

Institute of National Remembrance

<https://ipn.gov.pl/en/news/7064,The-February-1971-victory-that-Lodz-textile-industry-workers-won-over-the-commun.html>

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The February 1971 victory that Łódź textile industry workers won over the communist authorities in the archives kept by the Institute of National Remembrance

Although the December 1970 protests in the coastal cities were massacred by the communist regime, the wave of strikes headed inland; in early 1971, Łódź, the centre of Poland's textile industry, saw a clash between female workers and the authorities, a confrontation that the latter lost.



The unrest from late 1970, caused by dramatic price increases, led to

violence: workers protested the decision, and the communist state quelled their rebellion with the army, killing 45 and wounding hundreds. Hardly had the gunfire died down when in early 1971 the labourers' salaries were significantly lowered. The combination of higher cost of living and reduced pay put many people on the breadline, while poor work conditions only added to the resentment at the policy of the authorities. No wonder that resentment translated into another wave of strikes that swept across Poland.

On 10 February in Łódź, a number of industrial plants, most of them textile manufacturers, went on strike. Two days later, over 12,000 workers were involved, eighty per cent of them women. The scale of the protest put it far above the local party officials' powers, so it was the government that needed to find a solution and douse the fire. The use of force was out of the question: the nation was still in shock after the coastal massacres, and similar measures against the strikers, especially women, could set off an open, countrywide revolt. This time, the party had to negotiate.

The government delegation with Prime Minister Jaroszewicz arrived in Łódź and tried to placate the striking workers with empty promises, which only added insult to injury: on 15 February, the day after the visit, the protest climaxed, spreading to over 30 plants and involving 55,000 people. The intensity of emotions forced the PZPR [Polish United Workers' Party] leadership to start backpedalling on the price raise and pay cut plans, as well as take steps to improve working and living conditions in Łódź. Only when the media broadcast the

government's announcement to that effect did the strikers end their protest.

The materials below, mostly reports, cables, and situation assessments compiled by Citizens' Militia and Security services for the decision-makers in Warsaw, come from the IPN's Archive, and in addition to illustrating the information feed that forced the authorities to back down, they recorded the emotions of the communist troops on the ground.

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WYKAZ PRZEMIANOWYCH ZAKŁADÓW

Lp.	Nazwa zakładu	Liczba pracowników	Liczba strajkujących	Data strajku	Data zakończenia strajku
1.	WZP im. Karłowicza	1000	1000	10.02.71	15.02.71
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3.	WZP im. Karłowicza	1000	1000	11.02.71	15.02.71
4.	WZP im. Karłowicza	1000	1000	12.02.71	15.02.71
5.	WZP im. Karłowicza	1000	1000	10.02.71	17.02.71
6.	WZP im. Karłowicza	1000	1000	10.02.71	15.02.71
7.	WZP im. Karłowicza	1000	1000	12.02.71	15.02.71
8.	WZP im. Karłowicza	1000	1000	10.02.71	15.02.71
9.	WZP im. Karłowicza	1000	1000	15.02.71	16.02.71
10.	WZP im. Karłowicza	1000	1000	15.02.71	17.02.71
11.	WZP im. Karłowicza	1000	1000	15.02.71	16.02.71
12.	WZP im. Karłowicza	1000	1000	15.02.71	16.02.71

