

THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNIST THOUGHT IN POLAND

JANUARY 1947 TO OCTOBER 1956

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BY  
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## PREFACE

Since October 1956 when Poland effected a bloodless but significant revolt against Stalinism and Soviet domination, there has been a growing interest in the subject of Polish Communism. The large number of books dealing with this topic which have recently appeared are evidence of the wide search for an understanding of those social and political forces which led to the Polish uprising of 1956. Unfortunately, because of the lack of reliable sources, it has not always been easy to determine the exact nature of these forces.

It is my hope that a study of Polish Communist ideology between the years 1947 to 1956 may, in some way, contribute to the proper understanding of one of the most important events of the post-war era. This thesis, therefore, is not simply an exercise in philosophical thought but represents an attempt to throw light on political events by examining their ideological motivations.

This is a study of official Communist theory in Poland but, for obvious reasons, I have devoted space to unofficial pronouncements and writings during the period of the "thaw" and after. The thesis is based almost exclusively on primary sources. The most important among these has been the Polish United Workers' (Communist) Party's theoretical organ, Nowe Drogi (New Roads). This periodical has provided a wealth of material and has served as the basis for the thesis. I have also relied heavily upon two Polish literary journals, Nowa Kultura (New Culture) and Przegląd Kulturalny (Cultural Review). Both these publications were

particularly valuable as sources of information for the post-Stalinist period. During that time they exhibited a degree of independence that is rarely found among Communist publications.

My gratitude to Dr. C. R. Hiscocks goes beyond the limits of this thesis but I am indebted to him for the guidance, ideas, and valuable criticisms which he so generously provided during its preparation. Perhaps even more so, I am grateful to Professor Hiscocks for his trust and encouragement and for the inspiration which he aroused in me. Whatever merits this thesis may have must be attributed to his advice and assistance.

I wish also to express my appreciation to Professor I. Avakumovic for useful suggestions and for a post-graduate seminar in International Communism which provided the opportunity to view the subject of this thesis in the perspective of its larger setting.

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Brian Knapheis,  
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ABSTRACT

Of the M.A. Thesis

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Communism in Poland evolved out of the socialist movements of the early 19th Century. From the outset, Polish Communism was characterized by two distinct ideological tendencies. The first, most forcibly espoused by Rosa Luxemburg, adhered to classical Marxism with its accompanying doctrinaire internationalism. The second ideological wing was intensely patriotic and regarded the national liberation of Poland as a precondition for a social revolution. This ideological split in the Polish communist movement existed until 1918 when the Communist Party of Poland was founded upon Luxemburgist principles. During the inter-war period, however, the party was not always successful in keeping nationalism out of its ranks and this was probably the reason for its dissolution by Stalin in 1938. It reappeared in 1942 under the name of the Polish Workers' Party (PPR) and played a part in the national resistance movement. The PPR's main goals, however, were to prepare for the take-over of Poland after the war. This it was able to do through a combination of terrorist activities against all opposition and falsification of elections. Thus, in January 1947, Communism was triumphant in Poland.

Under the guidance of Wladyslaw Gomulka, Polish Communist ideology between 1947 and late 1948 was extremely deviationist due to its nationalism. Gomulka, head of the PPR, insisted on a "Polish road to socialism" and claimed that there were distinct historical and traditional differences between Poland and the USSR which precluded an identical evolution toward Communism by the two countries. Gomulka believed that Marxism-Leninism had to be adjusted to the specific conditions prevailing in Poland. This meant, for instance, that collectivization could not be effected as rapidly as it was in the Soviet Union during the 1930's. The Polish leader's insistence upon a different road to socialism betrayed a deep patriotism in his thinking and this was also evident in his campaign <sup>utterances</sup> for a merger between the PPR and the Polish Socialist Party.

The expulsion of Yugoslavia from the Cominform in June 1948 initiated a wave of purges throughout the Communist world, including Poland. Gomulka was accused of "nationalist deviationism" in September 1948 and dropped from the party's hierarchy. In December of the same year the PPR merged with the Socialists creating the Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP). The new party's ideological platform signalled the beginning of a new epoch in Polish Communist thought. The platform was extremely orthodox and dispelled any notions of a specifically Polish development toward socialism. It negated all of Gomulka's views and adopted an ideological foundation almost identical to that of Soviet Communism. This doctrinaire approach was particularly rigid on the subject of the national economy and agriculture.

In 1950 the PUPP reached an agreement with the Church in Poland without compromising its ideological attitude toward religion. It recognized the Pope as supreme in matters of "faith and ecclesiastic jurisdiction" but subservient to the state in all other matters. Apart from reiterating its dogmatic interpretations of economic progress, the party's theorists also adopted the Stalinist concept of a national constitution. The party's Secretary-General, Boleslaw Bierut, viewed the constitution, adopted in 1952, as a document whose purpose it was merely to embody the socialist achievements of the past and not to serve as a formulator of the future. Between 1950 and 1953, Polish Communist thought paid increasing attention to the concept of "socialist realism" as the foundation of Polish culture and literature. According to this concept, Polish artistic endeavours were to be carried out in the service of socialism and were to depict its revolutionary character.

Stalin's death and the subsequent reorganization of the Polish security police ushered in a new atmosphere in Poland. The youth and the intellectuals began to criticize the Stalinist period and to attack some fundamental tenets of Polish Communism. An example of this revolt was the publication of the "Poem for Adults" by the poet Adam Wazyk. Unable to control the growing opposition in the country, the PUPP agreed to certain ideological concessions but this did not stem the tide of criticism.

Following the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, the Polish Communists joined in the attack upon the "personality cult". But at the same time there began to be a wider questioning of basic

theoretical assumptions. This very quickly led to the adoption of an ideology that represented a marked departure from Stalinism but far short of a return to Gomulkaism. During this transformation, there began to evolve two factions within the party: one, led by Zenon Nowak and Marshal Rokossowski, believed in a rigid adherence to Stalinist principles and decried all deviations from it; the other, ~~holding a~~ <sup>supported by</sup> definite majority, proposed greater flexibility in the interpretation of Marxism-Leninism and paid more attention to the specific conditions of Poland. Not even this latter group, however, was able to placate the demands of the populace and the situation in Poland soon became revolutionary. At this time the party fully rehabilitated Gomulka and was about to oust the Stalinists when a Soviet delegation, led by Khrushchev, arrived in Warsaw. Soviet armed intervention was evaded, however, and Poland was able to effect a bloodless revolt under the leadership of Gomulka.

Upon assuming this leadership, Gomulka divulged his ideological views and promised to clean the party of all Stalinist inclinations. His ideas were generally a return to those he expounded while in power before 1949 and they once more laid stress on the need for a "Polish road to socialism". Thus the reappearance of Gomulka marked the resurrection of Polish "national Communism".

Communist thought in Poland may be viewed as a classic example of "deviationism" in the Communist world. It is also symptomatic of the nationalistic problem which Communism everywhere faces and has not yet

been able to resolve. Since ideology is so much a part of the Communist concept of power, the Soviet Union has recognized the need for a monopolistic interpretation of Marxism-Leninism. But because nationalism has been so consistently a part of its ideology, Polish Communism has threatened the Soviet Union's exclusive control over Marxism-Leninism.



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## INTRODUCTION

### THE ROOTS OF POLISH COMMUNIST THOUGHT

The outstanding characteristic of Polish Communist thought has been its nationalism. However true to the tenets of Marxism, however cognizant of the universal nature of their movement, Polish Communists have not been able to rid themselves of the tendency to identify their ideology with nationalism. If anything this has given Polish Communism a wider mass appeal; but it has also, quite naturally, complicated its tasks and confused its goals. It has not been easy to reconcile nationalism with what purports to be an international movement; it has not been easy to substitute "Polish" for "proletarian" as the most popular adjective in Communist jargon.

Nevertheless, the nationalistic ~~character of~~ <sup>element in</sup> Polish Communism is not surprising in the light of Polish history. The Poles have been ardent patriots since they faced their first recorded border incident a millenium ago.<sup>1</sup> From that day history was to be unduly harsh with Poland, and her people came to suffer their share of abuse at the hands of foreign powers using the country as a bridge between the two worlds of Eastern and Western Europe. Too often, from the time of the Teutonic Knights to Hitler, Poland was regarded as a piece of intruding territory to be walked across in search of greater riches.

That the Poles have managed to survive as a nation is a testament

to their unbounded heroism and determination in the face of monstrous, unfavorable odds. This national determination, in fact, has exhibited itself only in times of great crisis. During periods of relative tranquility the Poles have suffered from a serious lack of civic responsibility. In times of peril they have stood united to a man.

That unity was absolutely essential for survival. Frontier struggles aside, there was a period of some 120 years in Poland's history when the country literally did not exist. But not even this prolonged attempt between 1795 and 1914 by the then three Great Powers, Russia, Prussia, and Austria, to end the country's life in any way diminished its Polish identity. It only served to uphold what was then becoming a widely recognized observation--that political statehood was a much less potent force than national consciousness.

Polish nationalism, then, grew out of the tragic history of the country. The greater the threat to the nation, the stronger was the patriotism of the people. The vast and rich literature of Poland reflected how very much a part of national life, the struggle for survival had become. Often it manifested itself in romantic, mystical terms that could find justification only in lyric poetry. And Polish poetry and literature does sing of this heroic struggle; it glories in what can only be called the sometime foolhardy actions of Poles in the face of insurmountable obstacles. "It now turns out," ~~he~~ wrote, for instance, one Polish author in 1922, "that the policy of craft trying to outwit the foe was a

false course, while that of struggle against hopeless odds was perfect."<sup>2</sup> Romantic, foolish, unrealistic--though it has been all these things, Polish nationalism has yet managed to vindicate one of its celebrated dictums: "To be defeated but unconquered, that is a victory."<sup>3</sup>

Polish Communism inherited this very nationalism and more.

It embraced Poland's Western outlook, her ties with the civilization of Rome, and her richly developed culture. In spite of her geographical position--between two worlds whose only access to each other is across her prostrate land--Poland has never seriously been a part of the East European orbit. Ethnically, she is naturally identified with that region since East Europe is usually considered the cradle of the Slavic world, while Western Europe is looked upon as a community of Latin and Germanic nations. But that is the extent of her ties with the East; all others are with the Western world. In this context, religion, perhaps, has been the most influential factor. Poland's <sup>written</sup> history, in fact, does not begin until her Christianization. ~~since no prior records are in existence.~~ However distant Rome may have been, it was never too far away to bring its immense influence to bear upon the Polish nation. The fact that Poland adopted the Latin alphabet was in itself sufficient to assure her of contact with Western ideas. It is not surprising, therefore, that the writings of such men as Locke and Rousseau were widely read, and more widely admired in Poland, while they remained relatively unknown for some time to her eastern neighbor, Russia. The Polish intelligentsia, refined by any standards, was not only in contact with but also creatively a part

of the Western tradition. This, combined with her religious ties, assured that Poland would always remain a part of Western, not Eastern, Europe.

The Communists in Poland inherited the country's nationalism with its accompanying Western liberal traditions partly because they were themselves a product of it and partly because they had no other choice. But the ensuing struggle between nationalism and internationalism, between Western ethics and Communist political expediency, was not to be easily resolved by the Polish Communist movement. It was to be a struggle similar to the one which for many years plagued the Polish Socialists.

. . .

Socialism in Poland grew out of the unsuccessful insurrection against Russia in 1830-31 when groups of emigres formed radical movements as a means of combatting repression of their native land. Among the first of these was the Democratic Society, strongly influenced by French utopian socialism, and the belief in an agrarian revolution. This latter tenet apparently gained for them the support of Marx and Engels for in the Communist Manifesto the two had written: "The Communists fight for the attainment of the immediate aims ... In Poland they support the party that insists on an agrarian revolution as the prime condition for national emancipation ..."4 Marx and Engels in fact made numerous statements in support of the restoration of a free Polish state and this increased immensely the appeal of socialism to the Poles. But the patriotic and

agrarian demands of the socialists were often marred by mystical overtones which prevented a clear expression of their ideas.

A more "scientific" approach to socialism, however, began to evolve as large-scale industry developed in the Russian part of Poland, known as Congress Poland, in which lived nine of the country's 15 million Poles. Following the insurrection of 1863-64, the Russians placed more emphasis on economic growth and by the end of the 19th Century industrial progress in the region reached a high stage of development. Lodz, once a small town, became a thriving industrial center, a "Polish Manchester". As mines, foundries, and factories increased steadily, the industrial proletariat grew proportionately until in 1897 the workers with their families numbered over a million.<sup>5</sup> This industrial "revolution", however, brought with it the common ills of all such movements: low wages, poor working conditions and equally primitive hygienic precautions.

But the ideas of Marx, Engels, and the romantic Ferdinand Lassalle, concurrently took firmer root in Polish soil. The increasing social injustices accompanying the new capitalism worsened until the workers finally broke from their politically passive stupor and began embracing to some degree the doctrines of these men. In 1882 was formed the Proletariat, the first tenacious socialist party which emphasized the need for economic justice. But almost from the start, the party was split into two factions: the original, cosmopolitan group which gave priority to economic problems, and a second which insisted on an amalgamation of socialism with nationalism and called for a more patriotic appeal. The first branch, however, remained

adamant and its terrorist actions soon made it notorious to the point of alarming the Russian government. The Proletariat's revolutionary aims were clearly enunciated by its leader Ludwik Warynski:

"Our aim has been to beget a worker's movement and to organize a workers' party in Poland ... We have organized the working class in its fight against the present order. We have not organized a revolution, but we have organized for a revolution. We know that the ever mounting social antagonism and the ever spreading wounds in the social organism will inevitably lead to cataclysm ... It is precisely for that reason that we consider it our duty to prepare the workers for the revolution, to make their rise a conscious one, tempered and disciplined by organization, and to give them a clear program of ends and means."<sup>6</sup>

In spite of this obvious determination, the party was seriously crippled by the ensuing arrests and, failing to attract the broad masses of the workers, it gradually subsided.

The socialist movement lay dormant for almost a decade until 1892 when the remnants of its nationalist wing gathered to form the Polish Socialist Party (PPS). Pledging itself to fight all economic exploitation, the party also placed great stress on a free and independent Poland as a precondition for the socialist state. This renewed emphasis on nationalism soon created a schism in the party and it was soon followed by an outright split. The result was the formation of a second party, called the Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and which later united with a similar group in Lithuania and came to be known as the SDKPIL.<sup>7</sup> The ensuing rivalry between the two parties, the one deeply patriotic, the other, faithfully devoted to the creed of Marx and Engels, became the outstanding characteristic of the Polish socialist movement.

The main protagonist in this struggle was to be Rosa Luxemburg,



a highly gifted intellectual who had channeled all her energies into ardent revolutionary movements. Under her leadership, the SKDP<sup>IL</sup> promptly rejected the concept of national independence and gave all its attention to the international interests of the workers. Luxemburg considered a social revolution as the only salvation for Poland and its proletariat. This line of reasoning not only was contrary to the policy of Marx and Engels, but it soon got her into a prolonged fight with Lenin. The Luxemburg-Lenin controversy, however, involved two other issues. Sensing the absolute hold which Lenin had over the Bolsheviks, Luxemburg attacked his concept of the party, that is, that of a small elite acting as the vanguard of the working class. She further stressed the importance of the proletarians and their need to become fully aware of themselves as a class and as the most progressive element in society. Lenin promptly unleashed a full attack on "Luxemburgism" claiming it was heretical on three points. First, it denied the true role of the party in the revolutionary class struggle thus undermining the political effectiveness of the proletariat. Secondly, Lenin accused Luxemburg of underestimating the role of the peasants, particularly poor and middle-class farmers, as allies of the urban workers. Lastly, Lenin claimed Luxemburg had not given proper emphasis to the struggle for national emancipation and had overlooked its usefulness as an appeal to the revolutionary fervor of the masses.

This protracted, somewhat bitter controversy between Luxemburg and Lenin during the first years of the 20th Century in a way reflected the very differences which separated Poland's two socialist parties. The PPS, unresponsive to doctrinaire Marxism, looked forward to a revolution as

much for the national liberation it would bring about as the social injustices it would set aright. The SDKPiL, on the other hand, viewed the impending revolution in exclusively social terms.

The outbreak of the 1905 Revolution in St. Petersburg had a dramatic effect on the Poles. But aside from expressions of sympathy and minor demonstrations in Warsaw and Lodz, nothing on the same scale occurred in Poland. Still, sensing the national unrest, Czar Nicholas issued a Constitutional Manifesto which promised the Poles a bill of rights and a legislative assembly, provisions which, though far short of national independence, nevertheless appeased a wide segment of the Polish population. It also marked the beginning of a temporary socialist decline. The PPS membership split, one faction, led by Josef Pilsudski, remaining faithful to its nationalistic tenets, the other urging a gradual, evolutionary approach and a partial rapprochement with the Russian authorities. In a period of a few years, the whole movement, including the SDKPiL, was irrevocably atomized and Polish socialists, lacking both unity and guidance, sank into a seven-year period of deterioration.

The coming of the War may have saved it from a worse fate. The impending economic and political crises in the country once again inspired the workers to revolutionary goals. But it did little to unify the Socialists. The national and international factions reappeared again. The SDKPiL, for instance, took the following unequivocal stand:

"The development of the war has proved that the epoch of national states is over ... The Polish proletariat has never made national independence one of its aims. The proletariat has sought to destroy not the existing state boundaries but the character of the state as an

organ of class and national oppression. In the face of the experience of the war, the advancement of the slogan of independence as a means of struggle against national oppression would not only be a harmful utopia, but would constitute also a repudiation of the basic principles of socialism. ... The proletariat of Poland will fight neither for the unification of Poland ... nor for independence ... The Polish workers will struggle, in solidarity with the international proletariat, for a social revolution, which is the only possible solution of social and of national problems."<sup>8</sup>

To this Lenin vehemently answered that the Polish proletariat must seek nothing less than freedom, independence, and self-determination. Two years later, his Bolsheviks in power in St. Petersburg, Lenin unhesitatingly decided to give the Poles their freedom.

Meanwhile, with war drawing to an end and with political freedom imminent, the Poles were engulfed in the difficult task of organizing a government. The Socialists--the SDKPiL and the left wing of the PPS--unable to attract the support of the masses, were unsuccessful in gaining power and were left out of the national government. Nevertheless, their spirits undaunted and sensing that they ~~may~~ <sup>might</sup> yet duplicate Russia's example by overthrowing the relatively weak bourgeois government, the SDKPiL and the PPS-Left decided on December 15, 1918 to unite as the one working-class party. Thus was born the Communist Party of Poland (CPP).<sup>9</sup>

"In the epoch of international social revolution," said the new party's platform, "the Polish proletariat rejects every political solution that is to be connected with the evolution of a capitalistic world, solutions like autonomy, independence, and self-determination."<sup>10</sup>

It would appear then that Poland's Communists had embraced the old Luxemburgist line. It remains only to see how far, in the coming decades, the Communists actually adhered to this policy.

It took only some four years before serious nationalistic

undercurrents began to exert pressure upon the Communists. The first such influence came in the form of a book of essays published in 1924 by a young Communist writer, Juliusz Brun. Interpreting the October 1917 Bolshevik Revolution as a "Russian, national revolution", Brun added that what was needed in Poland was a native upheaval, strongly suggesting that it need not follow strictly Bolshevik lines, but must, in fact, take into account the unique Polish situation. These ideas had only a moderate influence upon the CPP initially, but they were to reappear in one form or another in the years to come.

Nevertheless, toward the end of the 1920's and afterward it was getting more difficult to speak in nationalistic tones. As Stalin consolidated his power and the Soviet Union entered the period of "Socialism in one country", the Communist International (Comintern), of which the CPP was a member, became ever more rigid in its ideological demands on the Communist parties. More and more, the Comintern came to reflect the ways and wants of the Soviet party until all other Communists, including the Poles, were neglected and their problems sidetracked. In addition, for the Polish Communists themselves, the wide national popularity of Pilsudski, who had come to power by a coup d'etat in 1926, made the road to power immensely difficult.

The rise of Hitler in Germany in 1933, provided the Polish Communists with an opportunity for a wider national appeal. Turned down by Pilsudski and other social democratic groups when they suggested a united front against the "fascist threat", the Communists began issuing patriotic slogans of their own. In 1935 a party Plenum resolution read,

in part, as follows:

"We, the Communists, students of Lenin and Stalin, recognize the right of every nation to self-determination and national independence. We, the Communists, respect the independence of Poland ... We ... are the heirs of the best traditions of the Polish people's struggle for independence and democracy ... Our party defends ... our nation's independence..."<sup>11</sup>

In part at least, such slogans undoubtedly led in 1938 to the perpetration of what still remains to this day an unsolved mystery. Sometime in that year--the exact date is not known--the CPP was dissolved and a large part of its leadership exterminated. The order for dissolution had obviously come from Stalin but the exact reasons for dismemberment are not at all clear. Nevertheless, it is fair to speculate that Stalin, foreseeing a possible agreement with Hitler, feared the outcry it might engender in what he must have considered a unreliable, patriotic Polish Communist Party.<sup>12</sup> Thus, a victim of nationalist inclinations, the first phase of Polish Communism ended.

