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## EAST EUROPE

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### LONG-RANGE AGRICULTURAL POLICY FOR POLAND

SUMMARY: A well-known Polish agricultural expert provides a general outline of the necessary conditions for agricultural specialization and any major change in private agricultural farming policies. He recommends that, pending an absolute decline in the number employed in agriculture, which will not occur for the next 10 to 15 years, individual farming as now practiced in Poland should remain largely unchanged.

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The well-known Polish agricultural specialist Professor Ryszard Manteuffel (1) recommends the continuance of the current private agricultural system in Poland for another 10 to 15 years, "more or less until 1985," and the introduction of specialized, large-scale agricultural production in some areas only after 1985, when the absolute number of working farmers will begin to decline.(2)

According to Professor Manteuffel, during the first period, under the condition of an abundance of farm labor, specialization can only provide a positive economic effect if such specialization does not: (a) touch off additional unnecessary investment expenditures and the substitution of more expensive "invested" labor for the cheaper replaced direct labor; (b) set off an expansion of the level of underutilized labor; and (c) occasion the loss of auxiliary production of those commodities which are in short supply even today.

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- (1) He is Chairman of Agricultural Economies at the Main School for Rural Economics, Chairman of the Committee on Agricultural Economies of the Polish Academy of Sciences, and writes frequently on agricultural problems, particularly those relating to individual farming in Poland.
  - (2) Ryszard Manteuffel, "Rural Horizons: Time, Conditions, Decisions," Zycie Warszawy, 15 January 1971.

Once the nonagricultural sector absorbs more than the natural growth of the labor force in agriculture, resulting in an absolute drop in the number employed in agriculture, then, according to the Polish agricultural expert, specialization in agriculture "is not only indicated, but even necessary." However, to those who call for the establishment of large animal fattening combines now, Professor Manteuffel replies that, in the long run, this is desirable, particularly when the number of agricultural workers declines "drastically." But even before this happens, "experimentation" with such large-scale agricultural enterprises should take place. However, he warns, this experimentation should be done without weakening those individual and co-operative forms of organizations which make possible cheaper production. These individual and co-operative types of organization should be utilized as long as those participating wish to continue such cheaper production or even when they must continue in such agricultural work because no other possibilities of profitable labor are available to them. He then concludes that "specialization, gigantism," will not by itself improve the situation in agriculture. But this should not prevent preparations being made to meet "changing situations, which can transpire and which undoubtedly will occur" some time in the future and under different conditions.

Professor Manteuffel's pinpointing of the limiting factors in agriculture and general prescriptions for agricultural policies seem to serve as a warning to those who may erroneously believe that now is the opportune time for drastic changes in agricultural economic policies, particularly in view of two successive disappointing years in agricultural production and the persistent shortages of meat and meat products.

Harry Trend