

~~SECRET~~~~SECRET~~

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING

DATE, TIME December 22, 1981, 2:30 p.m.,
AND PLACE: The Cabinet Room

SUBJECT: Poland

PARTICIPANTS:

The President

The Vice President

State

Secretary Alexander M. Haig, Jr.
Deputy Secretary William P. Clark
Under Secretary Walter J. Stoessel

Treasury

Secretary Donald T. Regan

Defense

Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger
Deputy Secretary Frank C. Carlucci

Agriculture

Secretary John R. Block

Commerce

Secretary Malcolm H. Baldrige

OMB

Mr. William Schneider, Jr.

CIA

Mr. William J. Casey

USUN

Ambassador Jeane J. Kirkpatrick

USTR

Ambassador William E. Brock

JCS

Admiral Thomas B. Hayward
Lt General Paul F. Gorman

White House

Mr. Edwin Meese III
Mr. James A. Baker III
Mr. Michael K. Deaver
Admiral James W. Nance
Admiral John H. Poindexter

NSC

Dr. Norman A. Bailey
Dr. Allen J. Lenz
Dr. Richard E. Pipes

DECLASSIFIED / RELEASED

NLS M1826 41BY smf, NARA, DATE 10/29/04Minutes

The President. They tell me that cars in California are already displaying "Solidarity" stickers.

The President then departed for 15 minutes.

~~SECRET~~

Review December 22, 1987

~~SECRET~~

Nance. Mr. President, with your permission, I will run down quickly a list of decisions made at our previous meeting.

The President. All right.

Nance. Briefly reviewed the discussions in the meeting that day between President Reagan and Ambassador Spasowski of Poland. (The exchange is recorded in some detail in file #8107302.)

Casey. I haven't much new to report today. The Soviet plan seems to be working. There are reports of pockets of resistance. The rest of the country is acquiescing. In the coal mines -- in some factories. We have a report that many Soviet KGB officers are involved in the operation.

Nance. Secretary Haig, will you explain events and the options facing us?

Haig. Yesterday I said we would need to discuss why the church has softened its line. We now have a report from Ambassador Meehan on his conversations with Archbishop Glemp. The church is under pressure from the government. Government representatives told the church last week that the message scheduled to be read last Sunday was too tough. When bloodshed began, the Archbishop felt it necessary to go for moderation.

Walesa is alive and apparently vigorous. But he does not want to negotiate with a Soviet agent (Jaruzelski). Walesa is a card for playing in the future. He is a protege of Cardinal Wyszynski. They don't dare kill him at this time.

We have no indication from the authorities of a willingness to negotiate either with Solidarity or the church.

The Army's role is still fairly subdued. They are using special security forces.

We have a Swedish report that the Soviets and the Czechs intend to intervene on December 26, but no verification of it.

The strikes continue in the Silesian coal fields. Thirteen thousand coal miners are holed up in a coal mine. The government apparently intends to starve them out.

The Western bankers in Zurich this morning took a hard line. They refused the Polish request to loan \$350 million to the Poles for interest payments and they also refused to begin discussion of rescheduling of Poland's 1982 debt payments.

I had a call last night from Irv Brown of the AFL/CIO. He feels that resistance in Poland is strong and will be growing. He says "Don't be influenced by the banks" (don't bail out the Poles). European bankers believe that they will be compensated either from the foreign hard currency accounts in Poland or by the USSR.

The Brandt statement of yesterday on behalf of Socialist International was a disaster. A rebuttal press statement is being formulated.

The Brezhnev interview with Marvin Kalb skirted Poland, but it was held on December 4, prior to recent events, so it is of little significance to this issue.

Larry Eagleburger called me twice this morning. He reports the Italians are vigorous, staunch and supportive of actions to be taken. Colombo is good!

But in Bonn, Genscher is opposed to initiatives now, since the Soviets have not intervened. He agreed to discuss economic sanctions, however, and to consider imposing them before they (the Soviets) intervene.

There is vigor lacking, however.

Hormats, in his discussions, sees a spectre of softness and opposition to action at this time. The reactions range from the Brits to the French (most vigorous), with the Germans softest.

These papers (referring to the handout provided for the meeting) that we have put together present steps that we can consider and provide pros and cons of each step and some assessment.

The first paper outlines actions that can be taken against Poland.

The second paper lists measures against the Soviets.

One of the themes throughout the assessment, Mr. President -- and all those that we have discussed are included in the paper -- is a strong emphasis on the Soviet steps on Allied unity. As of today, on economic sanctions -- and on some political actions -- Europe would break with us.

The President. Well, Al, it seems to me on this we make up our minds on what is right to do. We say to the Soviets tomorrow, right, we will proceed with actions, without spelling them out -- actions that will isolate them politically and economically. We reduce political contact; we do all we can to persuade our Allies to come along, unless and until martial rule is ended in Poland and they return to an antebellum state. We have to deal with our own labor movement. They are shutting off shipments to Poland, though church shipments are still going.

