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# THE POLISH CRISES AND THE MILITARY PROBLEMS OF THE WARSAW PACT IN THE FALL OF 1981

Lieutenant-colonel PETRE OPRİŞ, PhD

At the beginning of August 1981, the Polish military authorities invited the Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces to participate at several meetings at which plans were presented for the enforcement of the martial law. At the same time, the Marshal Viktor G. Kulikov was solicited by Marshal Dmitri Ustinov to participate at the preparation for the military application called “WEST-81”, which was going to take place on USSR territory, in Byelorussia (September 4-12, 1981).<sup>1</sup>

The historical sources previously examined do not reveal whether or not the Soviet military maneuvers of September 1981 in Byelorussia were directly related to the dramatic situation taking place in Poland. It is known, however, that the Red Army used in a demonstrative manner, on that occasion, massive formations of tanks, which were strongly supported by the air force. Paratrooper units and marine forces were also launched from the Baltic Sea, endowed with numerous specially crafted ships, hovercrafts and armoured fight technique with amphibian capacities, which could rapidly and easily intervene in Gdańsk to capture the delegates who participated at the first congress of the “Solidarity”. This congress started only one day after the starting of the “WEST-81” military application and ended on September 10, 1981.

Analysing the context in which these maneuvers took place, their extent, and also the more profound crisis in Poland, we may formulate the hypothesis that the “WEST-81” maneuvers formed not only a Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO) ordinary military exercise, but also a demonstration of force by the Moscow part<sup>2</sup> in order to determine, on the one hand, whether the Warsaw authorities hastened the preparations for the enforcement of the martial law, and on the other hand to assess the public opinion from the states which were NATO members, by unfurling significant military forces. At the same time, another hypothesis we consider plausible, may be proposed for research: the “WEST-81” application also had the role of exercising a strong psychological pressure on the Polish nation, especially on the representatives of the “Solidarity” union. The application often encouraged them not adopt decisions which contested the affiliation of the Polish state at WTO or which put in danger the system of political-military alliances in which Poland was a part.

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<sup>1</sup> Those maneuvers were led by Marshal Dmitri Ustinov. Cf. Constantin Olteanu, *România – o voce distinctă în Tratatul de la Varşovia: memorii 1980-1985* [Romania – a distinct voice into the Warsaw Treaty: memorials 1980-1985], ALDO Publishing House, Bucharest, 1999, p. 95.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 101.

The “WEST-81” Soviet military maneuvers had not yet prevented the delegates presented at the first congress of the “Solidarity” to adopt a document entitled “Message to all workers from the Eastern Europe”.<sup>3</sup> This action inflamed the spirits of the communist leaders both in Warsaw and in Moscow, because this message/liberation shout exceeded by its content the internal frame of Poland; it was addressed to all citizens from the communist states in Europe which were in the sphere of influence of Kremlin, and represented a “defiance which was without precedent, and intolerable for the Soviets”<sup>4</sup>. Inevitably, the respective document generated supplementary tensions between the Warsaw authorities and the leaders of the free trade unions, and also a new wave of hard reproaches of the Soviet political and military leaders addressed to Stanisław Kania and Wojciech Jaruzelski.

Stanisław Kania was very affected by the Soviet attitude and eventually understood that he had to renounce the position he occupied at the head of the party.<sup>5</sup> He became the scapegoat for all the problems Poland generated to the other states which were WTO members and for the fact the martial law was not yet enforced. General Wojciech Jaruzelski warned Kania during a session at which participated the generals Czesław Kiszczak, minister of Internal Affairs<sup>6</sup>, and Mirosław Milewski, secretary of CC of PUWP and former minister of Internal Affairs in the government led by Józef Pinkowski, and also two Polish generals, that measures would be taken against him in the case should he continue to oppose the military decisions to enforce the martial law.<sup>7</sup>

According to the data published until now by different historians of the Cold War, it is obvious that behind the pressures exerted by Wojciech Jaruzelski was in fact Moscow’s decision to remove Stanisław Kania from the leadership of PUWP. Otherwise, the replacement was very fast, and on October 18, 1981, without any opposition of the latest<sup>8</sup>. The new leader of the party was General Jaruzelski and, from that moment, preparations concerning the martial law establishment were initiated.

