SITUATION REPORT

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1. The East Berlin Communist Conference

   a. Polish Delegation's Activities. The Polish delegation to the Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties of Europe was headed by First Secretary Edward Gierek. It also included: Politburo member and CC Secretary Edward Babiuch; CC Secretary Andrzej Werblan; and CC member and head of the CC Secretariat office Jerzy Waszczuk. In an editorial devoted to the "important meeting," Trybuna Ludu (June 29) recalled that it was the PUWP and the PCI which had initially suggested convening the conference, and that it was the Polish party that had organized the first consultative meeting in Warsaw on 16-18 October 1974.

   On June 29, Gierek had "a friendly meeting" with Leonid Brezhnev, at which "current problems of international policy and of the international communist movement" were discussed. The two leaders also exchanged information on the implementation of the resolutions of the last party congresses in their countries, expressed satisfaction with the "fruitful results" of both parties' co-operation, and stressed the importance of a "further deepening of Polish-Soviet co-operation in all fields." The meeting took place in a "sincere and cordial atmosphere." The adjective "brotherly" was missing from the Trybuna Ludu report.

   Also on June 29, "a friendly meeting" took place between Gierek and Josip Broz Tito, at which on the Polish side Babiuch and on the Yugoslav Stane Dolanc, LCY Presidium Executive Committee secretary,
were also present. "In the course of a cordial talk, directions of a further deepening of the favorably developing co-operation between Poland and Yugoslavia were discussed." Opinions were also exchanged on "some international problems," particularly those in the context of the Helsinki decisions.

On June 30, Girek met the CP leaders of Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Rumania, and the FRG. The meetings with Gustav Husak and Todor Zhivkov took place in a "cordial and friendly" atmosphere, while that with Nicolae Ceausescu occurred in a "warm and friendly" one. With DKP chairman Herbert Mies, the talk was merely "cordial." With Husak, the "deepening of internationalist links" between the two parties and their co-operation in the "implementation of the policy of the socialist countries' community" were discussed. At the meeting with Zhivkov, Girek was accompanied by Babiuch, while the Bulgarian side was also represented by Politburo member and CC Secretary Boris Velchev. The "great importance" of the East Berlin conference was stressed, and co-operation between "brotherly countries constructing developed socialist societies" in accordance with the resolutions of the respective party congresses was discussed. The meeting with Ceausescu was the only one at which the two delegations were present in corpore. Trybuna Ludu (July 1) reported:

Certain problems of the communist and workers' movement, which are the subjects of the debates at the Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties of Europe, were discussed. An exchange of views on the question of the development of Polish-Rumanian relations also took place. A bilateral desire was expressed to take up new steps for the deepening of friendship and over-all co-operation, and for the development of relations between the two parties and nations.

At the Girek-Mies meeting, both Babiuch and DKP Deputy Chairman Hermann Gautier also took part. Of the subjects discussed, the activity of both parties for what PAP (in English, June 30) called the "consolidation" and Trybuna Ludu (July 1) the "strengthening (umocnienie) and unity of the international communist movement" is noteworthy.

D. Moderate Selectivity in Coverage of Speeches. The speeches of the CP leaders were printed in three issues of Trybuna Ludu. The June 30 issue carried the full texts of the Brezhnev and Girek speeches and the summaries of the pronouncements of the other eight leaders, including Ceausescu. Against the background of recent internal Polish developments, at least two passages of Girek's speech, one on proletarian dictatorship, another on consultations, deserve attention:

Through the development of its socialist democracy, the state of proletarian dictatorship is being transformed into a state of all people, a state whose main support is the working class and its alliance with the peasants and the intelligentsia. This is reflected in the newly made amendments to our Constitution. On all matters important for the country and the nation, before taking a decision, we consult society about them.
The words underlined in the above passage were omitted from the PAP English text (June 29), but they were in both the tape-recording broadcast by Radio Warsaw (June 29, 1900 hours) and in Trybuna Ludu (June 30).