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1*	2*	3*	4*	5*	6*
12.	Antkowi	2.100 200	ul. Smółki Główna 63/69	15.02.71	16.02.71
13.	Antkowi, Antkowi	2.100 200	ul. Wileńska 10/11	15.02.71	16.02.71
14.	Antkowi, Antkowi i por. "Ciepły"	2.100 200	ul. Sienkowskiego 62	15.02.71	16.02.71
15.	Antkowi, Antkowi	2.100 200	ul. Wileńska 77b	15.02.71	16.02.71
16.	Antkowi, Antkowi	2.100 200	ul. Sienkowskiego 60	15.02.71	16.02.71
17.	Antkowi, Antkowi	2.100 200	ul. Wileńska 19	15.02.71	16.02.71
18.	Antkowi, Antkowi	2.100 200	ul. Wileńska 27b	15.02.71	16.02.71
19.	Antkowi, Antkowi	2.100 200	ul. Sienkowskiego 17b	15.02.71	16.02.71
20.	Antkowi, Antkowi	2.100 200	ul. Sienkowskiego 2/4	15.02.71	16.02.71
21.	Antkowi, Antkowi	2.100 200	ul. Wileńska 13b	15.02.71	16.02.71
22.	Antkowi, Antkowi	2.100 200	ul. Wileńska 5/7	15.02.71	16.02.71
23.	Antkowi, Antkowi	2.100 200	ul. Wileńska 65	15.02.71	16.02.71
24.	Antkowi, Antkowi	2.100 200	ul. Wileńska 10	15.02.71	16.02.71
25.	Antkowi, Antkowi	2.100 200	ul. Wileńska 13b	15.02.71	16.02.71
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27.	Antkowi, Antkowi	2.100 200	ul. Wileńska 13b	15.02.71	16.02.71
28.	Antkowi, Antkowi	2.100 200	ul. Wileńska 13b	15.02.71	16.02.71
29.	Antkowi, Antkowi	2.100 200	ul. Wileńska 13b	15.02.71	16.02.71
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31.	Antkowi, Antkowi	2.100 200	ul. Wileńska 13b	15.02.71	16.02.71