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<sup>3</sup> By that message, the participants at the first congress of the “Solidarity” “express their hope regarding the starting of the democratic changes in the countries of the Soviet block”. Henryk Wujek, *Anii Solidarității: de la Legea marțială la Masa rotundă [The Years of Solidarity: from de Martial Law to the Round Table]*, in *Analele Sighet 10. Anii 1973-1989: cronică unui sfârșit de sistem [Sighet Annals 10. 1973-1989 Years: the Chronicle of the Ending of the System]*, Academia Civică Foundation, Bucharest, 2003, p. 867.

<sup>4</sup> Stelian Tănase, *Miracolul revoluției. O istorie a căderii regimurilor comuniste [The miracle of the revolution. A history of the communist regime failure]*, Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 1999, p. 77.

<sup>5</sup> The chief of KGB residence in Warsaw, Vitali Pavlov, reported to Moscow on October 5, 1981: “Kania came home in a very agitated state and said in the restricted circle of the family that the Russian comrades plot again to remove him from the Prime-Secretary function”. Vasili Mitrokhin, Christopher Andrew, *Arhiva Mitrokhin. KGB în Europa și în Vest [The Mitrokhin Archive. The KGB in Europe and the West]*, Orizonturi&Sirius Publishing House, Bucharest, 2003, p. 525.

<sup>6</sup> Before he was appointed as minister of Internal Affairs, General Czesław Kiszczak led the Polish service for military intelligence.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Vasili Mitrokhin, Christopher Andrew, *op. cit.*, p. 526.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*. Stanisław Kania was informed in the morning of that day by Boris Aristov, the ambassador of USSR in Warsaw, right before starting the plenum of the CC of PUWP, that the Moscow authorities wanted a new leader for the party, this being General Wojciech Jaruzelski.

During November 1981, with the backdrop of social tensions intensifying all over the country, the Polish Military Counterspy Department suffered a serious strike: Colonel Ryszard Kukliński “defects” and takes refuge in USA (November 7, 1981). It may be supposed that this news generated in Moscow an entirely unpleasant reaction, and it is possible that Marshal Viktor Kulikov became very nervous when he found out that his Polish liaison officer had in fact been an American spy.

Did Ryszard Kukliński’s “defection” put in danger the Warsaw authorities’ plan regarding the martial law establishment? It may be possible because Ryszard Kukliński was one of five officers on the Polish General Staff overseeing preparations for the military aspects of martial law.<sup>9</sup> If the respective officer participated in the meeting from August 1981, where the military details concerning the martial law establishment were presented to Marshal Viktor Kulikov, it is very possible that the American espionage services would have been informed in due time concerning the way in which they were to act in Poland during the next period. In addition, the disclosure of those plans would have created an important advantage for the USA, in both the diplomatic and military area. Knowing the fact that the armies of the WTO member states were not to be involved in a military intervention in Poland, both Alexander Haig, the chief of the State Department, and Caspar Weinberger, secretary of the Defence Department, could develop diplomatic strategies in order to counteract the measures to put down the Poland anticommunist movement. On the other hand, the summoning of a part of the American army in order to strengthen NATO forces in Europe was not necessary anymore, taking into consideration the fact that General Jaruzelski wanted to impose the martial law without a military intervention of the WTO in Poland.

Was the information supplied by Colonel Ryszard Kukliński used in a proper way by the US Intelligence Services? At present, we can suppose that the answer to that question is affirmative because the military and diplomatic arguments presented guide us to this conclusion. We hope that, in the future, new documents from American archives may reveal to us the aspects of this problem. As a result, we could formulate a final answer.

The dramatic intensification of the politic tensions in Poland during the second part of November 1981, and the dangerous effects that the CIA agent Ryszard Kukliński’s disclosures could have provoked, amplified, in our opinion, the excited atmosphere that had already existed inside the Soviet military leadership. It is obvious that both the USSR Minister of Defence, Marshal Dmitri Ustinov, and Marshal Viktor Kulikov did not agree with neither the “small steps” politics realized by Stanisław Kania nor with General Jaruzelski’s long time

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<sup>9</sup> Vojtech Mastny, *The Soviet Non-Invasion of Poland in 1980/81 and the End of the Cold War*, Working Paper No. 23, Cold War International History Project, Washington, D.C., September 1998, p 13; Mark Kramer, *Soviet Deliberations During the Polish Crisis, 1980-1981*, Special Working Paper No.1, Cold War International History Project, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington DC, April 1999, p. 37; Benjamin B. Fischer, *The Vilification and Vindication of Colonel Kukliński*, [www.odci.gov/csi/studies/summer00/art03.html](http://www.odci.gov/csi/studies/summer00/art03.html).

preparations concerning the martial law establishment.<sup>10</sup> In their opinion, the single viable option was the use of force and, at a given moment, the two Soviet marshals tried to impose this by threatening again with the WTO military intervention in Poland.

