

PREPARING FOR MARTIAL LAW:  
THROUGH THE EYES OF COL. RYSZARD KUKLINSKI



# MARTIAL LAW



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*The graphic design and layout of this booklet was inspired by, and is reminiscent of, the style used by the Polish underground press.*



While under Communist leadership, nearly every aspect of life in Poland was closely monitored by the government. The Main Office for the Control of the Press, Publications, and Public Performances (GUKPIW) maintained control not only on the content of published materials, but access to photocopiers, printing machines, and other printing supplies, such as paper and ink. This strict oversight forced those members of Polish society fighting against Communist rule to turn to more creative ways to get their message across.

Just as their parents and grandparents had done for decades, the members of the

workers' rights and human rights' groups throughout Poland turned to the underground press to keep their movement alive. These publications, printed illegally, both domestically and abroad, kept the public apprised of upcoming strikes and other news relating to democratic movement, as well as the names and addresses of those to whom political prisoners could turn for help. In addition, the underground press in Poland served as a venue for the free-flow of ideas, otherwise snuffed out at the hands of government censors.



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## OVERVIEW

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### Documents Provided By Col. Ryszard Kuklinski Regarding Planning for and Implementation of Martial Law in Poland on 13 December 1981

Between July 1980 and December 13, 1981, Poland stumbled through the most serious political crisis faced by a Warsaw Pact member since the Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia in 1968. The resolution of this crisis through the declaration of martial law by the Polish authorities provided only a temporary respite. The rise and suppression of the trade union Solidarity, followed by the inability of Polish communist authorities to restore political credibility or economic activity, were key developments that created the conditions that led to the eventual collapse of the Warsaw Pact by the end of the decade.

On one side was a Polish society deeply disenchanted with its political system and the mismanagement of its economy that resulted in increased deprivation in the late 1970's. Initial strikes in July and August 1980 protesting relatively mild increases in meat prices escalated as workers vowed not to accept near-term promises by the authorities. For the first time in post-war Poland, workers were joined by intellectuals bent on changing the broader political system. The meteoric and chaotic rise of Solidarity resulted in a mass movement with increasing determination to pursue fundamental change.

Facing this unprecedented development was a communist party apparatus with limited support, even from its members, and one that was lulled into lethargy by the vain hope of restoring calm with the time-tested tactic of buying off the opposition. Senior political and military authorities were averse to using force in the early months because of the memories of the deaths of shipyard workers during the uprisings in the Gdansk shipyards in December 1970. As events spiraled out of control during the 18 months of the crisis, powers that be engaged in lengthy discussions of whether, when, and how Polish authorities could impose order through martial law. This discussion was strongly influenced by the hard line taken by Soviet political and military leaders who continually and arrogantly pushed Polish authorities to immediately resort to force. Soviet officials not so subtly tried to intimidate Polish authorities by implying that they would use both their own forces in addition to other Warsaw Pact forces to restore order (if necessary).

## OVERVIEW

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Partly out of consideration for self preservation and partly as a result of intense Soviet pressure, Polish authorities slowly and sometimes grudgingly proceeded with operational planning to introduce martial law. These plans, including all the required legal documentation, were essentially completed by the fall of 1981.

In 1972, Ryszard Kuklinski, a senior officer on the Polish General Staff, volunteered his services to the United States at a time of increased friction between the Soviet Bloc and the Free World (see the book A Secret Life by Benjamin Weiser). Over the coming years, Kuklinski provided the CIA with thousands of pieces of key information regarding the Warsaw Pact. During the Polish crisis he continued to provide such information and also provided information and commentary regarding internal Polish developments and Soviet pressures. Located on the DVD are the declassified documents. A description of the documents follow:

- 1 document from 1977 outlining governmental tasks in the event of a threat to national security
- 18 documents in which Kuklinski reports information and impressions gained from his close contacts on the Polish General Staff and from contact with Soviet officers
- 42 reports which relay various official documents to which Kuklinski had access, including many of the planning documents
- 16 reports based on Kuklinski's information and thoughts disseminated after the declaration of martial law
- 2 assessments provided by the CIA's Directorate of Intelligence on the status of preparations for martial law
- 1 report, prepared by Kuklinski in the United States in 1983, in which he provides his thoughts regarding General Jaruzelski

## TIMELINE

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From the initial outbreak of labor unrest in July 1980 until the declaration of martial law on 12/13 December 1981 Col. Kuklinski provided periodic reporting and commentary on the chaotic progression of events. He focused on the increasing refinement of the plans for introducing martial law, the internal political debates surrounding these preparations, and the almost constant pressure from Moscow for the Poles "to do something" to contain and destroy Solidarity.