Whatever Communists remained in Poland, found themselves in utter confusion during the period of the Hitler-Stalin pact, and simultaneously Polish Communism suffered irreparable damage as a result of this diabolical agreement. But as the war with Russia began, the Communists quickly started organizing resistance movements in both the German and Soviet sectors of Poland. It was in the former that the Polish Workers' Party (Polska Partia Robotnicza-PPR) was created in 1942 thus reconstituting a Communist party in Poland. Sensitive to the wounds suffered by the movement because of the Soviet-Nazi pact and Russian occupation of Eastern Poland, the PPR toned down its Communist terminology and relied instead on such phrases as

"national front" or "national unity".

Their status, however, was further aggravated in April 1943 when the Katyn massacre, in which thousands of Polish officers were apparently murdered by the Russians, was revealed. The PPR's only resort, like that of the Soviet Union, was to accuse the Germans of the crime. It then proceeded with preparations for taking over a post-war Poland. Its propaganda constantly harped on the party's patriotism and independence from Moscow, and emphasized the role of its "People's Army" in the resistance movement. All this nevertheless, met with little popularity. Non-Communist factions in the country were successful in branding the PPR as a pawn in Soviet hands and discrediting it in the eyes of the Poles.

Thus rejected, the PPR, with Moscow's direction, turned to clandestine, illegal means in order to assure itself of power at the end of the War. Through a combination of betrayals and military and political tactics which caused the deaths of thousands of politically active non-Communists, the PPR was able to realize that dream.

At the end of the War it emerged as one of the three strongest parties, the other two being the Polish Socialist Party (PPS) and the Peasant Party. Still universally rejected by the Polish people, the Communists followed a pattern of ascension to power that was soon to become well-known in other East European countries. The PPR made the jump in two quick stages: the first involved becoming a part of the coalition government, assuming control over the important ministries--such as that of Interior which had jurisdiction over the state police--and thus acquiring

control over the powers of the state. The second stage consisted of terrorist and persecution activities against the opposition, particularly the popular Peasant Party headed by Stanislaw Mikolajczyk. During this time as well, the Communists proceeded with the vast nationalization of industry and began a reorganization of agriculture. Thus, by the end of 1947, Polish Communism was triumphant.

In spite of its dependence on Moscow, in spite of its obvious Soviet ties, the PPR was not yet a puppet of the USSR. There was still, notwithstanding all its Soviet characteristics, something different about the Polish Communist party. In a manner, it was vaguely reminiscent of the difference that had always characterized the Polish Communist movement: its nationalism. The patriotic coat had been worn in the past and now, at the zenith of their power, the Communists were loathe to shed it. If the ideology of the past had clamored for a "Polish revolution", now in a position of authority, the Communists urged a "Polish way to socialism".

"We have chosen our own Polish road of development ... (which) is derived from the character of our Polish social and political organism ... Poland can proceed and is proceeding along her own road ..."13

These words, spoken by Wladyslaw Gomulka on the eve of the January 1947 election which was to mark the last formal step in the Communist take-over of Poland, previewed the nature of the Communist ideology that was to be prevalent in Poland in the initial days of the new regime. They also testified to the fact that the internal contradiction of Polish Communist

thought--nationalist as opposed to internationalist concepts--had not yet been resolved one way or another. And in the person of Gomulka, Secretary-General of the party, this very contradiction was reflected. So it remained for him, ardent Communist and no less fervent patriot, to reconcile these two opposing traits in Polish Communist thought.



## CHAPTER I

### GOMULKA AND THE POLISH ROAD TO SOCIALISM

Wladyslaw Gomulka, as far back as 1944 when the PPR was having difficulties in capturing a popular following, had already spoken out against the party's reticence to become associated with Polish patriotism.

"The fundamental error of the Communists", he wrote in that year, "was that, while fully appreciating the question of struggle for the social emancipation of the working masses, they did not sufficiently appreciate the question of independence ... The struggle for social emancipation cannot be separated from the struggle for national emancipation."<sup>1</sup>

Then a member of the Communist People's Army and highest ranking official in the party, Gomulka had made for himself an honorable record as a resistance fighter during the war. There had been rumours that he had on more than one occasion stood up to Stalin when the latter treated Poland as the "seventeenth Soviet Republic". Gomulka's early life also was marked by a devotion to the fight against the social injustices of his native Poland.

A locksmith by profession and the son of an oil miner, Gomulka had been involved in the Polish Communist movement since his teens. His work was mainly in the trade unions where he showed remarkable organizational talent. His subversive activities, however, resulted in his imprisonment first in 1932 and again in 1936. It is quite probable that jail saved him from a much worse fate in 1938 when Stalin liquidated the CPP. Released at the outbreak of war, Gomulka managed to make his way to the Soviet zone of Poland where he remained until the beginning of Russo-

German hostilities. Thereafter he became one of the founders of the PPR and in November 1943 its Secretary-General. His conduct during the war increased his stature and he soon assumed the role as the party's foremost spokesman on ideology. Gomulka had always exhibited intense patriotism and was one of the few top Communist leaders who did not go to the Soviet Union and who never underwent political training in Moscow. During the coalition period of 1945 to 1947 he became Deputy Premier and Minister of Poland's recovered Western territories. In these capacities he already exhibited his patriotic leanings. In 1947, when the Communists came to power, Gomulka rose to a position of ultimate authority from which he continued to expound a philosophy of national Communism.

Gomulka saw no incompatibility between Polish national interests and those of the international Communist movement. On the contrary, in his view, the Polish party committed a gross blunder in divorcing itself from patriotism since in the process it made itself appear as merely an agent of the Soviet Union. A large part of his attack was directed at former members of the Polish Communist Party--the one abolished in 1938 by Stalin--who, he said, "have not been able to feel themselves into the new situation, have not been able to understand it, have not ceased being narrow sectarians. It is necessary that they also begin to think with the categories of the nation, of the state ..."<sup>2</sup>

Out of this belief grew his conviction that the Communists must work for a "Polish way to socialism" based on the particular conditions

prevailing in Poland and the temperament of the people. In January 1947, in the very first issue of the PPR's theoretical journal Nowe Drogi (New Roads), Gomulka warned against following dogmatically the Soviet methods of socialization.<sup>3</sup> He negated the advisability of such a course and pointed to three factors which made Poland different from the USSR.

First, political and economic changes in Poland were achieved by peaceful means while in the Soviet Union a bloody and ruthless revolution was necessary to overthrow the old capitalist system. Poland did not have to go through a revolution because the defeat of Germany in the War also meant the destruction of the most powerful forces of fascism and reaction, forces which had played such a large role in impeding a socialist upheaval in Poland. Thus in 1944-45, when the Poles embraced Marxism, those counter-revolutionary obstacles which existed in 1917, were no longer present.

This initial distinction between the Russian and Polish experiences, led, in Gomulka's opinion, to the second difference. As soon as the revolution in Russia had been carried out, it was necessary to establish, as Marx and Engels had predicted, a dictatorship of the proletariat. This dictatorship was essential so long as reactionary and counter-revolutionary forces existed and waged the civil war. But in Poland the forces of reaction had already been subdued in large part without a civil war ensuing. Furthermore, after the war, these same forces were being overcome and weakened throughout most of Europe.<sup>4</sup>

This combination of events, both internal and external, made it easier for Poland to adopt democratic institutions immediately. A dictatorship of the proletariat--which in any case is but a transitional instrument--was consequently not needed in Poland.

The final difference between the two countries, Gomulka concluded, was that Poland, in choosing its form of government, had opted for a national democratic parliament; the Russians, on the other hand, favored a federal system in which the member republics functioned as Soviets. Although he did not make the significance of this difference clear, Gomulka's implication appears to have been that the Polish system would make for greater national unity and prevent chronic fractional disputes.

Gomulka was emphatic in stressing that such differences were sufficient to compel Poland to find her own way to socialism. The Polish Communists must under no circumstances emulate the Soviet Union's example if it is to be in contradiction with the specific conditions of Poland. The Polish nation, he wrote, has developed along unique historical and cultural lines which have given Poland a social and political character of her own. The forces of tradition and environment must influence the manner in which Poland will build a socialist state. That manner, it is abundantly clear from Gomulka's words, must be gradual and evolutionary.

Gomulka's ideas quickly spread and were whole-heartedly embraced by other members of the PPR. One high-ranking party official wrote as follows:

"The specific character of the 'Polish road of development' depends on the fact that in Poland, conditions created by the war and its aftermath permitted the solution of the problem (what to do with the old bourgeoisie) in a way which was not and could not have been foreseen by classical Marxism."<sup>5</sup>

The writer suggested that the bourgeoisie was in fact destroyed by the war and its own ideological bankruptcy. It was the task of the Communists following the war to prevent the state apparatus from falling back into the hands of whatever bourgeoisie still remained. As Gomulka had already postulated, therefore, in the minds of the Polish Communists, the Second World War actually represented the Socialist "revolution" against a bourgeois-controlled capitalist system. Having consolidated its power, the PPR must now in earnest devote itself to building socialism.

The contribution of the Russians was not completely denied by the Polish Communists. They did not question the fact that without the USSR's aid there would never have been a Communist Poland. But from now on the evolution of Polish socialism must not be hampered by Soviet ideological orthodoxy.

"... the Polish road to socialism", wrote Jakub Berman, a member of the PPR Presidium, "is and will be the creative application of Marxism-Leninism to concrete and specific Polish conditions of the class struggle and historical development."<sup>6</sup>

In spite of this deviationist trend in their thinking, the Polish Communists at no time pictured themselves as betraying Marxism or being unfaithful to the principles of socialism. The PPR, said Berman, must rely on Marxism for guidance, strength and leadership.<sup>7</sup> Without the "light that comes from revolutionary theory, practice is blind", he added, paraphrasing approvingly Stalin.<sup>8</sup> In Gomulka's eyes

this is true so long as a further concept of Marxism is recognized. For him, Marxism has ceased to be an ideology only of the working class and has become a National ideology, reflecting the desires and interests of the whole people.<sup>9</sup> As for the socialist society at which Marxism aims, Gomulka sings its praises without hesitation:

"Nothing can any longer alter our idea of socialism, an idea which constantly enlightens more deeply the self-consciousness of the labour class and the working people, an idea in which whole nations find for themselves the only salvation, the only road by which to leave the labyrinth of exploitation and slavery, crises and unemployment, betrayal and lies, war crimes and international quarrels."<sup>10</sup>

Nor did the Polish Communists harbor any illusions about a peaceful overthrow of capitalism. There is no departure whatsoever from the belief that the working class in capitalist countries can gain power only by revolution. This aspect of Marxism is vividly emphasized:

"A socialist revolution--which can be realized in many forms but always aiming at the destruction of the bourgeoisie--is the road to the realization of socialist democracy. Socialist democracy--that is the aim of the socialist revolution; a democracy in which the people, politically and economically liberated, can decide freely for themselves their destiny. This system cannot be reached by any other means but revolution. Democratic socialism and socialist revolution are ... in fact ... both scientific socialism, Marxism."<sup>11</sup>

But if the tenets of Marxism and socialism had not been disturbed, what then did the Polish Communists mean when they spoke of a "different road to socialism"? They meant, firstly, that new concepts serving new needs would be incorporated into Marxism, without contradicting or conflicting with the theory, but merely adjusting it to the modern requirements of Poland. Consequently the first significant step along the "Polish way" was taken with the establishment of a "People's Democracy".

The People's Democracy, simply put, was the state. But for the Polish Communists, it was a unique type of state with its own special characteristics. It was, wrote Berman,

"... a new political system, which has grown up in countries liberated by the Red Army ... it is a new road to socialism ... that derives its ideology from Marxism-Leninism ... and represents the revolutionary triumph of the working class ..."12

Boleslaw Bierut, another member of the PPR hierarchy, also emphasized the originality of the People's Democracy:

"This specific order is not based on any existing model. It is not similar to the Soviet socialist order or to the classical economic system of the West."13

Within this state, various social and economic classes continue to exist including those which live by exploiting the work of others. Among these latter would be considered the various entrepreneurs, well-to-do merchants, factory owners employing a certain number of workers, rich peasants, and other "non-workers". Thus the People's Democracy represents the initial stage of Polish Communism in which not only have classes not vanished but the very forces of reaction and counter-revolution continue to exist side by side with the proletariat. Nevertheless, within this People's Democracy, this "revolutionary authority" as Bierut calls it, power is wielded by a coalition of the more progressive elements of the society. This coalition consists of the working class-- the leader in the group--the peasantry, the middle strata of the urban population,<sup>14</sup> the working intelligentsia, and a portion of the bourgeoisie. All combine to do battle with the reactionary, anti-Marxist factions which, though appreciably decreased since the end of the War, are still numerous

enough to be a potent threat.

The People's Democracy is thus a transitional state which exists so long as all reactionary elements have not been eradicated. Its raison d'etre, in fact, is the very being of these elements since without them there would be no need for a state at all. Polish Communist theory, faithful therefore to Marxism-Leninism, views the state as an instrument of repression of one class against another. In a People's Democracy, however, this repression is being exercised by the proletariat and its allies, that is to say, the tables have been turned upon the bourgeoisie. And, consequently, the People's Democracy must continue to be strengthened and fortified so that it can better withstand the capitalist threat. The working class must be given "institutional guarantees against the forces of capitalism, of war, and of exploitation."<sup>15</sup>

There are liberties in a People's Democracy, but of a special nature:

"A People's Democracy guarantees freedom, guarantees political liberty, but it prevents fascism from exploiting such freedoms. Fascism's freedom is restricted at least to the extent that it cannot endanger the existing society."<sup>16</sup>

It is difficult to see, in view of the PPR's description of a People's Democracy, how it in fact differs from a dictatorship of the proletariat. Gomulka, Bierut, and others repeatedly stress that there is a difference, that Poland is avoiding altogether the dictatorship of the proletariat. None of them, however, makes a convincing distinction. It would appear, though, that the difference is one of degree, not kind.



Under a People's Democracy the struggle against the enemies of the workers is gradual, legal and parliamentary. The bourgeoisie is not denied its normal rights, much less its existence. The proletariat, though it controls the state's power, does not use it in a dictatorial manner; it seeks to uproot the remnants of the capitalist economic system but it does so by legitimate means. This is all in contrast, of course, to the dictatorship of the proletariat in which power is wielded ruthlessly by the workers, and the bourgeoisie is coercively, even brutally, destroyed so that the workers may be rid of their enemies all the more rapidly.

It would logically follow, in the spirit of Marxist doctrine, that in a society where more than one class exists, there would be a plurality of political parties. Marxism holds that parties are representatives of classes and consequently a multi-party system is the reflection of a multi-class society. Gomulka does not argue with this concept and he readily admits that in the Polish People's Democracy, its nature being what it is, more than one party must be recognized.

"There is nothing more false than accusing the Polish Workers' Party of monoparty tendencies, of the desire to subordinate other democratic parties", he said in a speech in 1947.<sup>17</sup>

And again, writing in Nowe Drogi, he states flatly that the "dictatorship of a single party is neither essential nor purposeful ..."<sup>18</sup>

Be this as it may, such references to a multi-party system are scarce. Neither Gomulka nor other members of the PPR were prone to over-emphasize or stress its importance. They were more concerned with

the nature of what they considered to be the most progressive and representative of all political parties--their own Communist party. As to the structure and role of the PPR, there was to be little deviation from the Leninist concept. It was, first and foremost, the party of the working class. Its task was to guide, instruct and enlighten the proletariat, to show it the way to progress and development. Members of the party had to be individuals who had recognized the historical role and destiny of the workers and were prepared to help them realize it. According to Gomulka, they were to master not only the practical tasks of politics but also the ideological fundamentals in order to "deepen their theoretical outlook."

It is here that the Polish party was to depart from the Soviet-Leninist model. For, in <sup>the</sup>view of Gomulka, the emphasis must be placed on the fact that it was the Polish Communist party, and consequently its ideological foundation must be influenced by Polish circumstances.

"Party organizers and the party, as a whole", wrote Gomulka in Nowe Drogi, "can be trained in the Marxist spirit only through a close correlation of Marxism with our Polish realities, past as well as present ... We must teach Marxism in reference to the example of our country's history. To simplify the problem, one might say that the proper thing is to teach our party Polish Marxism."<sup>19</sup>

The PPR was thus no less a Polish party than a Communist one, no less reflective of the whole nation than of one class. Marxism, Gomulka said, could not be understood without interpreting it in the light of Polish history and that history itself can be properly analyzed only by the Marxist approach. Then it would become clear how, for instance, "Polish magnates placed their own narrow interests ahead of Poland and

her people, how they gave up independence so they could have their wealth."<sup>20</sup>

And so, according to Gomulka, the party membership must be taught the history of Poland:

"Without knowledge of Polish history, it is difficult to understand the essence of today's socio-political changes, carried out in our country; it is difficult to understand the essence of the frontier changes of our nation; difficult it is generally to struggle against reaction."<sup>21</sup>

This patriotic, sometimes emotional definition of the Polish Communist party was not limited to its future activities only. The past history of the PPR, particularly during World War II, was also hailed in bold nationalistic terms. It was claimed that during the war, two forces alone preserved the independence and sovereignty of the Polish state: the working class and the Communist party. Both were said to have valiantly fought for the freedom of the country against reactionary powers that sought to destroy it. Thus the PPR was

"the main and most decisive defender of Polish independence and sovereignty ... the defense of Polish sovereignty is written in the uppermost place of (the) party's program. The defense of (Polish) sovereignty primarily influences the internal and external politics of the reborn state."<sup>22</sup>

While the PPR continued to speak in the name of the working class, it also realized that another party threatened its right to do so. By the end of the general elections of January 1947, only the Polish Socialist Party (PPS) could conceivably endanger the monolithic powers of the PPR. During the elections, the Communists using tactics of terror and intimidation, combined with actual persecution, had managed to

literally drive from Poland the popular Peasant Party along with its leader Stanislaw Mikolajczyk. The obviously fraudulent elections, according to the "official" count, showed that the PPR had received approximately 80 per cent of the popular vote with the rest spread thinly among a number of parties. This, of course, did not truly reflect the will of the population--taking into account the large-scale rigging by the Communists. With the Peasant Party now gone, there could be little doubt that the Socialists might well have become, after the elections, the party with the greatest following, certainly greater than that of the PPR. The Communists were hardly blind to this fact and so they entered upon a campaign aimed at uniting the two parties.

Their ideological justification for such an action was basically simple. Since both the PPR and the PPS claimed to represent the working class, there was no reason why the two should continue to exist apart from each other. Oskar Lange, a high-ranking economist in the PPR, was impressed by the logic of this argument.

"In the past few weeks", he wrote, "many comrades have asked me: why should there be organic unity? I should like to reverse the question and ask: why shouldn't there be? For it is an altogether natural thing that since there is one working class, so organizationally there should be one party of the working class."<sup>23</sup>

The strongest proponent of this union without a doubt was Gomulka himself. He had often found himself in agreement with many of the views of the Socialists and particularly approved of their patriotic leanings. He was, in fact, in many ways closer to the PPS than to his own party and this probably influenced his desire for unity. When writing or speaking on the subject, he never failed to pay special tribute to the patriotism

of the PPS.

"Both for the Polish Socialist Party and for the Polish Workers' Party", he said on one occasion, "the independence of Poland is a supreme consideration to which all others are subordinated."<sup>24</sup>

When at one point certain members of the PPR had accused the Socialists of cultivating petty bourgeois ideas on civil rights and of showing reactionary tendencies, Gomulka jumped quickly to their defense by disassociating the main segment of the PPS from such weaknesses:

"The fight against the right-wing elements of the PPS cannot be a fight against the PPS as such. The postwar, reborn PPS ... has made and is making its positive contribution to the work of unifying the working-class movement."<sup>25</sup>

Gomulka strongly believed that a union of the two parties could create a political body capable of overpowering the forces of reaction and hastening the development of socialism. He had no illusions, he said, about the bourgeoisie. The history of his own Poland since 1945 had shown conclusively that "reactionary forces never surrender voluntarily, never without a fight."<sup>26</sup> Nor did he deny that in a People's Democracy, allowance must be made for the political organizations of such forces. But, he claimed, the PPS was not among these enemies. It represented the working class as clearly as did the PPR. It was therefore incomprehensible that the two parties should continue to remain divided. The mutual rivalries engendered by this division, Gomulka said, served not only to misrepresent the actual similarities between the PPR and PPS but, which is worse, to split the working class. The unity of the latter movement, Gomulka claimed, was a fundamental necessity for Poland. Recent experience has taught, he said, that the working class can fulfil its

"historic mission" of rectifying the present unfavorable circumstances in a "spirit of freedom and justice" only when it is united and only when it is ideologically agreed.<sup>27</sup>

Furthermore, the process of actual unification of the two parties, would serve as an opportunity for expelling from their ranks all forms of elements alien to the proletarian movement. And a precondition for this also was ideological conformity.