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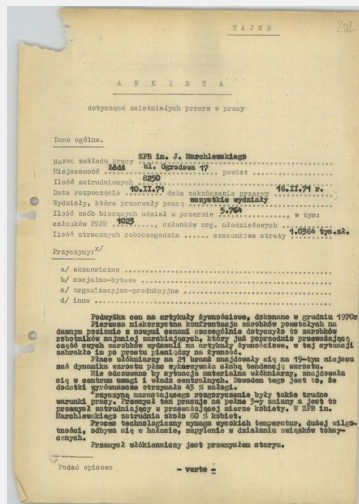
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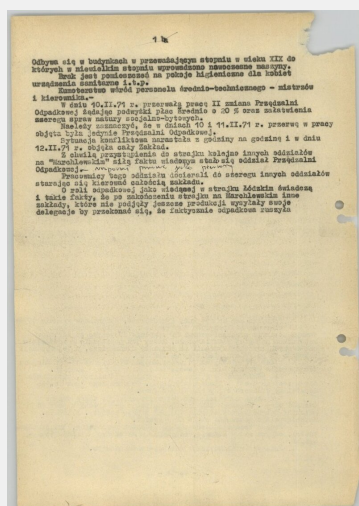
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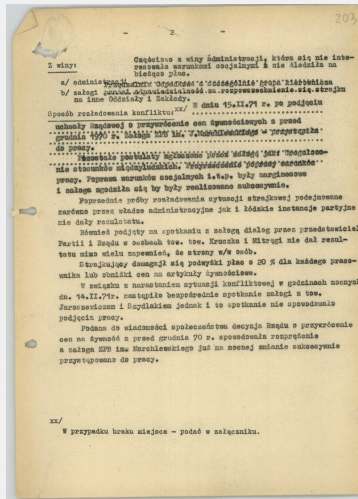
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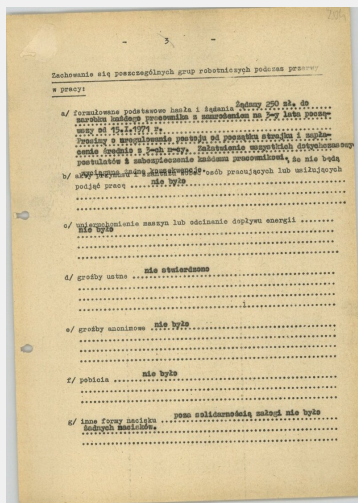
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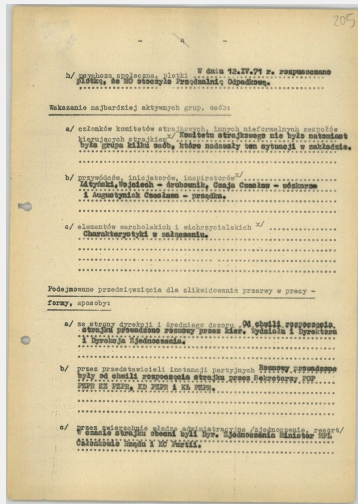
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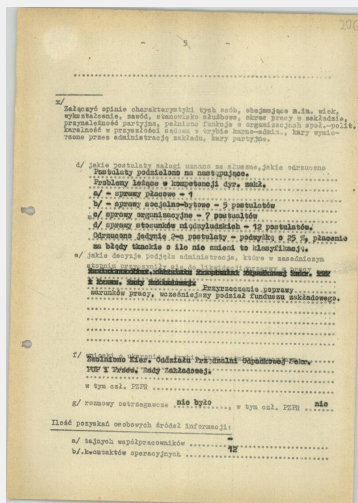
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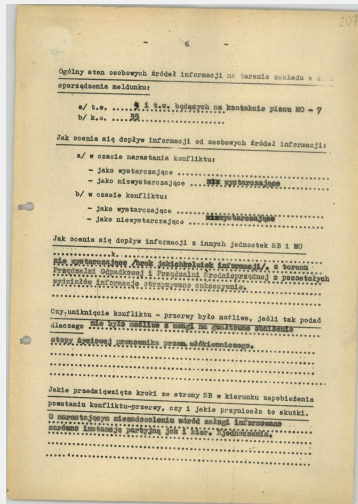
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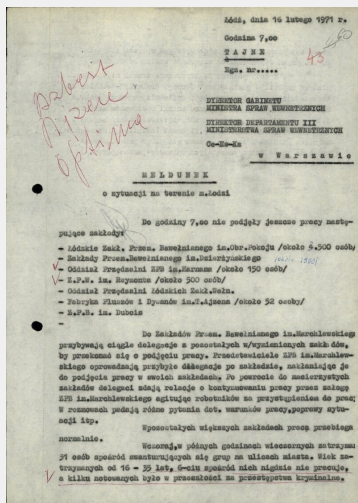
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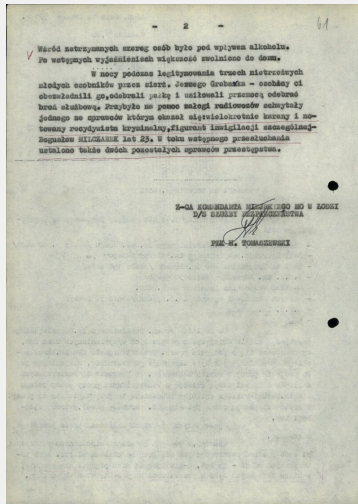
