

Accountability and Election Meetings

Accountability and election meetings of the Voivodship Party Committees have been going on for a month by now. According to the Party statute these meetings are supposed to take place every second year (not every year as erroneously stated in the March 19 Sit.Rpt.). The last series of these meetings took place in autumn 1960. The present series seems to be more important than the previous one, for these meetings are attended by even more important Party leaders than was the case in 1960. For instance, the First Secretary, Wladyslaw Gomulka, who did not attend any of the 1960 meetings found it necessary to take part in no less than five voivodship meetings up to now (Cracow, Katowice, Warsaw City, Warsaw Voivodship and Lodz). Also other Politburo members are touring the country, and taking part in the Party voivodship conferences. They all stress the need for better Party work not only in the ideological and organizational sphere, but first of all they emphasize the greater efficiency demanded of the Polish economy by increased tasks of the Polish export policy (cf. Sit.Rpts. of March 23 and April 2). In the majority of voivodships the meetings have already been concluded with no change in the positions of voivodship first secretaries. That would indicate that either the Party is satisfied with their performance or that it would not like to make changes in the crucial period ahead of a major effort toward increased economic efficiency.

An analytical comparative study of these meetings is being prepared.

Gomulka on Exports

Speaking at the Lodz Voivodship Party Committee (see above) on April 13, Wladyslaw Gomulka stressed the necessity of increasing export efforts in such a seemingly hopeless branch of the Polish industry as textiles. Although it is clear that the antiquated Polish textile industry has no possibility of competing with its highly efficient Western counterparts, Gomulka urged the workers of the Lodz textile center to increase the export of Polish textiles to the planned 33.4 per cent of the cost of import of textile raw materials, of which Poland has to buy about 90 per cent abroad. The Party boss complained that Poland had to spend 680 million currency zlotys (170 million dollars at the official foreign trade rate of four zlotys to the dollar) in 1961

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to cover the cost of importing the basic raw materials needed for the textile industry. This cost has been recovered to only 27 per cent by exports of textiles to the capitalist countries. He pointed out that the way toward raising that figure leads through better professional training. "He who will not learn, who will not improve his professional standard, must fall out", warned the Party leader.

Regarding the export problem, please note RFE Background Report "Poland's Need to Increase Exports" of April 13. A further study on the same subject comprising new material is in preparation.

Sentences in Smugglers' Trial

The trial of the "smugglers' gang" (cf. Sit.Rpt. March 22) has been concluded in Warsaw on April 12 with a total of over 3 million zloty in fines for all the accused and prison terms ranging from six months to three years. Helena Toeplitz was sentenced to three years imprisonment and 250,000 zlotys fine while her husband Jerzy was sentenced to two years and 103,000 zlotys respectively. The Austrian citizen who acted as a courier, Joseph Herman, was sentenced to two years imprisonment and fined 508,000 zlotys, the highest fine among all the accused.

Textile Racket Trial

In another trial of a group of about 100 persons accused of a mass economic racket in the textile industry, the Katowice Voivodship Court passed two life and three 15 year imprisonment sentences. The remaining defendants were sentenced to terms ranging from four to 13 years in prison. Almost all these sentences were connected with high fines, Radio Warsaw reported April 12.