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Soviet Troop Movements in Poland Reported

A number of Western diplomats and at least one journalist were stopped on May 8 and 9 on roads leading out of Warsaw and told to return to the capital, several Western news agencies reported. The ban was lifted during the evening of May 9. The next day, the Polish ministry of foreign affairs explained to British Charge d'Affaires Alan Horn that the whole affair must have been a "mistake," David Floyd reported in The Daily Telegraph on May 11.

The ban seems to have been caused by Soviet troop movements in southern Poland (cf. Czechoslovak Situation Report/52, Radio Free Europe Research, May 10). It appears from an avalanche of Western news agency and press reports that Soviet Army units were "definitely identified" moving south of Cracow in the direction of Moravia. According to Corriere della Sera, the movement had lasted for 24 hours and the Soviet troops "are reportedly concentrated in the area around Cracow and Katowice."

With the exception of the explanation given to Mr. Horn, there was no official word in Poland either about the ban on the travel of diplomats or about any "maneuvers" of the Warsaw Pact forces in which Soviet troops might have taken part. However, Jonathan Randal reported in The New York Times (May 11) that "the Polish Communist Party has held information meetings this week to attack Czechoslovak liberalization and mention Warsaw Pact maneuvers in Poland." It seems, Randal suggested, that the purpose of the meetings was to prepare Polish Party members "psychologically for a showdown with Czechoslovakia. Ceteka, however, issued a statement on May 10 to the effect that the troop movements were connected with Warsaw Pact maneuvers about which Prague had been informed in advance.

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At least two non-Polish Communist sources quoted an official Polish denial. In almost identical wording, Radio Zagreb and L'Unita stated on May 10 that "last night, a representative of the Polish ministry of foreign affairs characterized as ordinary rumors the reports of Western agencies about the alleged movement of Soviet troops in Poland toward Czechoslovakia."

Purges, Dismissals, Appointments

Aleksander Wolski, director of the Building Technology Institute, as well as Jerzy Tarkowski, deputy director of the Mechanics and Power Department of the Building Construction and Building Materials' Ministry, have been expelled from the Party, Fundamenty (a weekly dealing with architecture and building construction problems) reported on April 28. According to the same source, Marian Rzedowski and Jozef Grotte were dismissed from their positions as director of the Association of Building Construction Project Bureaus and director of the Technical and Economic Construction Information Center, respectively.

Bronislaw Taban, vice-minister of the Chemical Industry since at least 1951, has been dismissed, PAP reported on May 10. Taban, who is about 60, is an old "intellectual Communist" of Jewish origin.

A number of journalists were expelled from the Party and at the same time the recommendation was made that they be dismissed from their jobs, the Lodz Party daily Glos Robotniczy reported on April 23. Thus, the Glos Robotniczy editors J. Flajszman and J. Gliksman were expelled from the Party, while Jozef Lebenbaum received a reprimand and warning (threat of expulsion). The basic Party cell at the paper recommended that all three be dismissed from their editorial positions. At the same time, the editorial board (kolegium) of the paper, "with the participation of the basic Party cell, the trade union organization and the Polish Journalist' Association," authorized the editor-in-chief to give notice of termination to a woman journalist, A. Grabowska, who is apparently not a Party member. The basic Party cell at another Lodz daily, Dziennik Lodzki, recommended the dismissal of editor-in-chief Stanislaw Januszewski because of "errors in editorial work." In addition, Januszewski received a Party reprimand. Maria Lorber was expelled from the Party and recommended for dismissal from the position of deputy editor-in-chief of the satirical Lodz fortnightly Karuzela. Wladyslaw Basista, director of the Lodz branch of the Prasa Press Publishing House, was given a Party reprimand with a warning and recommended for dismissal from his job. Another employee of Prasa, St. Szejnski was expelled from the Party and recommended for dismissal.

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The editor-in-chief of the popular Warsaw evening paper Express Wieczorny, Leon Bielski, has been transferred to another, unspecified post, UPI reported on May 11. He was replaced by Zbigniew Soluba, who previous to his latest appointment had been deputy editor-in-chief of the weekly Polityka. UPI explained that under Bielski Express Wieczorny had run "few attacks on Zionism and intellectuals and liberals being purged." Soluba, who has recently become a quite conspicuous spokesman of the Partisan faction, is expected to put Express Wieczorny on the "right" track.

Professor Ludwik Mazurek, head of the Lodz Medical Academy Urological Clinic, has been expelled from the Party, Glos Robotniczy reported on May 8. Quoting this paper, UPI (May 11) explained that Mazurek had been expelled because of a "political-ideological attitude which was inconsistent with the Party statutes."

Manifestation of Polish-Czechoslovak Friendship

In addition to the congratulations sent on the occasion of the Czechoslovak national holiday (cf. Polish SR/40, RFER, May 9), a big friendship rally took place on May 9 in the Czechoslovak part of the divided city of Tesin-Cieszyn. It was a combined Polish-Czechoslovak-Soviet show of amity, in which the three countries were represented, respectively, by the Silesian Party leader, Politburo member Edward Gierek; by CPCS Secretary Alois Indra; and by Leonid Kulichenko, First Secretary of the Volgograd Committee of the CPSU.

