JPRS L/9462

30 December 1980

# East Europe Report

## POLITICAL, SOCIOLOGICAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

(FOUO 7/80)

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APPROVED FOR RELEASE: 2007/02/08: CIA-RDP82-00850R000300060043-5

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# EAST EUROPE REPORT

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## CONTENTS

POLAND

# FRENCH JOURNALISTS GIVE EYEWITNESS REPORTS ON POLAND

## First Photographs of Russians

Paris PARIS MATCH in French 24 Oct 80 pp 44-45

[Photographic Report by Andre Gorgreaux and Jacques Lange: "Under the Russian Boot"]

[Text] First Photographs of Russians in Poland

This photograph is a document taken hastily by our reporters right in the middle of a Red Army base hidden in a forest near Born. "We were following a military convoy," they tell us, "when we suddenly found ourselves right in the middle of this semisecret base. We were careful not to stop, and boldly forging ahead, we took these pictures on the fly, while our camper was sluing around in a skillful about u-turn. The most extraordinary thing was that no one bothered us. It was a miracle!" Everywhere in Poland, in the most remote country areas as much as in the cities, our reporters met Russian troops, and they felt, as if it were just beneath the skin's surface, the exasperation of the Poles, the hate they had for a "liberator" who had been occupying their country for the past 35 years. The first secretary of the Polish Communist Party, Stanislav Kania, who succeeded Gierek--who had been sent into retirement--recognized that "there was a feeling of edginess and constant excitement in the factories." In fact, the communist party leaders are in complete confusion. It is up to whoever will denounce another so as to lay the blame on the latter as being responsible for "the greatest political crisis in the history of contemporary Poland." And while Walesa, the leader of the workers in the shipyards of Gdansk, calls for an hour long warning strike to express everyone's impatience with and suspicion of a communist party that is seeking postponement of reforms, all Poland fears the intervention of the Warsaw Pact troops. As it had happened in Prague and Budapest.

### Through the Window of Our Camper

"We only had our camper window through which to take our photographs," our reporters tell us. "And we had a hell of a time meeting up with units of the Red Army. You would think there were no Soviet soldiers in Poland. We came upon convoys but never any soldiers, singly or in a group walking in the street. Only once, just once in Szczecin, right near Born, did we see three military men walking along preceded by an officer. They literally cut through the crowd which silently opened up before them. The officer's arrogance was unbelievable." The Poles have

their own way of showing their rebelliousness as well as their powerlessness. "If we talk to them about the Russians," say our reporters, "they stay silent. If we ask them whether they fear an invasion by the Red Army, they answer 'Not at all, they are already in our country'." Everyone is aware of the trap they risk finding themselves in again, even more humiliated and more a prisoner than before. The pitch is rising in the Kremlin which is denouncing "the antisocialist elements", in other words, the workers who are struggling to get free unions. The warning has been clearly stated for whoever, in a so-called people's democracy, knows how to read PRAVDA. And the latter states in an article signed by A. Petrov, a pseudonym for a group of Central Committee officials: "Elements hostile to a socialist Poland are becoming more and more active." And it should be remembered that this country's frontiers are protected by the member countries of the Warsaw Pact. It is just as it was with Czechoslovakia. "Poland is at the edge of the unknown," our reporters calculate. "One false step and the whole thing can explode. The Poles, unlike the Czechs, are ready for anything."

Gomulka Consigned Before Gierek to Oblivion

Our photographers surprised the one who was disgraced before Gierek was disgraced. Gomulka is seen leaving his modest home at 19 Frascati Street in Warsaw. Like Gierek, who retired for "reasons of health" on the last 16 September after the strikes in Gdansk, Gomulka also retired for "health reasons", 10 years ago on 20 December 1970, after the riots that ravaged Gdansk and Szczecin. He now leads the life of a small pensioner. Every morning, Gomulka, wearing a beret, rides in his chauffeur-driven blue Fiat 132 into the countryside. During his glory, Gierek, his successor, had use of a sumptuous dacha located in the Constancin region near to the capital. Today this deluxe residence is closed. Comrade Gierek is undergoing treatment in a hospital in Anin, in the Warsaw suburbs. Thus those who have been nicknamed "the two G's" have met the same fate, the same political disease that requires, in a crisis, immediate treatment and total isolation. No more than his predecessor Gomulka, Gierek will not reappear on the stage of history. Stanislaw Kania, who, henceforth, presides over the destinies of Poland, knows full well that he may undergo a similar disgrace. He has a few weeks, if not 2 months, to take in hand these free trade unions that the Soviets are already denouncing. If he has Leonid Brezhnev's confidence, who practically enthroned him during the latter's visit to the Kremlin, it will only be for a while. The time needed to succeed.

