



Mr Powell

FROM: N J Thorpe
DATE: 2 November 1988

Ambassador ✓

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT: MEETING WITH WALESA

1. I went to see Professor Geremek, Walesa's close advisor who lives in Warsaw, this morning. As agreed, I told him that, in the worst case, if the authorities refuse to permit the Prime Minister to meet Walesa in Gdansk because of a strike or other sensitive development in the Lenin shipyard, we would propose to the Prime Minister that she should invite Walesa and some of his colleagues to Warsaw for a meeting here. The timing would be tight, but given even a few hours notice it would be possible to arrange this.

2. Geremek said that a decision on whether or not to hold a strike in the shipyard would be taken today. There was the possibility of sympathy action in Katowice, in the coalmines, as well. He did not know how this would go. He fully recognised that a strike in the shipyard would make it impossible for the Prime Minister to lay flowers at the shipyard Workers Memorial. There remained the possibility of still meeting Walesa at Saint Brygida's church. But that would be a centre for advisors, press and others concerned with the strike and was likely to be ringed by police. In such circumstances he thought Walesa would probably agree to come to Warsaw. But only on condition that the Prime Minister did not go to Gdansk anyway, and carry out the wreath laying at Westerplatte. I said I thought it out of the question that she would go to Gdansk if she could not see Walesa there.

3. The situation should be clearer later today, possibly before the Prime Minister arrives. In the event of a strike in the Lenin shipyard I recommend that you put the following course of action to the Prime Minister:

- (i) leave it to the authorities to make the first move.
- (ii) if the authorities indeed say that the private part of the programme in Gdansk must be modified or scrapped because of a strike, argue for the retention of the meeting at Saint Brygida's.

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- (iii) if that fails, argue for a meeting with Walesa in Gdansk but well away from the shipyard. The ideal place would be the residence of the Bishop of Gdansk, Bishop Gocłowski, which is in the north of Gdansk about ten minutes drive from the Hevelius Hotel.
- (iv) make clear that if the Prime Minister cannot meet Walesa in Gdansk, then the whole programme there would fall away.

I think the strongest proposal to advance may well be a meeting at Bishop Gocłowski's residence. The symbolism of having visited Gdansk would be retained; and we know from earlier contacts with Walesa and Geremek that a meeting there would be very acceptable to them.

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Some important contingency planning. I endorse these recommendations, recognizing however that circumstances may make it necessary to alter them. We must, I think, do all possible to retain the meeting with Walesa.

J. J. [unclear]