"In our concept and understanding", Gomulka wrote early in 1948, "organic unity can result only in the process of cleaning the workers' movement of bourgeois-liberal and other foreign elements, and basing both parties upon the fundamentals of Marxist ideology."<sup>28</sup>

The PPR's campaign for unity was considerably aided by the support it received from one of the leaders of the PPS, Josef Cyrankiewicz. Either because he sensed the growing futility of the Socialists' attempts at avoiding unification or because he was honestly in agreement with the PPR--whatever the reason, Cyrankiewicz was extremely accommodating. His stand amounted to a repetition of the PPR arguments and his writings on the subject appeared regularly in Nowe Drogi.<sup>29</sup> Like Gomulka, Cyrankiewicz saw the aims of the PPS to be identical to those of the PPR and he unequivocally urged their forming one, working-class party.

"... for the good of the working people, for the good of independent People's Poland, for the good of socialism, for the strengthening of the struggle for peace ... our parties ... should realize the closest organic unity of the PPS and the PPR."<sup>30</sup>

The PPR's ideological drive for union was carried <sup>on</sup> an immense scale. In one issue alone of Nowe Drogi, the first seven articles dealt with this question, among the authors being Gomulka, Cyrankiewicz, and

Lange.<sup>31</sup> This was accompanied by a fostering of the belief among the Socialists that the only alternative to unification was the "return of reaction". Continued denials that the formation of one party would mean the "swallowing" of the PPS by the PPR also had their effect.

On March 17, 1948, the clique in control of the PPS, headed by Cyrankiewicz, presented the party membership with a manifesto announcing the proposed merger. Unable to oppose him since he controlled the party apparatus, the anti-Communist majority resolved to go along with Cyrankiewicz in the hope that a quick merger might allow them to swamp the PPR by the weight of their numbers. The Communists, however, foreseeing this danger, insisted on a lengthy period of preparation for the merger. In the course of this period, that is by December of 1948, they had succeeded in effectively purging a large number of the rightists and anti-communists in the PPS.

The intention of the Polish Communists to seek a "Polish road to Socialism" did not necessarily signify that they were totally clear as to what form it would take in certain specific spheres of the life of the country. The theorists--including Gomulka--were particularly uncertain of themselves, to the point of ambiguity and confusion, when dealing with questions concerning the economic development of Poland. And nothing seemed to give them more trouble than the topic of agriculture.

Prior to 1947, there had been repeated assurances by the PPR that following the initial land reform, there would be no collectivization for a long time to come, if at all. Large scale collectivization was not

even mentioned publicly until the summer of 1948 and Gomulka himself managed to avoid making any rigid policy statement on the subject. What he did say was merely that Poland would have to go slow on "socialization of the countryside" and this seemed to add to his popularity among the peasants. But he had already, as Minister for the recovered Western territories during the post-war coalition period, managed to begin experimenting with collectivization in these new areas. How quickly he intended to spread collectivization is not certain; all that can be said is that he was not in any particular hurry.

The first attempt at coming to grips with the question was made in July of 1948 by Hilary Minc, soon to become the virtual economic boss of Poland. In a speech before the Central Committee of the PPR-- later published in Nowe Drogi<sup>32</sup> --Minc issued the party's strongest policy statement on collectivization yet, but by the use of ambiguous terms, avoided an outright commitment.

The speech began with a condemnation of "individualistic economy" in the countryside and warned that such an economy would lead to capitalism and a return of the bourgeoisie. As it is, Minc said, the majority of farms already are being exploited by capitalism due to the system of wages in existence. The only way to prevent a further growth of capitalism on the farms while at the same time aiding their development is through "co-operation". What exactly he means by the term he does not say but he uses it liberally and exclusively. In view of Poland's economic and social conditions, Minc stresses, "co-operation" is the only system of proper farm development.



"... farm co-operation presents the best form for (reconciling) the peasant's individual interests with the general interest, the interest of the state and the people generally."<sup>33</sup>

The remainder of the speech is a prolonged polemic against capitalistic agriculture and while it would appear that Minc is urging collectivization, such a policy is nowhere actually enunciated. In a discussion that followed his address, Minc pointed out that the Polish and Soviet situations were not comparable. He claimed that in the USSR the "dictatorship of the proletariat" originally made it easier to rid the farms of capitalism; the absence of this dictatorship in Poland had made the task immeasurably more difficult although the need for socialist vigilance on the farms was no less essential. Minc cited another difference by pointing out that Poland had not chosen to embark on a wholesale nationalization of land as was done in the Soviet Union. Lastly he claimed that the USSR had recently become a socialist state by successfully completing collectivization of agriculture as well as transforming the economic character of its industry. Minc ended by predicting that the struggle against the rich peasant would in fact constitute a class struggle. If it is to be effectively waged, the rich peasant must be "limited" and the poor and middle peasants must be made aware of the danger to their existence which he represents.

Obviously, Minc's speech had not thrown much light on the PPR's stand on collectivization. In September of the same year, however, once again before the party's Central Committee, Minc made a more determined effort at defining his terms.<sup>34</sup>

Dealing first with classes of peasants, Minc said a poor peasant

was one who, unable to support himself from his own land holdings, worked for others in order not to "die from hunger". He was thus a farmer being subjected to exploitation. Higher on the ladder was the middle or average peasant who managed to live off his own land, and by his own abilities and industries, without exploiting others. Nevertheless, he was one who was constantly threatened and did not possess the means by which to improve his lot. It is this middle peasant, in many ways so similar to the industrial worker, who must receive the greatest support in a People's Democracy according to Minc and who should be considered an ally of the working class, engaged with it in the class struggle.

Finally, there was the capitalist farmer--the equivalent of the Russian kulak--whose livelihood was made possible by exploitation of poor peasants. The state, Minc said, must control this peasant by legislation involving prices, wages, taxes and credit. It must further mobilize the mass of poor or middle peasants to end all forms of speculation and exploitation by the kulak.

Having said this much, Minc suddenly becomes less rigid. The definition of a kulak must be flexible and not every prosperous farmer is to be considered a class enemy. Furthermore, Minc adds, the criterion for determining the status of a peasant must not necessarily be his land holding. One who has many hectares may be poor; one who has few may be wealthy. The definition of a kulak, in other words, remains arbitrary.

But Minc, in this speech, is more concerned with the question

of co-operatives and collectives. He strongly encourages the growth of such establishments but insists on their voluntary character. The use of coercion is to be disallowed and anyone found contravening this regulation should be severely punished by the party, Minc adds. The role of the state is to be advisory and friendly, but under no circumstances is it to direct or control the operation of co-operatives. Nor should joining a co-operative make it mandatory for the member to lose his right to own land.

Whether or not he does own land will depend on the type of co-operative or kolkhoz that he joins. Minc describes three types. The main and loosest form he considers to be one in which a member's <sup>cooperative</sup> duties do not extend beyond that of sowing and harvesting. Distribution of profits on this collective will be in direct proportion to a member's land holdings. Organization and rules of quitting the group are to be determined by the whole membership. This form, thus, retains the principle of private property and individual reward. A more advanced type of collective is one in which the members take <sup>together</sup> part/in every aspect of production. Cattle, plus a modicum of land, are individually owned. The division of the products is determined--60 per cent on the basis of how much land one owns and 40 per cent on the amount of work contributed. The highest type of collective is characterized by a complete sharing of work. In addition, the division of products, since there is no private land ownership, is to depend entirely on the work put in. Ideally then, each member contributes an equal amount and derives an equal amount.

Minc's conclusion after this long treatise on collectives is not

what one would expect. He urges the poor and middle peasants to become members of these collectives and warns against capitalist infiltration which would try to undermine the establishments from within. But he then goes on to stipulate that the most advanced form of collective is not advisable and that the PPR is opposed to a system whereby everything-- including the peasant's cattle, fowl and house--is socialized. He thus rejects ultimate, Soviet-type, collectivization. Whether his theory was influenced by considerations of political expediency or whether he actually regarded the Soviet kolkhoz unfavorably is, of course, difficult to say. But viewed against his future orthodox pronouncements on the subject, the former seems like a more plausible explanation.<sup>35</sup>

There was no question, however, as to the beliefs and intents of the PPR in the broader field of the national economy, and particularly in the industrial field. Industry was to be socialized, and socialized as quickly as possible. To do this, however, the Communists said, an all-encompassing national plan was needed. The whole economy had to be centrally integrated, fully controlled and efficiently directed.

"Economic planning", said Minc, "means setting up concrete directives and showing ways for their realization; it means systematically controlling each day the progress toward this realization; correcting eventual mistakes and overcoming obstacles; it means to fight for the plan, mobilize the masses whose creative energy and enthusiasm are the most important factors in the realization of the plan."<sup>36</sup>

The PPR theorists claimed that planning is the basis of a socialist economy. In capitalist countries it was only possible to plan in limited degrees as, for example, during the 1930's when the New Deal was initiated

in the United States. But even then, said the Polish Communists, the state's intervention was not carried far enough. A total transformation of the fundamental economic principles had to occur in order that an over-all economic plan could both be initiated and realized.

What all this meant, in effect, was that the state had to take over the means of production. "Economic planning can develop only on the basis of the nationalization of production", an editorial in Nowe Drogi declared.<sup>37</sup> In the process, therefore, all forms of capitalist, non-Marxist economic methods had to be replaced by a socialist approach.

In Poland, as there were different social classes, so different forms of economic enterprise were still tolerated. Socialistic, capitalistic and "small-commodity" systems existed side by side, even though the first had begun to dominate the economy. Nevertheless, Communist economists warned, capitalism was constantly seeking to regain control so that it could return to exploiting the masses.

Poland's task now was to build and consolidate a socialist industry, that is one in which

"the means of production find themselves in non-capitalist hands and the attained supplementary products are passed on to the state for planned distribution in order that the lot of the working people may be improved ... for the benefit of medicine, of education, of culture, of defense, and for other aims of the non-capitalist state."<sup>38</sup>

While the means of production had been socialized, Poland could not yet claim to fulfil the second part of this definition, according to the PPR. The necessity to conduct economic relations with capitalist states has prevented a "socialist" distribution of all supplementary Polish production.

Once the country becomes less dependent on these markets, she will be able to free herself of non-Marxist elements. Meanwhile, the class struggle must continue unabated.

Communist economic theory, while decrying the ills bred by capitalist competition, that is the free-enterprise system, did not rule out the need for competition in a socialist economy. Taking as their motto the slogan that "one cannot build a better tomorrow if today's work is worse than yesterday's",<sup>39</sup> the Communists insisted that friendly, co-operative competition is in fact the only way to build socialism. Socialist competition was described as the struggle of all producers--workers, technicians, engineers, administrators--for the betterment of social conditions. Competition among workers, said the theorists, was healthy because it both brought satisfaction to the individual and strengthened the state. Sometimes, in extolling the virtues of competition, the Communists reach lyric heights as in the following caption in Nowe Drogi, under a picture of a woman worker receiving a medal for above-quota production:

"... the movement of work competition is ... capable of moving mountains, of overcoming all obstacles which stand in its way ... It is a movement which will build a happy, democratic People's Poland."<sup>40</sup>

However doctrinaire the PPR's interpretation of Marxist economics was, it chose to present them, nevertheless, in terms of Poland's own needs and experience. Thus a reconstruction of the economy was declared to be in the spirit of Poland's character and the manner of that reconstruction was to be based strictly on the country's own economic and social peculiarities.

"The Polish road to socialism", wrote one party member, "means that in our political, economic and cultural conditions we want in the fastest time possible ... to build a foundation of national economic elements, enlarge the base of state economy, limit private-capitalist elements and turn them into state elements ..."<sup>41</sup>

While it was denied that there could actually be a middle ground between capitalism and socialism, Polish Communist theory yet made allowance for a Polish economic development that would differ in methods and aims from the Soviet model. The aim of the Russian five year plans has been to build a pure socialist country, to eliminate or "liquidate" all classes; Poland's economic plan, however, was merely seeking to consolidate the present sectors of the economy with a view to reviewing the position of private enterprise as against state ownership. Since Poland was not yet ready for the disappearance of classes, she could not hope to emulate Soviet economic aims. Her most immediate goals were to protect the interests of the workers, industrialize the country, develop technology, and modernize the methods and means of production, transportation and communication.<sup>42</sup> To this end, the PPR believed, Poland must embark upon a vast economic plan.

This stress on planning, although it was primarily meant in the context of the economy, nevertheless went so far among the Polish Communists as to be applied to the question of culture as well. The immediate post-war years, fraught with the problems of reconstructing a country that was left brutally assaulted by the ravages of war, permitted little time for attention to cultural matters. It was more urgent in those initial years to build homes rather than theatres. Though the Poles have historically

been a highly cultured and cultivated people, they realized that in the immediate post-war days, more important tasks than culture cried out for consideration.

Polish Communists, consequently, kept relatively quiet on the subject. But in 1948, there did start to appear an increasing number of articles in Nowe Drogi dealing with various aspects of culture. Though an ambitious theory was neither attempted nor developed, there was a unanimity of opinion expressed on the concept of cultural planning. Emphasizing the "mass" character of culture, the Communists pointed to the need for a cultural program geared to envelop the largest possible audiences. Libraries, schools, the theatre, the arts--all segments of cultural media--should be enlisted in reaching and enlightening the masses, the millions of workers in the cities and farms.<sup>43</sup>

The first phase of Polish post-war culture was said to be aimed at cleansing the country of all fascist elements. Its aim now was to represent and reflect the new social developments in People's Poland. The new culture must draw on Poland's past, her achievements and traditions, but it must be primarily a product of the present. The concept of "art for art's sake" was quietly dispelled and the social character of all cultural endeavors was emphasized. In other words, the social aims of Polish life were to become incorporated into the new, evolving Polish culture.

. . .



The "Polish road to socialism", with the encouragement and direction of Gomulka, continued to evolve without any apparent disturbances until well into the summer of 1948. In June of that year, however, an event occurred outside of Poland which was rapidly to affect her own internal course of events and the person of Gomulka himself. This was the June 22 meeting in Bucharest of the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform) at which Yugoslavia, accused of nationalist and deviationist tendencies, was expelled from among the ranks of the Bureau.<sup>44</sup> It was an unprecedented move, meant essentially to embarrass, cajole and threaten Tito and his followers, but also to initiate widespread purges throughout the Communist bloc against revisionists and nationalists, or anyone straying from the Moscow line.

It had an immediate effect upon Polish Communists. Almost overnight, the whole atmosphere in the PPR changed and in a matter of months the entire ideo-political situation in Poland was to undergo a drastic transformation.

## CHAPTER II

### THE ECLIPSE OF NATIONAL COMMUNISM

On July 6, 1948 the PPR's Central Committee met to consider the Cominform's expulsion of Yugoslavia. Gomulka was conspicuously absent. Just three weeks prior to the June 22 meeting of the Cominform, he had delivered an address before a plenary session of the PPR in which he reiterated his opposition to the Luxemburgist traditions of the party, reconfirmed his faith in Polish patriotism, and praised the PPS for its continued support of Polish independence. The speech was greeted with a mixed reaction and there were even some demands for his resignation. This sudden change in attitude toward Gomulka suggested that at least part of the PPR membership had already been forewarned about impending Soviet moves. Gomulka refused to resign but decided to take an indefinite leave on the grounds of ill health. Subsequently, in his absence, the Central Committee reconvened on July 6.

Approving the Cominform's resolution, the Central Committee denounced Yugoslavia's policies and launched into an attack upon all "conciliatory, compromising" tactics, and upon laxity and exaggerated flexibility in Communist principles. Berman and Minc, each in turn, condemned the reactionary elements within the PPR and called for more rapid farm collectivization. There were further demands for Gomulka's resignation.

Returning abruptly to party headquarters, Gomulka rejected the criticisms and declined to resign. He denied that approval of parts of the PPS tradition was unLeninist and defended his wartime activities as

an underground leader against new accusations that he had blundered through nationalist and rightist errors. But it was a futile struggle. The more unco-operative he remained, the more apparent it became that the long arm of the Kremlin was preparing to deal him a final blow.

The controversy erupted into the open between August 31 and September 3, when the Central Committee assembled for the third time in as many months. This time Gomulka's fate appeared to be sealed.

Initiating the accusations, Boleslaw Bierut, his impending successor, charged that Gomulka's speech before the party on June 3, made without a prior consultation of the Politburo, constituted "a precedent-breaking violation of organizational principles of a Marxist party."<sup>1</sup> He was then specifically accused of "rightist--nationalist" deviation; of having refused to support the struggle against the kulak; of a lukewarm approach to collectivization; of an inadequate understanding of the role of the USSR and particularly of the Soviet Communist party; of his objections to the formation of the Cominform in 1947 and of his doubt about the Cominform resolution against Yugoslavia.

The long line of speakers who rose to make these accusations denounced Gomulka in vehement terms. The words of Edward Ochab were representative:

"In your present position, Comrade (Gomulka), you will become the symbol for the bourgeoisie, for the rich peasants, for reaction ..."<sup>2</sup>

And finally Bierut himself summed up the total condemnation:

"We have characterized the errors of Comrade (Gomulka), which, as it is attested by the resolution submitted by the Politburo, are



neither isolated nor accidental but constitute, despite internal contradictions, a definite and systematic viewpoint which is rightist and nationalist in its character."<sup>3</sup>

Gomulka was given an opportunity to speak on three occasions with the intent that he would submit to a recantation and self-criticism. What he said in fact was a curious mixture of self-criticism and self-justification. He admitted that he had been wrong on many issues and accepted the party's resolution which accused him of "rightist, nationalist" deviations. Nor did he dispute the fact that the USSR was to be considered the leading member of the working class movement. But almost in the next breath, he betrayed his fundamentally unchanged attitude toward Soviet-Polish relations.

"It never entered my head", he said, "that Poland could progress along the way to socialism without being supported by the Soviet Union ... These things I understood, but ... it was ... difficult for me to shift my attitude as regards the Soviet Union to the ideological party plane."<sup>4</sup>

Gomulka thus believed that the two countries should have friendly relations but could not see that there should be a direct connection between their respective Communist parties.

Similarly, while admitting that nationalism was a social "disease", Gomulka could not hide his conviction that differences between Poland and the USSR had to be taken into account when building socialism:

" ... conditions are different--we live in a different historical period now; collectivization was brought about in the Soviet Union in another time of history (and involved) different conditions, a different situation, in accordance with a different distribution of class strength--and we will bring about changes in the countryside in different conditions. Thus there must also be some elements of a Polish road to socialism."<sup>5</sup>

Gomulka's words fell on deaf ears. On September 5, 1948, he was officially relieved of his duties as Secretary-General of the Polish Workers' Party. A brief resolution to this effect, stating only that he had committed serious blunders, was unanimously adopted by the PPR's Central Committee, although his party membership was not revoked. With Gomulka went a number of other party members, all charged with "rightist, nationalist tendencies". Among them was Wladyslaw Bienkowski, one of the founders of the PPR and a leading member of the Central Committee, in charge of the party's educational department.

The same resolution which expelled Gomulka declared that Boleslaw Bierut would replace him as Secretary-General. In the person of Bierut, the party could point to a leader who since his high school days had been involved in revolutionary, left-wing activities. Bierut had been an ardent member of the left-wing of the Polish Socialist Party between 1912-1919 and was one of the first to join the Communist Party when it was formed in 1918. His subversive activities got him into trouble with the authorities and he spent a number of years in the Soviet Union during the inter-war period. He thus received intensive training in Moscow and later worked as an agent of the Comintern, carrying out missions in Vienna, Prague, Sofia and Berlin. During World War II he was a leading member of the Communist, self-appointed underground government and, next to Gomulka, became probably the most powerful figure in the PPR.

Almost immediately following his succession to Gomulka's post, Bierut revealed the profound ideological difference between himself and

his predecessor and the significant change that had occurred in Poland.

"We must not forget for a moment", he wrote in Nowe Drogi, "that ... Hitlerism and fascism, which threatened ... Poland, were destroyed only thanks to the existence of a socialist state, only thanks to the victorious and powerful strength of the armed USSR. Without the victory of the USSR neither the social nor national liberation of Poland would have been attained."<sup>6</sup>

With Bierut's appointment, the party prepared to consummate its long sought-after merger with the PPS. Since March there had been a systematic, vigilant weeding out of all possible rightist members among the Socialists. Now, between September 18 and 23, following the Gomulka purge, the PPS high command instituted its own "purge session". Those who still opposed a merger were quickly disciplined and the history of the PPS was revised and rewritten. By the time of the Unification Congress, held in Warsaw on December 15, the PPS had been thoroughly cleansed and the official merger was a mere formality.

