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CENTRAL COMMITTEE REPORT FOR THE PERIOD BETWEEN THE FIFTH AND SIXTH CONGRESSES

Summary: It has been traditional practice for the Central Committee, prior to each PUWP congress, to prepare a report on the party's activities and performance since the last congress. These reports, full of praise for alleged "achievement," have then been routinely discussed and approved by the delegates at the subsequent congress. Compared with such previous exercises in self-adulation, the CC report for the period between the fifth and sixth congresses is a rather remarkable document. Given the fact that the three years under review (November 1968-December 1971) included both the latter two years of the Gomulka era and the first year of rule of the new party leader, Edward Gierek, the authors of the report were faced with an exceedingly delicate assignment. In handling this task, they sought to downplay the political and systemic aspects of the disastrous policies that led to the workers' revolt in December 1970. This was done in two ways: first, by asserting that the crisis was attributable not to any error of party policy, but rather to the Gomulka leadership's failure to implement the resolutions of the fifth congress, which were deemed "correct" in almost every sphere: and, second, by placing more stress on party activity in the one year preceding the congress (i.e., since Gierek's assumption of power), as opposed to the earlier period, and glossing over several touchy issues (e.g., "the assessment of the December events").

Despite such efforts and the fact that the document is marred by certain inconsistencies and inaccuracies, the CC report does contain one of the most comprehensive critiques of the policies and style of the Gomulka regime yet published in Poland. Moreover, it includes an admission of failure on the CC's part "to prevent autocracy and the infringement of Leninist principles of work in the leading party units, the Politburo, and the CC secretariat." Needless to say, in accepting

responsibility for past "deformations," the CC provided the rationale for the purge of its membership that was to come at the congress. This paper reviews and analyzes the most salient points in the Central Committee report.

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Introduction

Throughout the sixth congress discussions, Polish information media referred to three major topics of debate: the reports of First Secretary Edward Gierek and of Premier Piotr Jaroszewicz, and the PUWP CC Report for the Period Between the Fifth and Sixth Congresses. Although these references suggested that relatively equal importance (and discussion time) was accorded to all of the documents, this was clearly not the case. The two former reports were delivered orally by Gierek and Jaroszewicz on the first and second days of the congress. Primarily addressed to the issues of priorities and policies, they established the framework for the debates -- one that was closely adhered to by the subsequent contributors.

The CC report, on the other hand, was not formally presented to the congress. Approved at the 12th plenum of November 18 and subsequently distributed to the congress delegates, it was not published in the press until one day before the opening of the congress. (1) This fact in itself suggested that the leadership sought to discourage discussion about the party's general performance since the fifth congress in November 1968. This was confirmed in the debates themselves. Having asserted that the party expected a "penetrating analysis" of PUWP activities in the past three years, Gierek himself did not deal with the subject -- explaining that the CC report had already been submitted to the delegates -- but instead concentrated on the party's "future tasks." This pattern was to be repeated during the course of the debates; as a result, the congress unanimously approved "the restoration of Leninist principles" in party activity without having made any "analysis" of the factors and circumstances leading up to and allowing "the deformations in the methods of [the Gomulka] leadership."

The regime's decision to steer the congress discussion away from any "comprehensive assessment" of the last years of the Gomulka era was to be expected, given its earlier efforts to discourage any "tendency to settle accounts with the past." (2) It was also understandable in terms of the content of the CC report on the previous three-year period, which, despite its inconsistencies and a definite bias toward the party's "achievements"

(1) Trybuna Ludu, 5 December 1971.

(2) At the beginning of the precongress discussion in September, such sentiments were expressed by Politburo member and CC Secretary Jan Szydlak. His authoritative article in Zagadnienia i Materialy (22 September 1971) was subsequently republished in most of the provincial press.

in the final year under review (i.e., since Gierek's assumption of power), is one of the most comprehensive criticisms of the Gomulka leadership yet published in Poland. The report incorporates many of the charges earlier leveled against the Gomulka clique, e.g., autocratic methods of rule, socioeconomic mismanagement, and the failure to implement the resolutions of the fifth congress in almost every sphere of activity. Its most damning sections, however, are those devoted to the consequences of such errors. Among the franker observations in this respect are the references to the paralysis of the CC, the "transmission-belt" role assigned to the trade unions, the "signs of stagnation in various fields of cultural endeavor," and the emergence of "a general discouragement and lack of faith in the social and economic progress achieved by our country."