It may also be interesting to note that Gierek ascribed the "various difficulties" experienced by Poland "especially to the adverse effects of the recession and inflation in the capitalist world."

There was no mention in Trybuna Ludu of Ceausescu's withdrawal of the original version of his speech. The text, as published, contained the sentence

On the present historical stage, an international center of communist and workers' parties has become impossible [to exist] and is not necessary.

Ceausescu referred to the principles of Marxism-Leninism as binding in interparty relations, i.e., "full equality" of and respect for each party's "own political line." He was against any criticism of, or "condemning the policy of other parties," as well as against "any interference" with their problems.

Among the 16 summaries of the speeches which Trybuna Ludu carried on July 1 were those of Santiago Carrillo of Spain, Gordon McLennan of Great Britain, Enrico Berlinguer of Italy, and Tito. Carrillo's statement that "there will be no schism if nobody puts forth his own position as dogma" (quoted by Newsweek, July 12) was not to be found in Trybuna Ludu. But there was the statement that:

There is no doubt that today we Communists have no directing center whatsoever. What unites us are the links of common features, based on the theory of scientific socialism.

His criticisms of the United States, capitalism, military bases, the suggestion of the liquidation of "both existing military groupings," as well as direct attacks on former Spanish Prime Minister Carlos Arias Navarro (then still in office) and former Minister of the Interior Manuel Fraga Iribarne were summarized by the Polish party daily, as was also his recommendation for "actual implementation of human rights in the broadest possible sense of the word." Carrillo contested the concept of Eurocommunism. The species does not exist, he said, because it would exclude the non-European parties, but it is a fact that communist parties in the developed capitalist countries have to face "a special set of problems," the result of which is that "roads to socialism" differ.

McLennan stated that "socialism can be introduced in Great Britain only as a result of a free decision of the majority of the British nation, as a result of a democratic struggle of the masses." He referred to the "difficulties and differences of opinion" during the preparations for the conference in which,
he concluded, all the parties present take part "of their own free will," and they are "sovereign and independent."

Italian communist leader Enrico Berlinguer's speech was also edited rather selectively. In the following passage, the underlined sections did not appear in the Polish media:

This meeting of ours is not the meeting of an international communist body, which does not exist and could not exist in any form, on either the world or the European level. Ours is a free meeting among autonomous and equal parties, which does not seek to lay down guidelines for, or bind, any of our parties. And it is important that this debate is open and public. In the course of it, each party expresses its own points of view, since we are all aware that on various questions, including some important ones, our positions are different, and not only because of the diversity of the objective conditions in which each party works. Naturally, the points of convergence are important.

The passage on the October Revolution of 1917 was extensively quoted, but the reference to "difficulties and errors" was omitted, as also were the four words in brackets in the following passage:

Everyone knows, for example, that while we have always stressed the great advances made by the socialist countries, we Italian Communists have more than once expressed critical judgments both on certain events and situations (for example, on Czechoslovakia) and on more general problems relative to the relationship between democracy and socialism in various socialist countries.

Despite this editing, several important aspects of Berlinguer's policies were included in the Trybuna Ludu report. For example:

In Italy, where the working class and our party have been and are protagonists in the fight to restore, defend, and develop democracy, we are fighting for a socialist society that has at its foundation the affirmation of the value of the individual and collective freedoms and their guarantee, the principles of the secular, nonideological nature of the state and its democratic organization, the plurality of political parties, and the possibility of alternation of government majorities, the autonomy of the trade unions, religious freedom, freedom of expression, of culture, and the arts and sciences.

In Josip Broz Tito's speech, the statement on nonalignment was published, but no reference to workers' self-management could be found in Trybuna Ludu. Again, though, important sections were communicated to the reader, as, for example, the following statement:

When one talks about peace, it should be stated that interference into the internal affairs of other nations used to create a threat to peace and to bring about conflicts between the nations of Europe and in the world in general. For this reason, we oppose, and will continue to oppose, all the forms of such interference.
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The remaining five speeches, including that of Georges Marchais of France, were published by Trybuna Ludu on July 2. Marchais's description of the socialism the French CP envisions was shortened in such way as to leave out all references to civic liberties, including the right to strike, and to the possibility of changing the government through the normal processes of a pluralistic society. On the other hand, the passage on the futility of the East Berlin conference was published in full i.e., as it appeared in L'Humanité (July 1).