Thus the new Polish United Workers' Party (Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza) was no more than the PPR with a different name. Its Politburo and Central Committee were heavily loaded with PPR members and whatever posts went to former Socialists were held by such reliable men as, for instance, Cyrankiewicz. Bierut at this time was appointed Chairman of the Central Committee, the position of highest authority. It is, perhaps, symbolic that toward the end of the Congress, the new party dispatched a telegram of congratulations to Stalin on his sixty-ninth birthday and then, in assembly, burst into shouts of "Sta-lin, Sta-lin".

Certainly, that "leader of genius" as the Communists now called

Stalin, must have been pleased with the ideological platform of the PUPP.

"Every tendency aimed at loosening collaboration with the Soviet Union", it declared, "endangers the very foundation of the People's Democracy in Poland and, at the same time, the independence of the country."<sup>7</sup>

The platform, a document of some fifteen printed pages, marked an unequivocal departure from the ideological line which had been followed by the PPR under Gomulka. Now, the PUPP, commenting on every aspect of political, social, and economic concern, returned to an ideology that bordered on the doctrinaire, orthodox, or, what can commonly be called "Stalinist".

The platform opened with a declaration of purpose:

"The Polish working class movement has been united ... on the basis of common battles, common future aspirations, common agreement in all contemporary problems, on the basis of a common ideology and a common aim--the realization of socialism."<sup>8</sup>

There followed a somewhat detailed discussion of the history of the socialist and Communist movements in Poland, condemning in the process those tendencies which betrayed the international character of the proletariat and collaborated with rightist, reactionary elements. It was acknowledged that Poland's first truly revolutionary party of the workers had been the Proletariat.<sup>9</sup> The work of this party was later carried on by the SDKPił, the PPS-left, the Communist Party of Poland, and, finally, the PPR. But throughout, these parties had been threatened by nationalist and revisionist elements which sought to destroy the unity of the working class and very often succeeded in doing so. In this connection, the failure of the Polish proletariat to stage a revolution in 1905, which would have coincided with the Russian uprising, is cited as a case in point.

Finally, however, the platform continued, the working masses were aroused to the true nature of Polish patriotism and realized that it could not be separated from internationalism. This then culminated in the creation of the PUPP, a party descendent from the true revolutionary, proletarian movements of Polish history.

After this historical projection, a large section is devoted to a discussion of the nature and aims of a People's Democracy. There is no attempt to deny that the People's Democracy is geared to special Polish conditions, but unlike the approach adopted by Gomulka, the terms of description carry a singularly different tone. The People's Democracy is no longer the "Polish way to socialism" but "the way to socialism ... a new form of controlling power by the working masses, led by the working class, and brought into being thanks to the new historical situation and thanks to the assistance of the USSR."<sup>10</sup> And while it is not a dictatorship of the proletariat, it nevertheless aims at accomplishing what the "dictatorship" did in the Soviet Union. "The system of People's Democracy can and should ... effectively realize the basic functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat."<sup>11</sup> Its raison d'etre is no longer the specific character of Polish conditions; rather it is the result of external forces such as the Second World War and the proximity of the Soviet Union.

The platform lists a number of achievements which, it says, have been made possible by the People's Democracy. The outstanding one, it claims, was the defence of the independence and frontiers of Poland, with obvious reference to the Western territories and the part played by the



USSR. Economically, Poland has managed to effect a rapid reconstruction after a war which left her brutally wounded. In addition a start has been made toward a planned economy, unemployment and economic crises have been liquidated, and the standard of living of the worker has been immensely improved. Among other achievements listed are progress in education, betterment of the lot of working women, and the opportunities provided for the youth from workers' and peasants' homes.

But the main emphasis is placed on those tasks still ahead of the People's Democracy. According to the platform, there are basically six aims which the People's Democracy must attain in the future.

1. The liquidation of large capital: this also involves expulsion of capitalist elements among the peasants.

2. The creation of a totally new state apparatus in place of the old bourgeois machinery--by this is meant that the state must be run by the workers and that its base must be widened, so that more people partake in, to use Marx's phrase, "the administration of things".

3. An alliance of workers and peasants: the "vanguard" of such an alliance would be the working class.

4. The defense of Polish sovereignty and security against imperialist aggression: here the platform stresses the significance of the ties with the Soviet Union:

"The cause of consolidating Poland's independence and her march towards socialism is indissolubly linked with the struggle for peace conducted under the leadership of the Soviet Union."<sup>12</sup>

5. The liquidation of all exploiting classes through an intensive class struggle in the cities and the countryside which will shorten

the coming of socialism.

6. The development of economic strength through economic planning: in this manner Poland is to be totally rebuilt and the material conditions of the workers greatly bettered.

The common denominator in all these aims, it becomes apparent, is the intensification of the class struggle. What this means, in non-Communist jargon, is that the PUP plans to increase the speed with which Poland is to be socialized.

A great deal of space in the platform is devoted to a detailed consideration of the economic steps which must be taken for Poland to evolve from the stage of People's Democracy to socialism. To this end the PUP pledges itself to strengthen the power of the working class; improve living standards through realistic wages and housing construction; develop work competition as a "socialist method of increasing work satisfaction"; root out all forms of economic nationalism and consolidate the worker-peasant alliance. To the peasants it promises freedom from exploitation and a relentless struggle against capitalism. Thus the platform states that the party will urge an increase of "cooperative production" in the countryside and will, in this connection, mobilize the support of poor and middle peasants.

The second most important area through which socialism may be fostered is considered to be that of culture. Illiteracy must be wiped out, schools built and teachers trained, cultural institutions must be encouraged and scientific and artistic development supported. Culture

and the arts generally must create bonds with the masses of the people. Most vitally, a program of ideological education must be embarked upon in the schools and Marxism-Leninism must become a part of every curriculum.

While the spreading of "socialist morality" is urged, the role of religion is not denied. The platform states without apparent reservation that

"the party supports freedom of conscience and religious confession, respects religious feelings of believing people, and does not mix in internal matters of the Church."<sup>13</sup>

But, the platform adds, absolute loyalty is demanded of all religious persons and their beliefs cannot be a reason for neglecting their responsibilities to the state. It is the policy of the PUPP to seek out all reactionary tendencies which exploit religious beliefs and to vehemently oppose any clerical acts which are in conflict with the progressive evolution of social and political life. Finally, it is stated that the PUPP believes in the

"separation of church and state, and supports secular schools and all other public institutions."<sup>14</sup>

The final portion of the platform deals with the role and nature of the new Communist party. The PUPP is

"the vanguard of the Polish working class ... the leading force of the Polish nation ... the party which will guide the Polish people to socialism ... the organizer for the building of the foundation of socialism in our land."<sup>15</sup>

The actual functioning of the party is to be based upon the concept of "democratic centralism" as formulated by Lenin. This means that once a

decision has been reached by the party, the whole membership must support it without question and all responsibilities of members are to be carried out in accordance with that decision. The PUWP will not tolerate factions or groups nor any opposition whatsoever to Marxism-Leninism. Criticism and particularly self-criticism are a fundamental aspect of party life, but they must be manifested only through strict adherence to Marxist-Leninist considerations. Under no circumstances must "internal democracy" be misused for purposes which are contrary to the interests of the party and the working class. In short, the party must aim at ideological unity and organizational discipline in its everyday activities. For its challenge is not limited, and its role is not modest. "The party", concludes the platform, "is the wisdom, honor, and conscience of the working class."<sup>16</sup>

The creation of the Polish United Workers' Party and the declaration of its ideology marked a new stage in the evolution of Polish Communism. The break with the ideas of Gomulka was sharp, clean and complete and the move in the direction of a Soviet, Stalinist interpretation of Marxism-Leninism was profound. That interpretation was not yet solidified, but the PUWP platform took the first major step toward the consolidation of orthodoxy.

Essentially, the platform can be said to have taken a new approach in five areas. ~~Woodcock~~, The most significant departure from the Gomulka era, is in the field of Polish-Soviet relations. The new importance given to the USSR and the Soviet Communist party, the recognition of its role as the most advanced of socialist countries, the emphasis placed on the

"Soviet example and experience", all this provides a clue to the change that has taken place and is a reflection of that characteristic which now begins to colour all Polish Communist thought.

A second ~~interesting~~ development is that part of the platform which urges a worker-peasant alliance. Strange though it may seem, Gomulka, who was extremely popular among the peasants, usually underestimated their role in building socialism. He depended almost exclusively on the workers, partly because this was good Marxism and partly because he understood the intransigent feelings of the peasantry toward Communism. The fact that the PUPP now gives almost equal priority to the peasants is thus an indication that socialization in the countryside is about to be seriously activated.

Thirdly, the renewed importance given to the concept of the class struggle is also an omen of change. There is not much difference in the theory of the People's Democracy as it was propounded by Gomulka, leaving aside the patriotic consideration, and as it is put forward by the PUPP except in the fact that the latter interpretation comes very close indeed to being that of a "dictatorship of the proletariat". The class struggle, therefore, signifies now that the liquidation of capitalist, reactionary and generally anti-Marxist forces will not only be hastened, but will be waged more strenuously and more bitterly.

Fourthly, the merger of the PPR and the PPS, which, in fact, initiates the single party system in Poland, is reason for the Communists to assign an even greater role to their new party. The PUPP is thus

described not only as the "vanguard" but the "conscience" as well, not only as the "organizer and leader" but the "wisdom" too of the working class. And the working class, through the party, is one and united.

Finally, of course, nationalism is completely absent from the platform of the new party. Internationalism is identified with the Soviet Union; nationalism is associated with imperialism and the forces of Polish reaction. It is this break with the Gomulka period that reflects the new development in Polish Communist thought; from it are to be derived all other changes.

These five areas received special treatment from Polish Communist theorists during the year 1949. The ideological journal Nowe Drogi incessantly returned to questions dealing with Poland's relationship with the Soviet Union, to the concept of the class struggle and its role within a People's Democracy, to the worker-peasant alliance, to the almost idolatrous position of the party, and finally, toward the end of the year, as the purge was being completed and Gomulka again brought to task, to the danger of nationalism. Much of this was repetition of what had already been made abundantly clear by the PUWP platform; but a good deal of it revealed the rigidity that was setting into Polish Communist thought. It is worth considering for this if for no other reason.

The first two topics were closely inter-related. To speak of the People's Democracy meant also to deal with the whole gamut of Soviet experience and its applicability to Poland. That the Soviet experience was valid for Poland's purpose was no longer questioned. And, said one

writer, the People's Democracy is a verification of this:

"The People's Democracy does not follow some new, different road from that which the Soviet Union took in reaching socialism. Although it is not a mechanical duplication of the USSR road, yet it is identical in the main points: its basis is a socialist and collectivized economy, a sharpening of the class struggle and the liquidation of exploiting classes, an alliance of the working class with the peasants, with the working class as the forefront and the Marxist-Leninist workers' party as the guiding strength."<sup>17</sup>

The same author admits that questions of method, form, and tempo of development are dependent upon specific conditions prevailing in the countries moving toward socialism. He acknowledges that Czechoslovakia's experience, for instance, cannot be identical to that of Albania. But he adamantly denies that this is an admission of the belief that there are as many roads to socialism as there are countries. On the contrary, the road is one; only the technical and mechanical details differ. If this were not true, then the example of the Soviet Union would have no meaning and the scientific character of Marxism would be voided.

Polish Communist theorists also advanced the view that the historic significance of the People's Democracy was its transitional nature as a stage between capitalism and socialism. In many ways, they claimed, a People's Democracy can already be called a socialist state. In Poland industrial production, transportation, communication and the banks have become the property of the state. In 1948 already 60.7 per cent of the national income was created by the socialist sector of the economy, and by the end of 1949, the figure would reach 65.9 per cent.<sup>18</sup> The working class was clearly in possession of political power and had assumed the responsibility for the nation's economic and social development.

Furthermore, many of the functions of a socialist state were already being fulfilled in Poland no less than in the Soviet Union. All this made the Polish People's Democracy a socialist state in part. But until all private means of production were eliminated and the mixed economy liquidated and until all alien classes were weeded out, a fully socialist state could not be realized. Thus Poland remained somewhere between capitalism and socialism while the USSR was at the advanced stage between socialism and communism. To catch up Poland had to rely on winning the class struggle. Thus, wrote Bierut,

"there cannot be any question of a freezing of the existing economic relations, no question of the inviolability of the parallel positions of the various economic sectors ... the working class must carry on a ruthless struggle against capitalist elements, must aim at the complete elimination of all forms and sources of economic exploitation."<sup>19</sup>

Outside of the economic area, not even the Church would escape the vigilance of the workers during the class struggle. In one of the few comments on the Church, Cyrankiewicz said during a speech that

"all attempts to place the pulpit of the Church and the sacerdotal costume at the service of those who bring hatred against the popularity of the state or who help the clandestine reactionaries will be punished with all the severity which the law demands."<sup>20</sup>

In this context, the USSR could be of immense aid to Poland both internally, in providing the knowledge and experience necessary for socialist evolution, and externally in protecting her from the "imperialist and antidemocratic forces" that threatened all socialist states. The Polish Communists believed that given the polarization of forces in the world between the imperialist and anti-imperialist camps, the test of true



internationalism and devotion to the cause of socialism would be the attitude toward the USSR. This attitude must be conditioned by the fact that Poland's sovereignty can only be guaranteed by the might of her Soviet neighbour.

But if Poland was to reach socialism, even with the help of the Soviet Union, the class struggle would have to receive its most intensive support in agriculture. Here the Polish Communists seemed to be resurrecting Lenin's old dictum that the way to socialism passes through the countryside, and that until agriculture were collectivized a country could not become socialist. This was a principle as difficult to apply to Poland as it was in Lenin's time in Russia. In 1949, Poland was still predominantly an agricultural nation with approximately two-thirds of her population involved in agrarian work. Whatever industry existed was concentrated in comparatively few regions or cities which were not representative of the Polish economy. Furthermore, the Polish peasantry was little different in its attitude toward collectivization from the Russian farmers of the 1930's. The Polish peasants were highly individualistic, distrusted most forms of farm cooperation, and were certainly adamantly opposed to the Marxist concept of a collective countryside.

Thus to transform a nation with such a large agrarian population, almost unanimously opposed to farm socialism, into a collective society would be a gargantuan task. To do it at the speed which the Polish Communists now desired might very well be ~~an impossible task.~~

No one realized this better than the Communists themselves. But that did not dismay their ambitions. On the contrary, their reaction was to seek the most effective means possible by which the harshest difficulties could be alleviated. They saw, therefore, that by advocating an alliance between the working class and the peasants with small and middle-sized holdings, the battle against free enterprise in agriculture would be immeasurably aided.

It is an irony of the Communists' tactics that they always seek to aggrandize and entice those whom they intend to undermine. Under Gomulka, when the subject of collectivization tended to be evaded by the Polish Communists, little was said about the peasantry. Now that the drive toward socialization in the countryside had become an avowed policy, the Communists almost naturally began paying greater attention to the role of the peasant. Thus they called for an alliance between worker and peasant, an alliance which, said the theorists, would destroy the "last remnants" of flagrant capitalism in Poland. And no sooner did they mention the need for it than the alliance already came into existence.

"This movement (worker-peasant alliance)", said one writer, "arose because the working class perceived the face of the class enemy in the countryside, because it recognized more vividly yet its hegemonic role as the leader of the workers and peasants on the road to socialism."<sup>21</sup>

While this statement would indicate that the workers were being given a disproportionately important role in this alliance, the Communists stressed the benefits that would accrue to the peasants. It would, they said, raise the political consciousness of the peasant masses which they claimed had been deluded by the reactionary Mikolajczyk and his now non-existent Peasant

Party. It would make the peasants the beneficiaries of the best traditions of the working class, would mobilize their strengths against the common enemy, and would tie them to the most progressive class in Polish society.

In fact, said the Polish Communists, the worker-peasant alliance had already shown itself capable of a united struggle against reactionary elements. In this regard they pointed to the initial agricultural reform that had been undertaken in Poland, the defeat of Mikolajczyk, and the results of the elections to the Sejm (Parliament). All these successes, it was claimed, were the result of the alliance.

But the work ahead was to be more challenging yet. The Communists in particular urged the peasants to show more initiative and more enthusiasm for future goals. They were not to look upon the alliance as a philanthropic arrangement; they were to become more active and to "help themselves", while counting on the support of the workers. The Communist theorists, paying special attention to farm workers, urged a systematic mobilization of the great number of peasants against the capitalist minority. They pointed to the fact that only ten per cent of the peasantry was in the latter classification.

At the same time they stressed the need for an enlargement of peasant membership in the PUP. According to their figures, in 1949, of 1,359,012 members only 259,027 or 19.1 per cent, were peasants.<sup>22</sup> This was taken to be a clear indication that the party had not made a sufficient impact on the countryside.

The emphasis given to the worker-peasant alliance by the Communists can be explained by three motives. The first and most overt, no doubt, was the propaganda value of the campaign: it would enhance the role of the peasants, associate them with "progressive" social forces, and, in the process, perhaps weaken their resistance to collectivization. Secondly, by allying the peasants with the workers, the Communists hoped in fact to make clear the common problems of exploitation which they face at the hands of capitalists. Such an awareness might conceivably encourage the peasants of low and average means to rebel against the relatively rich minority. Lastly, and most significantly, the alliance had the value of making it possible for the PUWP to speak on behalf of a greater mass of the population. Since the party was, in fact, synonymous with the workers, the alliance was actually between it and the peasants. And while the PUWP was still to remain the party of the working class, it now took upon itself the responsibility for the fate of the peasants. Put another way, the party could now consider itself as representing the interests of the peasants no less than those of the workers. Such a position would in theory, if not in practice, provide rational grounds for the policy of collectivization.

But the PUWP sought to make its appeal even wider. Realizing that its party membership represented only a small fraction of the total Polish population, the theorists discounted the view that non-members were to have only a minimal influence upon party policy. Quoting Stalin and Lenin in support, the Polish Communists declared that close relations between the PUWP and the masses of non-members were absolutely essential.

One contributor to Nowe Drogi wrote as follows:

"Ties with the masses who do not belong to the party, that is the factor which gives the party strength, elasticity, and the ability to struggle and win. The lack of ties with the non-affiliated creates the weakening of the party, its decomposition, its sickness."<sup>23</sup>

In the same article, Bierut is quoted as saying that

"the strength of the party depends on the fact that not only its members, but also the many millions of non-member workers, peasants, intellectuals, women, youth--the great majority of working people--see the party as an (instrument) which blazes for the Polish nation the right and just road to development."<sup>24</sup>

This understanding among the masses was stated to have been the strength of the PPR during the war when, according to the Communists, it was able to carry on effective resistance against the Germans because of its large popular support.

Now it was the task of the PUWP to attract all progressive elements of Polish society, proletarian and non-proletarian, in order to make use of the vast talents available in the country. Without the aid of the vast resources of the nation, which frequently lie outside the party membership, Poland could not fulfil her plans for post-war reconstruction much less attain socialism. The party cannot be expected to do everything by itself; it must organize non-party associations, must mobilize non-members and delegate tasks to all sectors of the population. The Communists placed particular emphasis on the need for organizations of such nature as the League of Women, the Union of Polish Youth, People's Councils, the Union of Peasant Self-Help, and the trade unions. Not all of these had their relationship to the party properly defined.

The PUPP membership was urged to recognize the value of association with these organizations. The League of Women must receive the party's every support because it is a body whose members can have vast influence over the youth of the country. In addition the party must aid, educate and train women in order to raise their whole social status. As for the youth themselves, there must be a concerted effort to make them acquainted with the party and its ideology, to prepare them for future responsibility in the interests of socialism. The youth must be taught "to love and respect the party, to see in it its teacher and guidance."<sup>25</sup>

Similarly, the party must find approval among the nation's intelligentsia. It must exploit, in the interests of the country, the talents of intellectuals and professionals. Yet, at the same time, it should develop its own intelligentsia, one profoundly interested in the lot of the working class, and irrevocably attached to the party and its goals.

However, the most important and effective link between the party and the masses must be the trade unions. According to the Polish Communists, the trade unions are,

"in fact, that connection between (the two) which upholds the long ties of the party with the working masses, which keeps its hand on the pulse of their emotions, their hopes ..."<sup>26</sup>

Since the trade unions are "independent" of the PUPP, most of their members not belonging to the party, they are in an excellent position to express and reflect the sentiments of the workers. This they must be relied upon to do; and to this use the party must put them.

