

Strong Regime Reaction to the Letter of 34 Intellectuals

Two major events of the past weekend seem to indicate that the regime is stepping up its counteroffensive against the Western information media which took up the problems raised by the letter of 34 Polish intellectuals and protested against repressive measures directed against the signatories. These events are: Politburo member Zenon Kliszko's speech in Poznan and a "sharp protest" of about 150 Polish writers published in "Zycie Warszawy".

Kliszko spoke at the seventh congress of the writers of Western and Northern Territories (i.e. of former German territories, including the area of the Free City of Danzig and part of East Prussia) which took place in Poznan between May 8 and 10. The congress rallied from "over 200" (according to Radio Warsaw) to "over 300" (according to Radio Poznan) participants, of whom about 90 were writers from the following voivodships: Katowice, Opole, Wroclaw, Zielona Gora, Poznan, Szczecin, Koszalin, Gdansk and Olsztyn. In addition to Czechoslovak and East German delegations, about 60 writers came from Warsaw, including the secretary of the Polish Writers' Union, Jan Maria Gisges (cf. Sit. Rep. May 6). Two reports were read, both on the problem of Hitlerism and West Germany. A major part of Kliszko's speech (delivered on May 8) was devoted to the same subject, but the key passages dealt with a strong attack on Radio Free Europe and its Polish employees, "traitors to their own country" who "smear everything which is dear to our nation". According to Kliszko, these "traitors" act upon orders of "those who are rebuilding the Bundeswehr". (PAP omitted this passage in its English release of the summary of the speech.) The "gentlemen from Munich," continued Kliszko, used recently the letter of the 34 writers and professors in a campaign of "systematic^{ally} smearing Poland". Kliszko shed new light on the origin of the letter itself. "Let's put it plainly", he said, the two or three organizers who arranged the sending of the letter were not concerned with discussion on this or that postulate. Their idea was to organize a demonstration into which they drew thirty or so writers and scientists, abusing their trust and good will". The few initiators of the action, "guided by not very honest

11 MAY 1964

intentions and disappointed hopes sent the letter, as a matter of fact, not to the state authorities of our country, but to foreign centers, to which they found their way earlier than to the official addressee. The act itself of the delivery of the memorandum at the Office of the Council of Ministers took place in such a way that this memorandum was planted" ("podrzucony"). Again, PAP omitted the passage pertaining to "planting". "What is more", continued Kliszko contradicting his earlier statement about the timing of the delivery of the letter to "foreign centers", "two or three days later the letter was sent to one foreign agency or another with offices in Warsaw and to one embassy or another". It is at this point that Radio Free Europe comes into the picture. "Well, it is quite clear", Kliszko said, "that when the people who had signed the letter learned from Radio Free Europe, this diversionary radio station, they were shocked by this and many of them clearly dissociated themselves from this".

(This is an exact translation of a badly constructed sentence.)

Kliszko also confirmed earlier conjecture expressed in Sit. Rep. of May 6 ^{with} as to the reasons behind the publicity given to Gomulka's meeting/the representatives of the Polish Writers' Union. "The Polish writers' community", Kliszko said, "has more authoritative and more respected representatives in the form of the board of the Union of Polish Writers. Matter of fact demands presented by the Union's board, pertaining to material and moral interests of the writers' milieu, are studied by the political leadership of the country with full attention and sympathy". (In this connection it should be stressed that Kliszko referred to the "political leadership". Does it mean that this leadership consists of CC Politburo and not of the Office of Prime Minister? If so, Kliszko's contradicting of himself on the timing of the delivery of the letter to the proper addressee and to foreign centers is no contradiction at all. The proper addressee was the Politburo, and not the Prime Minister. It is ^{possibly} only through this kind of logic that Kliszko may be absolved from the sin of serious "terminological inexactitude" with respect to the calendar of events. Between the delivery of the letter on March 14 and the first Reuter dispatch on it, on March 26, there were not two or three, but at least twelve days.)

11 MAY 1964

The second major event pertaining to the letter of the 34 was "Zycie Warszawy" editorial of May 10 and the protest of about 150 writers. The paper reprinted also the letter of ten professors to the London "Times" (cf. Sit. Rep. of April 30). The protesting writers, among whom are prominent Communist literati, Jerzy Putrament, Ryszard Matuszewski, Stefan Zolkiewski, to name just a few, express their indignation about an "organized campaign" led by the Western press and by the "diversionary radio station Free Europe", and about "foreign interference in our internal problems, in our cultural policy which is a matter common to the creative intelligentsia and to the political and state leadership".

Tito to Visit Poland

Josip Broz Tito, the President of Yugoslavia and Secretary General of the Union of Yugoslav Communists, and his wife will pay an official visit to Poland in the second half of June, Radio Warsaw announced May 9. According to the simultaneous release of Tanjug, the visit will take place "towards the end of June". Both sources added that the visit is one upon the invitation of the First Secretary of the CC, PUWP, Wladyslaw Gomulka and of the State Council Chairman Aleksander Zawadzki.

The timing of the visit does not seem to be particularly convenient to the Polish hosts. It may coincide with the Fourth Party Congress, slated to start on June 15, and even if it takes place after the end of the Congress the Polish hosts will have their hands busy with the preparations of the July 22 anniversary which will be celebrated with particular pomp this year (as the 20th anniversary of People's Poland). The visit -- although officially not fixed at an earlier date -- must have been postponed several times (cf. Sit. Rep. of 10 September and 6 December 1963) and there is also much logic in the speculation about Tito's being rather reluctant to see Gomulka too soon. It should be noted that Tito is combining his Polish trip with one to Finland, to which country he will probably go first.