In addition to criticizing the Gomulka regime's socioeconomic policies in such specific areas as investment, industrial and agricultural production, housing, employment, and trade, the document also takes the former leadership to task for "the failure of many measures in the field of improving the system of planning and administration." According to the CC report, the embryonic economic reform, designed in the late 1960s and to be introduced gradually in the early 1970s, was inconsistent with "the goals of socioeconomic development." Moreover, it was said to be characterized by the adoption of "partial solutions," the "too feverish and hasty introduction of changes in the system of administration," an inability to come to grips with the most important issues of reform, and an absence of co-ordination in both the elaboration and implementation stages.

The CC report -- a very extensive document taking up four and one half pages of Trybuna Ludu and dated November 1971 -- is divided into four chapters: socioeconomic policy; party activity in the spheres of state administration, "socialist democracy," education, science, and culture; the international activity of the party and the state; and the party itself. This same breakdown has been utilized in the following examination of the four sections.

A. SOCIOECONOMIC POLICY

1. The Development of the Economy Between the Two Congresses and the Implementation of the 1966-1970 Five-Year Plan

At the beginning of this chapter, the authors of the report state that "in the year since the seventh CC plenum [December 20], the party has not only consistently implemented the correct guidelines laid down by the fifth congress, but has gone further. . ." only to stress a few lines later that the "basic weakness" of the economic policy between the two congresses was "the absence of a well-studied, long-term strategy of socioeconomic development." The inconsistency of these statements lies in the fact that both the guidelines and the strategy were creations of the Gomulka leadership. However, given the fact that the former were approved by a party congress, allegedly the highest ranking PUWP body, any criticism of the guidelines

would have cast a negative light on the fifth congress, as well as on the party as a whole. Therefore, only the former regime's "strategy" (i.e., implementation of the guidelines) has been singled out for criticism.

The previous leadership is also charged with "mistakes in social and economic policy," with having paid "insufficient attention to the necessity to develop the production of consumer goods," with responsibility for "almost a complete wage freeze and price increases, including the prices of basic articles of decisive importance in workers' budgets and in the budgets of families with lower incomes," (3) with having introduced only "partial solutions" at several plenary meetings of the CC, and -- last but not least -- with "niggling interference with the work of the government." Against this background of errors, one is almost surprised to read that the previous leadership allegedly took one correct step:

The task of increasing the share of intensive factors in the country's economic development, of more rapidly increasing productivity, technological progress and the effectiveness of the economy, was correctly put to the fore.

The former regime also gets qualified credit for some evident achievements in the 1966-1970 five-year period, and in particular for the two final years of the plan:

It is true that the aggravation of unfavorable economic phenomena over that final period weakened the total results, but nevertheless a considerable increase in productive forces and in the national income has been achieved over the five-year period. The national income increased by 34 per cent during the 1966-1970 five-year period and the total production of the socialized industry increased 49 per cent, that is, it was almost half again higher than in 1965. . . . Increasing industry's share in raising the national income to 58 per cent is proof of the structural transformations achieved in the national economy.

A certain irresolution in the appraisals of the preceding period can be noted in many parts of the report, and even in some of its specific statements. In one instance, for example, the report talks about "a certain acceleration in the rate of development" of the most vital industrial branches (with the implication that this rate of development was too slow), while in

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- (3) Since this charge pertains to the 1969-1970 period, it seems appropriate to list these increases: a circa 20 per cent average increase in the price of alcoholic beverages in September 1969 (see Polish Situation Report/74, Radio Free Europe Research [EERA], 17 September 1969, Item 6); an at least 50 per cent increase in the price of coffee at the end of May 1970 (see Polish SR/34, RFER [EERA], 5 June 1970, Item 5); and, of course, the general increase in consumer goods prices, which touched off the revolt on the Baltic coast in December 1970.

the very next sentence it mentions that the electromechanical industry output rose 80 per cent during the last two years (as opposed to the 49 per cent rise in industrial production as a whole). The production of the chemical industry (another of the most vital branches) increased by 89 per cent (as opposed to the 80 per cent outlined in the plan). Therefore, it is rather difficult to establish the reasons behind the restraint displayed in the general assessments contained in this report, which, at the same time, accentuated all specific achievements. The clearly evident lack of logic or consistency between the various arguments used in the report might stem from the fact that the latter was rewritten and edited a number of times in order to make it "palatable" to the broadest possible audience.

