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THE EVOLUTION OF POLISH PARTY POLICY REGARDING THE WARSAW UPRISING

Summary: The attitude of the PUWP (Polish United Workers' Party) regarding the Warsaw Uprising and its legend has from the start been the result of changes in Poland and the entire Communist bloc. Despite the fact that a quarter of a century has passed, the vivid memory of the events which occurred in Warsaw in August and September, 1944 encourages the propaganda machine to utilize the attitude of the people to the history of the uprising for its own ends. However, the Party's appraisal of the uprising, and the attitude of the populace toward it, still differ diametrically. Having found it impossible to do anything about this difference, the Party has tried -- without success -- to pass over this issue in silence, or -- when silence could no longer be maintained -- to refer to the intentions not only of the leaders, but also of the rank and file who took part in the uprising in slanderous terms.

In the course of the past 25 years, the evolution of the attitude of the PUWP to the uprising has gone through various phases. From complete confusion during the fighting in Warsaw and the few following years, the Party has now progressed to accusations of the leaders of the uprising of conspiracy with the Abwehr [the wartime German G-2] and the Gestapo; then finally decided to utilize the displays of patriotism evident during those days of fighting to the immediate advantage of Communist propaganda.

The basic reason for this discord is, at present, the traditional attitude of the Soviet Union toward the uprising. The basic principles underlying the

policy of the present ruling team, its overeagerness to eliminate any causes for an intensification of anti-Russian feelings, do not provide a way out of the vicious circle of historical falsehoods. Nevertheless, particularly as the outcome of internal Party disagreements, a conciliatory form of interpreting the uprising -- a little closer to the feelings of the people on this matter -- is beginning to emerge.

The purpose of this paper is to provide an introduction to this subject and to present the scope and direction of this evolution on the basis of (unfortunately rather haphazard) documents, chosen mostly from the press. In no case should this paper be treated as an exhaustive work covering the entire subject and its historical background. To do that, one should have fuller documentation and would have to be an experienced professional historian.

On the afternoon of 1 August 1944, the headquarters of the Home Army gave orders to begin an armed uprising against the German occupant. Fighting in the city lasted 63 days and ended in the capitulation of the insurgents. As a result of the uprising some 200,000 people, the bulk of them civilians, lost their lives, (1) and 42 per cent of the city's buildings, (2) were completely destroyed (mostly as the result of a deliberate plan to erase the city from the face of the earth

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- (1) The figure most frequently cited in Polish estimates of the losses. According to Hanns von Krannhals' work: Der Warschauer Aufstand 1944, Frankfurt am Main 1962, the losses were 166,000 dead. The population of Warsaw before the uprising was estimated at 1 million to 1.2 million people.
 - (2) This means 10,455 buildings out of the 24,724 that existed before the uprising. It does not, however, include the buildings partly destroyed. Taking into account the fact that considerable damage had been done previously (during the 1939 campaign and in the course of destroying the ghetto in 1943) and that this damage was concentrated in the center of the city, it can be said that in August 1945, Warsaw existed only as a geographical name on the map, but not as a city.

after the evacuation of its inhabitants.) The survivors were deported while the captured insurgents were taken to prisoner of war camps.

The insurrection broke out ahead of the major line of battle. The Red Army was then merely 20 to 25 kilometers distant from Warsaw, and in the second phase of the uprising, after Praga -- the east bank suburb of the city -- had been captured, halted on the east bank of the Vistula. This stabilized front lasted almost four months before it was broken by the Red Army's January offensive. As a side effect of this offensive, on 17 January 1945, Russians and detachments of the Polish Army seized the already desolate ruins of Warsaw. German divisions concentrated their forces north and south of Warsaw, leaving the city itself defenseless.

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Thus, in short, can one present the facts of this most typically Polish tragedy of the Second World War. The Warsaw Uprising has no parallel in any other, even larger, events of that period, so far as losses are concerned.

In no other tragedy of the last war was the historical dependence and the influence of the geopolitical situation of Poland so strongly and clearly displayed. Oswiecim (Auschwitz), the biggest extermination camp in all of history, was located in Poland -- but might just as well have been somewhere else. The losses incurred during front line operations -- although particularly high in Poland -- were also heavy wherever the war raged. But an uprising on such a scale and conducted with such determination as in Warsaw, could only happen in Poland. Among the many reasons for this, political reasons played no trifling part. No wonder then that precisely this political angle of the uprising became subject number one of later inquiries and propaganda endeavors. This aspect will be expanded upon below. However, to understand the influence of the uprising on the course of events in postwar Poland it is necessary to stress the fact that the battle in Warsaw was a testimony and display of unity by the nation never again encountered. It took place in an atmosphere of moral support by the entire nation. Because of all that, the crushing of the uprising inevitably left a deep imprint on the national consciousness. Of course, in analyzing it now, one must take into account the influence of the political factors, but to its contemporaries the decision to take up arms against the occupant was indisputable reality; it promised satisfaction

after years of humiliation and the last chance to play a personal part in the victory over Hitlerism. The order to start open fighting in Warsaw (and it is on this fact that most of present-day propaganda enunciations concentrate) perhaps might not have been issued. But as it was issued, it received the unanimous and enthusiastic support of the entire population of Warsaw.

No wonder then that the new authorities installed in Poland, as a result of the coming of the Red Army, that same army which, separated only by the 400-yard width of the Vistula, did nothing to lessen the tragedy, had a most difficult problem to cope with. It was no longer important that the nation was basically hostile to the idea of Communism; after the Warsaw Uprising, there emerged a new factor: the representatives of the new government were treated as accomplices to the crime, the crime committed by the Red Army when it refused to help Warsaw. Actually, from the first postwar days to the present, this problem, at least in Warsaw and its region, is the touchiest emotional factor in the discord between the Party and the people. To remove, or at least to lessen this discord was one of the most important propaganda tasks of the past quarter century.

Propaganda activity on this problem was evident even in the first days after the outbreak of the uprising. It then had a dual character: on the one hand, the Soviet interpretation, (3) broadcast by radio, called the uprising a counterrevolutionary performance; on the other hand, attempts were made to organize help for Warsaw. As time passed, especially from 1955 on, in an atmosphere of intensifying factional struggles, this second aspect was ever more apparent when one read between the lines of the pronouncements on the uprising.

(3) This is a reference to the interpretation during the second half of August 1944. Prior to this, on July 30, Radio Kosciuszko (which was under the influence of the Union of Polish Patriots) broadcast an appeal for an insurrection in Warsaw. Only in the middle of August, when it was obvious that the uprising could not in any way be considered a Communist success, did the Russians start to call it "reckless."

