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EAST EUROPE

Poland/14
29 February 1968

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The Eleventh Plenum

The two-day debate of the CC PUWP 11th Plenum, devoted mainly to problems of foreign trade, ended on February 28 with the passage of a resolution on further development of export production and an increase of foreign trade turnover. Radio Warsaw (February 27 and 28) reported fully on the debate.

After the formal opening of the session by PUWP First Secretary Wladyslaw Gomulka, Foreign Trade Minister Witold Trampeczynski opened the debate on the Politburo's report on the state of Poland's foreign trade in the years 1966-67 and its further development.

Although plans for 1966/67 were exceeded both for exports and imports and the overall balance of trade has improved, the structure of Poland's exports failed to improve sufficiently, namely, exports of machines and installations fell short of set targets, stated the report. Foreign trade turnover with "socialist" countries in the years 1966/67 increased by 13.3 per cent, and their share in Poland's foreign trade reached 64.7 per cent in 1967 (of which 94.5 per cent was with Comecon countries). This increase was determined by a considerable expansion of trade with the Soviet Union (21 per cent increase in 1967 over 1965), which accounted for about 55 per cent of Poland's trade with "socialist countries" in 1967 (only 51 per cent in 1965). The report pointed to considerable difficulties in trade with some socialist countries but also stressed that exports to these countries consist in greater part of consumer goods of industrial origin and that the share of machines in these exports increased considerably (to 50.2 per cent in 1967).

As to trade with "capitalist" countries, it accounted in

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1967 for 35.3 per cent of Poland's overall foreign trade turnover, an increase of 13.1 per cent (over the results of 1966). Moreover, imports in the years 1966/67 increased at a faster rate than exports, and the deficit in trade turnover (of visible goods) was only eased by an improved balance of services. The report blamed these unfavorable results on the adverse price structure on Western markets and on restrictive practices of the Common Market. Export of machines to "capitalist" countries increased in 1967 by 28.4 per cent over 1965 (a low basis for comparison, the report admitted). But while machines constituted 11.6 per cent of exports to the entire "capitalist" sphere, that share for advanced "capitalist" countries was only 4 per cent, and as little as 2.8 per cent for Common Market countries. The export plans for machines to these countries failed to be met in the years 1966/67.

A considerable part of the Politburo report was devoted to the unsatisfactory state of affairs in production for export which, it was said, had to be adjusted better to the requirements of foreign markets. The report also admitted that while food and agricultural produce play a decisive role in Poland's exports and will do so in the future, they cannot be expected to influence an increased inflow of hard currency. Thus, the central problem remains to assure the adequate increase of exports of machines and installations and of consumer goods of industrial origin.

The report concluded with a call for improvements in industrial production, introduction of technical improvements, foreign licenses, imported technology, cooperation and specialization with foreign partners. It also called for new forms of cooperation between industrial and foreign trade organizations and for more material incentives designed to improve the quality of goods. As to foreign trade agencies, they should improve their cooperation with the domestic industry and their methods of work on foreign markets.

The debate on the Politburo's report was opened by Foreign Trade Minister Witold Trampczynski, who praised what he called the general progress in foreign trade and put the blame for the shortcomings on industry and also the inadequate analysis of foreign markets.

The debate was summed up by Gomulka, who stated with emphasis that since the results of foreign trade reflect on the entire economy, both industry and administration should join forces in making improvements; obsolete machinery should be eliminated, and factories producing for export should enjoy wider prerogatives in direct trade with foreign firms. Gomulka also stressed that "socialist" countries are Poland's main partners in foreign trade and therefore both Polish industry and the foreign trade apparatus should concentrate their attention in that direction.

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The debate placed in a more sober light the real state of Poland's foreign trade than did the rather surprisingly optimistic appraisal of Witold Trampeczynski earlier in the year (cf. Polish Situation Report, Radio Free Europe Research, January 4). The Eleventh Plenum dealt with the problem of foreign trade in a broader context, linking it closely to problems of industrial production and the organization of the entire machinery of foreign trade.

Regarding the second point of the agenda, the Plenum adopted a resolution "on the convocation in the fourth quarter of 1968 of the Fifth Party Congress, and on the establishment of a Congress Commission," Radio Warsaw reported on February 28.

This rather broad definition of the date of the Congress may be explained with at least two reasons. First, the Politburo may not feel certain of completing all the preparations for a festive congress (it will mark the 50th anniversary of the existence of the Polish Communist Party) and would like to avoid possible adverse speculations about last minute postponements of the date. Second, and perhaps more important, the Polish Party may reckon with the possibility of a Communist summit late in 1968, depending on the outcome of the current Budapest consultative meeting, and would not want the two events to coincide.

Kliszko's Speech in Budapest

The chairman of the Polish delegation to the Budapest consultative meeting of Communist and workers' Parties, Politburo member and CC Secretary Zenon Kliszko, called for the convocation of an international conference of such Parties "possibly at the end of 1968 or in January 1969," Radio Warsaw special correspondent Ignacy Krasicki reported from Budapest on January 27.