The context in which the Soviet military leaders took action at the end of November and at the beginning of December 1981 in order to solve the critical situation in Poland using one stroke was very special: General Jaruzelski had initiated negotiations in order to form a “national agreement front” and had requested of Lech Wałęsa to avoid the organization of some new protests<sup>11</sup>; the Sejm had refused to grant exceptional powers to the Government<sup>12</sup>, this decision being in concord with the opinion expressed by the Polish archbishop Józef Glemp<sup>13</sup>; Colonel Ryszard Kukliński’s betrayal had become a notorious subject and it was difficult to estimate what effects could have provoked the information realized by this one concerning WTO implication in Poland. In addition to these causes we could add, at the last moment, the cadets’ strike at the School of fire brigade Officers from Warsaw, which was launched on 2 December 1981, and also was heard by critics all over Poland after the violent intervention of the Polish security forces.

In our opinion, all these causes could have generated a seriously excited disposition towards both marshals Dmitri Ustinov and Viktor Kulikov. It is possible that their attitude during the XIV<sup>th</sup> yearly ordinary conference of the WTO members’ states’ Defence Ministers Committee (Moscow, December 1-4, 1981) was influenced by the events that took place in Poland during November and the beginning of December 1981.<sup>14</sup>

The Romanian ex-Defence minister at that time, Lieutenant- General Constantin Olteanu, described the way in which the conference in Moscow of the WTO members’ states’ Defence Ministers Committee proceeded.<sup>15</sup> According to this perspective, on December 3, 1981, Marshal Dmitri Ustinov informed everybody present at that conference – within the framework of a separate meeting

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<sup>10</sup> During the summer of 1981, even the Commander-in-Chief of the WTO United Forces accused the Polish Prime-Minister of cowardice when he declared: “Even you, comrade Jaruzelski, you are afraid to take a decisive measure”. Vasili Mitrokhin, Christopher Andrew, *op. cit.*, p. 521.

<sup>11</sup> General Jaruzelski sent a letter to the „Solidarity” leader.

<sup>12</sup> On November 28, 1981, within the framework of the meeting of the CC of PUWP was adopted the proposal to send to the Sejm a request concerning the granting of exceptional powers to the government ruled by PUWP leader, General Wojciech Jaruzelski. Cf. Stelian Tănase, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

<sup>13</sup> The respective proposal was analysed in different manners both before and after December 13, 1981, being considered either an attempt of the Polish Prime-Minister to have a real dialogue with Lech Wałęsa and with the archbishop Józef Glemp, or a maneuver of Wojciech Jaruzelski to give the impression that he wanted the dialogue in order to surprise his political opponent unprepared at the moment of the martial law establishment. The tactics used by the PUWP leader generated, among other things, a secondary negative effect, the Polish general being personally admonished by Leonid Brezhnev on November 21, 1981 for not having adopted a passive attitude concerning the actions of the “anti-soviet and anti-socialist forces”. Cf. Vasili Mitrokhin, Christopher Andrew, *op. cit.*, p. 527.

<sup>14</sup> We may observe, among others, the fact that the opening of the conference took place on the same day when the strike of the cadets of the fire brigade officers’ school broke out in Warsaw.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Constantin Olteanu, *op. cit.*, p. 102-113; Constantin Olteanu, Alesandru Duțu, Constantin Antip, *România și Tratatul de la Varșovia (Istoric. Mărturii. Documente. Cronologie) [Romania and the Warsaw Pact (History, Evidences, Documents, Chronology)]*, Pro Historia Publishing House, Bucharest, 2005, p. 208-220.

that was not foreseen on the agenda of the day – which General Jaruzelski required assistance from the “friend-countries” by means of a telegram addressed to the WTO members’ states’ Defence Ministers Committee.<sup>16</sup> The USSR Defence minister proposed at that time that the following text be inserted into the initial hand out concerning the conference: “*The Defence Ministers Committee expressed its concern regarding the situation in the Popular Republic of Poland created by the actions of the subversive anti-socialist forces that fight against the armed forces of the Participant States to the Warsaw Treaty during their fulfilling of the alliance obligations and impose the necessity of taking the right measures in order to assure the security of the socialist community in Europe* (our underlining)”<sup>17</sup>.