He reported first hand information on his role in the preparations of the plans as well as on the knowledge and speculation of his contacts in the General Staff. Below are some very short excerpts on these topics which are contained in the full documents in this collection.





□ JULY

6 - Polish government institutes a previously unannounced increase in food prices; Strikes erupt throughout Poland in response



1980

□ AUGUST

14 - Strikes spread to Lenin Shipyards in Gdansk

16 - Inter-factory strike committee (MKS) forms at Lenin Shipyard representing strikes from different enterprises across Poland

18 - MKS agrees upon and releases a list of 21 demands, addressing political, social, and economic issues affecting the country as a whole

23 - Deputy Prime Minister Jagielski begins direct negotiations with Gdansk MKS

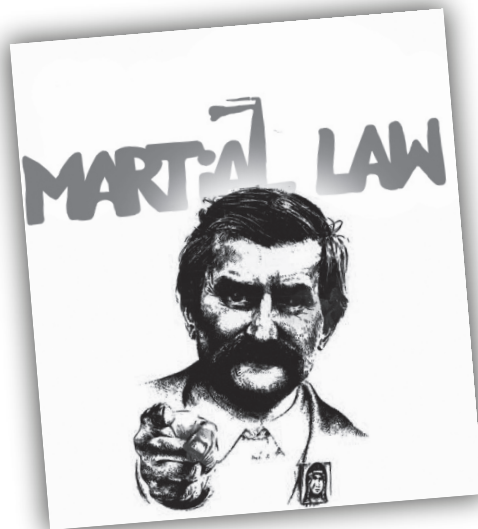
31 - "Gdansk agreement" is signed, granting workers the right to establish independent unions, the right to strike without reprisals, and the right to "freedom of expression"



SEPTEMBER

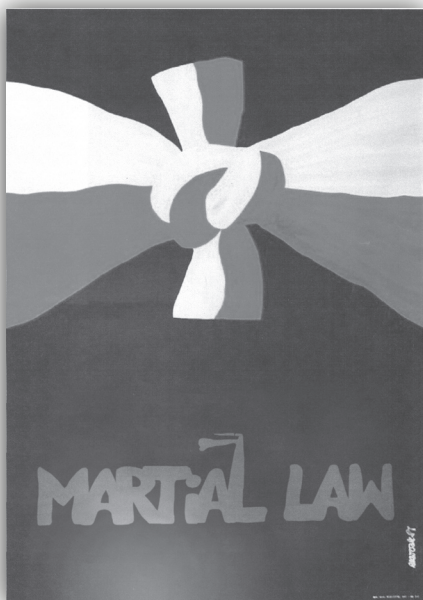
6 - Stanislaw Kania named First Secretary of the Polish United Workers Party

17 - 35 independent Polish trade unions declare intent to register as a single "Independent Self-Governing Trade Union" under the name "Solidarity"



OCTOBER

30 - First Secretary Kania and Polish Prime Minister Josef Pinkowski make an "emergency" trip to Moscow to meet with Soviet leadership



## TIMELINE



### JANUARY

23 - "... the highest levels of the Polish Party and Government appear to be resolved to employ directly the Polish military for the settlement of internal unrest ... in the initial phase, intervention of the Warsaw Pact forces is not contemplated ... senior Soviet Warsaw Pact representatives in Poland criticized the present leadership of the Polish Ministry of Defense for its passive position toward the 'Polish counterrevolution' ... the invasion of Poland by Warsaw Pact forces, which was initially planned for 8 December 1980, was suspended on 5 December."

30 - Lech Walsea and Prime Minister Pinkowski reach compromise on 40-hour work week



# 1981

### FEBRUARY

9 - Wojciech Jaruzelski appointed Prime Minister of Poland



11 - "Along with the envisioned changes in the Government, headed by the appointment of Jaruzelski as Prime Minister...there were hurried preparations being carried out to consider the introduction of Martial Law."



24 - "... In January during a confidential meeting with Brezhnev, Kania was given the ultimate warning - to eliminate the threat of counterrevolution in Poland ... the majority of the junior officer cadre and the troops in the Polish military sided with the spirit of the Solidarnosc movement ... the senior officer cadre was divided ..., Jaruzelski convinced the Soviets that the Polish problems can be peacefully resolved."



30 - "... the probability of Soviet intervention at this time is considered less than at the beginning of December 1980.... The decisive factor here is the unified, unequivocal and hard line position of the West as well as the defensive and determined preparation for such an eventuality on the part of the Polish population."