It is interesting that Wladyslaw Kuszyk (mentioned below) in his article, gives the exact date when the radio station in Lublin went on the air, i.e., 11 August 1944, as if he wished to shift off onto the shoulders of "the people with pro-Moscow orientation" the blame for instigating the people to rise.

There has recently been made public by Wladyslaw Kuszyk (4) first chairman of the National Council in Lublin, the text of an address by the Committee to Aid Warsaw and War Victims. As one can plainly see from this address, the population was informed that relief had been organized to help Warsaw. Here is the pertinent passage:

The gallant soldiers of the Polish Army hasten through the heavy fighting to bring arms to Warsaw. They must be followed by other kinds of relief -- by the entire community with help for the hungry.

Referring to the hopes of the insurgents for outside help, Kuszyk writes:

... in spite of these desires and hopes we all had considerable anxiety whether these hopes will really come true. In those days I did not differ greatly from the others. The same longings filled my breast, the same doubts lay heavily upon my heart.

There are numerous other statements giving evidence that an important purpose of this help was to canalize "bad blood" in some sort of action in aid of Warsaw.

In addition to the considerable and really broad material aid (for Warsaw), this drive contained a political problem of the greatest importance. It was the problem of the unity of the nation in a society torn apart, shaken by the underground subversion of reactionary forces and by virulent propaganda directed with maniacal obstinacy by the London Government. (Emphasis added.)

One more thing should be mentioned, that this entire drive to collect food and other help for Warsaw was conducted deep behind the Soviet front line. Which means, of course, that those gifts had no chance of reaching Warsaw, which was taken by the Soviet forces only several months later. What then was it, a conviction that Warsaw would be conquered in the course of the next few days?

Such are the latest endeavors to present the official attitude toward the uprising while it was still going on. The purpose of these endeavors is to display the political "wisdom" and the awareness of history of the Polish Communists of that time. Traces of a belief at that time of a speedy liberation

(4) Argumenty, 3 August 1969.

of Warsaw from the Germans and in help from the Red Army are at present rather reluctantly mentioned. Therefore, Kuszyk's disclosures are quite interesting indeed. In reality, apart from various hesitations, even that governing team which was installed with the help of the Red Army did not believe that the fight to liberate Warsaw would be abandoned at the moment when the front line reached the city limits. A broadcast by Radio Lublin of 13 September 1944 is eloquent proof of this:

To fighting Warsaw!
To all stalwarts of Warsaw!
To the people of Warsaw!

The time of Warsaw's liberation is near. Your anguish and your sufferings are coming to an end. The Germans will pay a high price for the blood they have spilled, and for the ruins. The Tadeusz Kosciuszko First Division has already forced its way into Praga. The Polish Army is fighting side by side with the Red Army. Keep on fighting! Whatever the intentions of the ringleaders, who prematurely and without prior clearance from the Red Army, provoked the uprising, we are now with you with all our hearts. The whole Polish nation is with you. The decisive battle rages on the banks of the Vistula. Help is on its way.

Strain all your forces! Stand fast!

Polish Committee of National Liberation. (5)

An attempt to help indeed took place. Some detachments of the so-called Berling Army (which formed part of the front under Marshal Rokossowski's command) tried to establish contact with the insurgents. But this was a spontaneous move, without proper support from the artillery and the air force (which, of course, came under Red Army command). As a result of this action, 2,000 soldiers of the Berling Army were killed and Berling himself lost his command.

It seems worth while to recall these events since the Party's propaganda apparatus tried to overlook this side of the story in the following years. Things came to such a pass that those very facts which could have put the governing team in a more favorable light were most diligently concealed. Occasionally in the years 1945 to 1947, despite many falsehoods and attempts to formulate a doctrine (which later became obligatory) some repercussions of this affair were slipped

(5) Text included in the work by Zenon Kliszko entitled The Warsaw Uprising, Ksiazka i Wiedza, Publishing House, 1967.

into the press and radio. But later a formula was adopted which consisted of the following points:

1. The Red Army never intended to fight for Warsaw in the summer of 1944; besides, after an offensive along a front line stretching for more than 500 kilometers, it had been left with no reserves. In such a situation, it had to be a powerless observer of the battle for Warsaw;
2. From the beginning, Polish Communists were aware of the senselessness of the uprising and its consequences, but could not refrain from joining in once the fighting began;
3. The unsuccessful attempt by detachments of the Berling Army to aid the uprising is the best proof of the impossibility of outside help. (The fact that the decision to cross the Vistula was made without the acquiescence of, and without supporting fire by, the Red Army was completely omitted);
4. The uprising was a crime against the city and its inhabitants, and for this crime the London Government and the entire Home Army are held responsible.

This formula lasted, with some minor changes, until the political crisis of 1955-1956. As early as 1948, the fact of having fought in the Warsaw Uprising was regarded so unfavorably that, for example, no "veteran" could join the youth organization. Masses for the souls of those who died in the uprising had to be said in secrecy. The cemeteries, on All Souls' Day, were the only place in Warsaw that gave an opportunity for people to make public the existence of this problem so rankling to the Polish nation.

The same problem also troubled the members of the Party, although for different reasons. They were aware that the people held in contempt the Party's attitude to the uprising and those who fought in it. By establishing the formula that Polish Communists held a view of the uprising which was identical to that of the Soviet Union, the Party made it impossible for the Party to relent in its official attitude to the Warsaw insurrection. Under these circumstances a tragicomic event took place. To overcome this hostile atmosphere, without, however, provoking possibly dangerous discussions, the Party decided to engineer a particularly friendly gesture by the Soviet Union to Warsaw. Therefore, in 1952, the Soviet government decision was made public that the Russians would build in Warsaw The Palace of Culture and the Arts at their own expense and with their own technical resources, as a Soviet gift to Warsaw. Three years later, this

rather pompous and somewhat monumental building was opened to the public. Situated in the center of the city, dominating the urban landscape, it was meant as an eternal reminder of Polish-Soviet friendship. However, the Warsaw public dismissed this Soviet gift as a sop thrown to them as compensation for the losses suffered by Warsaw during the uprising, although there was never any official suggestion whatsoever of recompense. But the opinion persisted that, if somebody intends to give recompensation, this means that he feels guilty. And if he does not feel guilty, then those who engineered the whole thing obviously think that he should.

This politically most unfortunate "gift" has resulted in the popular conviction that even the Communists in Poland consider the Russians as the authors of the Warsaw tragedy.

The feelings of the public influenced the propaganda policy. But the problem of responsibility for the consequences of the uprising is beyond the scope of this paper.

