

Church-State

The after-effects of the unofficial disclosure of the pastoral letter and the nature of the present tug-of-war between the Episcopate and the regime are again subject of Stehle's second major article in this series (cf. Situation Report, October 4). It would appear that by now the friction with the Church has come into sharper focus than was perhaps intended by both sides. According to Stehle, the more militant Polish communists regret today that the regime prevailed upon the Bishops to withhold their sharply-worded protest, since it would have given the party a legitimate reason to lash out with renewed vigor against the Episcopate. No less displeased are supposed to be the more conciliatory Catholic deputies of the Znak group, who in their unofficial role as a go-between in the Church-State conflict view the proposed pastoral letter as "careless", particularly since it became an open secret and the text of the latter was made available to the foreign press. No matter how debatable the tactics of both sides may seem, the final outcome will probably be a resumption of negotiations in the Mixed Church-State Commission. Stehle expresses this speculation by pointing out that in the forthcoming elections to the Sejm which are to take place next April, Gomulka, as he did once before, will prefer to go to the polls without the burden of an open split with the Church and that some government concessions primarily in the matter of taxation and Church property could be expected. We are preparing a translation of Stehle's article into English which will be telexed.

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(1) Glos Pracy of September 9, J. Bibel, "Eye To Eye With Housing Construction", the trade union daily on the shortage of fittings for new houses, on poor planning and control, all of which add to the already difficult housing situation; Argumenty of September 18, A. Pawelczynska, "Students and Religion", the results of a poll conducted among the students of Warsaw University by the sociological institute of that university on their attitude toward religion.; (3) Sztandar Mlodych of September 28 (j) "On Their Own", statements of Chairman Wisniewski of the Chief Council of the Polish Students' Union, on the role and tasks of that organization; (4) Zielony Sztandar, (September 25) M. Kowal "Culpable Carelessness", the organ of the United Peasant Party on the neglect of machines.