

The Congress of the PUWP

The first day of the Congress was almost completely filled by the report of Gomulka. His speech lasted six and half hours.

Gomulka actually delivered only a shortened version of his report, the full text being distributed amongst the delegates in book form. Foreign correspondents also received some kind of advanced copy of the speech, or its summary. As the full text is not yet available here no detailed analysis of the speech is yet possible, the more so as in the text already available there are observable some departures in the actual speech from the pre-speech hand-outs.

The speech as broadcast by Radio Warsaw showed that Gomulka devoted most of his attention to economic problems, on the whole keeping to the lines laid out in Theses for the Congress, adopted at the 14th Plenum. (These have been discussed in two papers by H. Trend -- "Proposed Reforms of Planning and Management in Poland" of April 15 and "The Main Features of Poland's Proposed Long-Term Economic Plan" of June 12.) Remarkably little was said about the internal Party matters.

On foreign policy the most important part was the detailed discussion of the Chinese problem, in which Gomulka critically analyzed Chinese policy and its motives, as well making his proposal for the international conference. On this subject the reference reported yesterday about Parties which would not attend an international conference putting themselves "beyond the pale", though it appeared in the printed speech, was not actually delivered. At the last moment this phrase was dropped, perhaps so as not to offend Parties like the Yugoslav, Italian and Rumanian or not to commit the Poles decisively to such an "expulsion" policy. But the phrase has received sufficient publicity for the point to be made. (A reference to the protest of the 34 intellectuals was another that was printed but not actually said by Gomulka.) When the full text becomes available other points of the speech will be discussed.

Note that Jerzy Albrecht, former CC Secretary dismissed in 1960, whose slow comeback could be observed over the last few months, was elected to the Congress presidium (cf. Radio Warsaw, June 15).

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Church Against Party

The Polish hierarchy, in an episcopal letter read in all churches of the country on June 14, accused the state authorities of an "immoral act" and of violating the constitution. The letter charged that leaders of various summer camps for youth were doing their best to prevent children from attending services on Sundays, which amounted to a violation of conscience.

The letter was addressed to "children and their supervisors in connection with their duties during the vacation". It takes the standpoint that the majority of Polish citizens are Catholics and that they have paid taxes which go toward the upkeep of state camps. This, according to the letter, made the state's act "even more lawless" (Reuter, June 14).

A day earlier Cardinal Wyszynski, in a sermon anticipating the letter, was more explicit. He extended his criticism to officials of the Office for Religious Denominations. He said i.a.: "We appeal to the government and the Party to teach officials to respect Polish constitution" and "we appeal to them to cut short the audacity and lawlessness of these officials". (Reuter June 13, UPI June 14).

These charges were levelled at the Party on the eve of Congress by the hierarchy. Meanwhile the Catholic deputy to the Sejm, Stanislaw Stomma, published in "Tygodnik Powszechny" of June 14 an article containing both an appreciation of the role the Party ^{has} played in Poland during the last 20 years and a statement that "The doctrine of the Party was always alien to us and we are arguing on that platform. But with all seriousness we are treating the political factor which is leading our state."