Disguised Journalists Cross Poland

Paris PARIS MATCH in French 24 Oct 80 p 45

[Article by Jean Cau: "The Russians Are Indeed There"]

[Text] They told me they were photographers and it was not their job to write. Now, I, it seems, know how to write, and so, if I wanted to, they would tell me their story. They would give it to me verbally and I would write it down. That's what I'm going to do now, that's the agreement, not without first giving my two strapping young friends something to eat. They are young men, cunning as a fox, as lively as quick-silver, highly professional, nuts about "sensational actions", fond of laughing, and--which often goes with it--self-assured. Full of courage, easy to get along with. They were men. I have said it all. And now, my friends, let's get to it, I am writing. And you, the reader, listen to this dangerous and

vivid adventure and you will learn what journalists, whose only desire is to tell you something, are capable of doing. Let's get started; they are telling their story.

"So, what did we want to do? To see whether, yes or no, there are Russian soldiers in Poland. We had been told: It is not possible, it is impossible, you will never see any. They are there but you cannot see them, etc. They are there, but they have made themselves invisible. They are in safe areas, protected, etc." Very good. Therefore, that's our goal, to spot Russians, no matter what it takes. How? By acting like tourists on a special trip to Poland so as to be able to discover their "reserves," to approach them, or get as close as possible to them. We rented a big fantastic camper, luxurious, it had everything, and it was terribly conspicuous. Inside the camper, there was everything for a trip, everything we needed to be able to act like guys sold on ecology. There were fishing rods, fishnets, books on animals, etc. And a girl friend to complete the picture and to give the impression of being on a joy-ride. She was a girl who spoke German and a little Polish. And there we were on our way, through East Germany, the DDR [German Democratic Republic], on a visa giving us the right to cross East Germany without stopping. We cross into the DDR where we meet customs officials who were silent and closemouthed. There was barbed wire everywhere. People were silent, undoubtedly a bit astonished because tourists are not seen at this time of the year. We go on, forging ahead on the freeway. No turns to the left nor to the right, signs everywhere. We stopped to have something to eat at a dismal and absolutely filthy eatery on the freeway. The W.C. was disgusting; there was no paper, not even a lock on the door. The waiters were as cold as ice. We acted like French jerks, smiling good humoredly; but nothing happened, absolutely nothing! No response of any kind, not even a smile. And, it was raining, how it was raining! Our objective was to reach the frontier that we wanted to cross at Forst at dawn. Why at dawn? Because we told ourselves that the customs officials and cops would not be fully awake; they would still be groggy from sleep, and because we had an idea that it would be a big scene. You are going to see. So, 50 kilometers farther on the freeway suddenly became a cruddy road. We kept on, then abruptly the freeway appeared again! It was huge, brand new, a fantastic stretch of cement, trees were cut down all around. There were enormous hangars. In fact, right in the middle of a lost forest of pines, there was an airfield. There were no airplanes, but there was an airfield, all ready for an emergency. By the way, during our trip, we came across a bunch of these hidden airfields. We arrive in Forst in our breathtaking rig. It was dawn. We told the girl: "Get to it", and she began to fix some toast, make some coffee, eggs and bacon. We had a little music in the camper. It was a gimmick to give them the impression that they were coming into our home, if they wanted to look over our machine. The gimmick was to make it look homelike--coffee, bacon, toast, they are used to those things, you understand? It surprises them, and intimidates them. It was our idea and it worked. They looked, those East German cops, with their big eyes. They took in deep breaths. They came out still sleepy from their huts with blinking lights, and half kaput--from their huts, 1950 style, enough to make you sick. They come in just the same and say to us: "Any magazines? STERN? PARIS-MATCH? Anything?" We had brought with us a pile of Maison de Marie-Claire, fishing, and gardening magazines, that sort of thing. They went through all of them. They squeezed the mattresses, they opened a closet and a box of noodles fell on their head. "No weapons? No radio transmitters? Why?" We just stood there, always laughing, acting dazed, like idiots hung up on ecology. They did not press matters. "O.K., go on." At the Polish customs--no problem. The customs officer, a serious young