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Anti-uprising propaganda literally raged in the atmosphere of extreme Stalinism during the early Fifties. The first guideline was to build a "wall of silence" around the uprising. When it was impossible to keep silent (for instance, on the anniversaries of the uprising), a propaganda campaign was launched designed to obscure the historical truth. The increasingly grave charges hurled against the policy of the Home Army and the London Government then approached a sort of zenith. This type of propaganda reached its peak in 1953, intensified -- no doubt -- by the earlier held show trials. One of the aims of those trials was to "prove" that the Home Army collaborated with the German occupying forces. Here is a sample from a broadcast by Radio Warsaw on 1 August 1953:

Nine years ago today, the Warsaw Uprising started. The Polish nation has paid for this crime of the reactionaries by the loss of lives, the destruction of priceless treasures of Polish culture and the immeasurable suffering of the population expelled from Warsaw. The trials of the reactionary underground forces have revealed that, between the leaders of the Home Army and Hitler's Abwehr, talks were held in the utmost secrecy (of which the ordinary Home Army soldiers were not aware) at which the decision was reached to start the Warsaw Uprising. The Hitlerites promised to abstain from attacking the units of the Home Army on condition that the uprising be directed against the Red Army and the Polish Army.

In the heat of the propaganda campaign, the fact that Hitler's troops actually did attack the Home Army was completely disregarded and the propagandists brazenly maintained that the uprising had a definitely anti-Soviet character. Since, according to the Stalinist doctrine, there should have been an alliance between the Polish reactionaries and the German Nazis, they promptly invented one! The above-cited excerpt from a broadcast is given in toto to illustrate the frenzy of the propaganda campaign then. Beginning with the third sentence of this more or less "commemorative" broadcast, there is a veritable lecture about "treason," and this is the only thing they have to say about one of the most important events in Polish history. One year earlier, a certain Jacek Wolowski (6) one of the editors of Zycie Warszawy published an article in which he demanded that Bor-Komorowski, Commander in Chief of the Home Army at the time of the Warsaw Uprising, be brought to trial. Wolowski accused the general of:

... consciously allowing hundreds of thousands of people to be murdered.

Generally speaking, any mention of the Home Army was always made in the context of treason to the nation. Only the Communists fought the occupant. Here is another excerpt from the already cited broadcast:

The Polish Workers' Party has been aware of the treacherous game played by the Home Army's Headquarters and has exposed its policy. However, when the uprising began and engulfed the majority of the Warsaw population, the Party called its members to arms. The units of the People's Army which were in Warsaw at that time fought at the most difficult sectors. Scores of self-sacrificing members of the Polish Workers' Party, the People's Army and of the Union of Fighting Youth died on the barricades.

Thus, even death in the uprising was denied to the soldiers of the Home Army, although the number of fallen Communists mentioned in this broadcast was rather modest. ("Scores" is not much, considering that the total figure of losses was at least 200,000!)

The political confusion after Stalin's death, the beginning of the process of change (which took on full force only in the years 1955-1956), all influenced also this field of propaganda of which we are speaking. In the first place,

(6) Zycie Warszawy, 31 July 1952.

it "granted" members of the Home Army the "right to their death."

We pay homage to the Warsaw insurgents. We bow our heads to the soldiers of the People's Army, who led the relentless fight against the occupant, while Polish reactionaries "stood by idle with arms in hand," or engaged in propagating the slogan of "limited fighting." We pay homage to those who, in the uprising, gave new proof of self-sacrifice and heroism, despite their awareness or the criminal machinations of the political tricksters. We bow our heads to the great sacrifice of life and the spilled blood of the insurgents who fell on the barricades with the badge of the Home Army on their arms. (7)

So, in spite of the intricate style, at least the dead were exonerated. Although this article repeats the old rubbish about the collaboration between the Home Army and the Abwehr and the Gestapo, it goes even further, making the general statement that "... the soldiers of the Home Army, who placed their trust in their commanders and were once more cheated and betrayed by them" cannot be held responsible for being betrayed and cheated by their headquarters.

That propaganda formula: a treacherous command and the misled but honest soldier was quite spectacularly used, and with some modifications, even survived October, 1956. In reality, however, membership in the Home Army or fighting in the uprising as a soldier of the Home Army, ceased to be an incriminating circumstance only after 1956. As late as 1 August 1954 Tygodnik Powszechny had to explain:

Those who survived are building, together with us, a new Poland. The entire nation should think of them with warm feelings. We repeat again -- it is not they, who are responsible for Warsaw's tragedy. It is not they, who are enemies of the new political and social structure which has just been born in our country. In the stretch of the last 10 years they proved by their life that they are with us and that together with us they are building a new Poland.

As we can see, there is still considerable restraint: "amnesty" only for those, who "had proved their loyalty."

(7) Karol Malcuzyński, Trybuna Ludu, 30 July 1954.

However, the evolution of official views on the attitude of the Red Army toward the uprising progressed with difficulty indeed. Without any modifications, the obligatory standpoint remains: the Red Army was very willing to help, but could not do so, being too exhausted by the long offensive which had immediately preceded. When the Russians were able to help (after entering Praga), they did all that was in their power. It was too late, however, to change the situation. The political reasons for abandoning the attack on Warsaw in the face of a hostile uprising are sedulously passed over in silence. On the contrary, efforts are made to show the great generosity of the Red Army. No doubt the appointment of the former supreme commander of the Soviet forces operating in the Warsaw region, as the Polish Minister of National Defense with the rank of Marshal of Poland, was not without significance here. For it did not seem proper to argue that this "true blue" Pole refused to help the Poles, while carrying out another policy, alien to Polish interests. Summing it all up: the Russians wanted to help and that help could have been effective but for the perfidious contrary behavior of those to whom that help was offered.

On September 15-16 efforts to cross the Vistula started. Detachments of the Second Infantry Division captured a bridgehead near Zoliborz and units of the Third Infantry Division captured a bridgehead at Czerniakow. Despite the extremely difficult situation, the soldiers of the Second and Third Divisions gallantly held their positions on the Warsaw side of the Vistula for several days, fighting heroically for every inch of ground, to make possible the evacuation to Praga of at least part of the insurgent forces and the civilian population. But the reactionary headquarters of the Home Army (whose real aim was to fight the Red Army and the Polish Army -- and not Hitler's forces) withdrew its units from the Czerniakow bridgehead, and in other parts of the city, persisted in treacherous inactivity. This treacherous behavior by the Home Army's command, which surrendered to Hitler's forces, resulted in delivering to the mortal enemy hundreds of thousands of Warsaw citizens. (8)

It is characteristic that this broadcast attempted to reduce the intention to create bridgeheads at Zoliborz and Czerniakow solely to an attempt to serve evacuation purposes. Therefore, it was not "the relief of Warsaw," as was stated during the uprising, but only to make evacuation possible. Such a formula allows propaganda to play up that

strange episode in the battle for Warsaw. If relief were intended, what would be left of the theory of the impossibility to attack Warsaw in the second phase of the uprising? If even those detachments of the Poles managed to hold the bridgeheads for a few days, then it would be quite obvious that support by the bulk of the Soviet forces would have to mean success. Therefore, a more plausible formula has been adopted: as an attack on Warsaw was impossible, there was nothing left but to attempt an evacuation. This attempt, however, was treacherously scuttled by the Home Army. None of the authors was put out by the fact that the evacuation of hundreds of thousands people across the river under steady German fire (the bridges were all gone by that time) would have meant total massacre. Of course, this plan sounded much more ambitious than evacuation across the river of 28 members of the People's Army (the AL), which was the outcome of "successful" evacuation in the Zoliborz sector.