Of course, the report contains some statements which are indisputably accurate. Thus, for example, it talks about the underdevelopment of the industries producing consumer goods and about an "irrational limiting of the import of necessary equipment and raw materials," etc. Particularly justified seems to be the statement that:

A serious mistake in the import policy of that period was the attempt to eliminate the import of fodder grain which, with the absence of an appropriate growth in crop production, affected animal husbandry and the supply of meat and meat products to the domestic market, and could also result in a future reduction of the traditional export of high-quality meat products, a source of foreign currency profits.

There are also some statements which (per deductiam) disavow the construction of the previous five-year plan:

The merchant marine has fulfilled the tasks of the five-year plan. Its dead-weight tonnage increased by 52 per cent. Marine transport in terms of tons has increased on a similar scale. . . . However, the development of the merchant marine has not kept pace with the needs of Polish foreign trade and it checked the export of its services [emphasis supplied].

The special "sensitivity" on all matters connected with the internal market evident after December 1970 is clear in many portions of the report. For example, the report talks about neglect in investments in light industry, which caused "a very difficult social situation in many plants." The lowest increase in production (15.8 per cent) were registered in the food industry.

The report makes a negative assessment of the wastefulness in the raw material and construction fields and of the insufficient outlays for the development of the manufacturing industries.

For example, fuel consumption per unit of national income is 50 to 100 per cent higher in our country than in the highly developed countries, and steel consumption is about 20 per cent higher. A relatively high consumption of fuel, steel,

and other basic raw materials in relation to the produced national income is one of the negative structural characteristics of our economy.

Along with the earlier-cited criticism of the fodder policy, the report also criticizes other shortcomings in the development of agricultural production. It notes, for example, that "no appropriate economic decisions were undertaken to stimulate the farmers' interest in animal breeding." Here the authors of the report had in mind mainly the low purchase prices paid by the state per kilogram of live animal and the lack of state help with regard to fodder. The general assessment of the achievements in agriculture is explicitly critical.

The lower-than-planned vigor of agricultural production and the insignificant improvement of economic conditions, especially for animal breeding, resulted in increasing the agricultural population's income at a very limited pace and even contributed to a considerable fall in the last two years of the five-year plan.

The report is also critical of the results achieved by foreign trade. Although it notes the 57 per cent increase in the over-all foreign trade turnover, it expresses its disapproval of the structure of export (in which the dominant role was played by raw materials and agricultural products). It observes that a certain improvement in the balance of payments during the last few years has been achieved through "limiting the utilization of accessible and favorable long-term credits mainly for investment purposes." According to the authors of the report, full use was not made of the possibilities of co-operation with Poland's Comecon partners.

As far as investments are concerned, the report criticizes the fact that the increase in productional capacity achieved was below that outlined in the investment plan, while the outlays made for this purpose surpassed the plan by 7 per cent. Moreover, the excessive emphasis laid on the increases in capital goods further altered the relationship between Group A and Group B production of goods to the advantage of the former. However, in the light of their further statements, it is open to question whether the authors of the report really condemn the state of affairs brought about by the former leadership.

However, irrespective of weaknesses and too great a pressure occurring in the investment process, an additional powerful production potential was created in 1966-1970, and its appropriate utilization is one of the important reserves of our economy.

The authors' desire to find a golden mean between criticism of the former leadership and praise for the allegedly "correct" party line leads to statements which are — to say the least — muddling:

The growth of employment in our economy outside agriculture was higher than the growth of manpower and was achieved partly at the cost of the movement of manpower from agriculture and due to the more rapid professional activation of women than expected.

In the light of the obvious high surplus of labor which is "frozen" in the rural districts, and the permanent unemployment among women, this opinion is simply misleading.

