

# RADIO FREE EUROPE *Research*

## EAST EUROPE

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#### Why Did They Strike?

In solidarity with their Cracow colleagues (cf. Polish Situation Report/23, Radio Free Europe Research, March 22), the students of the Warsaw Polytechnical Institute went on what they called "occupational strike" or sit-in on March 21. This "strajk okupacyjny" (the choice of this designation evokes memories of such strikes by Polish workers in the inter-war period) was about to end -- of the students' own volition -- at 08:00 hours of March 23. However -- as Radio Warsaw reported on the same day -- "good sense has won" and the students "obeyed the appeal of the rector and interrupted the strike."

As a matter of fact, the "sit-in" was ended when militia ringed the Polytechnic and a vice-rector entered and demanded that they disperse. The students were driven to their dormitories by buses supplied -- as a subsequent Radio Warsaw report had it -- by the Metropolitan Transport. No incidents were reported. Perhaps the students decided that their further resistance might help "these forces in the Party" which "in the present situation of crisis would prefer to be tough," Angela Nacken suggested in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (March 23). A few hours later, the 36 hour sit-in of the students of the Warsaw University ended as well, this time without police interference.

At least two sources, Reuter and Jonathan Randal for The New York Times (March 21) reported that a two-day sit-in took place at all eight schools of higher learning in Wroclaw on March 14 and 15. Nacken (FAZ, March 23) added that the Wroclaw students resolved that the example of Czechoslovakia showed that democratization is not alien to "socialism."

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All Western news agency reports stressed that the Warsaw sit-in was extremely disciplined, that the militia did not interfere with it -- although in at least one instance it cleared the Institute's surrounding area from sympathetic crowds, but in an orderly and even polite manner -- and that the posters displayed by the students underwent an internal censorship so as not to appear provocative. Among the posters was a full text of the students' earlier resolution (cf. Polish SR/23, RFER, March 22) and such slogans as "Workers with us" "Warsaw with the students." If there were any aggressive slogans they were directed against the lies of the press as well as against the distorted versions of the students' demonstrations given at various meetings. All these posters were torn down by the firemen after the militia cleared the area.

The question arises why did they strike, particularly after the speech of Gomulka who promised to review their grievances. The answer can be found in the speech itself, as well as in the preceding press, radio and TV campaign. The key problem would seem to be Gomulka's interpretation of "such matters expressed in the students' resolutions as democracy, freedom of speech, meetings and demonstrations, the meaning of the Constitution, and so forth." According to Gomulka, "the notion of democracy and freedom is not and cannot be an abstract notion. Freedom and democracy have always been, are and shall be a concrete idea... a class notion."

What this class notion means was explained in the morning of the day Gomulka spoke (March 19) by Kazimierz Kakol, editor-in-chief of Prawo i Zycie (Law and Life). In a broadcast over Radio Warsaw, Kakol explained that there are limits to freedom of the written word, hence censorship which prevents certain texts to be printed and distributed, such as texts which are "inimical to the system." The postulate [of the students] to free all the detained is at least "hasty" Kakol argued. "Shall we also free those who prepared Molotov cocktails to burn Warsaw homes rebuilt under difficult conditions?" he asked. Kakol presented similar arguments in a telebroadcast on March 18.

Another reason for the students' continued passive resistance may be seen in the fact that Gomulka did not make any definite promises. He said that students' demands, "some just, some unjustified," will be discussed at various meetings and in the press, but he did not promise to settle any of the grievances. In other words, as reported by Nacken (FAZ, March 23), "in the last days, the Party let the students know that they are no discussion partners." She also stressed that, of the 21 pages of his speech (which in the meantime has appeared in the form of a booklet), Gomulka devoted only one page to the students. The students' reaction to such treatment of their demands was best expressed in a slogan displayed at the Warsaw University: "We wait for a definitive answer."



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There are indications that the ending of the sit-in in Warsaw does not necessarily mean that the students have abandoned their resistance. "Despite the threat of arrest and the loss of educational degrees," UPI reported from Warsaw March 26, they are planning "further protest action against Party, state and school policies, reliable sources said." By continuing their passive resistance, UPI explained, students attempt "to get answers to their grievances." These are mainly over "police retaliation against demonstrating students and over what they feel are biased press reports on them." At least 200 students were arrested in connection with the Warsaw sit-ins last week, UPI said, and an unspecified number of students have been called up for two to three month training as a part of their university military service (such training normally takes place during the vacation period).