On the whole, Polish coverage of the East Berlin meeting was relatively informative. This impression can be confirmed by comparing it with the coverage the meeting received from the Czechoslovak press (see Czechoslovak Situation Report/27, Radio Free Europe Research, 7 July 1976, Item 1). The Polish media's handling of the autonomous communists' speeches takes on added significance when one considers the present political situation in the country, an atmosphere colored not only by the recent price increase protests but also by the remaining difficulties arising from the constitutional controversy. Seen against this background, the media's reporting of the conference seems to indicate a political decision to strive for a selective but still informative picture of the present state of European communism.

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2. Campaign of Support for Party and Government

a. Failure of Consultations Plan. Many an observer of the Polish scene must have wondered how the party leadership could have so misjudged a possible reaction by the population to the dramatic price increases. In a dispatch datelined Warsaw, June 27, Erik Michael Bader wrote for the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (June 28) that what the party intended as a semi-plebiscite turned into a true plebiscite, which the party lost and then had to draw the consequences. The point is, Bader explained, that consultations in plants and factories were planned for just one day, Friday, June 25, but a regular discussion with a "no" for an answer was not foreseen. From the way the decision was presented, the population concluded that the leadership was not confident on the one hand, but had not taken the possibility of a "no" seriously enough on the other. "It was precisely this that constituted a double challenge to the people to say 'no,'" Bader wrote.

The Economist (July 3) commented that in raising prices "the Polish government was right and its worker-opponents wrong." The latter "can make their protest stick," the British weekly wrote, and exercise "a veto on the party's will." In this connection, the magazine stated that:

The isolation of Poland's communist party from the public opinion it claims to represent has not been cured by Mr. Gierek's perfectly genuine attempt in recent years to meet more people, and explain his policies better, than most other communist leaders do.
While it would be difficult to deny that Giererek travels a lot all over the country meeting people, the question that must be asked is whether he meets with "the people." The record shows that both in his Silesian days and since he has been party leader, the people he meets during his visits to factories and establishments are -- with rare exceptions -- party apparatchiks. The well-known "propensity to please" exists at all levels of party and government structure, and under certain conditions may produce catastrophic results. One may assume that the leadership's serious misjudgment of the population's moods and possible reaction to a vital decision can be ascribed -- to a significant extent -- to optimistic reports submitted by subordinate party bodies.

b. Media Campaign: Rallies, Messages, Pledges. Since revoking the price increases, the party leadership has attempted to rally support among the population. There are several contradictions in this official campaign, but one trend has emerged. After the initial defensive reaction, the tone has changed from criticism of the strikers to emphasis on support for the government and its consultations with the workers.

The initial defensiveness was evident in Maciej Szczepanski's speech on June 26. Szczepanski, chairman of the Polish Radio and Television Committee, attacked as "ignominious phenomena" the "acts of anarchy and vandalism that occurred in Ursus, near Warsaw, and in Radom." The strikers were "firebrands and hooligans," Szczepanski stated, who were being condemned "with all severity" at the numerous rallies held in support of the government's policy.

"We have been, are, and shall remain a democracy," Szczepanski concluded, "but a democracy for enlightened, civilized people. For people who in their hearts cherish the thought of our Poland" (PAP, June 26).

The tone of the rallies held across the country was also somewhat defensive. At a meeting in the Gottwald-Coal Mine on June 27, one miner said that "certain groups . . . do not want to understand a difficult situation and the seriousness of the moment. They instigated unrest among the working people and in society, and provoked brawling which resulted in destruction and outright vandalism. . . . We dissociate ourselves in a categorical and decisive way from such phenomena" (Radio Warsaw, June 27).