The report criticizes the insufficient average rate of increase in the national income during the 1966-1970 period (6 per cent). In fact, Poland's average rate of increase in national income was generally lower during that period than in the other industrialized communist countries. In the final part of the subchapter under discussion, the authors of the report make the following appraisal:

An objective assessment of the implementation of the five-year plan for 1966-1970 proves both serious and lasting achievements and certain unfavorable phenomena: the emergence or growth of many disproportions whose results will affect our economy for many years. All the same, our economy has maintained its vitality and dynamism, although errors in economic policy created its unsatisfactory economic and social effectiveness.

2. Social Transformation in the Process of Building Socialism

This comparatively short subchapter of the report tries to paint a composite picture of the changes achieved in the social structure. In particular, the authors stress here the increase in the over-all number of workers, as well as the rise in the level of their education and professional qualifications. Altogether, over 70 per cent of the population now earns its living outside agriculture.

The report emphasized the role of workers' collectives in large plants, stating that "attitudes and opinions which are formed in such large plants have a great impact on the consciousness of the whole working class." This opinion could have been influenced by the experiences of the not-too-distant past, namely by the events of December 1970, when the ferment, as a rule, originated in such large combines or plants.

The report also duly notes that, during the last five years, nearly 150,000 persons with higher education entered the labor force. In 1970, the over-all number of such people passed the 600,000 mark. The stress laid on the interdependence between the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the labor force with higher education and the level of economic development reveals a certain change in attitude toward the intelligentsia.

This feedback is particularly strong at the present stage of development, when the production techniques and the management of industry and services must be increasingly strongly placed

on a scientific basis. This raises the objective need for a further development of the intelligentsia and a rise in its social status.

3. The Living and Social Conditions of the Population

This subchapter of the report presents a classical example of the earlier-mentioned lack of consistency in drawing conclusions and even obvious contradictions between various statements. This part bears the most evident signs of editorial efforts to make the report critical of specific errors or shortcomings of the old leadership, while at the same time maintaining the myth about the "infallibility" of party policy as such. While the first subchapter contains the earlier-cited negative appraisal of the excessive employment of the rural population and women, in this subchapter the authors of the report state that:

Among the achievements of the five-year period one should mention the creation of jobs, in conformity with the plan, for about 1,500,000 new employees. . . .

A considerable growth of employment meant an improvement in the living conditions of families. . . . Remunerative work was undertaken by women, who now constitute 40 per cent of all employees.

In the past five years, real wages increased by about 2 per cent annually, that is, at a rate which was hardly felt, especially since, in successive years, this growth was as follows: 1.3; 1.7; 1.3 per cent. At the same time, the growth of real wages varied among the individual occupational groups and categories of employees, and in recent years we noticed an actual stagnation of real wages and even a decrease among individual groups of employment.

The last part of the above-cited passage is particularly cautious in selecting data, because the authors of the report must have been well aware of the fact that, in the minds of most of the population, there was a general decrease in real incomes during the period in question.

The report contains perhaps the first really frank official admission of the deplorable state of affairs in housing construction, and the pertinent data, which reflects very badly on the former leadership. After stating that between 1969 and 1970, there was a setback in housing construction, as a result of which the number of people waiting for co-operative housing (4) increased from 300,000 in 1965 to 1,000,000 in 1970, the report said that:

- (4) Co-operative housing represents about 70 per cent of all the housing constructed in Poland. During the last four years, the average waiting period for an apartment lengthened to 10 years. The construction of new housing fell 34,000 apartments short of the target set for the five-year plan.

In terms of every 1,000 marriages contracted in a given year, the number of apartments delivered decreased from 853 in 1965 to 693 in 1970, and in urban areas from 1,280 in 1965 to 965 in 1970. Thus, in spite of the increased scope of construction, the unsatisfied demand for apartments grew.

This subchapter contains an especially large number of critical opinions. Among other things, it mentions the "social dissatisfaction" resulting from unsatisfactory work conditions, and difficulties encountered by secondary school graduates in finding employment. Rather significant in this respect is the conclusion of this subchapter of the report, which says:

The disregard in economic policy for the living and social conditions of the population, which checked their improvement and, in some cases, worsened these conditions, did not create a good climate for the growth of production activity and the social involvement of the working people. A general discouragement and lack of faith in the social and economic progress achieved by our country, and in the possibilities of personal advancement and improvement in one's material and professional status, was spreading.

A general assessment of changes in the field of the material conditions of the population proves the emergence of serious disproportions between social needs and the line of the economic policy. In addition to many other essential factors, this was the source of the events of December 1970.