The students of Warsaw were not isolated in their resistance. A sign displayed at the main entrance of the Warsaw University claimed students were also striking in Wroclaw, Lodz, Cracow, Gdansk and possibly Szczecin (there was a question mark after the name of Szczecin), Western news agencies reported on March 21 and 22. Independently of what the students claimed, UPI reported on March 22 that students in Lodz were in the second day of a sit-in strike. It was also reported by Western news agencies that -- in addition to the Polytechnical Institute and the Warsaw University -- many of the 5,000 students of the Higher School of Rural Economy in Warsaw had struck and ended their sit-in in the morning of March 23.

#### Dismissals of Professors and Officials

Four professors and two docents were dismissed from their posts at the Warsaw University on March 25, Radio Warsaw reported on the next day. The professors are: Bronislaw Baczko, philosopher; Wlodzimierz Brus, economist; Leszek Kolakowski, philosopher; and Stefan Tadeusz Morawski, philosopher. The two docents are Zygmunt Bauman, sociologist; and Maria Hirszowicz, sociologist.

"By transforming their university posts into centers of political opposition, they contributed greatly to the creation of a political atmosphere in which the activity of a group of immediate initiators of the last anti-state excesses could develop," Radio Warsaw explained. For a long time, they also extended "ideological support and protection" to the group of Jacek Kuron and Karol Modzelewski, then to that of Adam Michnik, Henryk Szlajfer, Seweryn Blumsztajn, Jozef Dojczegwand, and others. (Please note that in previous Situation Reports the name of Dojczegwand was erroneously spelled as Deutschgewand.) Trybuna Ludu (March 26), as quoted by Radio Warsaw, explained the reasons for the dismissal in a similar way but added a few new insinuations and names of additional "culprits." Thus the Trybuna Ludu article, titled "Coryphaei of Science or Protectors of Firebrands," stated that Brus, Baczko and Bauman started their career in the mid-forties "in the political apparatus" of the Polish Army and shifted to scientific work at the beginning of the fifties, "a period which was not particularly propitious for Polish

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science." Nevertheless, they managed to survive (even the October 1956 changes, Trybuna Ludu clearly implied) and to establish a "monopoly" for their teachings. Only in the past few years was this monopoly broken through "matter-of-fact criticisms" of the ideas of the three men of learning, as well as of Adam Schaff and Stefan Zolkiewski.

With the exception of Hirszowicz, the dismissal of the six members of the teaching staff of the Warsaw University comes as no surprise. The other five were mentioned by name as those behind the students' unrest by First Party Secretary Wladyslaw Gomulka on March 19 (cf. Polish SR/22, RFER, March 21). Against the background of Gomulka's inherent dislike for intellectuals, particularly for those who might be considered either revisionist or liberal, the possible Jewish origin of a number of those dismissed should not be seen as the reason for the action (UPI [March 26] reported from Warsaw that Bauman is known to be Jewish and Baczko and Hirszowicz are thought to be Jewish as well. Brus is believed to be of Jewish origin, while Kolakowski is not and the same seems to hold for Morawski.)

An additional professor, Stefan Zolkiewski, was recalled from the post of secretary of Department I of social sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences on March 25, Radio Warsaw reported on the same day. While the reasons for his dismissal are evident from the Trybuna Ludu article quoted above, it is to be stressed that he is an old, rather orthodox, Communist intellectual whose ideological deviation could not be as important as that of Professor Schaff or Kolakowski. Considered to be a hard-liner in Stalinist times, he became too liberal for the Party in the late fifties when he was editor-in-chief of the weekly Nowa Kultura. His dismissal would seem to be related more directly to his Jewish origin. However, his dismissal from the Academy post is merely -- at least for the time being -- a demotion, for he retained his professorship of literary theory at the Warsaw University and, above all, his CC membership. This demotion was to be expected after his name was publicly listed -- along those of Schaff, Bauman and Brus -- as one of bad educators of the rioting youth by Gen. Tadeusz Pietrzak, chairman of the Warsaw branch of ZBOWID (Partisan-led Veterans' Association), who in a speech in Warsaw, on March 23, attacked Zolkiewski. It is therefore possible that the professor was sacrificed in a give-and-take bargain between the Gomulka "center" and the Partisan hard-line faction.

There was also no surprise in the dismissal, on March 22, from the post of deputy chairman of the Labor and Wages Committee of Jozef Kofman, a pre-war Communist of Jewish origin. As early as March 12, Kurier Polski (officially the daily of the Democratic Party) mentioned the name of Wladyslaw Kofman (probably son of the dismissed official) as one of the organizers of the youth "Club of the Seekers of Divergencies," founded in 1962.

(more)



Kofman thus became the fifth high official of Jewish origin to be dismissed in connection with the students' riots. Earlier, Jan Grudzinski, Jan Gorecki, and Fryderyk Topolski were dismissed (cf. Polish SR/18, RFER, March 13), as well as Roman Zambrowski (cf. Polish SR/20, RFER, March 18).

