

Regime Concessions to Writers

Concessions to writers in the form of an increase of paper allocation, a new authors' convention and approval for a new periodical, as reported by Reuter from Warsaw on May 17, do not appear as definite and as rosy as initial dispatches would suggest. The "Zycie Warszawy" issue of May 17-18 is available now, and a closer study of the text of an interview granted by the Chairman of the Polish Writers' Union Jaroslaw Iwaszkiewicz reveals that much has been promised by the regime, but little granted. Referring to the audience granted the writers by Party First Secretary Wladyslaw Gomulka on May 4 (cf. Sit. Rep. May 6), Iwaszkiewicz was able to list just one definite achievement, namely the increase by about 25 per cent of paper allocation for "fine" ("piekna") literature. Another point was Gomulka's assurance that a new monthly would appear, with a specific task of providing printing space to the "developing young poetry". Regarding the "literary convention" (literary payment terms), this "is being introduced..." (Rather surprisingly, Iwaszkiewicz was interrupted by the interviewer at this crucial moment.)

Regarding other "concessions", these are subject to discussion, and the solution of these problems "must take time", Iwaszkiewicz said, probably till the next Congress of Polish Writers which will take place in Lublin September next, to which Wladyslaw Gomulka has been invited. These other problems were listed as the "outdated literary convention" which is particularly bad for translators, lack of social security and a pension scheme for writers as well as lack of the so-called "literature fund", which exists in all countries of the Soviet bloc with the exception of Poland. On paper allocation Iwaszkiewicz said that there are in the country about 30,000 libraries, while the average impression of a book is 10,000 copies, which means that no more than one third of the libraries can be supplied with the book, and nothing is left for schools, private buyers and for export. At the meeting with Gomulka, the writers presented a number of suggestions for new periodicals for which there is a "social

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order" (Communist jargon for "politically useful"), and in particular a periodical for poetry, then one devoted to translations from foreign literature, like the Soviet "Inostranya Literatura", then a "literary-political monthly". Of all these suggestions, only the one for a monthly devoted to poetry is about to be solved satisfactorily "for the time being", Iwaszkiewicz admitted.

Iwaszkiewicz devoted much time to discussing his or the Union's endeavors in the past to improve the financial situation of writers. It should be stressed that the Union, and Iwaszkiewicz in particular, were under strong criticism from the writers because they had done nothing to come to terms with the Party on such vital subjects as social security and the pension fund. Now, Iwaszkiewicz states in his interview for "Zycie Warszawy" that the Union of Polish Writers has been taking the steps toward achieving these objectives, but "certain doings in the literary milieu", i.e. the letter of the 34, brought about a delay in solving these problems.

Summing up, one may say that the only concession of the regime is the promise to set up a monthly for young poets and to revise literary payment terms. Regarding the new monthly, it is hardly any concession in political terms. Very few people read poetry and poems -- at least as a rule -- do not carry such dangers -- from the ideological point of view -- as philosophical or social essays. (The latter category of writing brought about the merger of "Nowa Kultura" and "Przegląd Kulturalny" into one new weekly "Kultura" a year ago.)

#### Gierek Speech at French CP Congress

The Polish representative at the French CP congress Eduard Gierek did not refer to the desirability of a world conference of Communist and Workers Parties in his speech to the congress. Thus he and Michail Dalea, the Rumanian delegate, were the only two East European bloc representatives who did not endorse the Soviet proposal which Suslov had so energetically urged. What Gierek did say was, however, entirely pro-Soviet.



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"Defense of the unity of the international workers' movement and of the principles of Marxism is a vital necessity", he said, Radio Warsaw reported May 16. He stated further that the "brotherly solidarity" of the French and Polish CPs is based on "proletarian internationalism and on the strategy of the international workers' movement worked out during the talks in Moscow in 1957 and 1960". Referring to the stand of the Chinese CP, Gierek said that the "opposing of the commonly worked out principles by a line of one's own, as is done by the CP of China", and the "impermissible attacks" against the CPSU and against "other brotherly parties" is not only wrong but also most harmful to the international workers' movement. While Gierek made no reference to the French suggestion of convoking a new meeting of Communist parties, Radio Warsaw reported on May 18 on the French CP Congress resolutions, including the one on such a meeting.