## TIMELINE

### MARCH

17 - Warsaw Pact command-staff military exercise Soyuz-81 begins

19 - Solidarity activists assaulted at a meeting in Bydgoszcz, 27 injured

27 - Solidarity organizes a nationwide four-hour "warning strike", successfully implementing the largest strike in the 36-year history of the Soviet Bloc

30 - Solidarity suspends threatened nationwide general strike after reaching agreement with Polish leadership



### APRIL



2 - "... Polish documents dealing with the introduction of the state of Martial Law were translated into Russian by the Polish Ministry of Internal Affairs, and Premier Jaruzelski was to have presented these documents in his meeting with Brezhnev ... on 28 March, with the agreement of Kania and Jaruzelski, approximately 30 leading functionaries of the KGB, the Soviet Ministry of Defense and GOSPLAN arrived in Warsaw to act as consultants on Martial Law."



29 - "... on 11 April Jaruzelski visited the Polish General Staff to become personally acquainted with the draft plans in case it was necessary to introduce Martial Law, which he was then to present to Marshal Kalikow at the 13 April meeting. Jaruzelski was depressed by the content of the documentation on Martial Law and stated that he was not familiar with the documentation on which the Polish General Staff had been working for several months, but that he felt that he finally had to familiarize himself with their content. Jaruzelski stated that in the darkest recesses of his mind he could find no place for the thought that they could introduce such a thing as Martial Law in Poland ... he did not wish to be Prime Minister when it became

## TIMELINE

### ★ JUNE

15 - "... party meetings in the Polish Armed Forces are stormy sessions ... the Soviets have ordered the evacuation of Soviet families with children to the Soviet Union by 15 June ... there will be a new Warsaw Pact exercise on Polish territory in which Polish troops will not participate ... the citizens militia is not meeting the demands of the current political situation ... they do not want to participate in controlling any demonstrations.... Militia personnel have threatened to join trade unions. There is information that entire commands have joined Solidarnosc."



★ 24 - "... as of mid-June the Soviets would want to avoid military intervention in Poland at all costs. However, Soviet military documents indicate that the USSR is making very intensive and concrete preparations for military intervention.... General Siwicki (talking with Marshal Kulikov) in defending himself stated that the main reason for the delay in the declaration of Martial Law was the realization that they lacked the forces to implement the plan. General Siwicki indicated that the Ministry of Internal Affairs had already 'fallen apart' and was not in a position to carry out the expected tasks required under Martial Law. To this Kulikov retorted that the Polish Government has fallen apart and not the Ministry of Internal Affairs."

### □ JULY

14-20 - Polish communists hold emergency party congress; Centrists prevail



17 - "... Jaruzelski's position on Martial Law ... is also influenced by his own origins and personality traits. Jaruzelski was stunned by the scale of violence, abuses and moral decay of the Party and Government, which has led to an economic collapse.... (But) Jaruzelski currently says: 'We are not the only ones responsible for the events of the last ten months.' Even more importantly is Jaruzelski's and his closest associates' conviction that the present postulates of Solidarnosc ... lead directly to the dismantling of Government structures, which in turn would open the way for taking the authority out of the hands of the Polish United Workers' Party Against this background, there has been a significant stiffening of Jaruzelski's attitude and his readiness to implement Martial Law."



# TIMELINE



## ★ AUGUST

14 - "... as of mid-August there had been a significant change in the attitude of the leadership of the Polish Ministry of Defense regarding the present crisis situation.... The situation demands more resolute behavior on the part of the Government vis-à-vis Solidarnosc including the possible introduction of Martial Law. The Soviets are also asserting considerable pressure in the same direction.... As of 12 August there has been no political decision regarding the introduction of Martial Law."

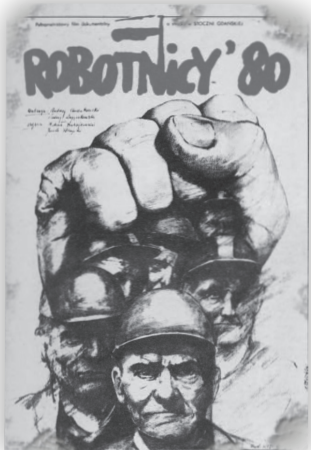
## □ SEPTEMBER

5 - Solidarity holds its first National Congress; calls for other Soviet Bloc nations to form independent trade unions

★ 9 - "There has been an additional hardening in Jaruzelski's position toward Solidarnosc ... everything points to the fact that in the event of a more serious conflict, Jaruzelski will no longer be concerned regarding the declaration of Martial Law.... Marshal Kukikov has put increasing pressure on Jaruzelski to introduce Soviet military advisors in the Polish Armed Forces down to the military district level ... the Soviets consider that the re-election of Kania to the position of First Secretary of the Polish United Workers' Party was a great disaster."