girl wearing trousers, looked at the camper, and with the hint of a smile, said: "Go on." What a relief! Fifteen for our side. It was now daylight. We were driving through a magnificent pine forest, in the direction of Swietoszow, where we had been told--obviously we had begun to use the familiar form of "you" amongst ourselves before starting out on our expedition--there might be a Russian. Of course, at the frontier, we had been asked where we were going. We had answered that we were tourists out to see beautiful forests, nature, fish, birds, little beastys--we loved that sort of thing. They thought we were complete idiots. We kept on through a thick forest, and the first Pole we saw was a mushroom picker whose baskets were filled with big mushrooms and chanterelles. At the same time, there was a loud noise--it was a gigantic Russian military helicopter, flying at tree level, some hundred feet above our heads. "Russki," said the mushroom picker. We said to ourselves: "Good, we are getting warm!" We rubbed our hands thinking about getting some photographs of the Russian base and camp. No way! It was impossible to leave the road through the forest. Everywhere, on the left and on the right, there were signs telling us we could not. Then, wham! We suddenly came upon a convoy of Russian military trucks with yellow stars and Russian signs in cyrillic. Overhead, above the forest and over our heads, there was a continuous line of aircraft. Enormous helicopters, MiGs, the sound filled our ears. In any case, however, we were happy. There /were/ [printed in italics] Russians in Poland, and we were right in the middle of the whole caboodle. To take photographs, that was impossible to do. And what ones would you take? We had to keep moving if we did not want to be caught being curious. So, we continued on to the nearest village called Trzebien--a shabby place, with its brick houses, peasants driving horse-drawn carts, women riding patched together motor-bikes, horses and plows--the village gave an awful impression of being extremely poor. People looked at us as we went by as if we had just fallen from the sky. They had never seen a person from the West. We were from another world. Without stopping the camper, we took pictures as best as we could through the window curtains. In fact we stayed under cover in the camper. There in Trzebien we saw Russian officers, stiff and impeccable in bearing. Again we saw a convoy of Russian military trucks. We left this area and drove on to a larger town called Zielona-Gora. Here, there was a change in attitude. Although the people did not say a word to us, they were not hostile. We roused their curiosity, but they made no move, as if they were afraid to approach us. Only the kids kept calling to us "Gum! gum!" The town was shabby. The people were dressed like the French used to dress 40 years ago. Everywhere there were people in lines, shops with only three eggs or a man's suit in the window. At last, a young girl came up and spoke to us in French. She was a student. Trying to be nice, she took us to the Student's House where we talked with her and her boyfriend. We said to them, straight out, that we had seen military convoys and a lot of aircraft. There must be a few Russians in the area, eh? "Yes, in Legnica, there's even a large garrison also." We did not press the matter because we could see that it would be impossible to get them to say any more. Regarding Russkis, not a word, no comment, nothing. "Yes, there are Russki..." and that was all. They were clearly frightened. We could feel it. With a steel carpet over their head, and these convoys on the ground, it was as if they were made into a sandwich. We went to the supermarket where all there was were a few canned goods that looked to be a hundred years old, some garlic and onions. These were the first words of Polish we learned: garlic--/czosnek/ [printed in boldface], onion--/cebula/ [printed in boldface]. We bought some and we were so happy to speak Polish that for the rest of the trip we called each other Czosnek and Cebula.

We set our course for Legnica, through a crummy countryside, covered in woods. We arrived in Legnica, hurrah! It was something! There were convoys, columns, Russkis everywhere, as if it were raining Russkis. But they never looked at us, no way. And never a word spoken. Besides, you never saw them in the streets, never. The troops were in their trucks or in their Russian-made jeeps. You did not see any Russki in the bars or in the stores, not a single Russki. They keep moving on wheels or in the sky.

During our trip, we could count on our fingers the ones we saw in the streets. They absolutely did not mix with the population. Always sitting in their vehicles, on the ground, or sitting in their aircraft, in the sky. Yes, really, it's as if the Russians were sitting on Poland! It's unbelievable the number of MiGs, helicopters, and cargo planes flying around without let-up. We had the feeling of being squashed down, of a cover being pressed down over our heads. Just the same, we did see in town--it was a miracle--two soldiers and an officer going along on foot. An unheard of exception. And then what a sight: They were walking along three abreast, and the crowd, abruptly and silently, moved apart as if they were the bow of a ship cutting through the water. And no one was looking at them, not a soul. It was almost heart-rending.

