent below the target set in the current five-year plan), the potential impact of a total Western embargo upon the Soviet economy could be enormous.
- (2) A similar embargo should be placed on the export of phosphates, important for fertilizers to the Soviet Union. Given their direct effect on agricultural productivity, a successful embargo on phosphates could well reduce Soviet grain yields in the next couple of years. As in the grain embargo, the West must convince alternate suppliers, particularly those in the Third World, not to furnish the Soviets with such materials.
- (3) Comprehensive trade restrictions on technology transfers should also be imposed by the West and by the United States in particular. Currently, the U.S. government permits the sale to the Soviets of items determined to be "non-strategic" while opposing sales of "high technology" items. Continuing such a "double-tier" approach would be detrimental to Western policy objectives. An overall ban on the export of all Western technology would have a significant effect, both in the short- and long-term, on the Soviet Union's military and domestic R & D programs. William Simon, in A Time for Action, correctly notes: "we must stop building the Soviet war machine with critical infusions of our technology." Statistics confirm Simon's grave concern over the dangers of technology transfers. About one-fourth of the annual production at the American-built ZIL truck factory is devoted towards military applications (including missile launchers); a 110/10C Sperry-Univac computer system is said to be used by the Soviet BACKFIRE bombers; Lockheed has sold an RB-211 turbo-fan engine (suitable for bombers) to the Soviets; IBM 360 and 370 computer systems are reported to be in use by the Warsaw Pact's air defense systems;

Litton Industries has sold technology with military application (particularly the tracking of American ships and submarines) to the Soviets.

The trade restrictions should not be limited to transfers with potential military application. Restrictions should also apply, for example, to such areas as energy. The Yamal pipeline, which is designed to bring natural gas more than 3,500 miles from northwestern Siberia to markets in Western Europe, is a case in point. To complete the project, estimated to cost in excess of \$11 billion, the Soviets have sought American and West European equipment and financial participation. While the U.S. and the West should immediately withdraw export licenses of those corporations involved in the project (e.g., Caterpillar Tractor Company), a more comprehensive and cooperative energy alternative scheme should be instituted to offset the potential loss of some 40-45 billion cubic meters per year of Soviet natural gas to the West European markets. One plan would involve greater utilization of American coal, nuclear energy, and North Sea natural gas.<sup>28</sup>

- (4) An important corollary to the issue of technology transfers is the problem posed by "student exchanges." Recently, the Office of Technology Assessment reported that "since 1972, Soviet 'students,' who are usually experienced engineers, scientists, and managers of R & D establishments, have concentrated on study programs in the U.S. in semiconductor technology, computers, and other fields of applied research." Such programs could be immediately abandoned in retaliation against a Soviet invasion.
- Consideration could also be given to limiting loans and assistance to the Soviet Union and its East European allies. Since the early 1970s, ominous trends have been noted in the growing Soviet Bloc debt to the West. Conservative estimates place this debt between \$60 and \$80 billion, or what one author described as "the total assets of Exxon and General Motors combined." By 1985, Soviet Bloc indebtedness, according to figures of the Commerce Department's Bureau of East-West Trade, could reach \$108 billion. Other conservative estimates predict the indebtedness to soar to \$200 billion by 1990. One-

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. Steven C. Goldman and Wayne A. Schroeder, "The Geopolitics of Energy," Policy Review, No. 17 (Summer 1981), pp. 95-113. See also, Thomas Blau and Joseph Kirchheimer, "European Dependence and Soviet Leverage: The Yamal Pipeline," Survival, Vol. 33, No. 5 (September-October 1981), pp. 209-214.



third of the current Soviet Bloc debt is from credits provided by the American Export-Import Bank. In the event of an invasion of Poland, these credits could be immediately halted. The remaining two-thirds debt is provided by the international credit market. Pressure could be applied by Western governments on the various banking institutions to refrain from providing further assistance.

While no combined Western military action is envisaged (or should even be considered), there are important military implications for the West in a Soviet invasion of Poland. In the short run, a Soviet invasion would most likely strengthen NATO's resolve to redress much of its weaknesses vis-a-vis the Warsaw Pact. Concomitantly, it would also, at least temporarily, silence much of the anti-military rhetoric and sentiment prevalent throughout Western Europe. In the long run, a Soviet invasion of Poland could spur NATO to redress some of the glaring military deficiencies within the Atlantic Alliance. In order to enhance NATO's ability to fulfill its deterrent strategy of flexible response and its concept of forward defense, consideration should be given to the following points:

- a greater sense of equality and shared responsibility among the Western allies;
- a further strengthening (in terms of manpower and equipment) of the northern and central fronts of NATO;
- a revitalization of the southern flank of NATO emphasizing greater cooperation and coordination between and with Greece, Turkey and the other allies, and including the participation of Spain;
- a greater emphasis on the interoperability of NATO parts and equipment;
- a significant increase in base rights, particularly in the Mediterranean;
- a more dramatic increase in the level of Theatre Nuclear Forces and the deployment of Enhanced Radiation Warheads throughout the alliance;
- a further acceleration of host nation support programs;
- a major increase in the readiness of in-place forces and the attendant raising of ammunition and war reserve materiel stock levels.