It was thus, according to Communist theory, the task of every party member to make the widest possible contacts with that segment of the population which does not belong to the party. While admitting that their aim is not an easy one, the Communists nevertheless enjoin the party membership to pursue it from day to day and not only in critical times. This must go hand in hand with the party's ambition to better the standard of living for the workers. For

"the ties of the party with the masses can be defended, deepened, widened, and strengthened only by a daily struggle to improve their living conditions ... fulfilling their every-day needs, their medical requirements, and the liquidation of old-fashioned social, economic and cultural methods."<sup>27</sup>

There is reason to believe in considering this attempt by the theorists for a mass appeal for the party, that they were seeking in a manner a substitute for the now condemned nationalism which had previously served as an effective cry for unity. Since they could or would not appeal to the Polish people on a patriotic base, there had to be another unifying force. The party provided this "substitute". It was a perfectly natural organ for the Communists to resort to in view of the role and meaning which the party had for them. Were the party to become a symbol of national unity, then the Communists in Poland might well have solved their most serious problem of the post-Gomulka era. This prospect explained the continued efforts of Polish Communist theory to present the party, not only in its narrow sense as the organ of the working class, but as a political organization interested in the welfare of all segments of the population, except those obviously reactionary and antagonistic toward socialism.

Combined with this attempt to popularize the party, the Communists

continued their attacks on nationalist deviation. Late in 1949 these condemnations were given a further impetus by the trial of Laszlo Rajk in Hungary for charges similar to those levied against Gomulka in 1948 and prior to that against Tito by the Cominform. The Polish Communists had been waging a steady word attack upon Yugoslavia consistently since Gomulka's demotion, but the polemic became especially sharp and bitter now that another major purge was in progress in a Communist state. In Nowe Drogi, Rajk was denounced as a Titoist, a nationalist, reactionary, an "enemy of the workers", and a "traitor".<sup>28</sup> Significantly, his trial was used as a pretext to reopen the case of Gomulka and, inevitably, to make comparisons. In the same issue of Nowe Drogi, Ochab accused Gomulka of practicing Titoism and branded his nationalist-rightist inclinations no less dangerous than those of Rajk.<sup>29</sup>

In the following month, November, Gomulka was again formally brought to task at a plenary session of the party. He was charged with "lack of vigilance" against Trotskyites, the use of Polish patriotism as a factor in determining party appointments, and, finally, in the most trumped up charge of all, was accused of responsibility for the deaths during the war of his predecessors in the office of secretary-general of the PPR. The severity of these charges, coming during a period in which Stalinism was being consolidated in Poland, was so extreme as to amount to virtual treason. But the courageous Gomulka refused to grovel. Instead he unleashed a counter attack. He claimed that if he had erred ideologically then so had practically all members of the party who, he said, had once supported his views and agreed with them. He demanded to know why he alone was being prosecuted.



But the party was in no mood to answer such questions and, though lacking the satisfaction of a recantation from Gomulka, wasted no time in condemning him. It expelled him from the Central Committee and forbade him to participate in any party work, in effect annulling his party membership. Thus, when the plenary session ended on November 13, Gomulka and the "Polish road to socialism" had been disposed of. Exactly one week earlier, Konstantin Rokossowski, Polish-born Marshal of the Soviet Union, at the request of the Polish government, became Commander-in-Chief of the Polish armed forces, Minister of National Defence, and member of the PWP Politburo.<sup>30</sup>

The appointment of Rokossowski and the expulsion of Gomulka brought to an end the one-year interregnum during which "national Communism" went into eclipse. Since the end of 1948 the new Polish Communist hierarchy had been engaged in the task of consolidating the transition to Stalinism. Now it was prepared to embark upon an ideological route that was in keeping with the Luxemburgist tradition of Polish Communism. To that tradition would be added the goal of making a thing of the past the ethical consideration expressed by Gomulka, in the following words, as he faced his prosecutors: "For me, it is difficult not to say what I think."<sup>31</sup>

### CHAPTER III

#### THE STALINIST PERIOD

The new year 1950 dawned bright for the orthodox wing of Polish Communism. Looking back upon the past five years, the "Stalinists" who now held power, may well have been proud of the record which enabled them to attain success. Nothing was left of Mikolajczyk and his Peasant Party, the Polish Socialists were either purged or swallowed up by the merger that was the PUPP, and Gomulka, Bienkowski, Marian Spychalski and other "rightists-nationalists" were in jail, disgraced and demoted, awaiting perhaps a worse fate. Not only were all remnants of "national communism" dispelled from within the PUPP but the party now prepared to put into full force its orthodox ideas: to speed up the production of heavy industry, to collectivize the countryside, to intensify the struggle against all opposition. Thus as 1950 opened, the future seemed to offer promising prospects for Bierut and his followers.

There was one outstanding problem, however, that had not been dealt with as yet. And to it, the Polish Communists, in those initial days of 1950, turned their attention. Since 1945 little time had been devoted to the question of religion, or, more specifically, the Roman Catholic Church. This is surprising in view of the Catholic Church's traditional opposition to Communism, but even more so when considering the extent of its influence in Poland. As a result of the war, and the consequent changes in the country's population, nearly 98 per cent of Poles were Roman Catholics in 1945. This meant that of the 50 million Catholics in Communist states, 23 million, or nearly half, lived in

Poland. In addition, the Catholic Church in Poland had a historical identification with Polish nationalism, the most recent instance of which had been expressed by its anti-German resistance record. The Church was thus not only influential but extremely popular among the masses.

This explains the cautiousness with which the Communists frequently approached the question of their relationship to the Church. Between 1945 to 1949 the matter was almost never publicly discussed by the party; the issues of Nowe Drogi from 1947 to the end of 1949 contain no attempt at an ideological consideration of Church-State relations and references to the subject are few and far between. The PUWP's platform of December 1948 had merely touched the problem when, in a short statement, it declared the independence of the Church while demanding of it loyalty in the affairs of State.<sup>1</sup> This official line was reiterated early in 1949 by Aleksander Zawadski, a member of the Politburo and later head of state when, in a speech, he said:

"The party does not fight against religion, but it does not tolerate the interference of the Church in political affairs. It demands that the clergy show proof of absolute loyalty."<sup>2</sup>

Thus for some time the party's official theoretical position clearly supported the coexistence of the Church and Marxism, each within its own specific sphere. The party consequently made no sustained effort at undermining the life of the Church. It limited its activities to making use of whatever anticlerical feelings existed in the country but without any large-scale mobilization and without any attempt at an all-out propaganda war. It even went so far as to exclude from the early agrarian

reform, land belonging to the Church.

For its part, the Church was also wary of becoming involved in an outright clash with the government. It could not very well hide its antipathy toward Communism's "atheistic and materialistic" philosophy but it did not choose to disagree with the party's economic and social policies. As it was, it saw the long overdue need for land reform and viewed with favor such programs as the nationalization of heavy industry. Thus in spite of relatively mild polemical exchanges, the Church and the party managed to avoid serious clashes. Sometimes the party even went out of its way to aid religion; it allowed Catholic publications, contributed to the reconstruction of Church buildings, and sent some of its dignitaries, among them Bierut, to religious ceremonies.

This obviously unnatural relationship, from the Marxist viewpoint, could not continue for long. The first serious rupture was instigated by the Church itself, although it originated in the Vatican, not Poland. On July 13, 1949 the Vatican issued a decree excommunicating those Catholics who belonged to the party or supported it. The party's reaction was immediate and vehement: it not only condemned the decree but warned that it would prosecute all attempts to carry it out. Simultaneously, it approved laws that would make it an offense, punishable by a prison term, to refuse sacraments to citizens for political opinions or activities. From this time onward, then, the Church-State controversy erupted into a sharp and bitter word battle.

Toward the end of the year, as Polish Communism adopted the "Stalinist" mantle, it felt itself in a stronger position to embark on a

frontal attack upon the Church. The motivation came not only from the increased opposition of the Primate of Poland, Archbishop Stefan Wyszynski, but also from the PUWP's annoyance at having to tolerate a rival source of power within the country. It was thus no less an ideological dissatisfaction with the position of the Church as a politically expedient one that prompted the party to take action.

On January 23, 1950 the party seized the Church's largest welfare organization, Caritas, claiming its funds had been used for political aims against the state. This action was immediately followed by a vitriolic, ~~hostile~~ attack upon the Church hierarchy and by the end of January culminated in the arrest of more than 500 priests, nuns, and monks. As it was, combined with a pending government proposal to seize all Church estates in excess of 250 acres, the Roman Catholic hierarchy had good reason to fear a disastrous fate.

It may thus have felt itself justified in acceding to a far-reaching agreement with the government on April 14, 1950, the first such agreement to be made between a Communist state and a Roman Catholic Church. The accord ranged over the entire field of Church-State relations and for this reason provided an insight into the ideological position of the Polish Communists in relation to religion and the Church's role in Poland.<sup>3</sup>

In part, the document amounted to a set of obligations to be fulfilled by the Church and meant to limit its scope of activities. It was specifically stated that the party would recognize the Pope as the supreme authority in matters of "faith and ecclesiastic jurisdiction" but

that in "other matters" the Episcopate was to be guided by the "Polish raison d'etat." Thus the Church was to instruct the clergy to inculcate respect for state law and state authority and cooperate fully with the government's programs for the reconstruction of Poland. The Church hierarchy was to "oppose the misuse of religious feelings for antistate activity" and punish all clergy guilty of associating with antigovernmental "criminal ... underground bands". Moreover the Episcopate was enjoined to ask the Vatican to give de facto recognition to Poland's post-war Western boundaries. The question of agricultural reorganization was more specifically dealt with:

"Accepting the concept", said the agreement, "that the Church's mission can be implemented within various socio-economic structures established by secular authority, the Episcopate will explain to the clergy that it should not oppose the development of cooperatives in rural areas because all cooperatives are essentially based on the ethical concept of human nature."<sup>4</sup>

In return for these obligations, the party made a number of concessions to the Church. Caritas was to be reestablished as the Association of Catholics, religious education was not to be restricted any further, public worship was to be free of interference, and consideration was to be given to land and institutional needs of the Church.

Neither side claimed that it had satisfied its ideological convictions nor did either admit to any ideological sacrifice. Both the Church and the party viewed the agreement as the only possible course under the circumstances. Negotiations, said an Episcopate communique, were "carried on amidst mounting difficulties caused by insurmountable ideological differences".<sup>5</sup>

Whether the Church had actually compromised its ideological position, depends, of course, on the view one takes of Roman Catholic doctrine. But since that doctrine usually looks askance at Church-State separation, which weakens its own position, it may be said that the Episcopate made the greater ideological concession. Insofar as its agreements were with a Communist state, the Church also may be considered to have gained a victory by being given recognition as supreme in matters of faith and morals.

Even if it did not fulfil its ultimate ideological ambition, the party went a long way towards doing so. The agreement accomplished--on paper at least--the separation of Church and State and this could only serve as the beginning of what the Polish Communists hoped would be the eventual subjugation of the Episcopate. The Communists had, as well, got the Church to agree to make no judgments on party policy in social and economic fields and to cleanse its ranks of antistate clergy. But even more significantly, the party was successful in mobilizing the support of the Church for its economic programs, including collectivization. The latter was certainly a major victory.

By this agreement, the Polish Communists, did not, of course, make any reconciliation between Marxism and religion. This they believed neither possible nor desirable. The ultimate aim to liquidate the Church remained a fundamental tenet of Polish Communist thought. The agreement, in fact, seemed permeated with the odour of political expediency and while the Church was recognized as having a social function to fulfil, the

theoretical commitment on the part of the Communists to the concept of co-existence seemed like a mild concession. In 1950 the party was in no mood to tolerate the continued prospect of the ~~e~~ternal existence of a body outside its authority and in a position of national rivalry. Consequently, according to Communist theorists, there was no room in the proletarian state for two sources of power. Religion continued to be considered a bourgeois institution with reactionary, anti-proletarian proclivities. The agreement of 1950, from the Communist point of view, was thus no more than a modus vivendi. The course of Church-State relations during the next three years, which culminated in September 1953 with the arrest of Cardinal Wyszynski, seemed to bear out this appraisal.

With the question of religion generally resolved in their favour, the Polish Communists, early in 1950, could turn their attention to implementing their orthodox economic and agricultural ideas. These were contained in the new Six-Year Plan, announced on July 15 at the Fifth Plenum of the party's Central Committee. None of the Plan's ideological foundations were actually new from the point of view of Soviet economic planning.

Minc, the Plan's chief architect and now Poland's virtual economic boss, said at the Plenum that the party had long failed to embrace Bolshevik methods in industry and agriculture and decried tendencies which deviated from the Soviet approach. He called for a "Bolshevik approach" in all spheres of economic life, in planning, management, production, and socialist competition. Specifically he rejected what he called the bourgeois theory of a "declining rate of growth in industry", a theory which would have



claimed that Poland's full potential could be realized only in critical periods, such as the immediate post-war years/ ~~thereafter~~ <sup>and that</sup>, a decline in growth had to follow necessarily. But socialist planning, according to Minc, would achieve the maximum results without any decline in production and even in times of relative prosperity. Quoting profusely from Stalin's writings, Minc also criticized the past tendency among Polish Communists to set low goals for fear that the ultimate could not be reached. A proper socialist economic plan, he said, must aim at the highest possible achievements taking it for granted that the people will respond entirely.<sup>6</sup>

Minc obviously meant what he said because the Six-Year Plan indeed envisioned a rate of industrial development that could only be termed meteoric. The average yearly increase in the nation's output was to be 11 to 12 per cent and industrial production was to grow by about 20 per cent annually. Machine building, for instance, was to increase by 364 per cent over the six-year period. There was no attempt at hiding the fact that output of producers' goods would be the cornerstone of the economy: by 1955 it was to reach 63.6 per cent of the total industrial output.

If Minc was out to make Poland an industrial nation in six short years, he also had intentions of finally ridding her of all capitalist elements. "The Six-Year Plan", he said, "is a general socialist offensive against capitalist elements in the cities and countryside."<sup>7</sup> He pointed to the Plan as a systematic, categorical battle against the "class enemy":

"There can be no talk of building socialism in the cities and farms without a systematic weakening and in the end destruction of the still strong economic position which agrarian capitalists occupy. The existence of peasant capitalists ... endangers the economic development of agriculture and even of the whole national economy."<sup>8</sup>

The Six-Year Plan thus made provision for intensified collectivization. Investment in cooperative machine tractor stations was to be increased tenfold and by the end of 1955, 20 to 25 per cent of Poland's total cultivated area was to consist of "producers' cooperatives". This, combined with state farms, would mean that one-third of the country's agriculture would be in the "socialist sector".

Quite aptly, Minc ended his discussion of the Plan by stressing the importance of greater economic dependence upon the Soviet Union. At the same time he repeated that Poland had many lessons to learn from the USSR and would be wise to follow the Bolshevik road to economic progress.

"This and only this road", he said, "leads to the maximum growth of creative strength in all People's Democracies and to the construction of socialism in these countries. This and only this road is a guarantee of the development of these nations and their real independence."<sup>9</sup>

In 1952, Polish Communist ideology viewed the building of socialism as a dogmatic process not only in the field of the economy but in all spheres of national life. It is not surprising, therefore, that the need for a new, up-to-date constitution was soon realized. This was logically in step with the Stalinist construction of socialism. In 1936, when he had already turned the Soviet Union into a partially socialist state, Stalin decided that it was time for a new constitution. He explained its ideological justification in the following manner:

"The new constitution is a summary of the path that has been traversed, a summary of the gains already achieved. In other words, it is the registration and legislative embodiment of what has already been achieved and won in actual fact."<sup>10</sup>

Some 16 years later Bierut, speaking before the Polish parliament on the subject of a new constitution, echoed Stalin's words.

"A constitution should be the sum and balance of already realized social, political, and economic changes", the Polish leader said.<sup>11</sup>

Bierut's entire address, in fact, amounted to no more than a paraphrasing of what Stalin had written in 1936. There was surely something symbolic in the fact that Bierut should use those theoretical arguments for a new constitution which Stalin had propounded for a similar document a quarter of a century ago in the Soviet Union.

Since 1947, Poland had had a provisional "Small" Constitution which had been retained only because the Communists had given little attention to drawing up a new one. Thus by 1952 it was not at all representative of Polish society and was closer to reflecting the Poland of pre-Communist days. In 1950 there had been an extensive reform in local administration and the Communists were thus prepared to approve a new national constitution which would reflect the tenor of Communist Poland.

In his speech, before the Sejm approved the constitution on July 22, Bierut stressed that the document would be an expression of the revolutionary achievements of Polish Communism. He pointed to the fact that since 1945, the Communists had been waging a consistent battle with capitalistic elements and it was now time to give written confirmation to

their successes. Furthermore, he claimed that Poland had now reached the stage where political freedoms could be accorded to all citizens since most reactionary elements had been eliminated from Polish life. Bierut implied that it was premature to speak of democratic rights before 1952 because economic freedom then was not yet a reality. Thus, he stated, there could be no political freedom without the freedom from unemployment, from economic crises, from exploitation. Countries like the United States, France, the United Kingdom could not boast of having democratic societies because they had not solved their economic problems. Poland, however, was now in a position to enact a democratic constitution based on the most profound of human liberties.

Bierut's concept of the Communist constitution was entirely Stalinist. He saw it as characterized by five specific features. The first, already mentioned, was that it came after the fact, after the society had been changed and was merely an expression of that transformation. Contrary then to the American constitution, the Communist document was a product of social forces, not their formulator. Its role was to record what had already been achieved, not to shape the future. Secondly, Bierut saw the Constitution as proceeding from the fact that the capitalist system was in the process of liquidation. Its foundations, therefore, were the "pillars of socialism" and the Constitution embodied those principles of freedom and rights which were an inherent part of the socialist system. Thirdly the Polish Communist constitution also differed from Western constitutions in that the latter placed the guidance of the state in the

hands of the bourgeoisie and took as their premise the antagonistic existence of classes. A Communist constitution, however, considered power to be in the hands of the working class, who shared it with the peasantry, and aimed at a society in which these two classes would live in peace and friendship. Its fourth specific feature was that it was thoroughly internationalist. The Communist constitution considered all nations and races to have equal rights and was based on the belief that neither difference in colour nor language, cultural level or level of political development, nor any other difference between nations and races, could serve as grounds for justifying national inequality of rights. Lastly, Bierut believed the Communist constitution to have been truly democratic, not only because it stated the rights of men, but because it specifically guaranteed them. This is to say that the constitution did not merely, for instance, proclaim the right to work but ensured it by giving legislative embodiment to the fact that there was to be no unemployment in Polish society. This, like Stalin before him, Bierut termed socialist democratism.

Bierut's speech to the Sejm, Stalinist throughout, at one point betrayed a curious deviation. While speaking of the necessity to follow the Soviet example in drawing up a Polish constitution, Bierut suddenly made a statement that was reminiscent of the Gomulka period:

"But it is ... clear that our constitution grows from the deepest layers of Polish soil, from the struggles and wishes of the Polish people, from the history of our nation and is the development of its most progressive traditions, which are for us a subject of endearment."<sup>12</sup>

This sentence may have been an inadvertent slip, for almost in the next breath, Bierut switched into a tirade against nationalism and returned to his praise for the Soviet Union.

As could be expected, the new Polish constitution of 1952 was almost an exact replica of the 1936 Soviet model. In contrast to a Western constitution which aims at limiting the powers of state organs and protecting the rights of citizens against the state, the Polish constitution, since its basis was the dictatorship of the proletariat, or People's Democracy, upheld the authority of the state to an extent that made it unlimited in relation to the individual citizen.

The constitution, making reference in its preamble to the "experience of the Soviet Union", rejected the concept of the separation of powers among executive, legislative, and judicial branches as characteristically bourgeois. It declared the legislature, or Sejm, to be the highest organ of state authority while making the executive branch purely administrative. Nevertheless, the Sejm was overshadowed in the constitution by the State Council which was to be the actual policy-making body.

Stressing the separation of Church and state, the constitution declared that the mutual relationship of the two was to be determined by laws. Freedom of conscience and religion was guaranteed but the abuse of these freedoms was liable to punishment.

The constitution dealt at some length with the questions of land ownership, and agricultural cooperatives, and collectives. It distinguished between three kinds of property--individual holdings of land, buildings and other means of production owned by working peasants and

artisans, personal property of citizens, and national and cooperative property. As regards private farming, Article 10 stated:

"The Polish People's Republic protects the individual farms of working peasants and assists them with a view to safeguarding them against capitalist exploitation, to increasing production, to raising the technical level of agriculture, and to improving their welfare."<sup>13</sup>

But, in the same article, the constitution declared:

"The Polish People's Republic gives special support and all-round aid to the cooperative farms set up, on the basis of voluntary membership, as forms of collective economy. By applying methods of the most efficient collective cultivation and mechanized work, collective farming enables the working peasants to reach a breakthrough in production, and contributes to the complete elimination of exploitation in the countryside and to a rapid and considerable improvement in the level of its prosperity and culture."<sup>14</sup>

The constitution also assigned importance to the People's Councils which had been established in Poland in 1950. At that time they involved a major reform in local administration, a reform which the PUPP viewed as "the strengthening of the people's power through deeper democratization, through the growth of the participation of the working masses" in the governing of the country.<sup>15</sup> The 1952 constitution declared that

"organs of state power in village communities, settlements, towns, precincts of larger cities, counties and provinces are the People's Councils."<sup>16</sup>

The theoretical scope of activity assigned to the Councils was extensive. They were said to "express the will of the working people ... develop creative initiative and activity in order to multiply the strength, well-being and culture of the nation."<sup>17</sup> Among their many obligations was the responsibility to "direct economic, social, and cultural activity within their sphere, uniting local needs with nation-wide tasks."<sup>18</sup> But,

most important, they were to "strengthen the tie of state authority with the working people of town and country, drawing ever greater numbers of working people into participation in the task of governing."<sup>19</sup>

The constitution, while technically referring to the People's Councils as "units of local government", in fact interpreted them as being mass organizations in which broad segments of the population, especially the peasantry, would be involved in implementing the party's plans and programs. Thus, although constitutionally, they were given a marked degree of autonomy and the opportunity to formulate their own policies, actually the party intended them to be administrative agencies.