"The conference should work out the new bases of the unity of the Communist movement corresponding to the present stage of its development," Kliszko was quoted by Krasicki. "This unity," Kliszko continued, "should be built in spite of the existing differences and divergences. Unity should not presuppose unanimity of all the Parties on all matters. A confrontation of views carried out in the spirit of internationalism should lead to the working out of a common stand."

Krasicki reported that Kliszko's speech provoked "great interest in Budapest," while Radio Warsaw stressed the next day that this speech had been regarded by Radio Budapest as "thus far the most important statement."

Radio Warsaw also reported (on January 28) both that "the overwhelming majority of the delegates" are for a "speedy convening" of the world Communist conference and that "all the

speakers" had thus far supported this idea. The exception, Radio Warsaw stressed, was the chairman of the delegation of the Rumanian Communist Party, who thought that the matter of the convocation of such a conference "is not mature yet," hence the Rumanian delegation "is against the convocation of the world conference at that early date."

Loga-Sowinski for a Round Table Conference of Trade Unions

Ignacy Loga-Sowinski, chairman of the (Polish) Trade Union Central Council, appealed for the convocation of a round table conference of representatives of trade unions of "socialist and capitalist countries," Radio Warsaw reported on February 28.

Loga-Sowinski was speaking at the 24th Congress of the Soviet Trade Unions in Moscow, in which he is participating as chairman of the Polish TU delegation. He was thus seconding his Czechoslovak opposite number, Miroslav Pastirijk. Both trade union leaders called for unity of European trade unions, "socialist and capitalist," TASS reported on February 28.

As quoted by the Soviet agency, Loga-Sowinski stated that the "split in the European trade union movement could not be continued forever and should not be an obstacle to the restoration of united actions." He added that "mutual relations between trade union centers must be based on principles which, despite differences in views, will allow them to pool efforts in the struggle for social progress and peace in Europe, which are threatened by West German revanchism."

Students and Writers Protest Censorship

To the list of forbidden plays has been added Noc listopadowa (The November Night) by Stanislaw Wyspianski, a neo-romantic playwright of the turn of this century. Bernard Margueritte reported from Warsaw for Le Monde (February 28). The play evoked episodes from the Polish uprising against Russia of 1830; perhaps the censors might have been afraid of an audience reaction similar to that to Dziady (cf. Polish SR, RFER, February 5 and 19). The piquancy of the situation is increased by the fact that the play was about to be staged by -- of all the theaters -- the Stanislaw Wyspianski State Silesian Theater in Katowice.

In the meantime, Margueritte reported, students and intellectuals in Warsaw collected 3,154 signatures under a petition demanding the return of Dziady to the stage.

Le Monde's correspondent also reported that interest in those circles centers around the extraordinary meeting of the Warsaw Branch of the Polish Writers' Union scheduled for February 29.

Probably in protest against the Party's cultural policy, two women intellectuals, Dr. Anna Pawelczynska and Prof. Helena Eilstein, left the Party recently, Margueritte reported. Pawelczynska is a sociologist who until 1964 was director of the Public Opinion

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Poll Center at Radio Warsaw, while Eilstein is philosopher and member of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Pawelczynska and Eilstein are not the only intellectuals to leave the Party recently. Margueritte reported earlier (Le Monde, February 1 and 2) that economist Prof. Wlodzimierz Brus and sociologist Prof. Zygmunt Bauman ceased to be Party members (it was not clear whether they were expelled or left on their own).

East-West Contacts

Representatives of eight countries met in Leningrad on February 26 to work out navigation rules for busy shipping lanes in the Baltic, Reuter reported, quoting a TASS dispatch from Moscow on the same day. Denmark, France, East and West Germany, Norway, Poland, the Soviet Union, and Sweden were represented.

The 5th International Travel Exhibition, designed to promote international tourism, was opened on February 26 in Vienna's Palais Palfy by Austrian Trade Minister Otto Mitterer, an RFE Special from Vienna reported on the same day. Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Rumania, Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union are among the 21 countries participating.

The European meeting of former combatants and former prisoners of Nazi concentration camps will take place in Rome on March 2-3, Radio Warsaw reported on February 28. The Polish delegation will include Minister Wlodzimierz Lechowicz, Dr. Czeslaw Pilichowski, and Prof. Alfons Klafkowski.

The well-known Polish musical ensemble MW-2 arrived in France for a tour including Rouen, Lyon, Toulouse and Paris, Radio Warsaw reported on February 26.

A group of French specialists arrived in Warsaw on February 27, Radio Warsaw reported the same day. They will hold talks on an agreement on transport between Poland and France.

The Polish firm "Metalexport" and the French firm "Antex" signed a contract on cooperation in production of various machines, Radio Warsaw reported on February 26. The products will be sold under common trade mark.

According to an RFE Special from Vienna of February 26, Austrian Education Ministry Foreign Relations Department Head Dr. Franz Karasek arrived in Warsaw on a private visit (cf. SR, February 26).