

RADIO FREE EUROPE *Research*

EAST EUROPE

Poland

31 January 1966

SITUATION REPORT

- * Speeches of Polish Delegates at Italian and Finnish CP Congresses
- * Soviet and Yugoslav Party Visits to Poland
- * Polish Communist Reporter Rebuked by American Comrade
- * Miscellaneous Trade News Items

Speeches of Polish Delegates at Italian and Finnish CP Congresses

"No ideological or political differences can or should be an obstacle on the road to unity on the question of aid to Vietnam," Zenon Kliszko, Polish delegate to the Italian CP Congress, stated in Rome on January 29. Quoting his speech, Radio Warsaw also referred to another important point which Kliszko had discussed -- the German problem. "The interests of peace in Europe," he was quoted as saying, require preventing "any form of armament of West Germany, the only European state whose government bases its policy on territorial claims vis-a-vis other states and on a tendency toward revenge." Needless to say, the speech also contained the usual references to "US imperialism" and "aggression" in Vietnam.

What Kliszko failed to mention was Church-state relations, a problem equally important and burning to both the Italian and the Polish CP. Kliszko's omission seems important and conspicuous for at least two reasons: 1) he is in charge of Church matters at the Politburo level, and his trip to Rome caused some speculation about a possible "mission" to the Vatican (cf. SR January 24); 2) a few days before Kliszko spoke, the Italian Party leader Luigi Longo, in his report to the Congress on January 25, had declared himself against state-sponsored atheism, and his statement was picked up by world (except for Soviet-bloc) information media. Of the Communist radio stations, only Zagreb reported -- on January 27 -- Longo's statement on religion. The Yugoslav agency went so far as to comment that Longo's statement on the complex of matters connected with religion even overshadowed such important issues as China.

31 January 1966

The only passage in Kliszko's speech which could be read as a reference -- albeit a veiled one -- to the problem of cooperation with the Church and/or Catholicism read as follows:

"All Polish efforts in the international arena aim at uniting all the forces in Europe for the purpose of security and peace, at cooperating with everyone who realistically appraises the situation and draws conclusions from the lessons of recent history" (emphasis supplied).

To anyone who has closely followed the recent propaganda campaign against the Polish Episcopate, the implication is clear. It is precisely the charge of an unrealistic appraisal of the situation by the Episcopate and of the failure to draw the proper conclusions from the lessons of recent history that the press and radio has repeatedly voiced. Hence Kliszko seems to be saying that the Polish Communists cannot cooperate with the Polish Episcopate, but are willing to cooperate with other Catholic circles and/or bodies (the Vatican included?) that see the situation more realistically than do the Polish bishops.

In Helsinki, another Polish Politburo member and CC secretary, Ryszard Strzelecki, heading a Party delegation to the Fourteenth Congress of the Finnish CP, took the floor yesterday to repeat what Kliszko had said in Rome on the subject of Vietnam, unity of action, US "aggression," and the "aggressive policy of the Bonn revenge-seekers, supported by US imperialism. For the benefit of his Finnish audience, Strzelecki also included a reference to common Polish-Finnish "concern about security of Europe, and in particular about peace in the Baltic area."

Strzelecki and at least one other Polish delegate, CC deputy member and first secretary of the Szczecin Voivodship Party Committee, Antoni Walaszek, left Warsaw for Helsinki by air on January 26. Considering the fact that the Congress started on January 29, the early arrival of the Polish delegation seems rather unusual.

Soviet and Yugoslav Party Visits to Poland

At least two groups of Party workers made a study tour of Poland recently, both upon the invitation of the CC, PUWP, Trybuna Ludu reported on January 26 and 27.

A Yugoslav group headed by Rista Jovanovic, deputy secretary of the Executive Committee of the LCY, toured Warsaw, Gdansk and Bydgoszcz, where they "held talks" with voivodship and district Party workers. While in Warsaw, the group met the head of the CC Organization Department, Edward Babiuch, and the head of the CC Planning and Finance Department, Franciszek Blinowski, as well as "other Party workers." The group left Poland for Yugoslavia on January 28.

The Soviet group, headed by Pavel Sizov, head of the CC, CPSU Department of Light and Food Industry, made a similar tour of the provinces (Lodz and Cracow) and held talks with "Party and economic workers." On January 26 it was received in Warsaw by Politburo deputy member and CC secretary Boleslaw Jaszczuk.