Finally, in a significant, culminating passage, the constitution pointed to the "great idea of socialism" as the ultimate aim of the Polish People's Republic which, it said,

"gives increasing practical effect to the principle: from each according to his ability, to each according to his work."<sup>20</sup>

At a constitutional conference held in 1954, the concepts stressed in the 1952 constitution were reiterated while, at the same time, more emphasis was given to the role of the party. The supremacy of the PZWP was made the basis for the sovereignty of the People's Democracy on the grounds that the party leadership guaranteed the maintenance of the dictatorship of the proletariat which was "the foundation of sovereign national power."<sup>21</sup> The party also rejected any institutional limits on its authority claiming that the separation of powers served only as a bourgeois device for suppressing the people. "In a real people's state," it was declared, "there is no room for any 'competition' of organs."<sup>22</sup>



The same conference interpreted the evolution of the Polish criminal code as dependent on the "form and intensity of the class struggle". The party viewed the code as going through three stages. It was first a weapon in the struggle against imperialism and fascism, and against the survival of feudalism. The next stage involved the use of the code in the suppression of resistance from internal class enemies. Lastly, it was to be adopted to serve as protection for socialist property. Thus the party considered the law to be a reflection of the interests and purposes of the working class.

The coming of the "Stalinist period" in Polish Communist thought meant also that the hitherto somewhat neglected subject of culture would now receive a full treatment from party theorists. Until 1950 the party had been mainly concerned with eliminating all criticisms of the Soviet Union which appeared in Polish art and literature and only vaguely occupied with enforcing the Soviet ideological line upon cultural development. There had also been an effective campaign to discredit and eventually purge those writers and artists who were either blantly anti-Communist or refused to prostitute their artistic principles.

By 1950, however, the party was prepared to advance definite ideological treatises on the subject of culture, and particularly in regard to literature and art. This new concern with culture grew from the recognition of the important role which art and literature could play in consolidating Communism in Poland:

"It is not possible to transform human consciousness", said a member of the PUPP hierarchy, "without literature and art joining in

the fight for socialism. We must clearly realize that art in all its forms is an instrument of exceedingly profound scope and that without this instrument, without the mobilization of its forces, we cannot attain full victory."<sup>23</sup>

With this ambition in mind, the Polish Communists made "socialist realism" the all-permeating philosophy in cultural matters, a philosophy adopted almost in toto from Soviet ideology. Socialist realism was to be the method of the artistic recreation of reality and its revolutionary development. It was to reflect the revolutionary transformation of society from capitalism to socialism and to record the ensuing class struggle. Adam Wazyk, for instance, a Polish poet who later was to break with Communist literary regimentation, in 1950 emphasized the obligation of poetry to act "in the service" of the revolution. Writing in Nowa Kultura (New Culture), the Polish writers' official organ, Wazyk pointed to Soviet poetry as an example of literature which had contributed to the successful completion of the 1917 Revolution.<sup>24</sup>

Poetry generally was to be reduced to a Communist propaganda medium. It was to espouse the doctrines of Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism, to portray the superiority of socialist society and culture, glorify the role of the party, and denounce the West. In short, it was the poet's task to deal primarily with political subjects and to work as any factory worker or peasant in the "building of socialism". A literary critic, Kazimierz Wyka, explained this role of the poet as follows:

"What did the People's Poland give to the writer and artist? ... She called from beyond the social pale, from solitude; she tore him away from service, to the wealthy classes; she freed him from the humiliating position which had been imposed upon him by capitalism.

His past position resulted in the degeneration of his artistic creativeness; it made his work useless and released only a small part of his energy, and not the best part at that. And what did the People's Poland demand--and rightly so--from the writer? She demanded his conscious participation in the nation's entire life, its work and construction of the socialist future; she demanded from him a most noble service--a service which allows him to express his true self, his full energy, and his artistic soul. In return she has given him readers and consumers in numbers he could not have even dreamed of in bourgeois Poland."<sup>25</sup>

"Socialist realism", in the process of chronicling the changing nature of Polish society, was to be, in itself, a revolutionary approach to literature. For, according to party theorists, what Poland needed in fact was a cultural revolution.

"We know", said an official party statement, "that processes within the cultural superstructure proceed more slowly and in a more complex fashion than economic, social and political ones. But we also know that without the full attainment of cultural revolution there can be no question of fully realizing the Socialist revolution now under way in Poland."<sup>26</sup>

A number of Polish writers emphasized the social role of literature and its use as an instrument in support of economic programs which the party had initiated. One writer, for instance, devoted a full-length discussion in Nowa Kultura to the ways in which Polish literature could aid in the realization of the Six-Year Plan.<sup>27</sup>

Since Stalin himself had consistently recognized that national languages were not doomed to disappear and had all but discounted as unrealistic the development of a common language for the Communist world, the Polish Communists had no misgivings about proclaiming that art was to be "national in form, and socialist in content". They claimed that the national cultural heritage could not be rejected, but at the same time,

insisted on its re-evaluation in the light of Marxism so that it could become an integral part of socialist culture. This blending of national tradition with socialist goals was best expressed by Jerzy Andrezejewski, a Catholic writer who had been converted to Communism.

"The literature of socialist realism", he wrote, "should be consistent development of the store of literary knowledge which mankind has worked out under the yoke of capitalist society. If, therefore, the progressive traditions of our literature are really to live in our present literature, if they are to enrich the consciousness of the writers, their language, their working methods, continuing to fulfil their auxiliary, active and productive role, it is first of all necessary that the writers should well and comprehensively know that tradition, and that they should strive to utilize the experiences of past epochs in a creative manner."<sup>28</sup>

Nevertheless, this knowledge of national tradition was subject to prescribed party limits; for the party was entitled to restrict the availability of the past literature of Poland to works which it considered to have grown out of the class struggle. Thus any literature which was in conflict with the "progressive" tradition of Poland was open to condemnation.

This privilege, to censor Poland's past artistic products, the Communist theorists based on their belief that two distinguishable literary trends were present in every historical period. The first, the "progressive" trend, was connected with the concept of realistic art and aimed at showing man as he really was. The second, or "decadent, reactionary" trend, was alleged to show each social phenomenon in a distorted form, contrary to real life. Thus it was necessary to liquidate all that was "decadent" and "reactionary" and to preserve all that represented progress. This, the Polish Communists were quick to point out, did not imply that all the old "gentry" and "bourgeois" writers were to be rejected, since they could

be subjected to creative re-evaluation from the Communist viewpoint. Nevertheless, the genealogy of Polish culture was to be thoroughly explored, and stress given to "progressive" elements which could be considered the precursors and heritage of the new Communist culture.

This right of passing judgment upon past and present Polish literature and art was to be the exclusive province of the party. To it alone belonged the exercise of jurisdiction over matters pertaining to culture. For, according to the theorists,

"the party and the people's authority conduct the cultural policy, the policy of developing the national culture, of concern for its progressive, socialist content, the policy of supporting all artistic work serving the building of socialism, the policy of combating reactionary currents which are an expression of the interests of the exploiting classes."<sup>29</sup>

It is the party, according to the Polish Communists, which teaches the authors that they are writers of the working class, and of a nation which is on its way to socialism. By instructing the writers in dialectical materialism, the party enables them to know, evaluate, and shape the objective reality of life. At the same time the party enlightens the writers through socialist humanism and ideological fervor, trains them in the methods of socialist realism, and shows them how to assume an active socialist attitude toward tradition. Finally, the party teaches the writers to create in the "party spirit".

According to the Polish Communists, the party's campaign for the reconversion of culture was already successful by 1954:

"A transformation has taken place in the writers' way of thinking, in their political and social views. They take part in our struggle for peace, they give expression to their love for the

People's Poland in their work. Many of them have understood the great truth of the brotherhood of the peoples fighting for freedom and prosperity, the great truth of proletarian internationalism. They have understood that the new Russia created by the working people on the ruins of the Czarist prison of nations has become the leader of mankind in the struggle for social justice, for socialism."<sup>30</sup>

While the nature and aims of the arts and literature were thus abundantly clear from the writings of Polish Communists, one responsibility which cultural endeavors seemed to be fulfilling, while obvious to readers of the Polish press, was seldom alluded to by party theorists. In the Soviet Union, Stalin had already for some time been in the process of glorifying his own personality; worship of the Soviet dictator, to the extent that it was possible under the circumstances, was already an accomplished fact. In Poland this idolatry did not begin until 1950 and even then there were no illusions about the possibilities for success: while lip-service was paid to impress the masses, the main goal was to make Stalin popular among the party members. To this end, every energy and talent of the writers was mobilized in the campaign to make Stalin infallible and superior at least within the PUPP.

Communism is a materialistic ideology and as such it rejects the type of Hegelian idealism which places so much importance on the concept of the "leader". There has never been any ideological trend within Marxism which sought to glorify the role of the individual; in fact Marxism has always rejected the notion that man makes history, choosing instead to assign this responsibility to social forces or classes whose eternal struggle is beyond the control of any one individual. This stress on economic groups in society and the priority given to the proletariat, has

naturally made for glorification not of the individual but of the working class, not of one leader but of the masses which, collectively, constitute the "leader" in Marxist ideology.

Theory aside, however, there have been very distinct discrepancies in practice. Communism, in the 20th Century, has been at best a dictatorial system, at worst totalitarian. As a totalitarian structure it has not differed from other totalitarian states: the ideological cleavage between Stalin and Hitler was always irreconcilable, but their system of retaining power and suppressing opposition was similar. A fascist murders in the same manner as a Communist, though his ends be different. And both, actually, have one end in common: power. The pursuit of political power, irrespective of the ideological leanings of those who seek it, follows a prescribed course if that pursuit is to be illegitimate, non-parliamentary, or undemocratic. Thus because Communism is a totalitarian movement it is no different ~~than~~ <sup>from</sup> the totalitarianism of even its arch enemy, fascism. And since all totalitarian regimes are characterized by the dictatorial and absolute rule of one man, or at the most a few men, Communism has not been able to escape the idealistic concept of the "leader" principle.

It is in this light that the "glorification of the personality" must be considered in Poland. It was no accident that it began in early 1950, when Communism in Poland became truly totalitarian, and involved Bierut as well as Stalin.

In spreading the Stalin cult, the Polish Communists made no

attempt at ideological justification. They never referred to the theoretical ramifications of one-man rule or questioned the concept of absolute power and the infallibility of an individual. The aggrandizements of the Soviet leader, on the contrary, amounted to no more than a propaganda campaign which made use of the most obvious methods. Stalin was profusely quoted, his writings were printed and reprinted, and his photograph was exhibited consistently, in all newspapers and periodicals. The task of many a writer or poet was to sing the praises of the revered Communist dictator.

Adam Wazyk, for instance, in a poem published in Nowa Kultura in September, 1950, refers to Stalin's mind as a "river of wisdom and reason". He crowns him with the power to "demolish mountains" and credits him with having "united nations".<sup>31</sup> Another issue of Nowa Kultura, celebrating Stalin's 71st birthday, refers to him as the

"genius theorist of Marxism-Leninism, the greatest teacher of our times, who shows humanity new ways, and in all creative aspects inspires the human mind, pushing forward our consciousness ..."<sup>32</sup>

"In the fight for peace", the same article concludes, "the word of Stalin is inspiration, the name of Stalin is the banner of victory." A year earlier, in a special issue devoted to Stalin's 70th birthday, the theoretical journal Nowe Drogi, emphasized in particular Stalin's role as the leader of the working class.

"The name of Stalin", read a message from the PUWP Central Committee, "is indissolubly linked with the hearts and minds of the Polish working class ..."<sup>33</sup>

Stalin was called a "great friend of our nation" and his name was made a symbol of "the historical link between the Polish and the Russian people."<sup>34</sup>



Some of the leading members of the Polish party--among them Bierut, Cyrankiewicz, Berman, Minc, Zambrowski, Zawadzki--contributed articles to the issue of Nowe Drogi, each dealing with some facet of Stalin's accomplishments.

This type of idolatry continued until Stalin's death, at which time some of the eulogies bordered on the bizarre, and until later still when the Polish press made a point of remembering both the anniversaries of his birth and his death, making it clear that "Stalin lives in our hearts".<sup>35</sup>

The adulation for Bierut, though it naturally always took second place to that of Stalin, also made use of propaganda and at times of remarkably bad poetry. One poem, published in 1952 before the national elections, and entitled "The People's Candidate", began as follows:

"It is not easy, not simple,  
No, not easy to be You,  
To be loved by the people,  
To have attained that which you have attained."<sup>36</sup>

Wazyk, who apparently enjoyed such assignments, also devoted a poem to Bierut calling him the leader of the new generation, rebuilding the destruction of the past.<sup>37</sup> Other writers and poets praised Bierut for his "greatness", his "devotion to the working class", his "distinguished" past and his "humility". On one occasion, Nowa Kultura printed a sketch of workers on the job with the caption: "Friends of Bierut".<sup>38</sup> The Polish Communists, faithful to Stalin, had yet managed to breed their own native cult.

The degree to which party adulation for Stalin and Bierut was

carried out reflected, in effect, the extent which Polish totalitarianism had reached between 1950 and 1953. Poland during these years lived under the full impact of dogma: rapid development of industry, without concern for consumer goods, housing or community services, coercive collectivization, and strict adherence to all party demands and programs. It was a period of complete Soviet domination and exploitation, as Polish Communists succumbed to all Bolshevik directives. It was also a period of disgrace for Polish art and literature, steeped in "socialist realism", untrue to its past traditions. And all this tragedy was reflected in the ideology of Polish Communism which, for the most part, was perfunctory and drab, and was conspicuous only for its doctrinaire repetitions and redundancies. Conspicuous also was the secret police, symbol of this the bleakest, most terror-filled period in Polish history.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE THAW

The death of Stalin on March 5, 1953, though its significance was readily understood, did not bring to an end the period of "Stalinism" in Poland. That system of government had become too deeply entrenched in Polish life to collapse because of the death of its founder. Stalin's followers in Poland, from Bierut to Nowak to Rokossowski, were powerful enough to continue as they had done under the direction of the Soviet leader for the past three years. But an event which occurred toward the end of 1953, with wide ramifications during 1954, outwardly at least, shook the Polish leadership more profoundly than the death of Stalin.

This event was the defection to the West on December 15, 1953 of Lieutenant Colonel Josef Swiatlo, one of the high-ranking officials of Poland's Ministry of Public Security, commonly known as the Bezpieka (Security Police). Swiatlo had been deputy chief of the Ministry's most important department which dealt with intra-party political matters and which had been involved in the purges of 1945 and 1949. As a member of the Polish Communist party for over twenty years, Swiatlo had also come to enjoy the confidence of Bierut, Berman, and Minc and was fully aware of all that went on within the party. Consequently, his revelations, broadcast over Radio Free Europe's "Voice of Free Poland", created a sensation not only among the Polish population but also within the party where they were received with a great deal of consternation.<sup>1</sup>

Of course, the work of the Ministry of Public Security had been no secret in Poland and the true nature of its assignments was well known

throughout the country. Nevertheless, the Polish Communists had always interpreted its role as legal, essential, and mandatory for the "protection" of the working class. Its ideological and political justification was given in the following statement:

"The problem of security in a country of a given type is essentially reduced to that of defending and consolidating the economic and political standing of the ruling class and protecting the legal order which suits its needs.

"The development of the problem of security presents itself in People's Poland in a similar fashion as in the USSR in the initial stage of development. During the first period after the revolution, the principal task of the government was to break the resistance of the overthrown classes. This was both in the USSR and in Poland the paramount problem with regard to internal security under the then existing circumstances."<sup>2</sup>

The Polish Communist theorists thus saw the Ministry of Public Security as an agency which would guard the People's Democracy and would combat any activities which aimed at undermining or weakening the state. Ideologically it was committed to conduct an "unflinching struggle against agents of imperialism ... as well as against any hostile activities against socialist reconstruction in Poland."<sup>3</sup>

Within these confines the abuse of police power was not only possible but flagrantly exercised. When Swiatlo revealed publicly the extent of the abuse by citing actual cases, the party's embarrassment was complete. Much of what Swiatlo broadcast could have been guessed at: the activities of the Bezpieka in manufacturing charges against Gomulka and General Marian Spychalski, its role in rigging elections, and the more brutal duties of espionage, imprisonment and murder. But his description of the aristocratic and luxurious lives which party leaders

led--chiefly Bierut, who, Swiatlo said, had at least ten villas with hundreds of servants--was beyond expectation. No less amazing was the disclosure of the manner in which party leaders spied on each other and accumulated incriminating files as instruments of blackmail or liquidation.

Swiatlo also left no doubt about the Soviet control of Poland. He revealed that Rokossowski was completely independent of the PUPP and acted as "Moscow's special envoy to Poland."<sup>4</sup>

"The Bezpieka," Swiatlo stated, "constitutes the spearhead of Soviet aggression by means of which Bierut, and through him Moscow, rules Poland."<sup>5</sup>

In discussing the expulsion and eventual imprisonment--in July 1951--of Gomulka, Swiatlo described the Bezpieka's interpretation of nationalist--rightist deviation.

"So-called rightist or leftist deviations", he said, "consist in the fact that some comrades do not distinguish between party tactics and the real political line. Tactics change and depend on the political conditions of the moment and on Moscow's needs. But the true party line always remains the same. And those who accept tactics as the new political line must in due course suffer the consequence. This is what deviation consists of."<sup>6</sup>

The PUPP reacted sharply and vehemently to Swiatlo's broadcasts and branded him an "agent-provocateur of the American secret service ..." who, as a member of the Bezpieka, "had managed to obscure and entangle many a case by applying ... methods of tormenting and trampling on human dignity, methods alien to our socialist morality and hostile to our people's rule of law ..." <sup>7</sup> But the Communists could not hope to convince anyone in the country that they were innocent and by the end of 1954 there was widespread questioning and criticism within the party itself.

Consequently, on December 7, 1954 the Ministry of Public Security

was abolished by decree, certain of its most notorious officials purged, and the ordinary police duties taken over by a new Ministry of Interior. Matters of state security were entrusted to a special Committee for Public Security attached to the Council of Ministers (Cabinet) and headed by a Deputy Premier. This reorganization need not have meant that the powers of the secret police would be curbed, but the accompanying declarations by party leaders indicated that such a course was certainly contemplated. An editorial in the December issue of Nowe Drogi, entitled "Let Us Strengthen the People's Rule of Law", demanded an end to "arbitrary" justice and called for a return to true "socialist legality".

"Nothing demoralizes the people more", stated the editorial, "than the contradiction between principles advocated and actual practice, between what is said and what is done."<sup>8</sup>

And Bierut himself, speaking to a December plenum of the party's Central Committee, recognized the need for change:

"The function of the state", he said, "along with the social and political transformation realized during the past ten years of sharp class struggle are changing simultaneously with the process of transformation. The scope and methods of activity of the repressive organs are on the decrease as compared with the period when much wider interference was needed."<sup>9</sup>

Swiatlo's revelations and the accompanying reorganization of the organs of public security signalled the beginning of a new period in Polish Communism. It was now almost inevitable that the political police would not long remain the sole object of criticism. And it was just as certain that the party would face new demands from the Polish people. The first segment of the population to verify this prospect was the politically-conscious youth.

Since July of 1948, Poland's largest organized youth group had been the Union of Polish Youth (Zwiazek Mlodziezy Polskiej--ZMP). It had been created by the Communists by compulsorily merging four already existing youth movements. The merger had been preceded by a thorough purge of anti-Communist elements in each, and the resulting Union was a monopolistic youth organization controlled by the PUPP. According to its statute, however, the ZMP was to be a "mass, non-party, independent, ideological educational organization for young workers and students in both rural and urban areas."<sup>10</sup> This seeming sovereignty was nullified by a statute of the PUPP which stated that "party policy is the directive for ZMP organizations in all fields of their activity."<sup>11</sup> The ZMP was responsible for carrying out indoctrination of the youth in the "spirit of socialism" and recruiting party members. By indoctrination it was meant that each youth had to undergo a period of ideological training which would rid him of "bourgeois nationalism" and religion, at the end of which he could qualify for party membership. Thus the ZMP, with its close to two million members, was no more than a branch of the PUPP.