Through most of these options could be accomplished or at least initiated during the short- and mid-term, other suggestions would need to be addressed in the long run. Among the latter would be an increase in the number and readiness of mobilizable reserves and the expansion of the strategic lift program.

There are other responses available to the United States that do not require cooperation from its allies. Because the Soviet Union would be tied down in Poland and thus less able to defend its interests elsewhere, Washington could assist anti-communist forces in those underdeveloped nations allied with or currently being subjugated by the Soviet Union or its surrogates. Though various forms of military assistance could be considered, it should almost always be channelled through friendly third parties. American policymakers could seriously consider providing assistance in the following critical areas:

### Afghanistan

For nearly two years, Afghan freedom fighters have been resisting tenaciously the armed subjugation of their state by a well-equipped Soviet force estimated at 100,000 men. The U.S. could support the Afghan resistance by: 1) arming the resistance forces with anti-tank and anti-helicopter weapons (perhaps via the PRC); 2) creating a radio communications network to assist the disparate rebel groups coordinate their military operations; 3) providing large quantities of medical supplies to the freedom fighters; 4) supplying greater economic and humanitarian assistance to Afghan refugees, particularly in Pakistan; and (5) helping to create a broad-based Afghan government-in-exile.

### Kampuchea (Cambodia)

For almost three years, Vietnamese armed forces have occupied and governed Cambodia through the puppet regime of Heng Samrin. Consideration could be given to supplying arms to a coalition of anti-Vietnamese forces which would include the Khmer Rouge, Son Sann's Khmer People's National Liberation Front and former head of state, Prince Norodom Sihanouk. It could be emphasized that the present, Vietnamese-imposed regime in Phnom Penh is recognized neither by the West nor the United Nations General Assembly. Here, too, the PRC could act as the conduit for assistance.

### Laos

Since the establishment of the People's Democratic Republic of Laos in December 1975, Western officials have decried the presence of over 60,000 Vietnamese soldiers in that country. If Vietnam persists in maintaining such forces there, consideration could be given to supplying assistance, again through the PRC, to forces in Laos still loyal to former premier, Phoumi Nosavan.

### Nicaragua

Since the Sandinista forces assumed power in July 1979, moderate forces within Nicaragua (particularly the Catholic Church, the independent newspaper, La Prensa, and the major opposition party, the Nicaraguan Democratic Movement) have decried the growing radicalization of the nation and the forceful imposition of the Cuban/Marxist state system. Consideration could be

given to broadly supporting these moderate forces. The possibility of supplying military assistance, through a third party such as Argentina, to anti-Sandinista forces could also be contemplated.

### Angola<sup>29</sup>

During the past six years, various indigenous Angolan groups have continued to resist subjugation by the Marxist government in Luanda, which is kept in power by the 20,000-man Cuban expeditionary force. The U.S. could consider concrete aid and assistance to the various indigenous resistance groups, particularly Dr. Jonas Savimbi's UNITA (National Union for the Complete Independence of Angola). Its 15,000-man force now effectively controls the southern half of Angola, an area roughly the size of Texas. Were UNITA to receive military assistance from the United States, it could arm its large irregular militia, consolidate its hold on the south and begin threatening the Marxist hold on the north. UNITA's needs are modest. The United States could help greatly by giving UNITA: 1) small arms and anti-tank missiles; 2) simple transport equipment; 3) simple communications system; and 4) ground-to-air missiles to enable UNITA to threaten MPLA/ Cuban control of Angolan airspace. These military supplies could easily be funnelled through UNITA's regular suppliers -- the PRC, Ivory Coast, Senegal and Morocco.

Two other options theoretically remain open for consideration, though they pose great risks: 1) supplying arms to Polish resistance forces; and 2) moving against Cuba. Both would be such a direct challenge to Moscow that utmost care and restraint must be exercised in considering them.

### CONCLUSION

The record of American response to Soviet invasions of its neighbors is dismal. Looking at this record, Moscow has little reason to expect to suffer any strong penalties if it invades Poland. Only by actively considering a broad range of responses to a Soviet invasion can Washington perhaps convince Moscow that there will a price to be paid for violation of Polish sovereignty. This itself could deter the Soviets.

If it does not, the actions outlined above will enable the U.S. and the West to exploit Soviet involvement in Poland by reducing Soviet influence and power elsewhere. The best situation would be no invasion, but if it comes, Washington and the West should be ready to respond more effectively than they did in 1953, 1956, 1968, and 1979.

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. Ian Butterfield, "U.S. Policy Toward Angola: Past Failures and Present Opportunities," The Heritage Foundation Backgrounder, No. 149 (August 25, 1981).