4. Attempts to Change the System of Planning and Administration

Along with the earlier-discussed parts of the report, this subchapter attempts to justify the guidelines laid down by the fifth party congress, but criticizes their implementation. Thus, while the report approves the fifth congress demand for "working out and introducing within the next few years a broad economic system which would be free of internal contradictions," it says that the failure in implementing that task was due to:

the changes introduced without due regard for the goals of socioeconomic development;

the introduction of only partial solutions, in view of "the lack of a general outline of some comprehensive concept of change";

the febrile, overhasty introduction of changes in the system of management;

the dissipating of efforts in matters of secondary importance;

a lack of co-ordination in working out a reform of the system of management, and a failure to make the government responsible for the practical introduction of this reform.

Nevertheless, the above-cited charges, addressed to the former leadership, could easily turn against those who make them, especially in view of the delays and even a certain "damping down" of the current preparations for a general reform in the system of economy and management and the simultaneous forcing through of partial solutions. Currently, there is even a lack of the formerly existing general perspective (provided in the resolutions of the fifth party congress), because the sixth party congress failed to pass any resolutions with regard to the reform, leaving work on this matter to the commission especially selected for this purpose.

5. The Party's Socioeconomic Policy After December 1970

This subchapter represents a sort of register of the measures introduced during the year following the change of leadership in December 1970. (5) A part of the subchapter is devoted to the 1971 economic achievements and the tasks for 1972. (6) Perhaps it would be worth while to note that the report confirms a complete lack of progress in two spheres: in investment activities, and in labor productivity. Particularly in the sphere of labor productivity, there was a setback in comparison to the results of the last few years. There was also a regression in the relationship between labor productivity and the increase in the average wage. The pertinent indices between 1968 and 1971 were:

1968 -- 0.78

1969 -- 0.85

1970 -- 0.46

1971 -- 0.83 (after adjusting for the pay increases to the lowest-paid workers).

II. PARTY ACTIVITY IN THE FIELD OF THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE STATE, THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY, EDUCATION, AND CULTURE

Although this chapter is formally devoted to the entire period between the fifth and the sixth party congresses, the report lays particular stress on a discussion of developments in 1971, rather than in the previous two years. The report refers in particular to achievements in the sphere of

- (5) These measures have been thoroughly covered in Polish Situation Reports, RFER (EERA).
- (6) Both these subjects were discussed in Antoni Marek, "National Economic Plan for 1972," Polish Background Report/3, RFER (EERA), 11 February 1972, and -- by the same author -- "Plan Fulfillment in 1971," Polish BR/6, RFER (EERA), 23 February 1972.

the division of responsibility between the party and the administration in co-operation with other political parties and in the realization of the new concept of the Front of National Unity ("toward broadening and making more effective the representation of nonparty groups and Catholic circles"), as well as the concept of the Sejm ("activation of its control and legislative functions"). However, when discussing the problem of people's councils, the authors of the report note the difficulties encountered by the party, which is confronted by a style of work in these institutions which has, with time, grown rigidly bureaucratic.

But it must be stated that responsibility for the fact that the process of strengthening and mobilizing the people's councils has been too slow must be sought in the old patterns of thinking and the old habits still lingering among some people's council activists and some administration employees, along with the insufficient standard of qualifications of these people, coupled with bureaucracy, which is no rare phenomenon, particularly when dealing with citizens.

When commenting on the trade unions, the authors of the report once again refer to the standard formula: "The resolutions were right, but the implementation was wrong." As a result, "the activity of the trade unions did not fully correspond to the working class's expectations of the trade union movement."

The report devotes considerable space to discussing the problems of youth. In this case, its appraisal of the whole period between the two congresses is almost completely negative. The only indication of a silver lining is contained in the information that, in 1971, the CC "began preparations for a thorough general analysis of the situation and of the attitudes prevalent among the younger generation. . . ." The report also discusses the wide range of problems connected with education and the system of higher education. It expresses approval of the reform of the primary school system which has been carried out in recent years. The question which still remains to be solved is that of the secondary school system, and especially of adjusting this system to the requirements of the scientific and technical revolution. In spite of the expansion of the system of higher education, no improvement has been achieved in the sphere of "proper teaching cadres" and in furnishing institutes of higher education with adequate scientific equipment. Moreover, in 1971 some difficulties emerged over providing jobs for the graduates in certain fields of study. Just as in other social spheres, the wrong implementation of tasks hampered the development of education. There were also some difficulties over ideological problems in the social sciences:

However, an attitude of compromise toward revisionism and other bourgeois ideological tendencies, which persisted for some time, constituted a weakness of the party. The harmful effects of this situation made themselves felt later, when revisionistic elements launched an attack on the party and its ideological and organizational assumptions. This attack was rebuffed by the party.