The upheaval within the ZMP and among the non-organized youth had its roots initially in a seemingly non-political, innocent source. This was jazz, a form of music long banned in Communist countries as a product of imperialism. During 1954, the Polish youth, with some understandable hesitation, began to embrace this Western import and it soon became extremely popular in the country. Neglecting the objections of Communist authorities, the young people also began to wear "blue jeans"

and by the end of 1954 were openly demanding greater social freedom. Western newspapers, though scarce, were eagerly read and books by American authors, also rare, widely discussed. The student theatre soon transformed itself into a daring commentary upon contemporary life. At the World Youth Festival, held in Warsaw in 1955, the contact with thousands of foreign guests, many of them from Western countries, increased the thirst among Polish youth for wider access to new ideas. Thus what had originally begun as a small jazz fad, almost overnight turned into a mass social movement. Inevitably, this movement began to have more vociferous and sharper political overtones. In this manner political discussion started among Polish youth.

Most of this discussion formed around the Warsaw Communist weekly, Po prostu, the literary organ of students and young intellectuals. Its editorial board was brave and opinionated, and thoroughly disgusted with the orthodox, dogmatic interpretation of Marxism. The paper frequently denied the validity of certain Marxist concepts by confronting them with historical evidence not easily explained away by dialectical materialism. Many of Po prostu's critical articles were written in the form of scathing satire and depicted the problems of contemporary Poland with bitter sarcasm. During its first year, 1955, and later, the paper, with a circulation of 200,000, was to be the most outspoken and lively of all Polish publications.

Events outside of Poland, meanwhile, were also having an influence upon the course of Polish Communism. Since the death of Stalin, the Soviet Union had also been undergoing an internal transformation.



In December 1953, the head of the Soviet security police, Lavrenti Beria had been executed and there had followed a mild relaxation of totalitarianism. During 1954, the new Soviet leaders stressed the concept of "collective leadership" and spoke of a departure from orthodox economic programs. Then, on May 26, 1955 Nikita Khrushchev, by then head of the Soviet Communist party, paid a visit to Tito in Yugoslavia. In an exchange of greetings the two Communist leaders expressed regret over the past differences between their countries and, at the end of Khrushchev's visit, issued a mutual declaration of respect and a pledge of non-interference in each other's affairs. In view of the fact that Yugoslavia's expulsion from the Cominform in 1948 had had such a direct impact upon Polish events, this reconciliation between Khrushchev and Tito was bound to make a significant impression upon Polish Communists in particular and the Polish people in general.

It was in the cultural field, however, that the full force of change began to be felt in Poland. Early in 1955, at its Third Plenum, the PUPP, taking its cue from the Soviet Union, decided to ease the cultural atmosphere. A similar relaxation in the USSR, epitomized by the publication of Ilya Ehrenburg's novel The Thaw, prompted the Polish Communists to loosen the hitherto rigid interpretation of "socialist realism" and to allow for a greater degree of cultural discussion.

This decision was warmly greeted by Polish writers and some began to speak out for further concessions. In late February, the weekly Przegląd Kulturalny, (Cultural Review), a publication of the Council of

Culture and Art, carried an article demanding that writers should have exclusive jurisdiction over their work.<sup>12</sup> The article claimed that the party was in no position to properly judge the standards and values of art and that this task should be left to those who knew the field best, the writers and artists themselves. At about the same time, a leading Polish sociologist, Jozef Chalasinski, attacked what he termed the "Marxist monopoly of scholarship" and its derogatory influence.<sup>13</sup> Chalasinski was particularly disturbed by the dogmatic interpretation of the doctrine, which, according to him, had practically destroyed Polish sociology and had stifled the creative impulse of Polish men of learning.

These were the outstanding outbursts amid what the party sensed to be a growing discontent and will to criticize among the intelligentsia. Choosing no doubt to placate these forces, but at the same time, recognizing the wrongs of the past, the PWP ~~strongly~~ <sup>took</sup> a bolder, self-critical approach. The new official line was expressed in a series of articles in Nowe Drogi.

The first of these, which appeared in March, interpreted the decisions of the Third Plenum as having given totally new directives to the development of Polish culture.<sup>14</sup> It admitted that the party's past habits of rigidly controlling the course of cultural endeavours were not only wrong but harmful. But it stopped short of proposing an independent existence for the arts. There was still room for party direction, the article stated, though it would now be carried out in concert with non-party sources, since "each of us can see the truth of life, whether or

not we are party members."<sup>15</sup> This, said the author of the Nowe Drogi article, was the true essence of "socialist realism".

The interpretation gave vent to a lively discussion of "socialist realism" by numerous authors in cultural and literary publications. No one spoke out against the broader view expressed in Nowe Drogi: there was unanimous satisfaction with a view which, in part at least, freed the writers of direct party control. The debate, rather, centered on the issue of what the limits of the new "socialist realism" should be.

In June, Nowe Drogi was even more accommodating. In an article by Stefan Zolkiewski, later to become Minister of <sup>Higher</sup> Education, it left no doubt about the errors of the past:

"The greatest blunder of our cultural policy", wrote Zolkiewski, "was the frequent and insistent ideo-political party direction of cultural development which took the form of vulgar commandeering."<sup>16</sup>

Not only the administrative organs of culture but its very "processes of artistic creation" were influenced by this direction. The result, Zolkiewski wrote, was a stifling of the arts to the extent that their development was deeply harmed. The direction, in fact, reached the degree where most artistic achievements amounted to no more than pure propaganda.

Turning again to the question of "socialist realism", Zolkiewski deplored the party policy which "interpreted all (cultural) conflicts as antagonistic" toward the regime.<sup>17</sup> Such a course prevented the healthy criticism that was needed to correct the errors of party thinking. It

also prevented literature and the arts from representing life as it truly was and from reflecting the nature of the difficult tasks facing the Polish people. Zolkiewski thus came to the problem of party theoretical orthodoxy as it concerned cultural matters.

"We sinned through dogmatism", he said, "It was a symbol of our weakness. Where we lacked arguments, there we substituted quotations and etiquette. Frequently we destroyed discussion-- and without discussion and cultural interchange of ideas there can be no development of the arts. This whole state of things lowered the level of our criticism. Self-criticism was not satisfactory. Our cultural life was weakened. It taught us conformism which is alien to our revolutionary goals. To this day, these faults (of party direction) have not been fully corrected."<sup>18</sup>

Zolkiewski continued to show how the evils of past policy had actually affected literature, poetry, the theatre, even films. The blame for this deterioration of artistic standards, he said, must be placed fully upon a "wrong interpretation" of "socialist realism". It was now essential that there should be an elimination of all those thoughts which in the past had limited and harmed the development of true artistic achievement.

"We must formulate questions and seek answers to them that are neither quick nor easy ... it will be better if they should help us to understand our real position," Zolkiewski concluded.<sup>19</sup>

The intellectual discussion in the cultural press continued. Aware now of the party's new ideological stand, the writers felt more at ease with the pen and less hesitant to speak openly. Nevertheless, the criticism was not as violent as may have been expected, for the intelligentsia carried on the debate with comparative caution, refusing to pinpoint the real root of cultural mismanagement.

It was not until August 21 that the logical projection of the "thaw" of Polish Communist thought was fully expressed. It came in the

form of a poem, published on that day in the literary weekly, Nowa Kultura, under the title, "Poem for Adults", and written by the leading Communist poet, Adam Wazyk. Its publication was all the more stunning in view of the author's exemplary background. A leading supporter and exponent of "socialist realism", Wazyk had at one time been the ideological spokesman for a Marxist periodical and had relentlessly criticized all tendencies aiming at liberalism and Western ideas. During the Stalinist period he became one of Poland's most widely published poets, among his writing being, as was seen, a number of odes of adulation to Stalin and Bierut.<sup>20</sup> It was thus symbolic of the deep crisis of conscience in which the intellectuals were engulfed, that Wazyk himself should give the initial expression to the frustrations of the Polish nation.

"Poem for Adults", some 300 lines in length and prominently displayed in Nowa Kultura, was a merciless, bitter attack upon Communism in Poland. It revealed all the despair, hardships and pains which, not only the intellectuals, but the whole Polish nation experienced in silence during the Stalinist years. It was also a vicious attack upon Communist dogmatism and regimentation, upon officially propagated lies, upon the dreams realized only in party propaganda:

"The dreamer Fourier beautifully prophesied  
that the sea would flow with lemonade.  
And does it not flow?  
They drink sea-water,  
and cry --  
Lemonade!  
They return quietly home  
to vomit  
to vomit."<sup>21</sup>

Wazyk scorned at the delusions perpetrated by orthodox Communism:

"They ran to us, shouting:  
 A communist does not die.  
 It never happened that a man did not die.

. . . . .

They ran to us, shouting;  
 Under socialism  
 a cut finger does not hurt.  
 They cut their finger,  
 they felt pain.  
 They lost faith."<sup>22</sup>

The Polish poet lashed out at economic plans which demanded the impossible, and deplored the situation of the "overworked" masses, the hungry children, the "people who wait for justice". Then, in the final words of the poem, Wazyk made the appeal:

"We make demands on this earth,  
 for which we did not throw dice,  
 for which a million people perished in battle:  
 for a clear truth,  
 for the bread of freedom,  
 for burning reason.  
 We demand these every day.  
 We demand through the party."<sup>23</sup>

Speaking a few years later to an American journalist, Wazyk explained the motives which urged him to write the "Poem for Adults":

"The idea for this poem developed out of notes I kept for a long time--notes representing a kind of chronicle and brief history of the developments in our life and in my own personal surroundings ... Here in Poland the poem's influence testifies to the Polish people's thirst for honest criticism of the mistakes and the black side of our national life. The young people are particularly avid for such open criticism on matters where silence has been the rule. Now, Poland is a Catholic country where the Messianic aspirations of our national poets are still a vital part of the popular spirit. There is a conflict here between modern atheism and deep-seated religious sentiments. That is one side of the picture. The other side is a conflict between the liberal and the dogmatic forces inside religious life, paralleling the same conflict inside the Communist party. The peasants are against the kolkhozes; the

religious conservatives against civil marriage. But this does not mean that the people of Poland as a whole want to go back to old social forms and institutions. What they do want is to root out the bad features of present-day life in this country, the irrationalities of bureaucracy, the terror and limitation on personal freedom."<sup>24</sup>

The latter part of the statement indicates that Wazyk had not made a complete break with Communism; rather his demand "through the party" signifies that he still looked to Communism for leadership while insisting on internal criticism, on a realistic and truthful approach to the problems plaguing the country, and a relaxation of the powers of totalitarianism.

The poem was an immediate popular success. Copies of Nowa Kultura became a black market item and the poem was read and discussed throughout the country. The reaction within the party was first one of amazement, then of anger. Wazyk was sharply criticized and reprimanded by official sources and the poem condemned. The editor of Nowa Kultura, Pawel Hoffman, and the entire editorial board were dismissed. Berman, then responsible for internal security measures, called together a meeting of Polish writers and demanded a collective denunciation of Wazyk and his "Poem". The resulting criticisms forced Wazyk to acquiesce in the party's view and he promised to do better in the future. But the damage had already been done. "Poem for Adults" had unleashed the pent-up, latent fury of a nation hungry for freedom.

The many articles dealing with the "Poem" which appeared during the next month were obviously commissioned by the party. Most were unequivocally critical and denunciatory; some were more subtle and dis-

cussed Wazyk's allegations intelligently and intellectually. But the initial outpouring of official condemnations, soon gave way to as many articles in the cultural press which supported and willingly repeated Wazyk's views. Finally, on September 21, even the party's daily newspaper Trybuna Ludu, admitted that the situation in the cultural field left much to be desired--though without exonerating Wazyk.

Polish writers now turned seriously to examining the very foundations of Marxist theory as it applied to culture. Josef Chalasinski, in a series of articles in Przegląd Kulturalny in which he took issue with the views of the leading Polish Marxist theorist Adam Schaff, questioned the "two streams" theory of culture.<sup>25</sup> Chalasinski said that he was not satisfied with this Communist notion that there are always only two streams or tendencies in culture, one progressive, the other decadent or reactionary.<sup>26</sup> Chalasinski was willing to agree that these two historical tendencies do exist but he was skeptical that they were the only ones. What Chalasinski implied was that any deviation in culture from the Communist line did not necessarily constitute an alignment with the reactionary trend.

"The issue does not depend", he wrote, "on whether the concept of two streams in culture is real, but to what extent does it make clear certain aspects of culture ... If it does not explain everything, then it is necessary to define what it does explain and what not, to what extent it brings us closer to understanding the process of cultural development and in what way it is necessary to supplement it so that this understanding may be complete. I do not question the service of this concept as a methodical directive but I oppose that view which gives it the character of a theory that explains the whole mechanism of culture."<sup>27</sup>

This critique went to the very roots of "socialist realism" and threatened



to destroy it entirely. If there were a host of courses which culture could embark upon, then Chalasinski's arguments would justify an almost unlimited discrepancy in cultural development. In short, writers could feel more free to follow an original, non-doctrinaire path.

Chalasinski went even further in other articles. Entering into a discussion of the position of the individual and Marxism, Chalasinski concluded that the latter did not have enough philosophic content to insure the fullest development of modern man.<sup>28</sup> He claimed that Marxist theory lacked the metaphysical concepts so essential for the satisfaction of the human imagination and emotions.

Chalasinski's views were complemented by those of two other leading Polish cultural figures: Wladyslaw Bienkowski, the former party member who had been denounced in 1948 along with Gomulka but who was now being allowed to appear in print, and Leszek Kolakowski, a brilliant young philosopher. Both were concerned with the application of the class struggle to the field of culture.

Bienkowski did not deny the fundamental truth of the class struggle as a historical phenomenon and its invincibility within Marxist theory. But he contended that the concept of the class struggle need not be exhaustively applied to the sphere of culture. And he cautioned against misinterpreting its role:

"The theory of class struggle does not adjust cultural phenomena to its needs; on the contrary--the theory of class struggle adjusts itself to cultural phenomena, to their specific character, to their specific social function ..."<sup>29</sup>

This was a clear call for more flexibility in cultural endeavours and less

reliance on Communist dogma; it was echoed by Kolakowski who argued that the theory of class struggle does not suffice for the full interpretation of cultural phenomena. There must be, he wrote, less clinging to dogmatism and more allowance for a variety of cultural possibilities which Communism had hitherto denied.<sup>30</sup>

This sort of discussion of Communist theory continued in the two main cultural publications, Nowa Kultura and Przegląd Kulturalny without any apparent attempt on the part of the party to impose strict censorship. Certain of the issues even emphasized in bold print that whenever an article was shortened for space consideration, the editing was done by the paper's editors. This sensitivity no doubt was symptomatic of the growing independence among the writers.

Symptomatic too was the unabated unrest among the youth and in an effort to placate them, the PUP theorists admitted the need for a more flexible ideological program within the ZMP.<sup>31</sup> But they could not belittle or evade what had become the main criticism of the Polish youth, that the party hierarchy had become the "new class", removed from the people, unconcerned with their welfare, and no less exclusive than the old aristocracy.

There was a great deal of truth in this allegation. Since 1950 the PUP had been following a policy of selective recruitment, neglecting its past efforts to construct a large mass following. It became more concerned with erecting a strong cadre of loyal and reliable party secretaries, members of executive committees, and generally an efficient managerial nucleus which would be the actual apparatus of the

party. Consequently there would be an elite of "organization men", trained especially for specific party duties and partaking of special privileges to which their jobs would entitle them. At the same time there was to be a continual purification of party ranks aimed at keeping the membership unadulterated and free of treacherous elements.

The result of this policy was reflected in the changed nature of the party membership in 1954-55. Worker and peasant membership dropped extensively while the number of white collar workers increased appreciably. The party was thus becoming a vast bureaucratic machine~~ry~~, suffering from an absence of ideological initiative much less fervor. The luxurious pleasures which the new party elite came to enjoy further alienated it from the masses and created a deep schism that would not be repaired by worn-out Communist slogans. The "new class", which Milovan Djilas decried in Yugoslavia, was no less a reality in Poland.

Early in 1955 the party conceded that there was some validity in such an allegation. A number of articles in Nowe Drogi deplored the loss of contact with the masses and attributed it to a "lack of freedom, lack of discussion of principles, and the absence of self-criticism."<sup>32</sup> The authors for the first time, began to use the term "decentralization", urging in the process a proliferation of local party units, and a greater reliance on mass support and membership. One article, dismayed at the bureaucratic, non-proletarian tendencies within the party urged a return to fundamental principles of socialist administration. At the same time the author called for greater candour before the masses. The party, he

wrote, must

"go bravely to the masses with all our problems and difficulties, (we must) tell them the truth about these difficulties, we must rely on their wisdom, on their patriotism, and, without commanding, we must learn from them and develop their initiative ..."33

Lack of contact with the party's rank and file was also blamed for its loss of initiative and determination. The party apparatus, Nowe Drogi declared, has forsaken the will to be more helpful to those among the masses who require party leadership and guidance. To rectify its administrative ills, the party must

"broaden (its) internal democracy, and develop political discussion through the creation of an atmosphere of criticism and self-criticism ..."34

The PWP's soul-searching showed that the party was extremely sensitive to the abyss separating it and the people. Its renewed insistence on internal democracy was also reflected by its concern over the fact that a small clique had come to rule the party. The change in leadership in the Soviet Union, climaxed by the concept of "collective rule", prompted the PWP to follow suit. At its second party Congress in March 1954 the principle of "collegiality" or collective leadership had already been advanced and it was stated at that time that this system of rule would serve as a means to "inner party democracy". Now, in 1955, faced with the "new class" image, the party restated the need for collective leadership to produce a balanced program and give scope to party activists for the exercise of "broad initiative". Though the party theorists never explicitly stated that there had been one-man rule, there was clear implication that "two or three comrades" had controlled the party.<sup>35</sup>

In the course of all the other criticism which the party had now recognized, it was almost natural that it should give expression to the sorest sphere of its past policies, agriculture. The question of collectivization had always acted as a barometer of the ideological situation in Communist Poland. Under Gomulka, during a period of comparative relaxation, collectivization had been avoided; the coming of the Stalinist period was reflected in the intensified drive to socialize the farmer. Now, as the "thaw" became pronounced, there was a retreat from Stalinist methods in agriculture. This was prompted by two factors: first, collectivization had been a dismal failure as the party could not convince the peasants of its advisability. Secondly, it had created serious food shortages and was responsible for decreased productivity. These two motives were complemented by the now general feeling in the party that there must be less compulsion and rigidity in agricultural policy and more reliance upon a gradual evolution of collective farming. The official party theory, consequently, began to reject the orthodox antikulak line which it had once propagated and demanded a more "elastic" approach which would ensure the level of productivity.<sup>36</sup>

While the subject of agriculture received this less rigid interpretation, nothing was said about national deviation from Communist theory and practice. Not even the cultural publications printed anything which was reminiscent of the nationalist ideas prevalent before 1949 under Gomulka. There was some logic in this silence over a matter that had been so vital to the Poles: before there could be any discussion of

a "different road to socialism" there had to be a relaxation of the stifling atmosphere that had prevented any serious discussion of Marxism, much less of deviationist concepts.

In October 1955, however, the party itself instigated the debate over a "Polish way to socialism". In an editorial in Nowe Drogi, the PUPP gave notice that it was now prepared to follow a policy in keeping with the concept of domesticism. But it first prefaced the doctrinal transformation with an unabashed diatribe against, what it termed, "ideological chaos ... nihilistic tendencies to disregard the achievements ... of the past ten years ..."37

It also denounced tendencies to revise the party's

"ideological principles, attempts at an allegedly creative 'supplementation' of Marxism ... concepts of liberalism, solidarism, relativism, cultural autonomy ... an autonomy conceived as being independent of the class struggle, of politics, and of the leading role of the party."38

These enjoinments, however, had little relation to the new ideological line unveiled by the party. The Nowe Drogi editorial, prepared the new ground by first quoting from Lenin to the effect that not all countries would reach the socialist stage in the same way. Agreeing with this view, the editorial went on to state that Poland's history, traditions, the different international situation--all these and other factors could not but influence her development toward socialism:

"We have paid too little attention to that which is innate in our movement, in our historical road, in our methods of construction, in our struggle and slogans, to that which arises from the specific conditions in the development of our country and from our historical past ..."39

This did not yet represent a complete return to "Gomulkaism" but it was now becoming apparent that the "thaw" could very well lead in that direction.

Outside the party, the cultural ferment in Poland continued. In the opening months of 1956 the tenor of the articles written by authors and academics was getting bolder yet and the press was lively, interesting, and certainly controversial. The intellectuals seemed fully inebriated as they drank from the savoury cup of discussion.

The climax of their revolt came on March 24-25, at the 19th Session of the Council of Culture and Art.<sup>40</sup> On these two days, some of Poland's leading men of letters rose one by one to pour out their frustrations and denounce categorically the cultural policy of Polish Communism. What they said was later published by Przegląd Kulturalny.