At the same time, official commentary stuck to the argument that price changes were necessary. These changes are never referred to as "price increases," but always as "price restructuring." According to the PAP report, "the conviction prevails among the workers/ that it is indispensable to restructure prices, and that the decision to examine thoroughly the results of the social consultation that has enriched the proposal with valuable comments and proposals from the working class was a correct one."

A third element in the campaign was expression of support for the party leadership. During the rallies many such expressions were heard. At the Zeran factory in Warsaw, one of the strike scenes, a resolution passed on June 26 emphasized the workers' "firm support for the party leadership, for Comrade Edward Giererek personally,
for the government and Comrade Piotr Jaroszewicz, for the
democratic manner of guiding the party and the nation, for
consultation on decisions important to all Poles."

A fourth, although not necessarily the last, point of the
campaign was work. At the beginning, the stress was on plain
work -- which could be read as an appeal either to return to work
or to work without "interruption." Ryszard Wojna, Trybuna Ludu's
leading columnist, concluded his editorial in the week-end (June 26-27)
edition as follows:

A discussion on the country's and nation's welfare can be
conducted only while working. This is the categorical imperative.
This is the basic criterion of proper attitudes to the most
important problems.

As the campaign intensified, its various currents -- at
least those which were evident from the study of Trybuna Ludu --
and their regulatory mechanism became more distinct; the initial
stress on support for the party shifted gradually to consultations
(as an obvious civic right), to the necessity of price changes, and
eventually to good work. Here the gradation went from efficient
work to good quality production, consistent work effort, production
above plan, and production pledges.

The early stages of the campaign concentrated mainly on
rallies, and the party's organization efforts were impressive.
Rallies were held throughout the country, in stadiums, town
squares, and factories. On June 28 (a Monday), a big rally of
Warsaw citizens was arranged in the Tenth Anniversary Stadium,
reportedly (Trybuna Ludu, June 28) upon a suggestion of the Zeran
Automobile Factory workers. The stadium has a seating capacity
of 80,000, but with a bit of effort 120,000 could get in, and this
last figure was reported by Radio Warsaw (June 28, 1600 hours).
Trybuna Ludu (June-29) referred to "thousands of party and nonparty
people" attending the rally, which was addressed by Politburo
member and Warsaw party leader Jozef Kepa. Against these official
reports, Die Zeit (July 2) reported that the stadium was filled
to half capacity only and that Kepa was the only high party
functionary present. Klaus Bednarz also challenged the claim of
120,000 participants at the Warsaw rally. Reporting from the
Polish capital for the FRG's Second Television Channel on July 1,
he pointed the camera toward large empty sections of the stadium,
and added that the crowd consisted of a selected audience, all those
present having been equipped with special recognition tags (easy
to distinguish by TV viewers).

Official media reported that "over 120,000 people" demonstrated
their support for the party in Poznan (on June 27), while one day
earlier 80,000 persons met in the squares of Lodz. Mass rallies
were held on June 28 in almost every town and city, and Radio Warsaw
cited impressive attendance figures: 120,000 in Poznan, 80,000 in
Gdansk and Cracow, 50,000 in Szczecin and Bialystok, and as many as 200,000 in Katowice, where Politburo member and local party chief Zdzislaw Grudzien condemned the strikers and rioters, emphasized the honest attitude of the Silesian people to work and civic duty, and assured Gierck and Jaroszewicz of full support.

In addition to public rallies, countless meetings were arranged at factories and other places of work, and Trybuna Ludu faithfully reported about them all until at least July 1. These reports filled three full pages of the paper on June 28, the same amount of space was devoted to the meetings of support on June 29, while subsequent issues shifted the weight of coverage to reports about "normal," "consistent," and "efficient" work. Another feature of Trybuna Ludu reporting was extensive lists of messages of support received from all over the country by the party and government leadership. Most of these reflected the resolutions passed at various factory meetings, such as the following:

We are with you, Comrade Gierck, with the party leadership and the government, with Comrade Jaroszewicz!

We support the party program!