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The coarseness of the propaganda of that period had been slightly toned down shortly before the 1956 "October." Then, on the 11th anniversary of the uprising, the recollection of those events was a bit differently presented.

On 1 August 1944, Warsaw was in flames. The heroic people of Warsaw, the soldiers of the Home Army, the People's Army and many others who did not belong to any organization, rose up in arms against the hated Hitlerite invaders. All those who took up arms were united by ardent love for their native country, by hatred of the occupant and the desire for revenge for the dreadful terror and humiliation. (9)

Thus, an interpretation approaching the designation of a national insurrection. The attitude of Trybuna Ludu in the issue of the same day, underwent a similar transformation:

Eleven years ago, the people of Warsaw took up arms and began an unequal battle on the streets of our city. The people were not aware of the political aims of the instigators of the uprising....The uprising, stirred up prematurely by criminal hands, ended tragically, but the cause, for which the entire Polish people fought through the darkest night of the occupation, was victorious.

This evolution was speeded up on the eve of the 1956 "October." Under the pressure of ever more apparent feelings in

(9) Radio Warsaw, 1 August 1955.

public opinion, official propaganda went on the defensive. The Polish press published a great avalanche of articles and reminiscences about the uprising. On the anniversary of the uprising, solemn commemorative meetings were held and the first publications about the uprising of some value started to appear. Despite a transitory new "freeze" in the political atmosphere just after the Poznan "strike" in June, 1956 -- several interesting enunciations appeared on the anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising. Radio Warsaw (already quoted above several times) defined the decision to start the fighting in Warsaw as "false and premature." In comparison with previously used expressions, such as "treacherous" or "criminal," this denoted considerable progress. Glos Pracy of August 1, referring to the appraisal of the uprising characteristic of the period following it, wrote:

We all know that, for many reasons... the reality of life in the years past sometimes deviated tragically from that evaluation of 1946. We know that, as a result of the deviations in political social life which occurred in later years, the attitude in many circles to former soldiers of the Home Army has been marked by antipathy and distrust. This attitude was reciprocated by bitterness and feelings of injustice... But as we know, that period now belongs to the past.

Jerzy Hagmajer, in the article published by Kierunki on 5 August 1956, calls for a precise definition of the perpetrators of this national tragedy:

... the mistakes and deviations of the postwar period have without doubt influenced the appraisal of the Home Army and its soldiers and have caused them to be treated as enemies of the revolution, as the "dwarfs of the reactionaries." The disclosure of the historical truth is indispensable also from the point of view of the necessity to revise the general attitude of the press, which contrasted all the leaders of the Home Army with its rank and file. Our young brothers and our sons must learn the objective truth about the history of the occupation years and develop another picture of those times, than that which they have been learning from their school textbooks.

In comparison with similar publications, the attempts of the official propaganda apparat to formulate anew a political estimate of the uprising give the impression of timidity and defensiveness. Although nobody actually violated the taboo set by the official interpretation of the Soviet attitude toward the uprising, it appeared that this might happen. But the situation was taken in hand by the new propaganda team,

assembled and guided by Gomulka. Although animated discussions produced startling and courageous statements, a certain stabilization and freeze in expounding upon some subjects was evident.

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If one is to compare the tenor of the publications and of the enunciations concerning the uprising in the time between 1956 and 1957 with the statements of the preceding years, one has to take into consideration whether each one came from official sources or from beyond the fringes of official propaganda. While in the period preceding 1955 practically all public statements had been tuned to the same pitch and mirrored the intention of the "central propagandist," after 1955, voices could very often be heard which had nothing in common with official propaganda. This was the result of the slackening of censorship (or rather of the confusion within its apparatus.) This observation concerns professional journalists as well as people who usually do not utter their sentiments in public. But the professionals were soon enough made to join the trend represented by official propaganda.

The peak of this confusion was reached when two former members of the Home Army, Ludwik Muzyczka and Kazimierz Pluta-Czachowski, published an article under the title "The Truth and Untruth about the Home Army," polemicizing with Jan Rzepecki. (10) It is worth while quoting daring excerpts from it:

... there has been quite a lot written recently about the Home Army. But those articles are aimed at immediate goals, often enough of propaganda value and seldom contain pure historical truth. ... The "upper echelons" of the Home Army, which means its headquarters, exemplified the same style and ideology as its rank and file. ... The decision to start the uprising was forced upon General Bor. ... There are many people in our country who know who they were (mainly in the Home Army headquarters). Those people who know them believe that they served the entire nation and not only a certain segment of it. Even if they made mistakes, like General Bor, who permitted himself to be forced to order the Warsaw Uprising! Nobody can accuse them of treason, self-interest or dishonesty.

(10) Tygodnik Powszechny, 16 July 1957.

Tadeusz Jackowski assumes an attitude to the uprising that is not so bold, but one that was very typical of that period. (11)

The main current of the uprising, stemming from the many years of fighting, was an emanation of the nationwide tradition of the time of the occupation and even earlier. It was the current of freedom, pure, and in its main principles, progressive. One could perceive not a small degree of falsehood in presenting the heroic insurgents as the blind tools of alien political concepts, as dumb, though excellent sharpshooters.

Jackowski optimistically treated this kind of interpretation as a thing of the past. However, life proved him wrong.

The Party, although on the defensive, tried at this time to neutralize the effect of such publications as his. The authors of the polemic in the Tydzien Powszechny met with severe criticism. The article by Wladyslaw Bartoszewski in a subsequent issue of the same periodical, which included the text of the broadcast of Radio Kosciuszko (mentioned earlier) also met with rebuttal. (12) But it was a period of sham discussions about every opinion. That explains the following attempt to minimize the effects of this broadcast:

In those appeals, fervently written by the authors of the broadcasts in question, there are certain definitions which by their vagueness (for instance, "strike at the Germans," "the hour for deeds has struck") could have been interpreted in many ways. But then, it was not -- of course -- a military command, which would be expected to have an exact order of battle, but only a broadcast.

