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SITUATION REPORT

- * Meeting of Top Polish and Soviet Leaders
- * Death of Professor Leopold Infeld
- * New Ambassador to Rumania
- * East-West Contacts

Meeting of Top Polish and Soviet Leaders

The three top Soviet leaders, CPSU General Secretary Leonid I. Brezhnev, USSR Supreme Council Chairman Nikolai V. Podgorny, and Premier Alexei N. Kosygin, "stayed on an unofficial visit in the Polish People's Republic from January 12 to 14 at the invitation of the PUWP Central Committee," TASS revealed in a dispatch from Warsaw on January 15. They had what the Soviet official agency called "friendly talks" with their Polish opposite numbers: Wladyslaw Gomulka, Edward Ochab, and Jozef Cyrankiewicz. In addition to these leaders, Soviet ambassador to Poland, Averki B. Aristov, took part in the meeting, as well as Polish Politburo member and CC Secretary Zenon Kliszko.

"The Party leaders discussed Polish-Soviet relations and expressed satisfaction with the fact that the political, economic and cultural cooperation between the USSR and the Polish Peoples' Republic was constantly expanding and deepening in the interests of both peoples and the strengthening of the unity of socialist countries," the TASS report said.

"The participants in the meeting exchanged views on a wide range of international questions and the situation in the world Communist and workers' movement," the Soviet agency continued.

"Both sides expressed their striving to strengthen further fraternal cooperation between the CPSU and the Polish United Workers' Party in the interests of the unity of action of the international Communist and workers' movement in the struggle against imperialism, for the freedom of the peoples, for peace and socialism."

The talks "displayed a complete identity of views on all questions under discussion, and passed in a comradely

atmosphere of mutual understanding," the communique concluded.

While this announcement was made by TASS in the afternoon of January 15 and while it could be read earlier in Moscow in the official daily Izvestia, Radio Warsaw broadcast it for the first time in the 2000 hours newscast. (Polish listeners could learn about the meeting two hours earlier from a Radio Moscow broadcast in Polish. This source was the only one to refer to the meeting having taken place in Warsaw, while other dispatches, both Polish and Soviet, did not disclose the site of the "friendly talks." On the other hand, UPI reported from Warsaw on January 16 that the meeting took place in the Masurian lake area, as it did last year.)

The meeting seems to have been a routine tours d'horizon, the last of this sort having taken place on 17-18 January 1967 (cf. Polish Situation Report, Radio Free Europe Research, 23 January 1967). However, due to the situation in the international Communist movement (lack of unity on the international conference which is intended to deal with unity; uncertainty about which Parties will take part in the Budapest consultative meeting at the end of February; recent leadership changes in Czechoslovakia), Western observers in Moscow and Warsaw began to speculate about the priority of the subjects discussed during the meeting.

Thus DPA reported from Moscow (January 15) that it was suggested ("by Moscow observers") that Poland would play the role of middleman in Moscow's efforts to bring the North Korean and North Vietnamese Parties to the conference table in Budapest and at a later world Communist meeting. Other sources also agreed that the problems of the Budapest meeting and of Communist unity must have been high on the agenda. Soviet and Polish policy toward West Germany must also have been one of the topics, but probably not the most important, considering the absence of Politburo member and Foreign Minister Adam Rapacki, who took part in a similar meeting a year ago.

Bernard Margueritte reported from Warsaw for Le Monde (January 17) that "according to certain observers," the Soviet visit had been prompted by "l'agitation" reigning among the high echelons of the Polish Party, which increased considerably after Novotny's fall in Prague. Some people see in the Prague developments "a dangerous precedent," Margueritte said.

A possible clue to the problems discussed by the Polish and Soviet leaders with respect to Communist unity was supplied by Radio Moscow (in Polish) on January 15. Discussing the forthcoming Budapest meeting, Radio Moscow editor (a candidate of historical science) quoted the French CP Secretary General Waldeck Rochet to the effect that the purpose of the conference would be "a common study of the present problems of the fight against imperialism and the assuring of best possible conditions for the coordination of the activities of all the Communist Parties" (emphasis supplied).