★ 11 - "On 9 September, General of Arms Florian Siwicki, after consultation with Jaruzelski, informed a select group of the Polish General Staff that Poland was approaching the institution of the state of Martial Law. Source indicated that this could happen as early as next week.... If the implementation of Martial law is unsuccessful, the question raised in the Polish General Staff was whether they would receive help ..."

★ 18 - "... Kania will not listen to any solutions which would require the use of force.... Jaruzelski, possibly under the influence of the Soviets and conservatives of the Polish Party and Government, has changed his position and currently favors a more decisive solution to the problem. So far, he is not openly opposing Kania; however, the change in his position is apparent.... Minister of Internal Affairs Kiszczak is pressing for an immediate and surprise declaration of Martial Law.... The Ministry of Internal Affairs has infiltrated the leadership elements of Solidarnosc and has a good grasp of what their plans are."



# TIMELINE

## OCTOBER

13 - "... The Soviet leadership is maintaining contact with Jaruzelski;... Brezhnev has had many telephone conversations with Jaruzelski. These talks were reportedly very unpleasant. Kania has been completely left out of these discussions ... there is a complete split between Kania and Jaruzelski."

18 - Kania resigns as General Secretary of Polish Communist Party; Jaruzelski named as replacement

20 - Three Solidarity activists are arrested on charges of "anti-Soviet propaganda"; Police use force and tear-gas to subdue subsequent protesters

23 - Polish government announces 25,000 soldiers will be deployed throughout the country to help in "establishing law and order"

26 - "... As of 25 October, no decision had been made regarding the implementation of Martial Law; however, at the same time orders have been issued for preparation of activities under conditions of Martial Law."

27 - Local "wildcat" strikes break out in 36 of Poland's 49 provinces

28 - Solidarity successfully organizes a one-hour "warning" general national strike

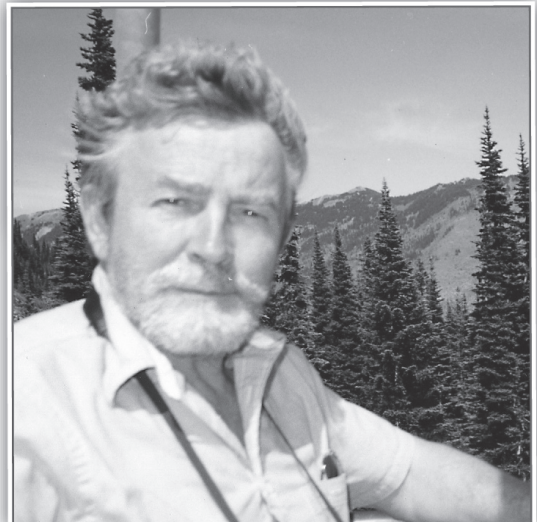
## DECEMBER

12 - Communications between Poland and Western Europe and the United States are cut, and the Polish border is closed

13 - Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski declares Martial Law

## NOVEMBER

11 - Kuklinski and family arrive in the United States



*Entangled in History*

## The Vilification and Vindication of Colonel Kuklinski

*Benjamin B. Fischer*



“  
**With the exception of the Rosenbergs and Alger Hiss, no other Cold War espionage case has aroused so much passionate debate in Poland and elsewhere.**  
 ”

**Benjamin B. Fischer** is on CIA's History Staff.

On a warm, sunny day in November 1999, a crowd gathered in the courtyard of the George Herbert Bush Library on the Texas A&M University campus to honor Americans and foreign agents who had lost their lives during the Cold War. The ceremony, “In Memory of Those Who Died That Others Might Be Free,” was organized by the University’s Corps of Cadets. Former President George Bush and Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) George Tenet presided as former DCIs Richard Helms, William Webster, and Robert Gates looked on.

Near the end of the event, Polish Colonel Ryszard Kuklinski, read a tribute to his “many anonymous colleagues who served on both sides of the front line [in the Cold War].” Kuklinski said, “I am pleased that our long, hard struggle has brought peace, freedom, and democracy not only to my country but to many other people as well.” Although DCI Tenet called Kuklinski “a true hero of the Cold War,” he is almost as anonymous to most Americans as those he was eulogizing. Few know about the important contributions he made to the defense of the West during one of the most dangerous periods of the Cold War.

