

29 May 1961

ZNAK

According to three concurrent dispatches from Warsaw (Stehle, Reuter and Olsen - May 27-28) the five-man group of ZNAK deputies in the present Assembly published in the last issue of the Catholic weekly TYGODNIK POWSZECHNY a joint policy declaration setting out their attitude towards the regime and the existing economic system in Poland.

Our own comment must await the receipt of the paper particularly since the interpretation and stress given in each of the dispatches vary considerably and in parts are even contradictory.

Stehle (c.f. FAZ of May 27 - telexed to you today), on the whole sees in the declaration a reaffirmation by the group to continue its role as mediator between the episcopate and the government. He quotes passages from it in which the ZNAK deputies reiterate their belief in "free choice of ideology" declaring this to be indispensable because "freedom is indivisible".

On the other hand Olsen, N.Y. Times May 28, interprets the declaration as a considerable concession by the ZNAK deputies to the regime and sees in it a softening of their stand as an "opposition" faction in the Sejm.

It must be remembered that the remaining five ZNAK deputies are par excellence individualists and many of the pronouncements particularly by KISIELEWSKI are of late easily misconstrued if taken out of context. Moreover in contrast to the situation in the last SEJIM when the ZNAK group numbered nine deputies, it is now faced with a counter-lever of six pseudo-Catholic deputies (three from PAX and two from the so-called Christian Social Association) who support the regime without any

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reservation. Under these circumstances the present declaration, if it is indeed contains accents expressing a "positive" attitude to the economic and geo-political reality of the country should be viewed as a tactical move which deputies may have thought fit to make in order to retain at least a token voice in the essential matters which have a direct bearing on the religious freedom in the country. As noted above we shall make our own analysis of the declaration after the full text becomes available.

#### Cardinal Wyszynski

Reports received here from Vatican sources confirm that Cardinal Wyszynski is expected in Rome on June 10-11 to attend the opening session of the preparatory commission of the Ecumenical Council on June 12. It is said that the Cardinal is to travel to Rome via Paris, a somewhat interesting detour, since thus far he always went to Rome on the direct route via Vienna. It will be remembered that earlier reports spoke of the Cardinal's reluctance to leave the country at present because of the strained Church-State relations.

#### Defection of Top Intelligence Official

Both the London Times and Daily Mail of May 29 returned to the earlier and thus far still unconfirmed reports about the defection of a high official of the Polish intelligence service. He is now being identified as Col. Antoni Alster, Vice Minister of the Interior, and is said to have fled Poland 10 weeks ago. Official circles in Britain and the US and also a Polish embassy representative in Lond continue to disclaim any knowledge about the defection. Should it nevertheless prove true, it would be the most important desertion of a top Communist official to date and would undoubtedly carry with it extreme repercussions in Poland directed against persons of Jewish origin in high posts in the government apparatus. Regarding Alster please note our background report on him telexed to you on Saturday.



Pouched:

Zycie Gospodarcze 21.5.61 - "J.M. & M.P. - "Agriculture at the  
Enc of theFirst and the Beginning of theSecond Quarter

Zycie Gospodarcze 20.5.61 - Letters to the Editor: One Should  
Not Recruit Members this Way (On Trade Union membership)

Przeglad Kulturalny 18.5.61 - Gottesman G.: On theCrossroads  
(On US policy)

Nowa Kultura 21.5.61 - Horodynski D.: A Study About Re-  
Emigrants from France (review of a book on this subject by Markiewicz)