18 January 1968

Death of Professor Leopold Infeld

Prof. Leopold Infeld, a well-known physicist and former close collaborator of the late Albert Einstein, died in Warsaw on 16 January 1968, Reuter and Radio Warsaw reported. He had been ill with heart and circulatory trouble, PAP, as quoted by Reuter, reported.

Prof. Infeld was born in Cracow on 20 August 1898. At the age of 23, he received the title of doctor at the Jagiellonian University in his native city. A high school teacher until 1930, he became a senior assistant at the Lvov University, a post that he kept until 1936. During that time, he stayed from 1933-1935 in Cambridge (Great Britain) as recipient of a Rockefeller Foundation scholarship.

Prof. Infeld left Poland in 1936 for the USA, where he worked until 1938 at the Institute of Advanced Study, New Jersey. There he met and became a collaborator of Albert Einstein, with whom he remained in close contact for about 12 years. Both were interested in laws governing motion and wrote jointly a number of scientific papers.

In 1939 Infeld moved to Canada, where he became professor at Toronto University.

In 1950 he returned to Poland, where he became active in developing Polish technical scientific research at Warsaw University as professor and director of its Institute of Theoretical Physics. From 1952 until 1962, he was a member of the Presidium of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

Although his interests were chiefly scientific, he was also active in the peace movement as a member of the World Peace Council.

He was one of the 34 Polish intellectuals who on 14 March 1964 signed a letter to Prime Minister Cyrankiewicz appealing for relaxation of censorship; the next month, he was one of 10 who sent a letter to the London Times, which said that the letter to Cyrankiewicz (which they had signed) and their meeting with him "has led to a campaign against our country, an action based on untrue information, spread especially by the West German press and Radio Free Europe" (cf. Polish SR, RFER, 2 and 30 April 1964).

Prof. Infeld held numerous awards from foreign scientific associations and was a member of the Canadian Academy of Science, the Royal Canadian Scientific Association and the American Association of Physicists. He is the author of over 100 works connected with theoretical physics, mainly the theory of relativity. In 1954 he was awarded the Order of the Banner of Labor, 1st class.

New Ambassador to Rumania

Although the departure of Wieslaw Sobierajski from the post of Polish Ambassador to Rumania was reported on 11 October 1967 (cf. Rumanian SR, RFER, October 13), the appointment of his replacement was announced only on January 17. As reported by PAP,

18 January 1968

January 17, he is Jaromir Ocheduszko, a former bank employee, journalist, and professional diplomat, rather than a Party man.

Born on 16 May 1912, Ocheduszko has completed higher juridical and diplomatic studies. During his student years, he began journalistic and social-cultural work, PAP said. From 1934 to 1939 he was a bank employee. In September 1939 he participated in the war against the Germans and was in the resistance movement during the Nazi occupation. He began his diplomatic career in 1954 and has been department vice-director in the Foreign Ministry since 1965.

This data from the official Polish news agency may be supplemented as follows. Ocheduszko started his diplomatic career earlier than 1954, since in mid-1952 he was recalled to Warsaw from the Polish embassy in Ankara, where he had held the post of first secretary. Upon his return to Poland he shifted to journalistic work and even became, in late 1956, editorial secretary of the now defunct Przegląd Kulturalny, a literary weekly known for its rather liberal views. He returned to diplomatic service in the late Fifties when he was sent to Paris, first as secretary, then as councillor, and he stayed in the French capital till July 1965. His last position at the Foreign Ministry was that of vice-director of the West European Department. He is member of the PUWP.

East-West Contacts

The British firm "Woodall-Duckham," which recently won a contract to build Poland's first fiber glass plant, has signed a second agreement with the Polish state trading organization "Polimex" to market Polish products in Britain and other countries, an RFE Special from London reported on January 16.

Another RFE Special from London reported on January 16 that the day before, three Polish technical editors arrived for a fortnight's visit at the invitation of the British government. They are Dr. Stefan Darecki, editor-in-chief of two technical periodicals on electronics and telecommunications, who is also Deputy Director of the Institute of Telecommunications and Radio Technology; Dr. Marian Grobelny, editor-in-chief of Chemik and a researcher at the Institute of Inorganic Chemistry; and Andrzej Voellnagel, deputy editor-in-chief of two periodicals on technical matters, who is also president of the Polish Photographic Society.

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