

MUNICH, January 18, 1962 (Research and Evaluation Note - Polish Unit) -- The most recent issue of "Nowa Kultura" received here confirms the reported dismissal of Stefan Zolkiewski as editor-in-chief of the Polish cultural magazine. Zolkiewski's deputy, Alicja Lisiecka is also missing from "Nowa Kultura"'s masthead. It has been reliably reported that both Zolkiewski and Lisiecka have been out of favor with the powers that be in the Polish Party for some months. The incident which finally coalesced the Polish Party's displeasure to the point of removing the two was an enthusiastic review of Jacek Bochenski's book "Divine Julius" (Caesar) in which the author -- according to Lisiecka's review -- presents the "political and philosophical history of the achieving of power by a dictator". Because of the implicit analogy to current power-political realities in Poland the book, not unexpectedly, was poorly received in Party circles. It had, however, been submitted to "Nowa Kultura" in a literary competition.

The new editor-in-chief is Hieronim Michalski, one of the previous deputy editors. Two other staff members' names are missing from the January masthead. They are Julian Rogozenski and Zbigniew Zabicki. They do not appear to have been replaced as yet.

According to Olsen (NYT, December 17, 1961) "the dismissal and its timing are being appraised in literary circles here in connection with a public debate on freedom in a Communist society", published in "Nowa Kultura" on 3 December 1961. The latter discussion, which undoubtedly contributed to the decision to change the journal's editorial board, was carried to greater length than anything published earlier in "Przegląd Kulturalny".

It also should be mentioned that a bit earlier, still before the 22nd Congress, "Nowa Kultura" published a controversial article by Wladyslaw Bienkowski on "forming the ideological attitudes of youth" (issue of 17 September 1961). It was only the first installment, but a continuation never appeared.^(X)

^(X) The full text of Bienkowski's paper appeared later in "Kultura i Społeczeństwo" No.4/61 quarterly of the Polish Academy of Sciences (also edited by Zolkiewski). "Kultura i Społeczeństwo" reprinted the first installment of nine pages from "Nowa Kultura" and added 26 pages in continuation.

As far as Zolkiewski is concerned Olsen also states that rumors of his forthcoming resignation (or dismissal) were current for some three months before his removal.

Alicja Lisiecka was one of the most active and controversial personalities of the board of "Nowa Kultura". She was reported to have incurred the Party's displeasure "for having made 'Nowa Kultura' too hermetic and too uncommunicative". Less can be said of the other two dismissals from the board. Julian Rogozinski, probably the best contemporary translator of French literature, joined the editorial board of "Nowa Kultura" on 12 June 1960. Recently he published there a series of pen-portraits of contemporary writers and poets. This series was intended as a sort of aid for teachers of contemporary Polish literature in schools. He also wrote essays on the prose of the last five years, 1956-1961. Zbigniew Zabicki was on the editorial board since 31 July 1960. For years he wrote reviews of newly published novels and poems. Recently in "Nowa Kultura" he began a "discussion of the character and style of Socialist mass culture", a most sensitive issue.

The new editor-in-chief, Hieronim Michalski, a literary critic, was a member of the editorial board of "Trybuna Literacka", the supra-Stalinist weekly literary supplement to "Trybuna Ludu", established by Leon Kruczkowski and boycotted by all the journalists and writers of good repute. From 1959 Michalski was editor-in-chief in the State Publishing Institute (Panstwowy Instytut Wydawniczy) and from 1961 deputy-in-chief of "Nowa Kultura". Already then he was rumored to be slated to replace Zolkiewski, but almost a year has lapsed before this materialized.

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