From Legnica, we set our course to the north, northwest. Our objective was to drive to the Baltic. We forged on towards an area called the "lake region". On the highway, there were the eternal convoys and motorized columns, as if the Russkis always had to be on the move; and all day long there were aircraft as if they enjoyed wasting their gas without having to account for it. We arrived in Poznan in the middle of the night--air maneuvers all night long--and, without stopping, we continued on to Szczecin and Zaplinek. The first town was filled, filled to the rafters, with Russian military personnel, trucks and jeeps, driving at night.

We came upon a long convoy of tanks; the men were in black uniforms with black helmets. Very impressive and ominous. In Zaplinek, we did the bars; we went to the barber's and got drunk on vodka with him and the optician on the corner. But there was never a mention of the Russkis, not a single word. It was a forbidden subject. Even with a glass of vodka under the nose, no word! Even when they were drunk, the barrier still held. As soon as we said "Russki", you could see the fear. As soon as we tried to speak about politics, even a tiny allusion to politics, that was it--not a word. We asked about "Walesa, the guy from Gdansk, you know him?" "No." One "no" and that was all. Curtain.

Next we were off towards the Baltic Sea, to have a look-see. On the way, during the night, we had a funny experience. At 11 o'clock at night, we came upon a military convoy going towards Bodovo. We said to each other, "Shall we follow it? Let's do it! We'll get a good look." We followed along at a distance from the tailend of the convoy. Suddenly, without anyone seeing us in the black night, we found ourselves smack dab in the middle of a huge Russian camp. We thought we were in a village, but we were in a camp that was crawling with soldiers. There were stone houses, signals, dim lights, etc. Good God!

We were right in the wolf's maw with our tremendous photographic equipment, our Minox cameras, our "500" cameras, our telescopic lens, and exposed films. We had had it. We could already hear them: "Who are you? Where do you come from? Why are you here? Let's see your film! Ah, you are fishing and nature nuts and

you spend your time taking photographs, even out of focus, of Red Army convoys?" Well, too bad, before reaching the heart of the camp, we did an abrupt u-turn happily it was at night--and hauled out expecting to be followed. But they must not have understood what was going on. Perhaps they thought that we were big-shots in a special vehicle. The people in the camp must have thought we belonged to the convoy; those in the convoy thought we belonged to the camp. And since they must not ask about their big-shots, we moved out. We were unbelieveably lucky. We drove on to the Baltic, right to the sea, at Kolobserg. There was still a hubbub on the road--convoys and aircraft. In Kolobzerg, there were MiGs all night long. This whole underpopulated region in the heart of Poland is covered with Russian bases, camps, and garrisons. It is their central area; from this point, hidden in the woods and among the lakes, and except for cities like Warsaw and Crakow where they are not to be found, the Russians can (a) spread throughout Poland as soon as the whistle blows, and (b) they are concerned only with the peasants or terrorized inhabitants of small towns cut-off from the main stream. Finally, in short, those who say there is no Red Army in Poland or who, from Warsaw, say that there are no Russians to be seen, we can point out the mushroom patch to them. If they want to see some Russians, we can give them the addresses. They will have all they want, as these poor Poles have already.

So, we said to ourselves: "On to Warsaw!" And here's Warsaw. It's dull, the people are sad, lines of them everywhere. As soon as they see a foreigner, it's the same sad and never-ending thing: "Change money? Change money?" Here we talked with the people. In Warsaw they were not afraid to say something. We met no one who liked the Russians, not a soul. We wondered if there is a single Pole who likes them. There were pictures of the Pope everywhere. The churches were full to overflowing until 11 o'clock every night. You see young people, liberated types, young girls with make-up on who, the poor things, want to be dressed in the vulgar style prevalent here and you see them entering the churches where they remain on their knees for an hour. One evening "here it's "Cebula"--the onion--who's speaking) I say to my buddy Czosnek (garlic): "Hey, I am going to take in a mass." I go in. It's 10 o'clock. The church is packed. There is an unbelievable piety. At the end of the mass, everyone takes communion. I do too. I say to myself: "I'm going to do it." The feeling was overpowering. I had not taken communion since my confirmation, but I had the feeling that I wanted to be with them. When you see a whole people weighed down, a whole people withdrawn into themselves, who open up only to tell you that they are afraid; when you give a bar of chocolate to two old people, to whose house you return the following day, you see the chocolate bar lying untouched in the knick-knack cabinet, next to a picture of the Pope, and they say to you: "We will not eat it. We have put it there as a souvenir from you." Damn it, you feel you want to take communion with them.