We support the PUWP, the leading force of the nation!

These assurances were followed, more often than not, by condemnation of rioters and strikers:

We disapprove of those who interfere with the course of consultations.

We express indignation about disturbances of the public order.

We condemn vandals and troublemakers.

Trybuna Ludu (June 29) reported the following excerpt from the Szczecin rally:

We condemn the firebrands and devastators from Ursus and Radom. We express our supreme objection to and contempt of them. At the same time, we demand severe punishment of all perpetrators of acts of violence, looting, and destruction of common property. We do not approve of work interruptions and we express our disagreement with the organizers of such things.

On June 27, the Gorzow Wielkopolski branch of the Ursus Tractor Factory passed a resolution, in which the personnel assured both Gierck and Jaroszewicz of their loyalty. Without referring to either Radom or their fellow workers at the main Ursus factory, they demanded "exemplary punishment of those guilty of incidents and excesses" (Trybuna Ludu, June 28). At the main Ursus factory itself, a conference took place on June 30, Radio Warszaw reported the next morning (0500 hours). "Over 800 workers, party members, and nonparty people took part in the meeting. They emphasized that the ambition of the Ursus personnel is to make the greatest possible contribution to the achievements of the voivodship and of the country." Considering the fact that the number of Ursus personnel
is over 15,000, of which number about 2,500 are party members, the attendance of 800 persons at the conference was not an impressive show of support.

Feelings about the price hikes were not quite uniform. One resolution can serve as an illustration of this point: "We feel that the problem of the level and structure of prices should be taken up and solved in the shortest possible time" (Huta Malapanew in Ozimek), while at a public meeting in Biała Podlaska, the withdrawal of the decision on price hikes was "appreciated" and accepted "with due respect as an expression of good political judgment." The theme of the unavoidability of the price restructuring kept recurring in media reporting, as did also the approval voiced at the consultations.

c. Consultations in Earnest? The blitz consultations planned for June 25 having failed, the question arises what sort of substitute -- an earnest or only a formal dialogue -- the party envisages for the immediate, as well as more distant, future.

Article 9 of the new Constitution provides that all units of the state administration are obliged "to thoroughly consider and take into account the right suggestions, complaints, and wishes of the citizens, in compliance with the laws in force," while Article 86 deals in more specific terms with the right to consultation by stating that Polish citizens "can take part in exercising social control, in consultations and discussions on key problems of the country's development, and can present motions."

Recent editorials have put more emphasis on the constitutional right to consultation and less on the privilege of such consultations. To return to earlier comments, Życie Warszawy (June 26) emphasized that the "civic consultation" on the price proposals had turned into "a genuinely creative, honest economic dialogue" which was "proof of the democratic principles that guide the party and the government in their social policies." Most commentaries have emphasized the constructive and democratic character of the consultations and the party's determination to preserve the "new, democratic relations between authority and society... which the country's political leadership, with First Secretary of the PUWP CC Edward Gierek, has introduced into the life of Poland in the 1970s." The same paper emphasized this point even more strongly in its July 1 editorial:

This democratic style of governing, a practical expression of the implementation of people's rule (ludówładztwo), this consulting on the program of socioeconomic development and on all important decisions has already established itself for good in Polish social life.

The way in which the leadership and the workers see the consultation process will be significant in the coming weeks' and months as the government tries to reintroduce some sort of price and wage increases. If the leadership should consider that
the present level of consultation has taken the party too far
from its leading role, it would have to revert to less consulta-
tion, a course which appears unlikely. If, on the other hand,
the leadership feels pressed to allow more consultation, the
serious question will arise of just how far Poland’s “consensus
socialism” can go. A further broadening of workers’ power is
also less than desirable from the party’s point of view, but the
present emphasis on the democratic character of the consulta-
tions would seem to exert pressure in this direction. The more
the official statements emphasize not only the democratic nature
of the consultations, but also the constitutional right to such
deliberation, the more the party may be forced actually to allow
some measure of democracy in the next round of price consulta-
tions.

