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POLAND

STATE POLICY

The Polish Diet (SEJM) is ostensibly preparing for "democratic discussion" of a new constitution, to take place in the fall of 1951. This is thought to be a mere propaganda stunt; the constitution has already been prepared by the WARSAW Politbureau and awaits only automatic approval of the Polish people.

On 19 February 1947, the Diet accepted temporarily the so-called "Little Constitution", based on the principles of the Polish Constitution of 1921. One of the main tasks of the present Diet is the establishment of a Constitutional Commission and the passing of a new constitution.

On 26 May 1951, the Polish Diet passed a law covering the "procedure of preparing and voting the constitution". One decision taken at the 26 May session violates the rules of parliamentary practice, as it has formed a Constitutional Commission from people outside of parliament.

This Commission has over 100 members; President BIERUT is its Chairman. Apart from deputies elected in proportion to Party registration (23 from the Communist Party and a much smaller number from the remaining Communist-controlled parties) it is composed of activists representing Regional National Councils, regime-controlled trade unions, the Union of Mutual Assistance of Peasants; Cooperatives, Women's League, the Union of Polish Youth as well as representatives of Arts and Sciences. The Commission and its sub-commission may also invite persons distinguished for their work for the State or Community.

In the fall, the Constitutional Commission will present in public its project of the Constitution. Following that, a so-called "general national discussion" will take place, during which suggestions and modifications, it is said, will be received from the citizens. After the discussion the Diet will finally accept the Constitution; this will have to take place before the end of the year.

The following points illustrate the futility and insincerity of the advertised "democratic discussion":

1) The discussion is modelled on Soviet practice adopted at the time when STALIN's Constitution was being accepted. At that time, no real criticism of the constitution could be made.

2) All the Satellites already have new Constitutions closely based on the Soviet Constitution. The Polish Constitution is expected to follow suit, particularly since it was clearly stated by Deputy JODLOWSKI in the Diet that the Constitution should also "follow the same principles as the Constitution of the country of victorious socialism, SOVIET RUSSIA".

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(cont'd)

3) Since the work on the Constitution has already been done by the WARSAW Politbureau, the 100-strong commission will only have the task of approving the text rather than preparing it. Consequently, the general public will have even less to say.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: End of May 1951

EVAL. COMMENT:

Source: usually reliable

Information: confirmed by other sources.