General Constantin Olteanu asked the Soviet Marshal to show him the telegram sent by General Wojciech Jaruzelski and asked why the Polish leader addresses “the Defence Ministers and not the presidents of states, having in view the functions he was invested with”<sup>18</sup>. Otherwise, in our opinion, that question had no use as General Jaruzelski was both Prime-Minister of Poland and PUWP leader and also Defence minister, a position which granted him the right to address the WTO members’ states’ Defence Ministers Committee.

Having no answer to satisfy him, the Romanian minister declared as his Hungarian counterpart did, the Army General Lajos Czinege, that he could not accept signing the hand out before discussing first with the leader of his party.

After he talked on the phone with Nicolae Ceaușescu and explained to him what kind of problem had appeared, General Olteanu knew that the leader of RCP wanted to confer immediately with the members of the Council of State and those of the Government.<sup>19</sup> What Constantin Olteanu did not know at that moment and did not mention in 1999 was the fact that Nicolae Ceaușescu convoked immediately a meeting with the members of the Executive Political Committee. This quick meeting started at 01.00 p.m. (hour of Romania) and, according to the

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<sup>16</sup> General Martin Dzur, the Czechoslovak minister of Defence, mentioned in a report addressed to his chief of the state the fact that the meeting took place on December 2, 1981. Andrzej Paczkowski, Andrzej Werblan, *On the Decision to Introduce Martial Law in Poland in 1981: Two Historians Report to the Commission on Constitutional Oversight of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland*, Working Paper No. 21, Cold War International History Project, Washington D.C., November 1997, p. 40.

<sup>17</sup> Central Historical National Archives (abbreviated in Romania as ANIC, for Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale), *Central Committee of Romanian Communist Party – Chancellery Collection* (abbreviated in Romania as *CC al PCR – Cancelarie*, for Comitetul Central al Partidului Comunist Român – Cancelarie), file 96/1981, p. 2. (This source will hereafter be referred to as CHNA, *CC of RCP – Chancellery*).

We underline that this is the official text proposed by Marshal Ustinov to the other Defence Ministers, text entirely reproduced and presented in première. This one is different from that one reproduced by General Olteanu: „Comitetul Miniștrilor Apărării sprijină acțiunile întreprinse de guvernul polonez pentru curmarea amestecului forțelor contrarevoluționare străine și a statelor N.A.T.O., care pun în pericol existența socialismului în Polonia [The Defence Ministers Committee supports the Polish Government actions to stop the foreign counter-revolutionary forces and those of NATO states, that put in danger the existence of the socialist system in Poland]”. Constantin Olteanu, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>19</sup> General Olteanu was not the single Minister that required explanations from his superior. The Czechoslovak Defence Minister mentioned in a report addressed to the President of his country the fact that he had called Gustav Husák on December 2, 1981 in order to ask his approval regarding the paragraph proposed by Marshal Ustinov. The same did the Army General Lajos Czinege, who called János Kádár. Andrzej Paczkowski, Andrzej Werblan, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

content of the minutes of the meeting, we could estimate that it lasted almost half an hour. The decision adopted during this meeting was clearly expressed by Nicolae Ceaușescu himself: “*First, it is a political problem and not a military one and we should say it is not necessary for the political problems to be discussed by the military so we should disagree all the references (...) The source of the problem was at the level of the first secretaries and of the leaders of the governments. Being a military problem, I think they [ministries of Defence] should take care of their business and we should agree with no action (...) It is a political issue. It is not a problem for the military to discuss* (our underlining)”<sup>20</sup>.

After the meeting of the Executive Political Committee was finished, General Olteanu took order from Nicolae Ceaușescu not to accept the insertion of the paragraph proposed by Marshal Dmitri Ustinov in the hand out. In his turn, the Romanian Minister communicated to his WTO counterparts the fact that he did not agree with the text and, ultimately, the Soviet Minister’s proposal was not inserted in the final text of the meeting hand out.<sup>21</sup> Moscow’s representatives did not want to underline in another hand out the fact that both the chief of the Romanian deputation and the Hungarian one had presented a different opinion. According to the communist ideology, the Soviets would have been obliged to take measures against the factions (Constantin Olteanu and Lajos Czinege) and, implicitly, this would have increased the tension between the authorities from Bucharest and Budapest during a very difficult moment for Poland and WTO.