Some statements about consultations indicate that certain
qualifications are appearing. For example, Radio Warsaw’s
feature program Wavelength 76 (11 July) stated that consultation
is

a relatively new instrument which not everybody can yet use
well. One needs some degree of political sophistication for
that, as well as the ability to observe certain rules, above
all social discipline and the feeling of civic responsibility
for everything that we are doing, for everything that
encompasses us.

There are also signs that workers may believe that consul-
tations are a passing phenomenon, and are consequently refusing to
speak up. The same Radio Warsaw broadcast complained:

Obviously, it is impossible to reconcile the evading of both
discussion and participation in the perfection of our joint
projects with the principle of consultation. The evading of
discussion makes it difficult jointly to achieve considered
and agreed-upon forms of future action. What is more, simple
nonexpression of one’s view and nonparticipation in the
constructive solution of problems makes the whole discussion
poorer by the thinking of those who hold it, but do not want
to share it with others.

The chorus of support for the party and the government
illustrates a further inconsistency in regard to consultation.
If so many workers support the government’s policies, why did the
government react so quickly to the scattered incidents of protest?
And if the workers support the government’s policies and also
reject price increases, how will the government be able to raise
prices against the will of these thousands of supporters now
rallying to its side?

One possible answer is that the present campaign is not
mopping up from the last attempt to increase prices but preparing
for the next. As Bader suggests (FAZ, June 29), the leadership
could now be making up for its insufficient consultation before the
announcement of price hikes, and be drawing up a new proposal which demonstrates the effects of party-people consultation. "The campaign," Bader adds, "is creating a climate in which rejection of the government's proposals appears closely related to rowdyism and vandalism." Thus, isolated incidents, such as the riots in Radom, could help the government the next time around, since as the present campaign emphasizes — the majority of workers actually understood the need for price increases and only objected to details of the proposals.

It is difficult to say when another attempt will be made to increase prices. In withdrawing his proposals, Jaroszewicz announced that several months more of consultation and study would be needed. The present wave of rallies and statements in support of the government might lead some to conclude that this campaign could be the consultation process, and that increases could appear later in the summer. This question remains unanswerable at the moment. But there are not many more months available if the increases are to come in 1976. Harvest time and Christmas will dominate the closing months of the year, and these would be inappropriate occasions for another test of the party's confidence in the people.

d. The Special Case of Radom. Radom, which was the scene of the most serious protests against the proposed price increases, is a town of 170,000 and since June 1975 the seat of a voivodship. It has a tradition of strikes and other forms of "class struggle" both under capitalist and communist rule. Of over 50,000 workers, some 40,000 are employed in state-owned factories, of which the Walter Metal Works is the best known (production of ammunition and small caliber weapons). In March 1975, both Walter — as the factory is known in local parlance — and Radoskor (a shoe factory) attracted some attention by a strike, started at the latter, because of food shortages. According to Der Spiegel (31 March 1975), there were arrests of some 150 Radoskor workers, mostly women, who were released after Walter workers threatened a strike of sympathy.

This time, i.e., on June 25, the problem was more serious. Surprisingly, an almost extensive account of the events has become available not through Western correspondents' reports — as would usually be the case — but from Radom President (Mayor) Tadeusz Karwicki, who addressed a rally of Radom inhabitants on June 30. A summary of his speech was broadcast by Radio Warsaw (June 30, 2200 hours) from tape recording, then published by Trybuna Ludu (July 1), while what is probably a full text appeared in the local paper Nasza Trybuna (also July 1).

At the very outset of his speech, Karwicki referred to the meetings in support of the party and government, in contrast to which there are also heard powerful voices of condemnation, anger, and disgust against the initiators and participants of the
events which took place in our city on June 25.

As an inhabitant of this city, as the mayor of this city, it is with regret and great pain that I have to state that these are words of bitterness and indignation which we unfortunately deserve, because all of us, as inhabitants of Radom, are morally responsible for the events that took place and for their consequences.