In Warsaw, we spotted the place where Gomulka lives, the guy who was succeeded by Gierek. He lives at 19 Frascati Street in an area of small houses. It is surrounded by a lawn and an iron fence with a cop at the entrance gate. It is forbidden to park longer than a minute. Gomulka lives on the fourth floor and has a reddish-brown dog. He is no longer young and wears a beret. Nor is he senile. Every morning at 0820 sharp, his driver arrives in a big Fiat 132 and he drives Gomulka and his mother to a small country area, Konstancin some 15 kilometers away. It's a small village where he shuts himself in a hut built of wood--his dacha. He does not go out, and at 1315, he returns to Warsaw. We followed him. Every day, it was the same thing, as regulated as lines on a sheet of music paper.

The road that goes to Konstancin is very beautiful because it had been built for Comrade Gierek who used to live in a magnificant dacha two kilometers from there, but we were not able to get near his place. The house is superb and secluded, because Comrade Gierek had a taste for luxury. We found the hospital where he is taking a rest. It's in the Warsaw suburbs, in Anin, on a road which leads to the woods. It is impossible to drive on it without being seen. The hospital is exposed and is surrounded by an iron fence. Gierek is on the second floor.

The hospital is loaded with cops. That's a change for him from his dacha. We nosed around without stopping. Our young girl succeeded in talking with one of the nurses. She said: "Hey, there is a famous person here?" The nurse, tense, answered dryly: "There is some one who used to be famous, but he is not any longer!" And she turned on her heels.

From Warsaw, we went on to Crakow. From there, we went towards Czechoslovakia where the Russkis do not hide themselves. They move around, they maneuver, we saw them everywhere. The Czechs are even more withdrawn than the Poles, they have an even more unhappy look. In order to cross the frontier, we went through our usual routine with the coffee, eggs, music, and ham, but here it was the worst. Wait--that's their gimmick, wait! And barbed wire, iron fences, a no man's land between barbed wire and observation posts. When we arrived at the crossing point, there was only one car which they were in the process of taking apart, from top to bottom. They had a large mirror to look underneath. They ran rods into the exhaust pipe, etc.

We told ourselves: "This time, we can throw in the towel. If they work us over with that much curiosity, they have got us, what with our cameras, film." "So, just like that, you are coming back from a fishing trip in Poland? Where were you? Wait a minute, we will develop your film and make a telephone call to find out what area in particular you visited." Happily, the aroma of the coffee and toast, the ham, the fishing poles, the camper so obviously a capitalist trick, all that saved us and we went on. They asked us: "Where were you?" "In Poland. Ah, you know, to fish, to pick mushrooms, to see nature!" "You had a good trip?" "We were pleased!" "Go on, go on through, have a good trip!" "Thank you!" We were in West Germany, safe. We are here, what a trip! Good, my friends. I closed my notebook. They asked me what had been happening in France while they were away. I told them there had been an attack and we had promptly taken up arms to fight and had courageously demonstrated against nazism which would not pass. They looked flabbergasted: "Nazism? Where? Here? What nazism?" They were completely dumbfounded. They were returning from occupied Poland, with fire at their heels and fear in their guts.

PHOTO CAPTIONS

1. p 44. Soviet tanks hidden in a forest in the Born region, near Szczecinek, in northern Poland. Red army soldiers are everywhere kept apart from the local inhabitants for fear of an incident.

2. p 46. From left to right. Above: A Russian officer on a street in Szczecin, near Born. One of the few Soviet military men on foot seen in the crowd by our reporters. Below: A driver in a Soviet convoy. On the right: The arrival of Soviet troops at the Legnica railroad station.

3. p 48. Gomulka, a man in disgrace. He has been forgotten for the past ten years, since Gierek had succeeded him after the great uprisings in Gdansk. Our reporters succeeded in surprising "this pensioner of History" that Gierek has now become.

4. p 51. A Soviet soldier and his jeep near our reporters' camper.



