

Munich, 8 July 1963 (Target Area Research and Analysis, Polish Unit/kz). -- The thunderbolts thrown at the recent 13th Plenum (July 4 thru 6) of the Polish Party, were not entirely unexpected. There were recently at least three indications of the nature of things to come. First of all there was the winding up of two literary weeklies, "Nowa Kultura" and "Przegląd Kulturalny", and their replacement in mid-June by a weekly simply called "Kultura". The new weekly was to be devoted to "socialist" culture, i.e. it was addressed to a broader circle of recipients, and was to advocate creativeness which is "actively engaged in the cause of building socialism". (The other weeklies catered mostly for a narrow circle of intellectuals.) The second indication came from CC Secretary Ryszard Strzelecki who, at a meeting of the Warsaw Voivodship Party Committee, said that culture and education were as important in socialist construction as industrial production. He put particular stress on the role of mass information media (radio, TV, films, press, books, theater), since the "enemy imperialist centers" did not spare any financial means in poisoning Polish life and delaying the ripening of its society. The speech of Tadeusz Galinski, Culture and Arts Minister, of June 26 also hinted that changes were in the air. Referring to the new weekly "Kultura", he said it would be based on "Marxist criteria". He also stressed the particular role of literary and cultural criticism which should make possible a "proper selection" of the works for mass circulation. Such criticism, Galinski said, should not concentrate on form but on the "socialist" content.

First Party Secretary Wladyslaw Gomulka's report, delivered at the Plenum dealt with a wider variety of problems, including science, education and the Church. While, on the one hand, he indirectly admitted the failure of Communist ideology in Polish cultural life, conversely he had high praise for the effectiveness of the influence of Western culture (he singled out New York and Paris) and of Western stations broadcasting in Polish (cf. Strzelecki above).

The ideological work of the Party, Gomulka said, consists also in propaganda-educational activities aimed at explaining to the working masses Party policy, winning their support for this policy, and in shaping their views, way of thinking and the style of life according to socialist principles. Conditions had already been created to achieve these aims. 40 per cent of the Polish population are under 19, those of up to 34 constitute 60 per cent. The social basis for bourgeois ideology had narrowed, thus establishing "objective conditions" for firm socialist consciousness. Nationalization of means of production, with the exception of agriculture, democratic people's power, Poland's belonging to the socialist camp, and "our struggle for peace" determine this consciousness. However, bourgeois ideology has not been routed out, and it still worked from two sources: 1) internal reactionary forces, which find their support in the Church hierarchy, 2) external imperialist forces, "making ample use of the services of reactionary emigrants".

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Attack on Church

In the fight between two social and economic systems, the socialist world and the capitalist world, every government, every social body, "including religious organizations", must take a clear stand. Here Gomulka singled out the Polish Episcopate for an attack on the subject of peace. According to the established propaganda line, he stated that the Episcopate's position on peace was not identical with the one taken by the late Pope John in the encyclical "Pacem in terris". The passage selected by Gomulka for attack was contained in the Episcopal letter dated 18 April 1963, and it read as follows: "Those who brought upon the earth tremendous suffering and unhappiness and sank the world in an abyss of wars, in the first place fought against the Gospel of Christ and against His Church, because they knew that the firmest adversary of their crime was the Christian religion. It was they who brought a blood bath upon the world in the 20th century. It is to be feared that they are preparing a new, more terrible war, an atomic war."

To which Gomulka replied: "Instead of making a distinction between real champions and opponents of peace, the bishops are making a distinction according to religious belief, and are shielding those who, with the words 'Gott mit uns' on their lips, were throwing the world into the abyss of war." Gomulka also tried to convince the bishops that wars are not born of the "original sin" of man but of imperialism.

(A few hours after his return to Warsaw last Sunday, Cardinal Wyszyński advised Gomulka to mind his own business. "Our Polish bishops have to deal with the Lord's business -- that is the task assigned to them. Other people have to concentrate on their own jobs and preoccupations".)

