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POLANDDESCRIPTION OF THE COUNTRY

The territory east of the Oder-Neisse once again figures prominently in Poland's economic and industrial plans. Under the first four-year plan, this territory received a great deal of attention, and industrialization had priority. Under the second four-year plan, starting in 1950, other parts of Poland seemed to get more attention as far as industrialization was concerned, but the situation has once again changed: MINC Hilary, Head of the Economic Committee of the Council of Ministers and Head of the State Planning Commission, is now paying special attention to the western provinces. Silesian heavy industry, in particular, is being built up, giving the local population more opportunities for employment. MINC has promised to set up new industrial enterprises in the Oder region and to assist the farmers.

Conditions in the western provinces vary considerably, and nothing that can be said applies to the whole region. In places that were not damaged during World War II, population is much greater now than it was before 1945. This applies to such places as Upper Silesia, HIRSCHBERG, GALATZ, LANDSHUT, GDYNIA and ZOPPOT. Other places are quite different: rehabilitation is still in its first stages and many towns and settlements are still in ruins. The old German fortress of KUSTRIN, for example, used to have a population of 50,000 before the war, but it now has only 1,500 inhabitants. The center of the town is wasteland.

The Polish settlers are less afraid of the Germans than of the Communists who have nationalized the majority of their enterprises and collectivized farming. Polish nationalists who after the war put themselves at the disposal of GOMULKA to effect colonization, have, in many cases, been driven away as "class-alien elements." To this day, none of the settlers can be regarded as permanently settled, and frequent changes occur.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: Spring 1951

EVAL. COMMENT:

Source : fairly reliable;

Information: confirmed by other sources