Although the decision that Constantin Olteanu wanted to adopt was almost the same as the RCP leader’s answer, we cannot overlook an essential aspect of the problem: in the case that he had assumed another answer than the one established by Nicolae Ceaușescu during the Executive Political Committee (meeting about which the General had no information), the Romanian Defence Minister would have put his own military and political career in danger.<sup>22</sup> This is why it could be

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<sup>20</sup> CHNA, *CC of RCP – Chancellery*, file 96/1981, p. 2.

<sup>21</sup> Taking into account the meantime zone difference, we could establish the schedule of the events:

- Moscow, 12.00 o’clock (Bucharest, 11.00) – begins the extraordinary meeting of the Defence Ministers, where Marshal Dmitri Ustinov announces his intention to insert a special paragraph into the hand out, concerning the support granted by the Defence Ministers Committee to Poland;

- Moscow, approximate 13.00 o’clock (Bucharest, approximate 12.00) – General Constantin Olteanu phones Nicolae Ceaușescu concerning the problem that appeared to the meeting;

- Moscow, 14.00 o’clock (Bucharest, 13.00) – begins the extraordinary meeting of the Executive Political Committee of CC of RCP, having as topic the special paragraph in the hand out of the Moscow’s conference;

- Moscow, approximate 14.30 (Bucharest, approximate 13.30) – the extraordinary meeting of the Political Executive Committee of CC of RCP is closed;

- Moscow, approximate 15.00 o’clock (Bucharest, approximate 14.00) – General Constantin Olteanu phones again Nicolae Ceaușescu and is telephonically informed regarding the decision of not signing the hand out if the paragraph proposed by Marshal Dmitri Ustinov would be inserted.

CHNA, *CC of RCP – Chancellery*, file 96/1981, pp. 2-3; Constantin Olteanu, *op.cit.*, p. 107.

<sup>22</sup> During the Council of Ministers meeting on October 3, 1955 (08.30-09.00), Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej formulated a defining principle concerning the communist political regime in Romania: „*The only one force that is able to put you out or to sustain you [in the function of a high dignitary] is the party, the leadership of the party. If you are not suitable, he put you out*”. The agenda of the day of that meeting had only one point: „Concerning the future organizational changes that are to be done”, meaning „the re-organization of the Government by dismissing comrade Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, the president of the Council of Ministers”. CHNA, *Presidency of the Council of Ministries – Shorthand Reports*, file 7/1955, p. 45.

inferred that General Constantin Olteanu wanted to display a parade patriotism both in *România – o voce distinctă în Tratatul de la Varşovia: memorii 1980-1985* [*Romania – a distinct voice into the Warsaw Treaty: memorials 1980-1985*] and in *România și Tratatul de la Varşovia (Istoric. Mărturii. Documente. Cronologie)* [*Romania and the Warsaw Pact (History, Evidences, Documents, and Chronology)*]. This would minimize the fact that in December 1981 he was not acting on his own, but under Nicolae Ceaușescu's orders, the Supreme Commander of the Romanian army. At the same time we may say that Nicolae Ceaușescu really wanted to adopt a decision regarding that problem by conferring with the members of a Romanian superior political forum. Also that the ex-Defence Minister was wrong stating that the RCP leader wanted to inform the Soviets directly – by means of telephonic interception apparatus installed by KGB – about the fact that such a decision should be adopted during debates at the level of the Superior leadership of the State and party.

Was the paragraph referring to the Defence Ministers Committee and its support granted to Poland an important one? What was hidden behind the phrases proposed by the Soviets? Was it a military WTO intervention – as both Nicolae Ceaușescu and General Constantin Olteanu suggested?<sup>23</sup> It is obvious that the Soviet Marshals' vanity had been offended by the positions adopted by Ministers Olteanu and Czinege but, as the Soviets renounced to insert the incriminated