There was also a reference to the Sino-Soviet rift, although without mentioning any names. The main condition for the success of the policy of peaceful coexistence, Gomulka said, was "cooperation on the part of all anti-imperialist forces, and above all the unity of the socialist camp in all basic matters connected with the fight against the policy of aggression and war, for general disarmament and peace."

No Ideological Coexistence

Turning to the ideological issue, Gomulka stressed what other Communist speakers have said before, that peaceful coexistence advocates cooperation of various social systems, normal trade, scientific, cultural and tourist exchange, but it does exclude ideological coexistence.

While admitting that the capitalist world has still economic superiority over the socialist camp, Gomulka stressed

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that the pace of economic advancement of the socialist part of the world brings it closer to the moment when socialism will overtake capitalism. He complained that the tempo of socialist economic advancement and the imminent possibility of overtaking the capitalist economy is not stressed by economic and other writers, that they do not concentrate on the enthusiasm of socialist working masses, which is also evident in the creation and performance of socialist competition brigades and in the devotion of "thousands of silent heroes of work". This seems to be the weakest point of Gomulka speech, for there is no secret that work competition brigades exist more on paper than in reality, and that the Polish worker is far from being enthusiastic about competing in work for which he is paid so little.

The Marxist-Leninist approach, said Gomulka, must be the guiding principle in science, particularly in economics, philosophy and sociology. The revisionist concept that science has nothing to do with ideology is wrong, as is pseudo-objectivism in science. In the last years, Gomulka complained, economic, philosophical and sociological writers based themselves on West European and American sources and literature, ignoring Soviet literature and even Marxist classics. Similar phenomena could be also observed in the fields of theater and literature. Too many Western plays were staged in Poland. Social sciences are particularly linked with politics, therefore they must be written from the point of view of Marxism-Leninism. The latter must also be a subject in the curriculum of secondary and higher schools. As an example to follow Gomulka cited "Problems of scientific Communism" which is a subject at Soviet universities. On the youth sector, Gomulka advocated the widding up of the existing youth clubs, and the subordination of such activities to the Socialist Youth Union.

The Party does not intend to interfere with the creative activity of the writers nor to tell them how to write their books, but at the same time the Party supports the creative activity of socialist realism, "deeply ideological and representing the highest artistic level understandable to the masses and serving the masses".

In order to coordinate and supervise ideological work in various branches of cultural life, a special Ideological Commission of the Central Committee should, according to Gomulka, be set up to work systematically under the guidance of a member of the Party leadership with the participation of appropriate secretaries of the CC, heads of departments of the CC and of the ministries concerned as well as some members of the CC.

Will the Party Succeed?

The question arises to what extent will the Party

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succeed in its ideological aims. The answer was partly supplied by Gomulka himself, who complained about the lack of sufficiently trained ideological cadres and about the almost universal apathy concerning the Party work. "It is paradoxical," he complained, "that in Party organizations active on the ideological front, as for example on the editorial boards of papers and publications, literary, school and artistic organizations, internal propaganda and ideological work is negligible, weaker than in other organizations... (and) participation in Party schooling is not the thing done."

Gomulka's report was accepted by the Plenum as a directive for further Party work. But will the directive be carried out? It is not the first of such directives which have been issued, but it is certainly the most authoritative one. It may be considered as a turning point in the efforts of the Party to control cultural life. But action provokes reaction. And, judging by experiences from October 1956 to the present, Party hardliners have been inching forward step by step, but have made little progress in the minds of Polish intellectuals. Organizational measures such as the winding up of two weeklies and their replacement by a single one can hardly be regarded as a sign of progress. It may represent a visible material progress, but ideology has little to do with "numerical" test data.

The announcement of the return to socialist realism, which is synonymous with the return to the old Stalinist era, can be met by Polish intellectuals with a shrug of the shoulders. Every attempt at further curtailment of intellectual and cultural freedom (theater, film, mass information media) will not be accepted by the entire population, and instead of the intended enthusiasm "for socialist construction", may bring about a further deepening of the present apathy.