Haig. Yes they are still going. Last shipment was one week ago.

The President. I don't know whether Red Cross aid is going or not.

The Vice President. Cardinal Krol mentioned they were getting receipts for the food deliveries.

The President. For that handled via their own distribution?

Haig. Another thing I would like to call to your attention, Mr. President. It is vitally important that whatever we do, we do officially to Brezhnev and Jaruzelski so that they are on notice. They should be offered an alternative. We should include a deadline by which we expect a response. Now, if we want to get out a list of actions we are taking tomorrow night before we have a response to our threats, we risk losing the Europeans before we even get started.

You can lay out the human rights considerations tomorrow night. That keeps us flexible. Keeps our options open with no public threats.

You can highlight that you hold the Soviets responsible, but it is too soon for threats unless you want to break with our Allies.

The President. The thing that bothers me -- the constant question is -- that we continue to deplore, but isn't there anything we can do in practice? Those "chicken littles" in Europe, will they still be "chicken littles" if we lead and ask them to follow our lead?

Haig. The answer, Mr. President is "yes and no." They are not the most courageous people (European leaders), but they have more at stake than we do. They are closer to Poland than we are.

The President. I know.

Haig. We ought to be careful (with our demands) until we decide we want a break with them over this matter (if that is what it comes to).

The President. If they (the Polish government) don't cancel martial law, can we yet do these things?

Haig. We will be in for a long, torturous period with the continuation of martial law and negotiations (between Solidarity and the Polish Government) going on. It is difficult for us to kick over the traces now -- to go all out -- and then to be accused of triggering what will probably happen anyway (a Soviet intervention into Poland).

Weinberger. Concerning our Allies and the stakes we have in this matter, we have over half a million people in Europe. It is comfortable for the Europeans to do nothing. If you take the lead and give a strong speech, they will be in an uncomfortable (moral) position and they may be dragged along with our actions.

We should be taking stronger action than just wringing our hands. That (wringing our hands) is what the Soviets want. They (the Polish government) can begin meaningless negotiations with Solidarity that will please Europe. We should have a list of nine things we can do. Each is, in itself, a pin prick, but they cause anguish and pain. They evidence our seriousness. They influence public and industrial labor movements. It is morally right to take a stand -- a position of leadership.

It is easy to delay, to do nothing. If we delay, we will allow them to crush the movement in Poland. We won't push them (the Soviets) into intervening in Poland. (They will do it if it suits their needs.) As Ambassador Spasowski has said, they will march in for their own reasons, not because of what we do.

I hope your speech is along the lines of your statement yesterday.

Haig. We agreed on a tough speech, but not on measures. We are not debating whether to do tough things -- the timing is the issue.

Weinberger. The longer we wait, the more the situation solidifies. Tomorrow night you should mention measures, not handwringing. These papers are an eloquent plea for doing nothing. We should be considerably bolder. There is a difference here between our recommendations.

The President. Ambassador Spasowski, in his talk with me this morning, asked that I make a call for a lighted candle in every window on Christmas night.

Haig. That's not the kind of act that Secretary Weinberger is saying we should take.

Meese. It seems to me the candle is important, but we need something else. The things on the list, as far as Poland, are the very minimum that we can do. We should debate about what we want to put the heat on the Soviets.

Kirkpatrick. In thinking about dealing with our Allies and if we take significant actions they will break with us as Al says. I would like to remind you that they do that frequently. Five of them went against us on a Mexican resolution on El Salvador, counter to our interests. The French Foreign Minister lead the effort. All except Britain went along. Britain abstained. On the Abu Ein issue France abstained. They break with us frequently. They don't worry that much about breaking with us.

Haig. I recommend we stop philosophizing and go down the list one by one.

First, Poland -- what is the speech to cover?

Then the USSR -- what actions now? what later?

Roman I is actions already approved. We are suspending consideration of the \$740 million Polish request for grain. You could state that in your message.

Weinberger. We should emphasize there was no assurance that such assistance would go to the people.

The President. We could say we'll go ahead in food if allowed to monitor that it goes to the people.

Haig. The next item is the pipeline. I(c) is the letter to Jaruzelski, you already read it. I(d) is already done, but this should not be raised in the speech.

The President. All of that is included in the item about food.

Haig. You have sent a letter to Jaruzelski.

Weinberger. What is its general theme?

(A detailed discussion of the letters to Jaruzelski and Brezhnev followed.)

Haig. You can say in your message that you have sent a letter to Jaruzelski.

The President. (Reads to himself the draft of the letter to Jaruzelski.) This seems to have the right tone.

Haig. (Continuing down the list of actions against Poland). We have suspended ExIm credits.

Regan. That is not significant enough to put in your speech.

Meese. We should say we are suspending all financial aid.

Baker. I suggest we go through the list. Decide what you want to do on each item.

Haig. Mr. President, we decided yesterday we should not invoke the exceptional circumstances clause. The unions might disagree with us on this one.

The President. Will it affect the people?