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CSO: 8319/0204

POLAND

UK CORRESPONDENT REPORTS ON CONFUSION SURROUNDING POLISH CENSORSHIP

LD221333 London THE SUNDAY TIMES in English 21 Sep 80 p 8

[Michael Dobbs dispatch: "All the News (Almost) Fit for Poles"]

[Text] Warsaw--Last Thursday a newspaper in Gdansk carried a front-page report on the first full conference of Poland's new independent trade unions. The historic meeting, attended by delegates from all over the country, had been held in the city the previous evening, and the account carried by the VOICE OF THE COAST [GLOS WYBRZEZA] was both gripping and accurate.

It was an excellent example of a new style of journalism that has been helping to transform the usually turgid pages of the Polish papers over the last month. But no other Polish newspaper carried a similar report. Although the event clearly had immense implications for the whole of Poland, all mention of it elsewhere was banned by the censor.

The incident provides an insight into the confusing position in which Polish journalists find themselves. Since the end of August, when the government formally agreed to workers' demands for a relaxation of censorship, the press has become a good deal more interesting and lively. Much that was previously unpublishable gets into print every day, including the formerly unmentionable word "strike." But many journalists say the changes are patchy.

"At present, the press is like a cake that has not been fully baked," says Jerzy Salecki, a journalist with the government information agency INTERPRESS. "Parts are nice and fluffy--but then you come across an indigestible bit in the middle."

An illustration is provided by the newspapers' coverage of Parliament [Sejm] earlier this month. The session was unprecedented in Poland's post-war history for MPs' frankness and the sharpness of their criticism of government policies. Next day, the arguments were reported in the press, but many comments were considerably toned down.

In the past fortnight, some newspapers have published articles that had previously been banned by the censor. One piece in the weekly POLITYKA was an interview with a former socialist politician on the conflicts with the communists immediately after the Second World War.

Another described the way the Hungarian Government treats its intellectuals. This article had been held up for seven months because, without ever referring to Poland, it was implicitly critical of policies pursued by the former Polish leader, Edward Gierek.

One particularly sensitive issue is what the censors refer to as "the August events." POLITYKA, which has always enjoyed a privileged position in the Polish media, was allowed to print a colourful and objective account of the end of the strike in Gdansk. But coverage has been limited, apparently to avoid over-exciting the people.

By normal East European standards, even the brief reports of the strikers' demands that have appeared in the Polish press are subversive. Czechoslovak and East German customs men have confiscated copies of official Polish newspapers containing details of the Gdansk agreement.

In one sense, demands by journalists for greater freedom are merely a reflection of the deeper stirrings in Polish society. But they also have a particular importance of their own. In Poland, as in other Soviet bloc countries, control of the mass media has always been regarded as a cornerstone of Communist Party authority.

The abolition of censorship during Czechoslovakia's Prague Spring was one of the actions that led to the Soviet invasion of August 1968. After the invasion, the Soviet leadership complained that the Czechoslovak reformers under Alexander Dubcek had ignored their repeated calls for controls over the press. Formal censorship was quickly reimposed.

There are, of course, important differences between the Czechoslovak and Polish upheavals. One is that the Polish Government has not agreed to abolish censorship, but merely to restrict it to "the protection of state and economic secrets and matters relating to the security of the state and its important international interests."

Another distinction is drawn by Jerzy Wiatr, a distinguished political scientist. He says: "The essence of the problem is the attitude of the editors. In Czechoslovakia, most of the people controlling the media were unwilling to compromise at all. Here, most editors support the reforms--but they are not willing to push everything to the same extreme."

In Czechoslovakia it was the intelligentsia that formed the core of the reform movement. By contrast, the first demands for change in Poland came from the workers; only later did the journalists join in.

Many calls are now being heard for the reform of the Journalists' Association [SDP] and its close involvement in drawing up a new press law to be submitted to Parliament within the next three months. At a lively meeting a week ago, a group of 265 journalists signed a petition demanding an extraordinary congress of the association, fresh elections to its leadership, and "independent" journalism.

In a weekly column in POLITYKA, Daniel Passent said the association should transform itself from a cafeteria-com-travel office into a professional organization representing journalists' interests.

Ironically, reports of the Journalists' Association meeting were themselves censored. Coverage was limited to a three-paragraph item by the Polish news agency PAP briefly mentioning the topics discussed without reporting any of the speeches.