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<sup>23</sup> During the extraordinary session of the Executive Political Committee of CC of RCP from the morning of December 13, 1981, Nicolae Ceaușescu remembered, among others, the fact that the event in Moscow was discussed within the Permanent Bureau of the Executive Political Committee. Then, the Romanian leader specified: „The Soviets wanted to introduce in the general communiqué on the meeting a view on Poland, saying it was necessary, as the security of the socialist states was in jeopardy and that they should intervene to safeguard security; as a matter of fact, to approve the intervention. Of course, the other delegates were prepared to agree. We were against and the Hungarians said that they would ask their people at home. Of course, we said that we do not accept such a thing and we did not. They wanted to issue a separate communiqué. The Hungarians said that if the Romanian comrades do not sign, neither would they (...) It is true that there, the Soviet declared what happened to them, and the Hungarian asked what did he mean by that - he pounded the table - and said „you are offending the Hungarian people” and so on”. CHNA, *CC of RCP – Chancellery*, file 101/1981, pp. 13-14.

From the declaration of Nicolae Ceaușescu results that all Defence ministers who participated at the reunion in Moscow, with the exception of generals Constantin Olteanu and Lajos Czinege, agreed to sign the communiqué proposed by Marshal Dmitri Ustinov in the morning of December 3, 1981. But this information was not true and it seems the error comes from the person who informed Ceaușescu about those happened in Moscow, General Constantin Olteanu. According to the report elaborated by the Czech Defence minister after the reunion, General Martin Dzur called Gustav Husák (on December 2, 1981) to ask for his agreement regarding the paragraph proposed by Marshal Ustinov. In the same way Army General Lajos Czinege acted, who called János Kádár.

Based on the information offered by General Constantin Olteanu, Nicolae Ceaușescu concluded during the extraordinary session of the Executive Political Committee of CC of RCP from the morning of December 13, 1981: „A foreign intervention [in Poland] is not acceptable anyway. Of course, the Bulgarians might send a company or a battalion; the Czechs wouldn't, practically it is only the Soviets left. The Germans don't want to send anything [troops in Poland]”. *Ibidem*, p. 14.

Four days later, during another extraordinary session of the same committee, Nicolae Ceaușescu presented the Polish Government requirement for immediate offer of help “in food, medicines and anything”. From the shorthand record of the respective session appears, on the one hand, the wish of Nicolae Ceaușescu and Dumitru Popescu to help the Polish people in those hard moments, and on the other part, the mercantile and inhuman attitude of Elena Ceaușescu. The mean replies of the Romanian leader's wife with the address to the Poles are self-evident: „It is normal for them to pay. It cannot be otherwise!”, „It is not our country that should aid Poland, which has many more raw materials”, „It is normal for them to pay. It cannot be otherwise!”, „If they had worked, this would not have happened”, „At any rate, they should pay”, „There will be no philanthropy toward them!”. *Ibidem*, file 104/1981, pp. 2-4.



paragraph into the hand out<sup>24</sup>, we may consider the respective text as not being so important for Poland and WTO – even if at a given moment it was mentioned the “alliance obligations fulfilment” and the “necessity of taking the proper measures in order to assure the security of the socialist community in Europe”<sup>25</sup>.

At present, we may suppose that Dmitri Ustinov and Viktor Kulikov tried to obtain the support of the WTO member states in order to create a supplementary psychological pressure against Wojciech Jaruzelski. The two Soviet Marshals tried to give “a stroke of genius” and it is clear that behind their actions was an impressive military force. What they really lacked was the political support. Analysing the documents published until now, we are able to state that the respective Marshals took action without having the approval of the Soviet military leaders, in order to accelerate the martial law establishment process in Poland.

On the other hand, it is necessary to mention the important position that the Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces had within the relationships between Moscow and Warsaw. For instance, General Wojciech Jaruzelski presented Marshal Viktor Kulikov, on the night of December 8 to 9, 1981, the program details concerning the martial law establishment in Poland.<sup>26</sup> In case the action of the Polish leader had been a failure, the Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces would have to be prepared to propose the intervention of the WTO military forces in Poland. That respective meeting had a top-secret character both for the Polish people and for the major part of the members of the Political Bureau of the Polish Communist Party and of the Government, taking into consideration the fact that the leader of the two leading structures, political and public, was the same person, General Wojciech Jaruzelski.

In the same connection, after the martial law establishment was decided by the Political Bureau of CC of PUWP, General Czesław Kiszczak sent a report on December 7, 1981 to Vitali Pavlov, the chief of the KGB residence in Warsaw. Being the Minister of Internal Affairs, the Polish General had the task of detailing plans concerning the way the decision was to be carried out and informed the chief of the KGB residence in Warsaw.<sup>27</sup> It is obvious that, beside usual tasks, both Vitali Pavlov and Marshal Viktor Kulikov in December 1981 were charged with counselling missions of the Polish leaders simultaneously with report missions of the leaders in Moscow.