Gierek spoke on behalf of the "270,000-strong army of Communists, on behalf of the working class and all the inhabitants of Katowice Voivodship." He pledged that the two countries would "never again" become an object "of bargaining by international imperialism." He referred to inimical groups which were trying to "sow trouble" in both countries, using the slogans of the "alleged defense of democracy, freedom of speech and culture," to the dangers emanating from the "neo-fascist, Nationalist Democratic Party of Germany," and from the FRG in general, and, in this connection, appealed to the sense of "co-responsibility of our fraternal states and the peoples of Poland and Czechoslovakia," as well as to "unity of action." Significantly, Gierek omitted any praise of the present leaders of Czechoslovakia, but he was also rather restrained about the Polish leadership. His statement on the Polish "CC and its policy" was not necessarily equivocal. "Against expectations (of the inimical forces), our whole Party, all of Polish society, offered basic support to our CC and its policy," Gierek said (emphasis supplied). As the word "basic" ("zasadnicze") may also mean "principal," exceptions on certain matters are not excluded. The possibility of such "exceptions" seems to be strengthened by the fact that Gierek failed to mention Party leader Wladyslaw Gomulka.

However, behind the show of friendship, there was also evident Polish apprehension about what is going on in Czechoslovakia. On the same day that Radio Warsaw extensively covered the Cieszyn-Tesin meeting, it also broadcast a critical appraisal of the

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"reactionary, anti-socialist forces" which are trying to divert the process of renewal toward the "undermining of the leading role of the Party." In the Czechoslovak press, radio and TV, the broadcast complained, "irresponsible persons" voice opinions which "often have an anti-socialist, reactionary character." Czechoslovakia is "too important a link in the community of socialist countries," Radio Warsaw stressed, to disregard what is going on there.

Another instance of criticism was a TV speech of Jozef Barecki, deputy editor-in-chief of Trybuna Ludu. Speaking on May 11, Barecki -- as quoted by Randal in the NYT (May 12) -- said that "anti-socialist and Zionist forces in Czechoslovakia were demanding bourgeois political parties and improved ties with West Germany and Israel and were attacking Party cadres and fraternal countries."

Coverage of Paris Meeting

"We have not said that war is unavoidable. We have said that it can be avoided if there is proper force in our camp; we will force imperialism to retreat," claimed Prime Minister Cyrankiewicz in the speech he delivered at the Metallurgical Workers' meeting in Zabrze (Silesia) on May 11, PAP and Radio Warsaw reported.

Cyrankiewicz seized the opportunity of the Zabrze celebrations to attack the US and to ascribe the fact that the Paris negotiations have managed to start to the heroism of the Vietnamese people and their military prowess. "Now, while we celebrate our Day of the Metallurgical Worker, preparatory talks are beginning in Paris between representatives of the DRV and the US government. The world has long waited for this moment. It may be a flash of success on the darkened horizon. The whole world has followed the heroic struggle of the attacked Vietnamese people.... Johnson and the US imperialist circles have at last decided to sit at a table for, I would not say negotiations, but preliminary talks..."

After these optimistic remarks, Cyrankiewicz added a note of warning: "But let us harbor no illusions, American imperialism was forced to begin negotiations. It will do everything to drag them on forever, to create difficulties and to commit sabotage at every step."

The same emphasis on the US having been forced into starting negotiations with Vietnam was contained in the speech delivered by CC Politburo member Ignacy Loga-Sowinski at the celebrations, held in Warsaw on May 12, of the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the First Warsaw Mechanized Division, as reported by Radio Warsaw on the same day. "Under the pressure of world opinion," said Loga-Sowinski, "and particularly owing to the heroic ... struggle of the Vietnamese people ... the US has at last decided to start negotiations with the DRV government."

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"It is clear," he concluded, "that -- if the US government genuinely wants peace -- the only result of the negotiations which have started in Paris can be putting an end -- without preliminary conditions -- to all acts of aggression against the DRV and the departure of foreign troops from South Vietnam, so that the Vietnamese people will really be able to decide their fate themselves."

The weekly review of events broadcast by Radio Warsaw on May 12 started with a review of the Vietnamese issue. The commentator dubbed the Paris meeting "one of the most important international conferences since the Second World War," but added that "it is difficult to hope that the talks will soon bring the peace which is so desired by everyone." "We ought not to forget that the Paris negotiations are accompanied by the bombing of the DRV and that Washington is trying to prove that it speaks in Paris from a position of strength; this not only does not make the Paris dialogue easier, but, on the contrary, sets the whole problem 14 years back, to the year 1954."

The new coverage of the Paris meeting is extensive and factual. A reference to the meeting is being carried in nearly every newscast of Radio Warsaw, in some cases as the first item. The reports by Radio Warsaw's Paris correspondent, Miroslaw Azembski, are generally free of attacks on the US and objective.

East West Contacts

Finland - General Jozef Konarsewski, director of the Polish Customs Administration, and department chief Z. Zukowski have begun a week-long visit to Finland at the invitation of the Finnish Customs Authority, an RFE Special reported on May 7 from Helsinki. During their stay in Finland the Polish officials will inspect various customs installations, said the Special.

Great Britain - Polish Vice Minister of the Machine Building Industry Jan Chylinski arrived in London to continue talks on British-Polish cooperation in the electro-mechanical industry, Radio Warsaw announced on May 9.

A festival of Polish art opened in Plymouth, the largest base of the Polish Navy during the last war, Radio Warsaw reported on May 11, and added that it was the largest event of this kind ever organized in Great Britain.

Italy - The celebrations in Italy commemorating the 100th anniversary of the birth of Maria Curie-Sklodowska ended with the unveiling of a commemorative plaque in the well-known spa of Montecatini, according to a Radio Warsaw broadcast of May 9.

France - Poland is represented at the International Film Festival, which opened on May 10 in Cannes, by two films, one full-length and one short, Radio Warsaw reported on the same day.

Poland - Norway is among the foreign countries represented at the eighth annual Days of Chamber Music which opened in Lancut on May 12, Radio Warsaw reported the same day.