The commemorative celebrations of the 13th anniversary of the uprising expressed the Party's standpoint and indicated the emerging propaganda trend. Those were celebrations on a scale never witnessed before or after. They lasted practically as long as the uprising, that is, 63 days. On the anniversary of the outbreak of the uprising, there was a solemn main commemorative celebration in the biggest hall of the city, and on the preceding day, one of the squares of Warsaw was renamed Insurgents' Square. Then followed a roll call of the

(11) Zycie Warszawy, 1 August 1957.

(12) Trybuna Ludu, 9 August 1957.

dead, the laying of flowers on their graves, funeral music on the radio.

On August 1, Radio Warsaw broadcast (among other items) a talk by Edmund Osmańczyk, in which he stated:

... these 63 days [of the 13th anniversary celebrations --ed.] which in themselves represent a sort of extended All Souls' Day, have the character of a national demonstration. For the first time, the nation is allowed to celebrate the anniversary of the tragic uprising in an atmosphere of freedom on a scale unknown in past years. It is only natural that, by this 63-day-long celebration, the nation has, above all, displayed its will to be free! To read any other meaning into these "All Souls Days" would be pointless!

The author of the text entitled "The Roll Call of the Dead," which was read on the day preceding the anniversary, goes even further. He calls the uprising one of the battles for Communist Poland:

People of Warsaw! Young people! On the 13th anniversary of the tragic Warsaw Uprising, bow your heads, honour their memory and pay homage to those who took up arms and fought for the Polish People's Republic.

ZBoWiD, which at that time was expanding its activities, presented at the slightest opportunity some of the members of the Home Army command, particularly the leaders of the uprising, as prominent figures in ZBoWiD. Although the gallantry of the People's Army and the Polish Army was still emphasized, the name of the Home Army then took precedence whenever there was a necessity to enumerate the various wartime fighting units.

ZBoWiD influence had already been apparent at the above-mentioned main commemorative celebration, and later it became quite dominant. At that celebration, in which members of the PUWP Politburo, members of the government, and representatives of the army took part, the main speaker was the then chairman of ZBoWiD, General Janusz Zarzycki. In his speech, General Zarzycki outlined the attitude of the Party on the question of what place the uprising should occupy in official historiography. That attitude later became quite evident. This speech contained the following assertion and shibboleths:

1. glory to those who fell in that fight -- therefore, to the soldiers of the Home Army, as well as the People's Army, the Polish Army, and the Red Army;

2. the most tragic national calamity;
3. we must tell the truth -- therefore, above all, the truth about the suicidal character of the decision to start the uprising, which arose from class hatred;
4. let it be a lesson to us -- mainly that the only real political concept is the idea of a socialist Poland, relying on close alliance with the Soviet Union;
5. one cannot go forward while looking backward -- therefore, one must not dig up old, no longer valid dividing lines or warm up old quarrels. All forces of the nation should be united in building the People's Poland.

The remaining sentences of Zarzycki's speech were in the same vein. This speech represents a synthesis of the attitude to the problem of the uprising at that particular time.

Glory to those who fell in battle! The road to work in the service of the country is open to all! When one now looks back at this wrestling by the propaganda apparatus with the voice of public opinion, coming to the surface in 1957, one can see quite evident changes in the propaganda scheme characteristic of the first half of the Fifties. Thus, although the decision to start the uprising was suicidal and brought disaster to the city and its people, it was a decision determined by the class-conditioned old social group, which was already leaving the political scene. The uprising itself, however, had a universal, popular character -- it was a great manifestation of patriotism. The Home Army was, above all, the embodiment of this patriotism in battle (although there were also the People's Army and other groups). The political dividing line did not run according to the following formula: the soldiers -- the command. The major portion of the headquarters staff also represented unsullied patriotism. Even those in command headquarters who were responsible for the decision to start the uprising were conditioned by these already mentioned class considerations.

The fewest alterations were made in the theory alleging the technical impossibility of hastening the conquest of Warsaw by the Red Army. But even here there appeared the tendency to protect above all "the good name" of the Polish Communists. The very strong accentuation in publications of the part played by Berling's Army in the attempt to force the

opposite bank of the Vistula could serve as an example, (13) and the earlier mentioned incident, concerning the Trybuna Ludu explanation of the intentions of the broadcast by Radio Kosciuszko. Although this part of the history of the uprising had at that time been shrouded in absolute silence, it nevertheless left considerable scope for conjecture. At the beginning of this phase, the then insufficiently controlled press made wide use of it, but soon enough the tightening of the censors' screw could be felt. (14) The most durable residue of that period was the incorporation of the whole question of the uprising, along with a considerable part of the veterans of the uprising into the mainstream of the activities of the Association of Fighters for Freedom and Democracy.

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The next few years brought an air of stabilization to this newly-outlined propaganda platform. It is marked, on the one hand, by scrupulous protection of the claim that it was technically impossible for the Red Army to help the uprising, and on the other by enlarging upon the amount of information made available, describing in more detail the circumstances why this help was withheld. The factional strife within the Party had a certain amount of influence on this latest direction in the evolution of the Party's stand on the whole question. The speech by the PUPP Politburo member Zenon Kliszko, at the commemorative meeting marking the 20th anniversary of the uprising, produced the first

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- (13) This is worth recording that the conspiracy of silence surrounding the person of General Berling was also broken. At about this time, there appeared an announcement reporting that General Berling, after completing higher military studies in the USSR, was resting in Zakopane. The wording of the announcement convinced people in general that those "military studies" were nothing else than confinement in prison or in a camp.
- (14) The already quoted Trybuna Ludu of 9 August 1957 states that: "...the commentary--which allegedly suggests that, on the 'Lublin side of Vistula,' with a lack of responsibility equal to that displayed by the circles of London politicians; there were thoughts about an uprising in Warsaw -- is completely misleading. For, what else could the following words of this commentary mean, that 'those appeals reflect the atmosphere and the feelings which prevailed on the eve of the uprising -- also on the Lublin side of Vistula?'"

noticeable sign of this influence. But before that, it is worth noting one of the last publicly expressed voices which was inconsistent with the official Party propaganda line. In the year 1958, in the second issue number of the Wojskowy Przegląd Historyczny, Colonel Jan Rzepecki wrote an article entitled "Concerning the Decision to Begin Armed Action in Warsaw." In this article, the author states the following:

.... naturally these calls (of Radio Kosciuszko) combined with the news that Mikolajczyk had left for Moscow, made people believe that aid would come from 'beyond the Vistula.' If one would put together the fact that the decree of the Polish National Council and the Manifesto of the Polish Committee of National Liberation had been dated in Warsaw, with the real or false news of July 27 that the People's Army stood ready for battle, the broadcast saying that the conquest of Warsaw by the Soviet Army was at hand and the (earlier quoted) calls of Radio Kosciuszko, should one wonder that, in the mind of the commander of the Home Army, the suspicion was born that all these things constituted links in but one scheme: the capture of Warsaw by the Communists?