It is noticeable that Gomulka specifically dismissed the idea of returning to "administrative methods" (police terror?), but the setting up of the Party ideological commission would indicate that he seeks to depend on "organizational means", such as censorship and economic pressure. The Party has always had these means at its disposal and has so far failed to use them effectively. There is no guarantee that they will be effectively used in the future and, speaking comparatively, even if there is an effective crackdown on Poland's scholars and creative artists; the tremendous advances which they have made in recent years are not liable to be destroyed easily. Poland still remains a society conspicuously the most free in the East bloc.

New Appointments

No replacement has been named for Roman Zambrowski in the Politburo. (His resignation from the Politburo and from the
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Secretariat was announced on the eve of the Plenum.) However, two new CC secretaries have been appointed: Boleslaw Jaszczuk, the Polish ambassador to the USSR, and Artur Starewicz, the head of the CC Press Bureau.

They both have almost the same background, the important difference apparently lying in the fact that Jaszczuk spent the war years in Poland (a "home" Communist), while Starewicz at that time was in the USSR (a "Moscow" Communist).

Boleslaw Jaszczuk was born in 1913, completed his secondary studies in Vilna, then went to Warsaw, where, just before the outbreak of the war, he managed to finish his studies at the Warsaw Polytechnical University and to obtain an electrical engineering diploma. While at the university he belonged to the Communist student organization "Zycie".

He was one of the first members of the Polish Workers' (Communist) Party when it was resurrected at the beginning of 1942, and an organizer of the Communist resistance units (People's Guard and People's Army). Thus he may be connected with the "partisan" group within the PUWP. Official sources differ as to the date of his arrest by the German occupation authorities, naming, in this respect, the years 1942 and 1943, but all sources agree that Jaszczuk was sent first to Oswiecim, and then to Mauthausen concentration camps. Immediately after the war he was called to Party and regional state administration work, first in Warsaw, then in Katowice. In the early fifties he was appointed Minister of Power, then of the Machine Industry. In 1957 Jaszczuk was made deputy chairman of the Planning Commission at the Council of Ministers. In October 1958 he headed a delegation of parliamentarians and cooperative workers on an extensive visit to the USA. Since late November 1959 he has been Polish Ambassador to the USSR. Jaszczuk was appointed alternate member of the CC in December 1948 and continued in that capacity until March 1954, when he was made full CC member. RFE files reveal that he is considered a rather sober and moderate Communist whose personal weakness is being well-dressed (a Polish Eden).

Starewicz

Artur Starewicz was born in 1917 in Warsaw into a clerk's family, and -- like Jaszczuk -- belonged to the Communist students' organization "Zycie". However, he completed his university studies during the war in the USSR (chemical engineer). In 1943 he entered the Polish Patriots' Union, set up in Moscow. In 1946-1947 he worked at the Warsaw Party Committee, later as First Voivodship Party secretary in Lower Silesia. From 1948 to 1953 he was head of the CC Propaganda Department, and was then sent to work in the Trade Union organization and also as deputy editor-in-chief of "Trybuna Ludu". Since December 1956 he has been head of the CC Press Bureau. His Party career is

as follows: alternate CC member from March 1954, and full CC member from March 1959. Starewicz belonged to the "Pulawska" (Zambrowski) group in 1956 and later. His pronouncements on film, press, etc. reveal a faithful Communist who would not stand "liberal" nonsense and would stick to the Party line, although he seems to be an approachable person and one whom people can talk to. He was instrumental in past efforts to remove Mieczyslaw Rakowski from the editorship of "Polityka", and it is known that he hates Rakowski. The hard-line "partisan" group was reported to have made several efforts to have Starewicz demoted. However, it was also reported that Starewicz had recently managed to make a deal with the "partisans". This last point has so far not been confirmed. It is possible that Gomulka appointed Starewicz exactly to counterbalance the influence of the hard-line apparatchiks ("partisans") in the new set-up. This would be in the traditional Gomulka fashion.

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