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<sup>24</sup> The paragraph that caused so many discussions in Moscow between the ministers of Defence of the member states of WTO finally had the following text: „At the same time the Committee of the Ministers of Defence, observing the evolution of the situation in the Popular Republic of Poland expressed its trust that the communists, the working class, the working people of the brotherly Poland will succeed in overcoming the difficulties, will assure the continuous development of the country in the socialistic manner. The PUWP and the Polish people may certainly count on the brotherly solidarity and on the support of the participating countries to the Warsaw Treaty”. The respective fragment was entirely published in „Scinteia” newspaper on December 6, 1980. *Ibidem*, file 96/1981, p. 4.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 2.

<sup>26</sup> After the meeting with the Polish General, the Soviet Marshal reported to Moscow: „During the discussion, W. Jaruzelski’s face betrayed his anxiety provoked by the execution of the plan concerning the martial law establishment”. Vasili Mitrokhin, Christopher Andrew, *op. cit.*, p. 527.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*.

At the same time, Mirosław Milewski, CC secretary of PUWP for national security problems and ex-minister of Internal Affairs in the Government ruled by Józef Pinkowski, was informing Vitali Pavlov on December 9, 1981 that the leader of the Polish communist party had not yet established the date of the “Operation X”.<sup>28</sup> Until now we have no data to prove that Mirosław Milewski knew about the information presented by his colleagues from the Political Bureau of CC of PUWP to the representatives of Kremlin, Generals Wojciech Jaruzelski and Czesław Kiszczak. In contrast, we do know the fact that a meeting of the Political Bureau of CC of CPSU was held on 10 December 1981, to discuss the situation in Poland. It is very possible that the data sent by Generals Wojciech Jaruzelski, Czesław Kiszczak and Mirosław Milewski by means of Vitali Pavlov and Marshal Viktor Kulikov, arrived before the Soviet Political Bureau members, after it had been verified and compared by the Soviet Intelligence Services.

On Saturday, December 12, 1981, General Wojciech Jaruzelski informed by telephone Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev and Mikhail Andreevici Suslov about the fact that “Operation X” was to be initiated that night, at the local hour 23.30.<sup>29</sup> The Poles informed then Marshal Viktor Kulikov<sup>30</sup> and, at the same day, the Polish Minister of Internal Affairs, General Czesław Kiszczak, sent to the leader of the KGB residence in Warsaw the program details concerning that operation.<sup>31</sup> It is very possible that Wojciech Jaruzelski would have taken into consideration, when adopting his final decision, the fact that on December 11 and 12, 1981, the meeting of the leading Council of the “Solidarity” was held in Gdańsk. That meeting offered to the Polish General a very good opportunity to arrest and isolate the syndicate leaders’ majority that was against the decisions of the communist authorities in one way or other.

In conclusion, we can formulate the next hypothesis: the decision adopting system in the framework of the meetings of the leading authorities of the PUWP and in the Polish Government was controlled by Moscow, both by means of the Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces and KGB agents, and by means of the information presented by the leader of state/party/army and by his principal collaborators (the Minister of Internal Affairs, the Secretary of the Party who was dealing with the national security etc.). Gathering and comparing all of the data, the authorities from Moscow could make a crossed verification of the information received, in order to offer a series of conclusions to the political and military factors at the top of the hierarchy of the Soviet party and state.

Also, we may state the fact that the Soviets were no longer consistent at the beginning of the 1980s with regard to many of their former communist principles. Such principles had been applied and strictly imposed on their own territory as well as by force in the European countries existing in their sphere of influence right after the Second World War had ended. The consistency of Kremlin relied

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<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 528.

<sup>30</sup> Vojtech Mastny, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>31</sup> Vasili Mitrokhin, Christopher Andrew, *op. cit.*, p. 529.

more on requiring obedience from the political leaders in the various satellite-countries. These leaders were able to impose the Soviet directives. At the moment when communist leaders of the “new guard” appeared in different states, they were allowed to lead those countries as long as they did not put in danger the political-strategic equilibrium in Europe established since 1945 and consolidated 30 years later, when signing the *Final Act* from Helsinki.