The officially inspired propaganda did not go that far. Its limits best define the (earlier mentioned) speech by Kliszko. This speech outlined the way to estimate the uprising: on the one hand as "glorious and heroic, cherished in the nation's memory and inscribed in golden letters on the pages of history of the fight for independence," and on the other hand, as a "dark and disgraceful page of the policy of the Polish reactionaries, of the government in exile (London) and its foreign backers."

But what was new, or at any rate expressed with unheard of emphasis, was the declaration that ancient quarrels must cease:

....today, on the 20th anniversary of the Warsaw tragedy, we can say with conviction that the chapter of the old disagreements is finally closed. Nothing whatsoever divides us now -- us, who fought on the barricades of Warsaw under the banners of different detachments, against the mortal enemy of Poland.

Even if there still existed some strife, the important fact was that the veterans of the Warsaw Uprising had no alternative but to accept the offer of "national reconciliation." The awareness that their former leaders were among those in authority in ZBoWiD "softened" the unpleasant feeling of being members of this ambiguous organization which, after all,

gave them some protection in their difficult life. In any case, the passage of time and the lack of any other alternative led to irreversible results. Results which allowed Kliszko then to play the part of the principal hero and the official interpreter of the uprising.

After the above-mentioned speech, Kliszko moved up to the forefront of those who wrote or spoke publicly about the uprising. There began to appear interviews, as well as reprints of his old articles, and finally, his book about the uprising. This also indicates how important the problem of the memory of the uprising was. Not without good reason, after all, leadership of that section of the propaganda apparatus had been placed in the hands of the second most important person in the Party's hierarchy. One cannot help thinking that, fearing the difficult to foresee consequences of the intra-Party controversies, which always threatened revelation of the existence of different views on this subject within the various factions, the Party decided to entrust the tricky job of official interpretation to someone with especially great authority within the Party. The intended purpose of this move was to put dampers on the digging up of the historical truth. Kliszko's book, published in 1967, (15), represents proof of this hypothesis. The choice of material and the sequence in which it is presented testifies that the author was at pains to contradict the popular belief that the Polish Communists shared the blame for failing to help Warsaw.

In the first place, Kliszko refers to the interpretation of the uprising made at the time when the fighting was still going on and immediately after. In addition, he points out that the Polish Communists also believed in the possibility of providing armed help for Warsaw.

.... aid for Warsaw was really necessary. In the estimation of that fact, the People's Army and the Home Army were in complete unanimity. Both organizations strove to obtain it. Of course, each approached different people and both groups had different motives for their endeavors to obtain effective help for Warsaw... The Home Army headquarters and the Representative of the Government in Exile had well organized and systematic radio communications with London; but the People's Army Command did not possess such means of communication with Lublin.

(15) Zenon Kliszko, The Warsaw Uprising, Ksiazka i Wiedza Publishing House. Warsaw, 1967.

Relating the feelings of the Communists in the last days of the uprising, Kliszko states:

... the opinion prevailed that now was the time for the speedy liberation of Warsaw.

And after establishing communications with the headquarters of the Polish Army in Praga:

The most important news, which captain "Karol" (a courier) brought was that an attack on Warsaw by the Soviet Army and the First Polish Army was imminent. Therefore, the skeptics were wrong, the moment of liberating Warsaw was approaching.

The book is full of vague hints, some of which seem to be intentional. For instance, there is mention of the refusal by Rokossowski's emissaries to hold talks with the Communists (from the People's Army); also about the strategically unsound choice of place for crossing the river by detachments of the Polish Army, etc. In general, there is the impression that the author is anxious to minimize the part which detachments of Berling's Army played in establishing communications with the Warsaw insurgents. At the same time, however, he puts an end to the earlier propagated calumny that Home Army units in Powisle "ran away from help."

Although the German forces had already gone on the defensive in the outskirts of Praga, in the center of the city, however, and in Powisle, the fighting had intensified. The Germans strove to clear the insurgent forces out of Powisle... Under the pressure of the vastly superior enemy forces, the insurgents withdrew from Powisle. In this manner, on the eve of the Soviet attack on the Praga, the Germans managed to establish an unbroken line of defense on the left bank of the Vistula and to cut detachments of the insurgents off from the west bank. Gorny Czerniakow, where the insurgents managed to hold small a bridgehead on the river, was the only exception, but it had no communication with the center of the city, still held by the insurgents. (16) That bridgehead had been surrounded on three sides by the Germans and pushed back to the river bank on the remaining side.

.... on the night of September 19 to 20, Lieutenant Colonel "Radoslaw" (Jan Mazurkiewicz) decided to retreat from Czerniakow to Mokotow through the sewers. Faced with the situation which arose during the fighting to

(16) emphasis added.

gain bridgeheads on the left bank of the Vistula the headquarters of the Polish First Army came to conclusion that the command of the Home Army did not want to co-operate with the Polish Army units and the Red Army in the effort to liberate Warsaw.

Having thrown such light upon this subject, the author proceeds to suggest that the headquarters of the First Polish Army came to the wrong conclusion. Moreover, he talks of the "effort to liberate Warsaw" and not -- as had been stated earlier -- of the intention to make preparations for the evacuation. It is also worth emphasizing that Jan Mazurkiewicz is at present one of the vice-chairmen of ZBoWiD. In the same restrained way, Kliszko describes the effort to capture the Zoliborz bridgehead:

Two kilometers away from the insurgents' positions, the detachment of the Polish Forces was doomed to isolated fight with the Germans. The most incomprehensible and therefore alarming fact was that the command of the Polish First Army did not try to get in contact with the insurgents at Zoliborz to co-ordinate the planned military attack on the left bank of the Vistula.

There is a lot more of these "misunderstandings" and riddles in Kliszko's book, (for instance, when Rokossowski's emissaries refused to hold talks with the People's Army). As one can see, Kliszko's opinion below about the already mentioned broadcast of Radio Kosciuszko is quite significant in the light of the fact that even political enemies could not come up with one single manifesto or newssheet of the Polish Workers' Party calling for an uprising in Warsaw:

It is true that this broadcast was not very fortunately worded and in its tone deviated from the propaganda line of the Polish Workers' Party and the People's Army. (emphasis added.)

Although cautiously formulated and sparingly granted, these reservations represent the main claim of this book: if the Communists in Poland, and not a group of people from the Polish Patriots' Association, had had influence at Soviet headquarters, events might have taken a different turn and it would not be a farfetched conclusion that the Red Army could have captured Warsaw in the second half of September. The rest is left to the reader, but the author systematically indulges in

suggestiveness. (17) This assertion reflects the broad aspect of the intra-Party controversies between the so-called Partisan faction and the Muscovites.