A similar fate befell a resolution on press freedom adopted by journalists in the southern city of Krakow. The resolution was published in full on the front page of the local newspaper, but not reported at all in the national press. The deputy editor of POLITYKA, Zygmunt Szeliga, described the censor's decision in an interview as "a relic of the old way of handling the press."

Many journalists object to the fact that the Polish public is better informed by foreign radio stations such as Radio Free Europe and the BBC than by the Polish press. Jerzy Salecki, who represents INTERPRESS journalists in the association, commented: "It is very upsetting that we journalists are not trusted by our own authorities."

He added: "A letter can be published in the Krakow press, but not in the central press. I don't understand it."



CSO: 2020

POLAND

ITALIAN JOURNALIST INTERVIEWS STUDENTS ON SOCIALISM, DEMOCRACY

Milan CORRIERE DELLA SERA in Italian 17 Oct 80 p 3

[Interview by Sandro Scabello: "Thirst for Democracy, Not Anarchy"]

[Text] As enthusiasm for the new independent students' association mounts, the official socialist association concedes the setback and offers a welcome to everyone in its ranks, political ideas notwithstanding. The danger of excessive fragmentation in the organizations.

Warsaw--Along with Solidarnosc [Solidarity], democracy is coming to Poland's universities. The new Independent Association of Polish Students (NZSP), which is recruiting hundreds of members in all the nation's universities, wants to adopt the same title used by Lech Walesa's union as a symbol of something more than hope. The (official) Union of Polish Students (SZSP) acknowledges its loss but declares that it will not dissolve, as the old central union apparently wants to do.

"The mistakes we have made do not justify the dissolution of our organization," say SZSP's directors. Last year its membership numbered 300,000, or 71-72 percent of all Polish university students; today, this percentage, estimated by SZSP's own representatives, has plummeted to a scant 20 percent. In its courageous self-criticism, the organization admitted its faults, its [adverse] responsibilities and unpopular interferences, but it denies that it is a direct emanation of the party.

"We see the party's direction," said SZSP deputy chairman Tadeusz Sawic, "as a function of partnership, not subordination, providing we maintain our autonomy. The central committee does not finance us, and the ministry of education contributes only 40 percent of our budget. The rest we raise ourselves through our own initiatives."

SZSP now wants to "unlace the corset, which has kept us imprisoned," and declares its readiness to accept anyone in its ranks, whatever a student's political opinions or visions of the world may be. "Wider student participation in the life of the nation," "democracy and pluralism in the life of the university," "we support our autonomy with action and deeds, not only words" -- at the debates in Krakow, Gdansk and Warsaw, these slogans, handwritten on placards, ring out their messages with fervent passion.

If the aims of the associations are identical, their strategies often differ. Before deciding which one to join, many students want to know what the precise program of each of the various organizations will be. The most ambitious objective is some kind of self-management, above party and groups and free from the power and tentacles of the government.

But how can the students structure a system of self-management and insert the university into the process of democratizing Poland's society and institutions? We discussed this problem with four students of the University of Warsaw, the capital's biggest: Piotr (political science), Jan (history), Adam (sociology) and Stefan (literature), all barely 20 years old and all members of the new independent association's founding committee.

[Question] To what extent can your association's program be considered a-political?

Jan: Until now there has been no way of eliminating the government's firm control over every aspect of social life. Therefore, everything that happened has been given some political label. Now, it seems, the government has reverted to the position it should have taken since the beginning -- just looking after certain indispensable state matters, but not our entire social life. What does our political attitude signify? The defense of democracy, the demand for more freedom in the university, and the right to publish our journals without censorship.

Adam: We students have a precise job to do in democratizing the country through university activities. In the other socialist countries, the universities are dominated by the party in power. If our universities in Poland can shake off the party yoke and function autonomously, that will be a long stride forward and an indication that Poland is really changing. We will add the democratic creed we formulate to those adopted by other social groups, with which we intend to cooperate from now on. We will publish independent journals that will fulfill an important purpose, not only for the universities but for the rest of the people, too.

Piotr: My friend here has spoken of an autonomous university. It would seem that such an institution, totally independent, is unthinkable in a country of the socialist bloc, that a university cannot exist on its own terms because the powers-that-be would close it down immediately. Fortunately, we can count on the majority of our people to stand behind us, just as they are supporting the new unions. We are not alone, and the spread of democracy in our institutions of higher learning will influence other social organisms and institutions.