The situation in the field of culture shaped up in a rather uneven way: "Its dominant feature was progress and development, but there also appeared some difficulties and signs of stagnation in certain creative spheres." Rather interesting is the opinion cited below, representing a sort of synthesis of party policy in the cultural sector:

Attempts to assess cultural development and promotion through economic means were false and dangerous to culture. Culture exerts an influence on socioeconomic progress, particularly in the era of the scientific-technological revolution, but this influence is not direct and should be viewed in the long-term perspective, and not on a day-to-day basis. Whenever it develops dynamically and without periods of stagnation, culture multiplies the creative potential of the entire nation in all fields of endeavor. In the long run, this is of great significance for the growth of the nation's internal strength and its international position.

In the final portion of this chapter, the report announces the preparation of a plan for the development of culture in Poland, covering the next decade.

C.. PARTY AND GOVERNMENT ACTIVITY IN THE INTERNATIONAL FIELD

The extremely brief part of the report devoted to foreign policy is the only one which does not contain any explicit criticism of the Gomulka leadership.. Although this section heralds the favorable development of relations with the Soviet Union, in particular, and other "socialist" states, in general during the three-year period, greater emphasis is again placed on the party's "international" activities during Gierek's year in office. In this respect, the report places particular stress on "the strengthening of fraternal contacts" with the USSR, the GDR, and Czechoslovakia in 1971. Elsewhere in the report -- in the section devoted to socioeconomic policy -- the improvement in Poland's economic situation in 1971 is closely linked with "improved bilateral relations in our fraternal co-operation with the Soviet Union" and the "much more favorable conditions for the development of economic and scientific-technological co-operation with the German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia." Although these passages refer to the economic assistance granted Poland in 1971 by these states, the terminology clearly implies that the nature of the bilateral relationship with the three neighbors had been somewhat less than satisfactory in previous years.

Two other points of interest in the international section of the document pertain to Poland's advances toward West Germany and the PUWP's attitude toward the Chinese leadership. On the former score, the report states that "the steps taken [by Poland] conducive to a normalization of relations with the GFR" were but a part of "the joint policies of the Warsaw Pact," the obvious implication being that Poland was neither alone, nor out of step with its allies in making the approach to Bonn. As regards the Chinese Party, the document refers to the party's "consistent attitude toward the anti-Soviet line of the

Chinese leadership." (If anything, both the number and the vehemence of Polish attacks on the Chinese regime have increased since the change of leadership.)

D.. THE PARTY

This chapter -- perhaps the most interesting in the entire report -- contains some statements whose wording leads to a better understanding of the very essence of the recently introduced changes. It also offers some clues to the specific mentality of Edward Gierek, who until fairly recently was still willingly accepted as a "leading pragmatist" among Polish communists. In any case, this chapter proves that a pragmatic approach in the sphere of the economy and the administration does not necessarily also apply to party affairs.

At the very opening of this chapter, the authors of the report make a statement which clearly contradicts the other, farther-reaching, appraisals of the same subject in the report.

The decisions concerning the improvement of the situation of the lowest-paid people and those with large families, and the restoration of food prices back to the pre-13 December 1970 level removed the real reasons for social conflict.

However, it transpires from subsequent statements (below) that the above-mentioned "social conflicts" were by no means created only by neglect and error in price and wage policy, but that they resulted from a complex chain of reasons, among which the degeneration of the party itself played a considerable role.

The Central Committee of our party realizes its responsibility for having failed, in the initial period of its activity, to prevent autocracy and the infringement of the Leninist principles of work in the leading party units, the Politburo, and the CC secretariat. In the Central Committee itself, an unwholesome atmosphere arose which consisted in the acceptance of cliquish methods of administration and the conviction of the purposelessness of opposing negative facts, which paralyzed the activity of CC members.