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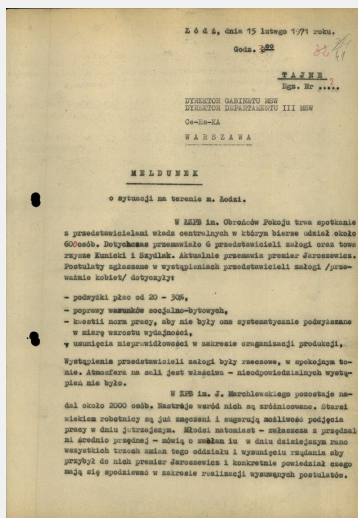
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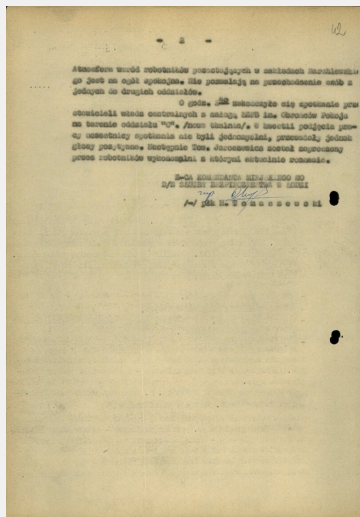
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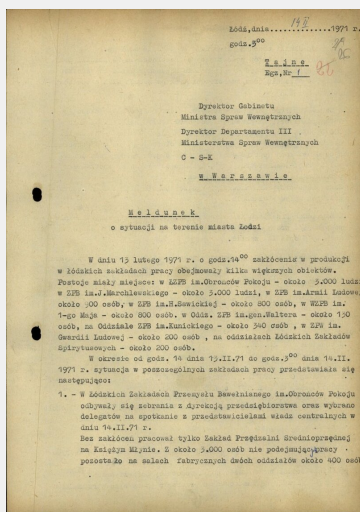
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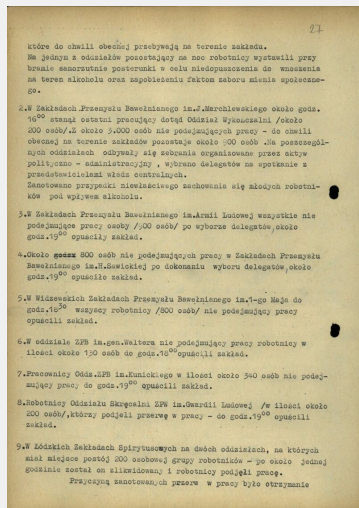
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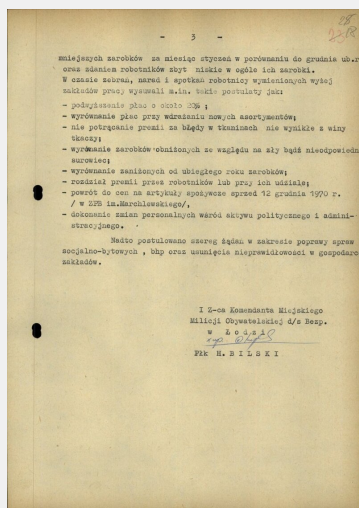
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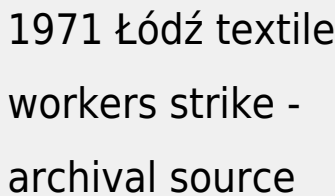
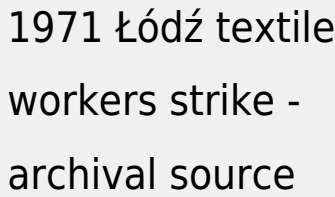
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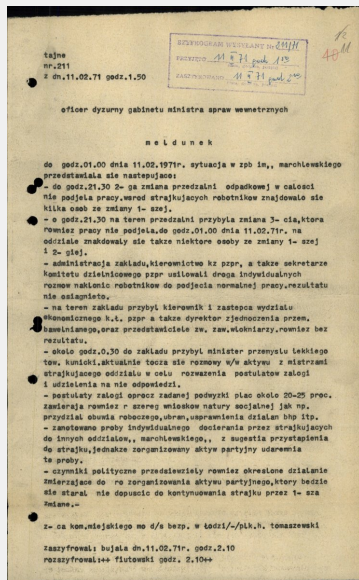


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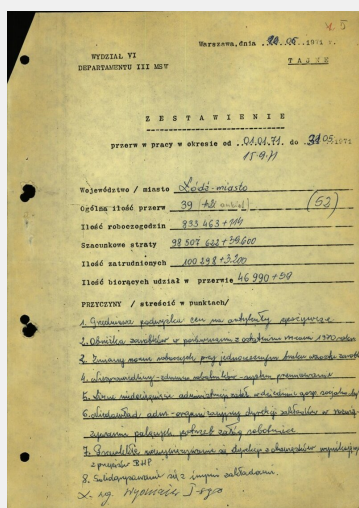


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