

Direct Polish-West German Talks Suggested

Direct Polish-West German talks on the subject of future frontiers were suggested by Fritz Erler, the social democratic minority leader in the West German parliament, speaking in Berlin on January 14, agencies and the press reported. He said that it was up to an all-German government to settle the problem of the border and to sign a peace treaty, but it would be useful to hold earlier discussions between West Germany and Poland without any interference of other powers.

Erler's statement provoked instant reaction of the West German government and of the ruling Christian Democratic Union. Speaking for the federal government, press chief Karl Guenter von Hase told a press conference in Bonn on January 15 that "unilateral declarations of this kind bring Germany no closer to reunification". The CDU parliamentary leader Dr. Rainer Barzel also attacked Erler's proposal as amounting to a premature abandonment of a German legal position. Much more restrained criticism of the proposal was made by Parliamentary speaker Eugen Gerstenmaier who stated that he was ready to discuss it in spite of the fact that it was a far reaching one "which would place the total methods of our policy on Germany under discussion anew".

Reporting on the event on January 15, Radio Warsaw sounded rather matter-of-fact, although it also criticized Bonn politicians - including Erler himself - of being far from reality. According to the broadcast, reality was with those who understood that the Oder-Neisse border was final, and this particular subject needed no discussion.

20th Anniversary of the "Liberation" of Warsaw

Great celebrations were staged on January 16th in Warsaw on the eve of the 20th anniversary of the "liberation" of the capital. A rally in the Congress Hall of the Palace of Culture was attended by six Politburo members (Edward Ochab, Jozef Cyrankiewicz, Marian Spychalski, Zenon Kliszko, Ignacy Loga-Sowinski and Ryszard Strzelecki), a delegation of the Red Army and delegations of three bloc capitals: Moscow, Prague and Berlin. The rally was opened by the Chairman of the National Council of Warsaw, Jerzy Zarzycki and the main speech was delivered by the newly elected (on July 24) and just (on January 15)

18 JANUARY 1965

reelected First Secretary of the Warsaw City Party Committee Stanislaw Kociolek.

Two personalities that one could expect at such a function were conspicuous by their absence: Gomulka and Marshal G. Zhukov. Gomulka has recently appeared at the election and accountability meeting of the City of Warsaw Party Committee (January 14 and 15) and delivered a speech there in which he advocated the limitation of the growth of the capital and envisaged a time when industrial enterprises would be moved out of Warsaw. With such a speech delivered just a day earlier, and with the meeting of ^{the} Warsaw Pact Consultative Committee to begin on January 19, Gomulka could be both too tired and too busy, even to put in a personal appearance. The case of Zhukov is, of course, somewhat different. In spite of the change of regime in the Soviet Union, Zhukov is apparently still persona non grata. The official Soviet delegation was led by Marshal Sergei Rudenko, airforce commander on the Warsaw front. It included four Red Army generals who spent many years in the Polish service, amongst them General Stanislaw Poplawski, who it seems was more popular with Poles than any other Soviet general.