During the political crisis in December 1970, the CC overcame these difficulties, and with a sense of responsibility to the party and nation, made the necessary organizational and other decisions at the seventh and eighth plenums.

This last statement appears only a few paragraphs after the earlier-cited statement, which ascribed the December riots to purely "social causes." The fact that such contradictory appraisals are presented in the same report logically stems from the manner in which the new leadership (and not this particular leadership alone) interprets the role of the party in the community. To wit: the party as a whole must always be a disciplined executor of the instructions issuing from superior authority, even when this is contrary to -- later recognized by the party itself -- social interests.

The report also notes that, even after the change of leadership, the party could hardly lay claim to any sense of unity:

The time of overcoming the crisis, the first months of 1971, proved that in addition to the overwhelming majority of party members devoted to its cause and behaving in accordance with the principles of democratic centralism there were also people in the party who did not know how, and did not want, to commit themselves in difficult situations in favor of correct issues and principles, to the party's decisions, and did not subordinate themselves to party discipline, yielding instead to demagoguery.

Such references were presumably addressed not only to various factional elements in the party, but also to those PUWP members who had solidly sided with the demands of the working masses. This failure of certain parts of the party rank and file to submit to "discipline" is linked with the former leadership's cadre policies. In particular, the excessive growth in party membership is criticized:

The December events once again emphatically confirmed that growth in the number of party members is not always conclusive proof of support for the party's policy and its bond with the masses, that the party's strength is not simply dependent on the number of its members. The party drew the necessary conclusions.

These "conclusions" led, among other things, to the expulsion or the crossing off from the party membership list of 110,000 persons during the first three quarters of 1971, and to the emphasis on accepting into the party "stabilized, highly qualified workers."

In that part of the report devoted to the achievements of the last few months and to future tasks, two main subjects are most prominent: the problem of strengthening so-called internal party democracy and that of intensifying ideological activity. As regards the former, there are also some interesting formulations on the party's information policies:

The standard of and the flow of information in the party about the decisions taken, the tasks outlined, social facts, and political feelings are of primary importance for the consolidation of the party's political unity and the bond among its units and members. In 1971, great progress was achieved in this field. Information for members of the central and local units and party activists has increased considerably. The CC secretariat decided to accelerate and simplify the flow of information from large industrial units to the voivodship committees and the Central Committee, as well as information from the CC directly to these units' party organizations.

The report places particular emphasis on the need to strengthen ideological activity, one motivated by the desire to repair the neglect of the last few years.

The party's work was characterized by one-sided economizing, separation from the masses, and subjectivism.

At present, we still have to overcome the consequences of narrow pragmatism and inconsistency regarding revisionism and other anti-Marxist views.

For this purpose, the authorities have already reactivated the Higher School of Social Sciences (of the party) and broadened the network of party schools, which employs about 100,000 instructors (including free-lance lecturers). The activities of the mass information media receive very favorable appraisal in the report.

The press, radio, and TV are an important link in the ideological front. The mass communication media played their part in frustrating the expectations of forces which, in the December crisis, saw a chance of undermining the leading role of the party in our country. This testifies to the correct party attitude of most of the editorial personnel of the press, radio, and TV.

Thus, the press, radio, and television, which faithfully stood by the former leadership to the very end have ironically received a grateful pat on the back in the report. Although even party officials have been taken to task for the "errors" committed, the journalists, who justified or defended past policies and -- in effect -- prevented these "errors" from being revealed receive praise for their conduct. That officials have been held accountable for previous shortcomings is confirmed in the data on the personnel changes in the party apparatus cited in this chapter of the report. Thus, as a result of the last report and election campaign, people who were elected to these bodies for the first time represent 46 per cent of the local labor union committee members, 20 per cent of the district committee members, and 39 per cent of the members of the voivodship committees.

The leading cadres (in industry, administration, etc.), have also been extensively renewed. In October 1971, the people who had held their posts for less than three years represented over 50 per cent of the leading central cadres and nearly 50 per cent of the leading cadres on the voivodship level. These figures apply mainly to the people who were appointed to their present posts after the 1968 purges and also to various party go-getters who, between 1969 and 1970, were given a special "push" by various elements within the party leadership.

Antoni Marek