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Polish Delegation to the Budapest Meeting

The Polish delegation to the consultative conference of the Communist and workers' Parties starting in Budapest today is composed of: Politburo member and CC Secretary Zenon Kliszko; CC Secretary Artur Starewicz; CC member Jozef Czesak, head of the CC Foreign Department; and CC member Andrzej Werblan, head of the CC Science and Education Department.

With the exception of Czesak, all these delegates can be considered as Party ideologists. This again seems to indicate that the meeting has a truly consultative character and that it is unlikely to produce important decisions. As a matter of fact, the only man -- as far as the Polish delegation is concerned -- who would be authorized to take any such decision is Kliszko.

These conclusions seem to be supported by the composition of other delegations, notably the Soviet one led by Mikhail Suslov.

On the eve of the conference, Radio Warsaw commentator Aleksander Woydt stated that the tasks of the conference are "neither simple nor easy." He stressed "the variety of opinions and the dissimilarity of experiences and views formed in different conditions of action" of the Parties represented at the Budapest meeting. (Farther difficulties were also reported by Milika Sundic, Radio Zagreb's special correspondent who, on February 25, said that many Parties had at the last moment included "considerable supplements in their views.")

Under these circumstances, one may wonder whether the rather optimistic prediction of the PUWP leader, Wladyslaw Gomulka, made in Prague on February 22, will come true. Speaking during the ceremonial commemorations of the "February events" of 1948, Gomulka expressed the hope that the Budapest meeting would advance

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"a joint program of action of the struggle against imperialism." He said that such a program "can come into being only in open Party discussion marked by mutual esteem and effort to unite the standpoints, but not evading controversial questions. The differences of opinions of individual Parties," Gomulka continued, "cannot and must not weaken that which is most important, i.e. their international unity." Gomulka stressed the importance of economic cooperation between the "socialist" states, maintaining that it was "not only an economic but a political necessity. Such cooperation constitutes a fundamental factor consolidating and cementing political unity of socialist states." Gomulka also attacked strongly the "dangerous policy" of the "government" of the FRG, the content of which was said to be "anti-Communism, revenge, and revisionism." "In the light of this reality," he continued, "we can see how important and necessary is the strengthening of our solidarity, the unity of the socialist states and the cohesion of the international Communist and workers movement." (Radio Warsaw, February 22).

While Gomulka avoided in his Prague speech any reference to China or to nationalism as the "main danger" to the Communist movement -- the definition of the Polish theoretical Party monthly Nowe Drogi (February 1968) -- another member of the Polish Politburo, Marshal Marian Spychalski, declared on February 23 that "we reject and condemn with determination all attempts at disrupting this [Communist] unity, above all nationalism and chauvinism." Spychalski was speaking in Moscow on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Soviet Armed Forces where -- as he admitted -- he was "greatly honored" to act on behalf of the "representatives of the friendly socialist countries, their Communist and workers Parties and their fraternal armies."

East-West Contacts

Two student theaters, one from Warsaw and one from Wroclaw, will represent Poland at the International Festival of Students' Theaters in Leeds, Great Britain, February 26-March 12, Radio Warsaw reported on February 23.

The Director of the Austrian Department for Cultural and Scientific Cooperation with Foreign Countries, Dr. Franz Karazek, arrived in Warsaw on February 25 at the invitation of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Radio Warsaw reported on the same day.

By decision of the Austrian Federal President, the Austrian Cross of Honor for Merits in Science and Arts, First Class, was awarded to Polish professor and German studies expert Roman Karst, an RFE Special from Vienna reported on February 23.

A Polish commercial mission arrived in Las Palmas, Canary Islands, on February 22 to study chances of increasing trade between Poland and Spain, an UPI dispatch from Las Palmas reported on February 23.

A three-man trade delegation from Poland has arrived in

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Ankara to discuss ways and means of increasing trade between Poland and Turkey, an RFE Special from Istanbul reported on February 23.

A program for increasing trade exchanges and economic cooperation between Tunisia and Poland was worked out in week-long talks between Tunisian officials and a Polish delegation which left Tunis for home on February 24, a Reuter dispatch from Tunis reported on February 25.