Stefan: Then too, democracy in the university will exert an enormous influence in molding the students. Until now -- and the same applies to the whole life of the country -- the students had only one organization, with a very definite political character. You could take up political activities only if you submitted to its predetermined position, otherwise you didn't commit

yourself at all. Now, after the changes we believe will come in our nation, our association will enable young people to complete their studies with a sound cultural preparation, as well as a social and political awareness far more complete and freer. That's certainly not a negligible factor.

[Question] The process of democratization carries certain risks with it. What particular risks for you?

Piotr: The biggest would be if there are too many student organizations because the result would be anarchy, and that would make it easy for the authorities to wipe them out on some pretext or other. Let's not fool ourselves. Right now our association is legal, but it's looked upon with suspicion and bewilderment. Some students are impatient to win their freedom sooner than we do. That's why we insist so much on democracy, on the kind of democracy you saw during the strike in Gdansk. There, the workers' demands, whether approved or not, were discussed rapidly, the strikers didn't get lost in futile speechmaking. But I see our project beset with difficulties. There is too much debating, too much splintering. Maybe that's because we're only at the beginning, or maybe it's the fault of our environment.

Jan: All the same, you must realize that discussions teach people to think. They learn about things and problems they never before knew existed. That's our purpose: to accustom people to think and take part in a pluralist system. We now have two student organizations, and we might have others. The individual shaped by our new university system -- and we believe that some day there will be many more like him all over Poland -- will have learned democracy from the ground up before he takes up a professional activity.

Stefan: What's more, this individual won't be demoralized as in the past when he had to show his loyalty to the party before he could earn any immediate profit from anything. We don't want our association to give people material benefits, but only to satisfy their will to work in the social field on a vast scale.

Piotr: The best way to carve out a career for yourself, whether political or otherwise, has always been to take an active part in some youth organization, especially SZSP.

Adam: Someone mentioned anarchy. To me that's not the greatest danger. For years we've been suffocated, repressed, prevented from giving voice to our demands or discussing our problems. I have heard a lot of talk in discussions about rational politics. The writer Stefan Bratkowski spoke of the revolution of reason. I think there won't be any lack of reason with us. We all realize our geopolitical situation, and we won't go beyond the limits of our specific program.

[Question] Do you think the party is ready to switch over to democracy?

Piotr: That's a tough one. It doesn't seem to me that the party needs to go through any great metamorphosis, yet it must take into account the reality

of the new unions and the new universities, which are going to be a power and a mechanism of control. Who knows what will happen in the future? There are enough precedents in our history, there have been periods, like the so-called thaw, when the party was confronting difficulties and loosened the screws for a while. But once matters were smoothed over, it inexorably reverted to repression. Today, I think, that would be difficult, in view of the pressure from below for the movement of liberation to turn the screws. It's essential to organize as soon as possible a (popular) force that can put strong pressure on the party. Perhaps that can happen now.

Adam: The party base is widely favorable to democratization. Two years ago, when the association Experience and Future (DIP) was formed, many members of the party joined it. Even before the union revolt in August, DIP had seriously analyzed the country's political, economic and social situation, and arrived at conclusions that were subsequently borne out by facts. So you see, there are men in the party who are fighting for democracy. But we have another problem: should we really hope for liberalization? We mustn't forget that when the communist parties democratize -- look at Hungary in 1946 and Czechoslovakia in 1968 -- the Russians step in. Will that happen to Poland, too? It's a risk we cannot ignore, and we must discuss it.

[Question] Do you four believe in socialism?

Piotr: Socialism is such a threadbare, devaluated word that you don't really know what it means any more. In Poland, though, it preserves an exact sense. Speaking of opposition groups, it is often used to attack antisocialists. It's a sort of code the authorities use to brand the people who reject their line and directives as antisocialists.

Jan: Apart from that, like us, many communists in the opposition don't want to fight socialism or revolutionize its principles, but rather set up a really democratic socialism that's more just and human.

Adam: Two years ago, a group of specialists asked students at the University of Warsaw about their political ideas. Three fourths of those interrogated did not know how to answer the question: what is socialism? They simply said it was a very good thing, a system that made it possible for people to live well, that people are happy with it. That was all they could say. To be frank, I don't know myself whether it's more a doctrine or a utopia. Young people in the West will certainly know better than we do.



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