#### Polish Reaction to Brandt's Oder-Neisse Statement

Official Polish reaction to the latest statement of the West German Foreign Minister, Willy Brandt, calling for the acceptance of the Oder-Neisse line until the border question is finally settled in a German peace treaty, was marked by apprehension. Brandt made the proposal on March 18 in his capacity as chairman of the Socialist Democratic Party before the SPD Congress in Nuernberg. Two days later the Congress adopted a resolution on the issue with wording similar to that used by Brandt.

The next day the Polish Party organ Trybuna Ludu called Brandt's statement on the Oder-Neisse line meaningless and interpreted his words as indicating that the problem should not be solved. Zycie Warszawy of the same day, according to foreign correspondents in Warsaw, actually ignored Brandt's statement on the border question and stated only that his attitude did not differ from the general principles of West German Eastern policy. Further official comments stressed that Brandt, as Vice-Chancellor and Minister of Foreign Affairs, cannot express opinions different from the principles of official Bonn policy, that as a matter of fact his opinions were identical with Chancellor Kiesinger's statements on the subject, and that he questioned the permanency of the Oder-Neisse border, that his words still mean "revisionism."

The official Polish media devoted, on the other hand, considerable attention to reporting the voices of West German opposition to Brandt's statement on the Oder Neisse border.

#### Death of an Old Socialist

Boleslaw Drobner, a Jew, a Socialist since the age of 15, member of the Polish United Workers Party since December 1948, deputy to the Sejm, and one of the most colorful personalities of Cracow, died on March 21, at the age of 85. Obituary notices appeared in all Polish newspapers.

Drobner was born in Cracow on 21 June 1883 in a family which is said to have been connected with that city since the 14th Century. His grandfather participated in the uprising of 1830, his parents in the uprising of 1863, he himself in the revolution of 1905 and in Pilsudski's Legions during the First World War. He studied chemistry at Berlin, Lwow, Zurich, and Freiburg/Breisgau universities and graduated with a doctor's degree. Little is known about his professional achievements, the whole of his life being devoted to politics.

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Socialist since his schoolboy days, always at the left wing of the movement, only in 1928, after fusion of his group with the Polish Socialist Party did he become a member of that party. Then he became one of the advocates of a "unified front" with the Communists. Between 1922 and 1939, he faced courts over twenty times for organizing strikes, illegal meetings, and anti-government demonstrations. He was sentenced several times to terms of prison, the last time in 1937 for three years. Temporarily released from prison in 1939 for health reasons, he went to Lwow. "The war threw him far into the USSR," euphemistically wrote the author of his obituary in Trybuna Ludu (March 22).

In 1943 he became active in the Union of Polish Patriots, formed in the USSR under the patronage of the Soviet government. On 22 July 1944 he became member of the Polish Committee of National Liberation (the first Communist-sponsored provisional Polish government) where he was in charge of labor, social security, and health. From 1944 until his death he was deputy, first of the National People's Council and after 1947 of the Sejm. One of the leaders of the post-war Polish Socialist Party, on its fusion with Polish Workers Party in 1948, he became a member of the Polish United Workers Party. Although in 1945 he was for a time the first Polish mayor of Wroclaw, he was soon removed from active politics. The "thaw" again gave him an opportunity for political activity; he was one of the best known and most popular parliamentarians in the days when the Sejm had some importance and influence. In October 1956 elected one of the Secretaries of the Cracow Voivodship Party Committee, soon afterwards, on December 22, he was elected its first Secretary, yet after less than two months he resigned that appointment "to devote his time to scholarly work" (cf. Trybuna Ludu, 15 February 1957). Since then he became a unique personality in Cracow. His age made his retirement from political life appear reasonable. He was still active in the Cracow People's Council and to a much lesser extent in the Sejm. But he continued writing until his very last days. His most important recent works: On Class Trade Union Movement in Poland (5 vols. 1964-1967); Incessant Struggle, Recollections (1962-1967, three of the planned five volumes published by the time of his death).

#### East-West Contacts

For the first time since World War II a West German theater group will appear in Warsaw. The group of the Essen Municipal Theater Company according to Radio Warsaw -- arrived in Poland on March 24.

The Polish student theater in Lublin, "Gong - 2", will participate in the 16th International University Theater Festival in Parma. A previous RFE Special from Rome (cf. Polish SR/24, RFER, March 25) reported that this group had sent a telegram to Parma to say that it would not come. Some hours later, Radio Warsaw reported that this group had left Poland for Italy. This incident seems to indicate the extent of confusion taking place in the Polish Passport Office after the last student riots.