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In the light of this attitude of the Party to the uprising and its legend, the nuances of this year's campaign should stand out quite clearly. But it seems to be necessary to point out the fact that, as the result of the political crisis in 1968, there was a certain restraint in the evolution of trends, which earlier had been emerging quite clearly. It seems, for instance, that the disparity of attitudes between the Partisan faction and the Muscovites to the uprising became less marked. However, despite a temporary slowing down, the evolution of the estimate of the uprising progresses. Undoubtedly the passing of time helps. For it is easier to approach the historical truth after a quarter of a century has elapsed, and the immediate influence of the 1944 events in Warsaw on contemporary life has diminished. However, this rapprochement with historical truth still faces one obstacle, difficult to overcome: the probing cannot touch upon the problem of the USSR's joint responsibility for the scale of tragic consequences of the uprising. Just as in the question of Katyn, there was only one moment at which it was possible to tell the truth about the Warsaw uprising -- the 1956 "October." Later, as Gomulka's idea of politically reorienting the nation to the East was put into effect, there was room left only for half-truths. The celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising illustrated this situation explicitly. In the case of the highest Party authorities, there was a somewhat intensified political passion in the speeches they made on the occasion. Here is, for example, an excerpt from Gomulka's speech before the Sejm on July 21:

.... the tragedy of the Warsaw Uprising was born out of the pretentious claim to govern Poland, out of the disastrous concepts of the reactionaries. While the Polish Committee of National Liberation wrestled with the enormous difficulties of the first days (of freedom); when in each liberated town it had to start by burying the last victims of Hitler's terror; while, with the utmost effort, it tried

(17) There is also mention, in similar vein, that the first supplies of arms dropped by Soviet planes for the People's Army were received only in June, 1944; this mention seems to convey to the reader the idea that, earlier, the AL would not have been trusted.

to provide the population with elementary conditions of life and work; while it organized the army in order to hasten victory and to strengthen Poland's position, the reactionaries had one only maniacal idea: to install themselves in power, to install their own "legitimate" government in the capital of Poland even if only a couple of hours before liberation and to confront the Polish democratic camp, the Soviet Union and Europe with a fait accompli.

Kliszko, who had previously experimented with the slogan of "national unity" now talks about it in the conditional tense: (18)

Despite the fact that 25 years have passed, it (the Warsaw Uprising) is still alive, it is part of our social and political substance, it is still the subject of our reminiscences and family mementos, as well as our political reflections, discussions and even -- frankly speaking -- the subject of political subversion. After a quarter of a century, there are problems, affairs and quarrels, which one should now forget, which we can consider to be closed and settled. (emphasis added.)

The mention of "political subversion" is one example of the new accents, renewed after 1968. There is also a new tone of broadly demonstrated concern to hand down to the younger generation the "class" truth about the uprising.

If we look behind the scenes of the uprising, if we talk about the orientation of its leaders, it is not in order to open old wounds, but to convey to the younger generation of Poles the political meaning of those events. (19)

Sztandar Mlodych of August 2-3 goes to the extreme, expressing that trend not without comical overtones:

.... whether the generation born and brought up in People's Poland realizes that those who proclaimed the Manifesto and those who decided to start the uprising represented entirely different political orientations, and had different images of the political and social mold of Poland? ... we must not mix up those who

(18) Excerpt from his commemorative speech, as reported in Sztandar Mlodych, 2-3 August 1969.

(19) Polityka, 2 August 1969.

towered over the occupant by their heroism and their scorn of death with those who exploited that heroism and that scorn of death for their own reactionary political purposes... Otherwise, one would not know to whom, today, a quarter of a century later, homage should be paid.

But then, the Communists themselves who (at the time of "national unity") paraded as the heroes of the uprising, led to the situation in which they are "allegedly" recognized as co-authors of the uprising.

It appears, therefore, that the earlier efforts went to waste -- the already "educated" older generation has not passed on its reorientation to the younger. This thankless task has to be started anew. In this light, the optimism of K.Kakol (20) seems to be ill founded. He is trying -- as usual without unnecessary trimmings -- to uncover the mysteries of the concept of "national unity."

... although the truth about the uprising was sometimes difficult to accept for those who fought on the barricades in the ardent conviction that they were bringing nearer the day of liberation for Poland; nevertheless that truth has been accepted. It was also accepted because the love of the fatherland, the self-sacrifice and generosity which inspired the fighters of Warsaw have been recognized as enduring lasting values, worthy of respect and emulation.

There are also deliberations upon the essence of patriotism, which was evident during the uprising. Many come to the conclusion that it was not a patriotism deserving absolute approbation by a politician. Here is Kliszko's opinion from the earlier quoted speech:

Today we are paying homage to this boundless patriotism of the people of Warsaw; today this patriotism, matured by the lessons of the past is wise, uniting love for one's fatherland with a feeling of responsibility for its fate. (emphasis added.)

What can be deduced from Kliszko's speech is far more clearly expounded in the (also quoted earlier) article by W. Kuszyk:

How tragic is that school in which the moral and political unity of the nation is being developed. That

(20) Prawo i Zycie, 10 August 1969.

nation which, in its historical march, has many times proved to be noble, generous and heroic, but also quite often -- perhaps too often -- reckless.

But whoever thinks that the entire nation has been accused of stupidity is greatly mistaken. For instance, the Communists have not been thus branded. And not because they didn't take part in the uprising. On the contrary, because they were clever enough to take part in it! This point of view is "proved" by Wlodzimierz Sokorski in the August issue of Radar:

Were they right? Of course they were right. The aims of the leaders of the uprising -- that was one thing -- while the objective role of the uprising itself was quite another. The former had to lose, and it did indeed suffer political and military defeat. The latter was rightful and withstood the test of time -- despite the disclosure of the political inspirations which guided London and Bor-Komorowski's clique. What is more, the uprising became a national cause, a matter of national pride, national heroism and national wisdom, and of those who fought and of those who died. (emphasis added.)

However, not all died. With deep concern for the good name of those who fell and of those who survived, Slowo Powszechne of August 1 suggests the following formula:

It is of no importance that most of the generation which fought on the streets of Warsaw was politically gullible and did not comprehend the significance of the history which shaped its destiny. But whether more or less consciously, nevertheless right to the depth of their souls and right to the bitter end, they refused to accept Hitler's New Order, the fascist moral propositions, or to negotiate with the immanent fascist evil. It is untrue that only the terror of the occupation led to self-defense, that its policy would make the Polish people agree to Hitlerism. As in the year 1939, the Polish nation answered German imperialism bent on conquest, with a curt "NO!" -- so throughout the entire occupation, and especially on the streets of Warsaw during the uprising, it kept on repeating that "NO!" on deepest moral grounds. This motif should forever remain in the treasury of the most precious values of our tradition. ... let us think for a moment, what was the meaning of their fight, and also let us wish that the new, regenerating life of the nation would justify the sacrifice thanks to which it was reborn.