31 January 1966

Though these visits were not of any great intrinsic importance, they do serve as a reminder that such contacts between Polish and other Soviet-bloc (including the Yugoslav) Parties have been continuing as usual in the recent past (for the last review of Polish-Soviet Party exchanges, cf. SR November 4).

Polish Communist Reporter Rebuked by American Comrade

"At a time when thousands of workers are striking.... your paper finds it proper to publish an article which condemns and criticizes the chief leader of their union and ridicules their demands," Harry Yaris, Warsaw correspondent of the American Communist weekly The Worker complained in a letter to the editor of Zycie Warszawy, the mass-circulation "independent" daily, on January 12.

Yaris was referring to the recent transit strike in New York City and to the late Michael J. Quill, head of the Transport Workers Union, who died on January 28. The article in question, published by Zycie Warszawy on January 5, was written by Wieslaw Gornicki, PAP correspondent in New York, who is also a contributor to a few Polish papers.

"It is difficult to write in a balanced way about the strike itself or -- strictly speaking -- about the guy who conceived it," Gornicki wrote. "Needless to say, Mike Quill is a professional gangster just like the chairman of the Teamsters' Union, Jimmy Hoffa, or the chairman of the Eastern waterfront longshoremen's union, Thomas Gleason," the Polish Communist reporter continued. He also explained that these "venerable chairmen," whose annual salaries are more than 100,000 dollars, oscillate irresponsibly between supporting "ultra-reactionary, almost Birchist" principles of foreign policy and putting forward "fantastic demands" which find no justification either in the "economic interests of a given labor group or in any rational proposition." As if anticipating possible objections to this "heresy", Gornicki stated bluntly: "Only a very primitive and most incompetent observer belonging to our part of the world could be happy about the power enjoyed by the gangs of Quill or Hoffa."

Miscellaneous Trade News Items

1) Poland and East Germany signed on January 25 a trade protocol for 1966 which provides for a 12 per cent increase in the exchange of goods between the two countries over last year, Radio Warsaw reported on January 26. Mainly responsible for the increase in trade this year is the exchange of products in the metal-processing industry, said Radio Warsaw. The present protocol is based on the long-term (1966-70) GDR-Polish trade treaty signed on December 30 (cf. SR January 10).

2) Comecon secretary Nikolai Fadeyev stopped over in Warsaw and was received on January 26 by Polish vice-premier Piotr Jaroszewicz, Radio Warsaw reported the following day. Discussed were problems to be dealt with during the forthcoming meeting of the Executive Committee of Comecon scheduled for next month, Radio Warsaw explained. No further details of the discussion between the two officials were given.

31 January 1966

3) A French section has been established at the Polish Chamber of Foreign Trade, Radio Warsaw reported on January 26. The section is to cooperate with French institutions dealing with the promotion and development of French-Polish trade, and particularly with the Polish section set up recently at the France-Eastern Europe Committee. In the present favorable climate for Polish-French exchanges, it is expected, according to Radio Warsaw, that new possibilities will arise for an increase of Polish exports to France, as well as for purchases of French goods necessary for the development of the Polish economy.

4) A Polish delegation of 12 industrial experts is currently touring French enterprises to explore the possibilities of greater exchanges than those foreseen in the Franco-Polish trade agreement of last October, reported an RFE Special from Paris on January 28. The Poles are to pay technical visits to more than 50 French enterprises. The visit of the Polish industrial delegation follows a tour of Poland last November by a group of French chemical industry experts, the report added.

Miscellaneous Trade News Items

1) Poland and East Germany signed on January 25 a trade protocol for 1966 which provides for a 12 per cent increase in the exchange of goods between the two countries over last year. Radio Warsaw reported on January 26. Mainly responsible for the increase in trade this year is the exchange of products in the metal-processing industry, said Radio Warsaw. The present protocol is based on the long-term (1965-70) GDR-Polish trade treaty signed on December 30 (cf. 28 January 10).

2) Comcon secretary Nikolai Babayev stopped over in Warsaw and was received on January 25 by Polish vice-premier Piotr Jaroslawski. Radio Warsaw reported the following day. Discussed were problems to be dealt with during the forthcoming meeting of the Executive Committee of Comcon scheduled for next month. Radio Warsaw explained. No further details of the discussion between the two officials were given.