### **A Source of Controversy**

In his native Poland, Kuklinski is far from anonymous. His case has been a *cause célèbre* for more than a decade. With the exception of the

Rosenbergs and Alger Hiss, no other Cold War espionage case has aroused so much passionate debate in Poland and elsewhere. But the controversy surrounding the American spies turns on questions of guilt and innocence and allegations of government frame-up. The Kuklinski case is simple and yet complex. The colonel has freely—and proudly—revealed what he did during the Cold War. For more than a decade, he passed Warsaw Pact military secrets to US intelligence. Thus, the controversy is not about what Kuklinski did but whether his motives were patriotic or treasonous, and whether his actions helped or hurt Poland. On another level, however, the furor is over what Poles think about their Communist past and their future in the Western community of nations.

For years, polling organizations surveyed public opinion about Kuklinski as if the statistics held national political significance. In fact, they reflected change and continuity in the political landscape. Poland has advanced further than any other former Soviet Bloc country toward democracy and free-market economics, yet it has done less than most in coming to terms with its Communist past. National politics have swung like a pendulum since 1990, when post-Communist forces first won and then lost to neo-Communists in presidential elections. In a poll taken about two years ago, when Kuklinski returned to Poland for the first time in 17 years, and almost a decade after the collapse



**Kuklinski**

almost a decade after the collapse of Polish Communism, more Poles (34 percent) considered him a traitor than a hero (29 percent).<sup>1</sup> But most had no opinion, unable to decide whether he was one or the other. Ambivalence and irony reign supreme in the Kuklinski story.

**Kuklinski's Opponents**

For seven years, a clique of generals, all Communist-era holdovers tried to block Kuklinski's legal exoneration. Having lost that battle, the "generals' lobby" formed what one observer termed a "strange alliance" with ex-Solidarity activists opposed to Kuklinski.<sup>2</sup> The generals despised Kuklinski because he reminded them of what they really were—Soviet officers in Polish uniforms.

Lech Walesa, Solidarity's leader and the first freely elected president of Poland, dismissed Kuklinski as a traitor and refused to pardon him. The Solidarity crowd still resents the colonel, contending that hero worship of Kuklinski denies workers the credit they deserve for starting a rebellion that brought down the Soviet empire. For some Poles, Kuklinski is an unpleasant reminder of their own collaboration with the Soviet-imposed regime or their failure to resist it. Some on the left fear that Kuklinski will become an icon of the Russophobic right or, worse yet, might return to Poland and enter politics.

Wounded national pride also plays a role. Some Poles resent the intervention of influential

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 ”

Polish-Americans on Kuklinski's behalf. A majority of Poles wanted to join NATO, but they did not like being told that Kuklinski's acquittal on treason charges was a price of admission. As the chief editor of one of Warsaw's leading dailies put it, "Kuklinski is a tragic character, entangled in history, in which there are not and there will not be easy answers—at least for my generation."<sup>3</sup>

**Urban Warfare**

The world probably would never have heard of Ryszard Kuklinski if Jerzy Urban had not tried to embarrass Ronald Reagan. In 1986, Urban was press spokesman for the Military Council of National Salvation, the junta headed by General Wojciech Jaruzelski that had seized power and instituted martial law in December 1981. Known for his acerbic wit, sharp tongue, and occasional profanity, Urban stood out among the colorless bureaucrats who ruled Poland. He was always combative and never apologetic, even when defending an illegitimate government that had suppressed the first free trade union in the Soviet Bloc.

Warsaw had failed to improve or even normalize relations with Washington. Although the White House had lifted most of the sanctions it had imposed in 1981, the strongest measures, including withdrawal of Most Favored Nation status, remained in force. Even more important, Urban and his bosses knew that the United States was covertly supporting the underground opposition in order "to keep the spirit of Solidarity alive," and the National Endowment for Democracy, a quasi-private, government-funded, public diplomacy initiative, was about to receive \$1 million in congressionally appropriated funds earmarked for Solidarity.<sup>4</sup> Jaruzelski and company were in a foul mood because they were losing the battle against the underground, and the economy was in worse shape than ever. Most important, however, Urban and his bosses could not abide Ronald Reagan. Next to Pope John Paul II and Lech Walesa, the American president was the most revered figure in Poland. The "evil empire" rhetoric of Reagan's first term, while controversial at home, cheered the Poles on in their struggle against Soviet hegemony; in 1984, many prayed for his reelection.

On 3 June 1986, Urban met with Michael Dobbs, the former *Washington Post* bureau chief in Warsaw, then based in Paris. Urban offered Dobbs a scoop: in a few days, the Polish minister of internal affairs would reveal that CIA had had an agent inside the general staff who had drafted the operational blueprint for martial law. CIA had "evacuated" the agent and his

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