Therefore, according to the author of the above excerpt, the uprising was one of the sacrifices which conditioned the revival of the national existence. This view might have been interesting, had it represented the actual propaganda line. But this was not so. Slowo Powszechne, as well as the entire PAX press, always have had a warmer attitude towards the uprising.

It is interesting to follow the propaganda acrobatics of the (already quoted) Sokorski:

... without the participation of the Communists, without the leftists, the Warsaw Uprising would not only have been a tragic disaster, a symbol of needless sacrifice of hundreds of thousands of people, but an armed action aimed against the Communists and all progressive forces in our society. The participation of the leftists in the uprising together with the entire Warsaw population took away from the uprising the character of a battle on two fronts. What is more, it made of it one common war front against Hitler's invading forces, and confirmed once more, despite the London instigations, how right the historical concept of the Polish Workers' Party and of the National Council was.

Although this is a somewhat obscure argumentation, it nevertheless strives to grant the uprising certain values -- this time from the point of view of the aims of the Polish Workers' Party (sic!)

But on the question of the facts and circumstances of the uprising, the commemorative publications are very scanty. One feels that this part of the subject has been definitely put in the deep freeze. In comparison with Kliszko's "revelations" of 1967, there are now only trifling bits. For instance, Glos Wybrzeza of 2-3 August 1969, commenting upon the views which hold the USSR responsible for the defeat of the uprising, calls those views purposeless and without logic.

The first of these features -- purposelessness -- stems from the fact that Soviet headquarters expected to cross the Vistula at such time as would be suitable, according to the needs and possibilities of military operations and which appeared to be completely different from what the leaders of the uprising expected. The military publications contain an extensive analysis of the situation of the Soviet forces on the River Vistula at that time. It appears that breaking through the German line of defense on the Vistula in August, 1944, was not possible. Therefore, attempts in this direction

would have meant taking extraordinary action, which would have virtually ruined the strategic plans of the Soviet command. Soviet headquarters could not, and would not, indulge in such action, because its target was not Warsaw, but Berlin.

The second feature -- lack of logic -- is expressed by the fact that the Home Army was not in official alliance with the Soviet Army, a fact which quite obviously emerged from the plan for operation Burza (Storm). The Warsaw Uprising was not in any way coordinated with Soviet headquarters, which was not even informed that it was being prepared. In view of this, the London camp's efforts to identify its own wishes and expectations with the right to obtain help were basically contradictory. The Home Army did not have such a right. It could only count on a charitable act of help, arising from purely humanitarian reasons.

The author seems to be suggesting that political reasons had priority over technical ones, and in any case does not seem to believe in the latter. It is worth noting how he generalizes. For instance: "at a suitable time," and then: "different from what the leaders of the uprising expected." But most significant of all is the fact that he confines this possibility to the month of August. Does this mean that subsequent desisting from operation on this front was the result of political manipulations?

Polityka (in the already quoted issue) also confines the objective difficulties more or less to the same period of time:

Placing their hopes upon such slim chances, did they have the right to start the battle, whose consequences it was their duty to foresee? We know that the help of the Western Allies was pure improvisation, a noble gesture rather than effective aid. The historians who analyze the military problems maintain that the Soviet forces which during the summer offensive have been stretched out over a long front line could not -- after the outbreak of the uprising -- immediately leap over to the left bank of the Vistula.

But even apart from this analysis, it is beyond doubt that the initiators of the uprising could not count on Soviet help, while the uprising -- in its political sense -- was aimed against the side represented by the USSR.

The Soviet forces could not make that leap "immediately." But this does not mean that they could not do so later. Could they not? That brings to mind associations with Kliszko's book. Another irresistible association -- the discrepancy with Sokorski's opinion that the participation of the Communists in the uprising (from the very beginning!) removed its anti-Soviet character ("the fight on two fronts"). Thus, even the leading champions of the modified doctrine contradict each other. It is worth noting at this opportunity the article in Argumenty (21) about Allied aid to the uprising, which states:

News about the outbreak of the uprising reached London on August 2. Despite the negative and clearly stated attitude of the British government, feverish endeavors were immediately started to get help by parachuting arms and ammunition at designated points....The British Prime Minister immediately gave the appropriate orders, ordering the operation to be conducted from Italy, subject to the technical possibilities of executing it.

As we know, those "technical possibilities of execution" were nil, especially because Russia refused to permit Allied airplanes to land behind the front. Undoubtedly, a reader of those publications will compare this information with the fact that, for many weeks, the obvious technical chances of organizing help were neglected by the Soviet side. But these are only peripheral rays of the general tone of the anniversary propaganda, similar to the interview with von dem Bach-Zelewski about the uprising reprinted after 12 years by Express Wieczorny. (22) In this interview, quite revoltingly, Bach puts on airs and graces in front of the Polish interviewer to create the best possible impression (no wonder, because he then could well have already expected to be tried by a Polish court for the crimes committed by the Germans during the uprising). However, one can assume from this interview that the Germans also expected a rapid Russian attack on Warsaw.

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Conclusion

This, more or less, is a summing up of the evolution of the attitude of the Polish Communists to the uprising and

(21) 3 August 1969.

(22) 9-10 August 1969.

its legend. This evolution is mostly an offshoot of the political changes taking place within the country, as well as in the relations between Poland and the USSR. Can one foresee the scale and direction of this evolution in the future?

A forecast of this type is extremely difficult to make in the face of political changes in the entire Communist bloc, which are occurring in such rapid succession. One can only point out certain trends.

For instance, if the quarrels within the Party -- which have, at present, been put "on ice" -- were again to blow up (which is almost certain), one can expect the following changes in the appraisal of the uprising and the events connected with it:

1. because the "Moscow-oriented Poles" had greater influence on Soviet headquarters than did the "homegrown" Communists in Poland (who were much better acquainted with the situation in the country), the fears of the Soviet Union of the consequences which could result from effective help for the uprising have been greatly exaggerated;

2. but for that influence, the Soviet Union could have "magnanimously" organized local actions during the second phase of the uprising and could have taken Warsaw before the uprising was defeated.

This is probably the limit of the dosage of truth about the uprising permitted, beyond which the people connected with the present governing team in Poland cannot go. To overstep this limit would mean upsetting the very foundation of the policy of people of Gomulka's ilk, who cherish the ambition to "re-orient" the Polish nation toward the East.

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