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7. POLAND: GOVERNMENT SHAKEN BY ELECTION LOSS

DIA Washington (12 Jun 89) reported:

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(Poland)

a. (NC) Polish leaders continue to react to the results of the first round of parliamentary elections. Although the administration is trying to project an air of normality, it seems to have been genuinely shaken by the large size of its defeat.

b. (NS) On the 8th Defence Minister Siwicki presided over a military council meeting, which was attended by Jaruzelski and Interior Minister Kiszczak. Jaruzelski reportedly expressed the profound conviction that the Polish Army will, as always, unswervingly guard ... the stability of the Socialist State.

c. (NS) Provincial Party organizations are also reportedly agonizing over the poor showings of their candidates at the polls. Some Party officials believe the elections will result in mass desertions from the Party as well as harassment against them and their families.

d. (NS) In a related development, Jaruzelski gave a postelection interview to a western newspaper. He reportedly emphasized that no formal commitment to future free elections exists in the roundtable. Elsewhere, final official election returns indicate that two members of the Party-backed National List were elected on the 4th. All told, only six Party-backed candidates were elected in the first round of balloting, leaving the remainder to compete in runoff elections on the 18th. All 161 Solidarity-backed candidates for the SEJM were elected in the first round of balloting, as were 92 of the Union's 100 candidates for the Senate. Solidarity is expected to fill the eight remaining Senate seats on the 18th.

e. (NS) Comment by DIA Washington. The reaction of the Party to the election results clearly shows that it grossly miscalculated its ability to attract support at the polls. Warsaw is trying to project a business as usual image, despite a general unease. Jaruzelski's comments about the Army's role in preserving internal stability may mean that the Government is concerned over heightened prospects for unrest. Provincial Party organizations seem to be in disarray, and they are searching for scapegoats on which to blame the Party's loss. If the Government does not achieve some near-term benefit from its electoral gamble, Jaruzelski could face a revolt by hardliners who consider the roundtable a grievous mistake.

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