These events were started, Karwicki said, by Walter workers whose wages, he stressed, "increased during the last few months by 20 per cent, as compared to the same period of last year." (By bringing up this subject, Karwicki invited analogy with then Politburo member and Deputy Premier Stanislaw Kocielek who, on 16 December 1970, in a speech in Gdansk, wondered why shipyard workers, one of the best paid categories in the country, could have started bloody riots over higher food prices.)

A group of Walter workers, Karwicki continued, went into the streets, where they were joined by "parasitic and hooligan, criminal and antisocialist elements." It was in this "well-chosen" company that the group had "terrorized" the personnel of other factories, of Radoskor, the Radom Telephone Factory, the Tobacco Plant, the Rolling Stock Repair Works, and others. The rioters staged a siege of the Voivodship Party Committee headquarters, then entered it by force (and set fire to it; as Reuter's correspondent in Warsaw Vincent Buist reported on June 29). "Drunken hooligans and hysterical women ran the show," Radom's president complained. To support his point, he listed five names of alleged "hooligans." Two were persons who "think work is not for them," one was a worker of a recycling plant, and the last two were "pupils of an evening elementary school," i.e., most probably adults supplementing their education at evening courses. After naming these five, Karwicki exclaimed:

Shame and infamy on those who supported vandals and looters, who threw stones at militia men trying to restore peace and order.

Karwicki stated that the harvest of the riots, which lasted almost till midnight, was 24 cars and trucks, tractors and buses, including fire engines, totally burned; a number of shops on two streets demolished and looted; attempts at setting fire to the Voivodship Office and the militia headquarters; material losses are estimated at 77,000,000 zloty, in addition to 30,000,000 zloty-worth of goods looted from the shops. Seventy-five militiamen were wounded, eight of them seriously, and "two participants in the riots are dead." According to the Radio Warsaw version -- which on this point differs slightly from Nasza Trybuna -- Karwicki explained that "they had been crushed by their own cronies (kompanow) with a trailer used for building a barricade at the crossing of the First of May and Slowacki Streets."
The militia detained on June 25 and on the following days people whom Karwicki described as "active participants in the incidents, arsonists, looters, and thieves," some of whom had already been sentenced by courts and administrative organs. "All of them will receive the punishment they deserve," Karwicki said.

(Those guilty of excesses could be tried according to Article 127 of the Penal Code, which provides for penalties not lower than five years and up to and including the death sentence. The condition is that the defendant must be found guilty of acting "for the purpose of weakening people's power, provoking commotions or moods of general dissatisfaction, or serious disturbances in the functioning of the national economy." If milder sentences are intended, Article 220 can be applied. Then those guilty of inflicting partial or total damage to "technical equipment" and thus bringing about disturbances in production, transport, and communications, are liable to punishments of no less than three years' "deprivation of liberty."

Karwicki devoted the rest of his speech to promises to mend Radom's ways. The following is just one of many such passages:

RADOM must regain its good name. Workers and all inhabitants must demonstrate to themselves, to the party leadership, and to the whole country that they are able to morally rebuild and learn from the events which took place in our town.

After these statements, several speakers followed Karwicki and condemned the excesses and expressed indignation. A Walter worker, Tomasz Kozlowski, was quoted by Nasza Trybuna as follows:

It is not easy to live and work while realizing that the noble workers' tradition of the city and factories has been trampled upon.

No resolution was passed at the Radom rally. As explained by another speaker, a local physician, Tadeusz Kortylewski, "for the time being, the city has no mandate to do so."

The Radom rally raised two important points. First, denouncing and punishing the rioters can be a double-edged sword. While the state must exhibit its authority vis-à-vis criminal activity, the party must consider the possibility that too strong a counteroffensive could alienate other workers who might feel that their protests of June 25 were being lumped together with the looting and destruction which occurred that day in Radom. Secondly, why was it that a representative of the state administration was chosen to address the rally? At the other rallies around the country, it was the local party leader, and not the mayor, who spoke to the crowds. Could it be that the answer to the second question lies in the logic of the first?