The session opened with an address by a leading literary critic Jan Kott. Entitled "Mythology and Truth", Kott's speech was a scathing attack upon "socialist realism", Marxist regimentation of the arts, literary falsification, and ideological hypocrisy. The only purpose of "socialist realism", Kott claimed, had been to gloss over the crimes of the regime.

"Literature which was not allowed to speak about crimes, literature which had to keep silent about trials which shocked men's minds and which were the daily reality for years, literature which had a sealed lip and wandered ever further and deeper into lies, created a more and more fictitious vision of reality."<sup>41</sup>

Kott did not absolve the writers of the guilt which they shared with those who decreed the cultural policy:

"For human conscience and for artistic creativeness these were

dark years. Many of us who lived through them will spend the rest of our lives atoning for the moral consent we gave to these misdeeds."<sup>42</sup>

Kott was as critical of the concept that all bourgeois art was decadent as he was of the notion that under socialism art was progressive and creative. But the theme of his address was that Polish writers had been forced to commit the most unforgivable literary crime--the distortion of truth into mythology:

"We have been trying to explain reality and not learn the truth; to explain and justify at any price, even the price of truth. Thus modern history became a great mythology before our eyes ... Whenever the facts stood in the way, the facts were changed. If genuine heroes were obstacles, they evaporated."<sup>43</sup>

The poet Antoni Slonimski, who spoke following Kott, made an equally harsh appraisal of the past.

"The history of philosophy", he said, "knows few periods in which intolerance has so greatly increased as that of the last few years. The persecution of critical thought at the beginning of the Renaissance or later, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, appears to have been almost idyllic when compared to the times we have recently witnessed and which, we can add with relief, are passing."<sup>44</sup>

Slonimski showed no compunction about blaming the Soviet Union and particularly Zhdanov for creating the false thesis of "socialist realism". This "precision tool for destroying art", he said, was embraced by Polish Communism and carried out zealously. Slonimski claimed that "socialist realism" distorted completely great world literature ("We were told to believe ... that Robinson Crusoe's adventure was an example of colonial imperialism") and destroyed the Polish artist's perspective.

"At first I thought that these sacrifices made by the artists were to some degree necessary and that one had to ~~substitute~~ **subordinate** oneself



to the higher political reasons for that great cause, which the building of the basis of socialism and the strengthening of popular rule in our country undoubtedly was. However, not long after ... I became convinced that these sacrifices not only were unnecessary but decidedly harmful both for our literature and for socialism."<sup>45</sup>

Slonimski concluded with expressing his belief that the errors of the past could be allayed only by the reinstatement of the citizen's basic freedoms. Constitutional guarantees could no longer remain a "plaything in the hands of anonymous officials". Despite everything, Slonimski said, he had not lost faith in socialism. He was willing to serve its cause but in a manner which he saw fit as an artist.

"There are in Poland young forces, healthy minds and characters who have been waiting for this moment of change. Today, they must be allowed to speak out."<sup>46</sup>

The many other voices that were raised during the Council's Session inevitably returned to the themes of Kott's and Slonimski's addresses. It was a merciless attack and it found its logical culmination in the warning expressed by the writer Artur Sandauer:

"If we must accept the principle that the machine can only be repaired by the man who wrecked it, then we are lost."<sup>47</sup>

These words had an ominous, almost prophetic ring about them. The possibility of a clean and complete break with an era not long ended, no longer seemed remote.

Polish Communist theory had vacillated since the end of 1954, uncertain of the path to follow, confused by its own trepidation, and in the meantime pent-up emotions of the intelligentsia had erupted. Now the revolt of the intellectuals had reached a point of no return. In the background other social forces were at play, ready to join the accelerating avalanche. In fact, the "thaw" had come to an end; all around there was a flood.

## CHAPTER V

### THE ROAD TO OCTOBER

A month before the Session of the Council of Culture and Art, the growing Polish opposition to the Communist regime received unexpected assistance from Moscow itself. At the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, two decisions were made which had an immediate and profound impact upon Polish thought and events. The first involved the official rehabilitation of the Communist Party of Poland, dissolved in 1938 by Stalin; the second decision was the CPSU's scathing condemnation of Stalin and his era.

Immediately at the beginning of the Congress, the matter of the CPP's dissolution was referred to a special committee which consisted of delegates from the Communist parties of the Soviet Union, Italy, Bulgaria, Finland and Poland. On February 18, the committee issued a communique which included the following statement:

"In 1938 the Executive Committee of the Communist International adopted a resolution on dissolving the Communist Party of Poland in view of an accusation made at that time concerning wide-scale penetration by enemy agents into the ranks of its leading party aktiv.

"It has now been established that this accusation was based on materials which were falsified by subsequently exposed provocateurs."<sup>1</sup>

The communique, which was made public the next day by Trybuna Ludu (People's Tribune), the daily central organ of the PUPP, described the dissolution as having been "groundless". It gave a short resume of the CPP's "glorious revolutionary past", and pointed to it as the precursor of the PUPP, "which is now a militant, monolithic Marxist-Leninist party, the leading force in the struggle of the working people of People's

Poland for the building of socialism."<sup>2</sup>

In printing the communique, Trybuna Ludu, added the following editorial comment:

"The evidence for the dissolution has been faked by a gang of saboteurs and provocateurs whose real role was only brought to light after Beria was unmasked ... The party honor of the liquidated comrades had been reestablished and they were fully rehabilitated."<sup>3</sup>

Who exactly the "saboteurs" and "provocateurs" were was not stated nor was the evidence upon which the decision was made, divulged. Nevertheless, the PUWP lost no time in resurrecting the full details of the CPP's history, its leaders, heroes, and accomplishments. It was obvious, though this was never directly stated, that the PUWP enjoyed the opportunity to heap vengeance upon an action which it had never ceased to abhor.

The CPP's rehabilitation became a weapon in the hands of those who had been speaking out against Stalinism. And almost immediately it was supplemented by Khrushchev's violent speech to the Congress which attacked Stalin and the "cult of the personality". To Polish minds, the speech also cast a shadow over Bierut whose arbitrary role in Poland left him open to similar charges. Bierut had been present at the Congress as head of the Polish delegation and in a speech had refrained from mentioning Stalin altogether, choosing only to praise the Soviet Union's "collective leadership". Following the Congress he remained in Moscow for discussions with Soviet officials but on March 12 he suffered a heart attack and died.

His death must have made it easier for Polish Communists to join the condemnation of the "personality cult". The first official men-

tion of the subject was made in Trybuna Ludu on March 27 (later reprinted in Nowe Drogi) by Jerzy Morawski, a party secretary.<sup>4</sup> Morawski said the Congress was an important experience because it fulfilled the PUP's expectations by revising "certain old, unjustified opinions and certain old, erroneous moves". Morawski tried to explain how it was that a "personality cult" had developed in the Soviet Union, having in mind that Marxism-Leninism "rejects all cults and all irrationalism". He gave three reasons for its development.

The first arose from Stalin's struggle in 1923 against Trotskyites and Bukharinites who had to be defeated if the 1917 Revolution was to remain successful. Stalin correctly liquidated these elements but in the years to come abused the prestige which he had gained from doing so.

Secondly, the need to transform the Soviet Union's economic and social conditions gave Stalin an opportunity to exercise power beyond all limitations. Industrialization and collectivization were absolutely necessary in Russia even at the cost of "tremendous sacrifices" but Stalin should never have been allowed to usurp the authority of the party in these matters.

Finally, the coming of World War II with its accompanying dangers to Soviet existence, helped to strengthen the cult of Stalin. In spite of many military blunders, Stalin managed to present himself as a national hero whose leadership had saved Russia.

The "nimbus of infallibility" which surrounded Stalin, Morawski wrote, led to a cult which was a direct infringement of Leninist principles,

and this "personality cult" led to

"the violation of the principles of democracy within the party and in social life, to the stifling of criticism, to discrepancy between word and deed."<sup>5</sup>

The cult also had a deep influence upon Poland, infringing on the party's life. It created a "stubborn, petrified bureaucracy" within the PUP, suppressed criticism, and destroyed internal democracy. It is not clear to what extent Morawski's charges were meant to implicate Bierut but he could not have been blind to the possibility of such an interpretation.

Morawski claimed that there were many in the CPSU membership who realized that Stalin was guilty of distorting Leninist "norms" but did not oppose him openly because they feared that a party fight would endanger the Revolution. It was not personal fear which prompted them to keep quiet: "The point was not to save one's life; the point was to save the revolution."<sup>6</sup> Morawski concluded with the warning that the "personality cult" had not yet been entirely eradicated and will not be until all its symptoms are removed from "social life, from science and education, from literature and art."

It is interesting to note that Morawski's attack on the errors of the past, the dissolution of the CPP, the break with Yugoslavia, the doctors' plot and other such affairs, followed strictly the line laid down by Khrushchev in his address to the Congress; that is, that the blame belonged to the "personality cult" not to the system itself. A similar approach was later taken by Poland's leading Marxist philosopher, Adam Schaff, in an attempt to rationalize away the policies during Poland's Stalinist period.<sup>7</sup>

Meanwhile, the events of the 20th Congress engendered discussion in the PUPP of a host of questions, beside that of the "personality cult". The latter subject was, in fact, only used as a door by which to enter into the serious subjects of ideology which were now plaguing the party. Sensing that the "personality cult" could now be used as a smoke-screen behind which to deal with the real root of past errors, the Polish Communist theorists became bolder in their criticism.

At a conference of party activists held on April 6 in Warsaw, Edward Ochab, who had succeeded Bierut as the party's First Secretary, frankly admitted past errors, officially announced the release and rehabilitation of Gomulka along with many of his political friends, and promised that the party would be democratized.<sup>8</sup> At the same time he warned against going beyond the limit of permissible criticism, pointing out the fact

"that some comrades seem to be losing their sense of balance and are beginning to lose their sense of proportion between justified criticism and actions from positions which cannot be of advantage to the party. There are people who in public--and not through the party--and in the press, come out against the party. This shows an unhealthy, anarchistic tendency, the loss of a feeling of party responsibility, and a confusion of ideas."<sup>9</sup>

Ochab's words, however, seemed to have made little impression on the party's critics who continued to clamour for a general "re-education" of the membership. Again and again they returned to the themes of intra-party democracy, self-criticism, bureaucratic tendencies, local revitalization. A great deal of attention was paid to the question of increasing the party's popularity by broadening its mass appeal, enlarging the membership of workers, and attracting ideologically devoted individuals. The criticism

was more bitter from non-party sources. Po prostu, for instance, again chose to characterize the party in terms similar to those used by Milovan Djilas in Yugoslavia:

"The new class, if it had succeeded in perpetuating itself, would not have denationalized the factories and the land. It would have known how, while preserving the formal characteristics of our system, to destroy its content. It would have been able to dispossess the working class without in any way restoring private ownership of the means of production; it would have known how to create privileges for itself, to divide itself from the rest of the nation by a wall of isolating 'elite' institutions, by an alienating way of life, by another type of culture, of housing, of vocation, of love, all of it based on economic and political privilege."<sup>10</sup>

The party was not the only subject of re-evaluation. Stalin's thesis of the sharpening of the class struggle, because ideologically it was so central to the problem of democratization, was also revamped. Morawski, for instance, claimed that Stalin had sought to justify his theory in order that he could apply repressive measures against all those who held views different from his.<sup>11</sup> Cyrankiewicz, addressing the Sejm in April, agreed that class antagonism still existed in Poland but added that

"the objective social processes connected with the building of socialism have already advanced so far that the enemy's base of action has eminently shrunk ... with the progress and development of socialist construction, with the strengthening of our people's state, we can decrease repressive means against those who once during the period of sharp class struggle worked against the revolution, against the people's rule."<sup>12</sup>

In fact, according to Cyrankiewicz, the struggle must now be waged against all remnants of "Beriaism" which still hamper the freedom of the development of culture and art, and which undermine the initiative of the masses. This must be accompanied by a thorough democratization of all segments of

national life, but, in the same vein, there must follow a decentralization of the whole state apparatus.

Cyrankiewicz's reference to the latter reform, revealed the deep concern which the Polish Communists were now showing for the problem of the growing bureaucratization of the country. Particularly since 1950, when the Six Year Plan had been introduced, Poland had begun to develop a vast managerial class, not uncommon to societies where national economic planning is extensive. By 1956, the bureaucracy's class status, somewhat similar to the "new class" within the party, was felt in the country. During the same six year period, the units of local administration, the People's Councils, had become a veritable farce. They enjoyed practically no autonomy, were rigidly controlled by Communists, and performed perfunctory, unimportant tasks. The populace soon lost all interest in these "governmental" bodies. It was understandable, therefore, that Cyrankiewicz should call for a

"decentralization of management, for the maximum self-government of the regions, for maximum initiative and control on the part of the masses, for the removal of all regulations which hamper the initiative and the self-government of the local bodies."<sup>13</sup>

Appropriately, since he was addressing the Parliament, Cyrankiewicz also declared that the Sejm must come to play a more important role in governing the country. It was no secret that it had been no more than a "rubber-stamp", dutifully approving all legislation emanating from the party. Cyrankiewicz promised that in the future the Sejm would be supplied with the "maximum" of facts and the "maximum" of information:

"We want the Sejm really to become what a constitutional Sejm



should be: the supreme legislative organ, supervising the activity of all lower state organs ... It should be the rule in principle that laws are passed by the Sejm, and the issuing of decrees the exception only when it is really required by the work of the state."<sup>14</sup>

The revolutionary tenor of the changing atmosphere in Polish Communist thought, the intellectuals' love affair with the opportunity for real discussion, the growing unrest among the youth, and the now noticeable national sentiment rising to the surface, signified that, inevitably, the debate would turn more and more to the subject that had been taboo for over six years--the "Polish road to socialism". The announcement by Ochab of Gomulka's release helped to accelerate this discussion, and for the first time since 1949, "Gomulkaism" was given ideological consideration by official party circles.

Outwardly it was denounced. But this condemnation was shoddily supported and was generally unconvincing. The Communist theorists now unquestionable adopted the concept of the "Polish road", claiming that it was in keeping with Marxism-Leninism. Thus it was not the slogan itself that was false in 1948, but

"the class content which the Gomulka group put into this slogan--holding up the process of revolutionary transformation, freezing the alignment of class forces in the countryside, holding up the process of basic transformation not only in the economy, but also in culture, science and education."<sup>15</sup>

"Gomulkaism" was consequently considered to be not a variation of the Soviet road but its contradiction, not a positive interpretation of Marxism but a negation of all roads to socialism. Gomulka was accused of having opposed the party's attempts for socialist reconstruction in the countryside and of obstructing its efforts at limiting kulak

exploitation.

"Gomulka", said Ochab immediately after announcing his release, "countered the party with a nationalistic appraisal of the traditions of the Polish workers' movement ... The correction of injustice done to Gomulka does not in any way change the correct content of the political and ideological struggle which the party has conducted and continues to conduct against the ideological conceptions represented by Gomulka."<sup>16</sup>

If Gomulka had been wrong, what then was the real Polish road to socialism? The answer given to this question by Polish Communists showed that their disagreements with Gomulka were less real than they made them<sup>out</sup> to be. Essentially, they amounted to no more than an academic game of semantics. The distinctive features of the "Polish road", wrote, for instance, Jerzy Morawski, "consist mainly in different forms and ways of accomplishing the revolution."<sup>17</sup> But these different forms, beginning with the peculiar circumstances prevalent at the time of the Polish "revolution" and ending with the subsequent new alignment of forces in the world, were identical to the ones enunciated by Gomulka before 1949. There were a few additions, based no doubt on Poland's experience since then, such as the unique relations of Church and State, the particular forms of collectivization and liquidation of capitalist elements in the countryside. But there was no fundamental departure from Gomulka's interpretation of Polish socialism. Morawski and other Communists were thus conducting a play on words when they sought to create a cleavage between themselves and Gomulka. For the time being, at least, no one was prepared to absolve the former head of the Polish Communists.

In spite, however, of this affinity between the ideology of

Gomulka and the theoretical formulation of the Communists in power, there was a point of distinction. Not only was the PUWP reluctant to use such terms as "nationalism", "patriotism", "independence", but it reaffirmed its faith in the Soviet Union and the Bolsheviks. Cyrankiewicz, for example, confirmed the CPSU's continued international leadership within the socialist camp:

"... the role of the 20th Congress ... stems from the importance ... the first socialist state ... had and has for the prospects of building socialism ... for the struggle of the working masses to gain power and for the struggle to consolidate their power, for the further progress of socialism throughout the world."<sup>18</sup>

And Ochab, speaking over Radio Warsaw on April 21, relayed the following reassurance to the USSR:

"We can assure our Soviet brethren that no machinations of imperialist adventurers, remnants of reaction, will weaken the alliance and eternal friendship between People's Poland and the Soviet Union."<sup>19</sup>

Yet in step with the changing attitude within the Soviet Union, the Polish Communists modified their concept of the international Communist movement and the question of relations with the West. The slogan of "peaceful co-existence" was advanced for the first time and increased contact between Poland and Western countries was proposed as a contribution to preserving international peace. Taking their cue from the 20th Congress, the Polish theorists denied the thesis of the inevitability of war, claiming that it was manufactured by Stalin and was

"hung over our heads like an ominous fate ... the Congress has shown that there is no fatal necessity for wars. The forces of peace throughout the world have grown to such a degree that in spite of the existence of imperialism and of the drive to war, resulting from its nature, an outbreak of war can be prevented and peace safeguarded and preserved."<sup>20</sup>

Similarly, the possibility of a peaceful Communist accession to power was given credence by Polish Communists. They stated that the present alignment of forces in the world made feasible a non-violent transition to socialism in a number of countries through the utilization of parliament, whereby the working class in alliance with "other progressive" forces of society would gain a majority, form a revolutionary government and by legislative means, "expropriate the exploiters".

"To bring about a social revolution", wrote Morawski, "without recourse to violence, without the ruin and disorganization resulting from a bloody upheaval, would be very much to our liking. The working class, said Lenin, prefers to take power into its hands by peaceful means. Whether it will succeed in doing so depends on the degree of resistance of the bourgeoisie."<sup>21</sup>

The theory that Social Democracy was a peculiar variety of fascism was abandoned. The Communists were to seek friends among Western socialists in order to build up a common front of the working class, which would also include Christian Democrats and peasant organizations, against "imperialist and war elements".

Nevertheless, the peaceful road to socialism, the Polish Communists were quick to point out, was not to be equated with "reformism" which was, by their definition,

"a policy of concessions and reforms effected within the framework of the bourgeois system, intended to 'correct' or 'amend' capitalism, instead of radically liquidating the sources of class exploitation and oppression."<sup>22</sup>

The changing political theory in Polish Communism, meanwhile, was being fortified by a series of official acts which reflected the PUWP's desire to become associated with the transformation in Polish life. On April 20, an amnesty was announced, freeing some 28,000 persons, at

least a thousand of whom had been political prisoners. Simultaneously, several high-ranking army officers, condemned in 1951 for allegedly plotting against the regime, were reinstated. The next day, April 21, the much-disliked minister of art, Włodzimierz Sokorski, was removed from his post, an action which represented a victory for the intellectuals. The purging of former high officials of the Ministry of Public Security continued and on May 6, Jakub Berman, one of the staunch supporters of the Stalinist period, now responsible for security and ideological matters, was forced to resign as deputy prime minister and as a member of the Politburo.

The fever of free-speech continued to be contagious. Various non-political organizations, once strictly controlled by the party, now began to emphasize their independence; trade unions started electing officers by secret ballot, and the Sejm began to emerge as a legitimate legislative organism. Concurrently, universities clamoured for greater academic freedom, and the Polish cultural press, now beyond the point of any return, pressed on with embarrassing, sometimes devastating, questions and criticisms. "Is this the twilight of Marxism?" asked an article in Po prostu.

Not everything, of course, pointed in the direction of an overwhelming social change in Poland. There were still powerful forces within the PZP which abhorred the course of events and violently protested against the ideological turn-about. One of the leaders of this party faction, Zenon Nowak, a member of the Politburo, a deputy premier, and a close friend of Marshal Rokossowski, issued a harsh warning to the critics of the regime.

"A discussion is a discussion", Nowak said, "but just as we struck at those who tried to hamper the discussion, so shall we strike even more sharply and mercilessly at those who, utilizing the wave of discussion, try to undermine the strength of our system, the unity of the People's camp and our friendship with the Soviet Union. Anyone who has any illusions on this score and who would like to pull some chestnuts out of this invigorating fire of discussion will receive such a beating that he will not try it again."<sup>23</sup>

But even Nowak's words were drowned out by the sea of accumulating opposition to the party. And now freedom of criticism was no longer the only issue as the protests also included emphatic demands for an improvement of material conditions. Since 1950, Poland's economic situation had been consistently worsening. The Six-Year Plan, while generally successful in meeting its goals for producer goods, had brought agriculture to the verge of ruin, wasted great quantities of raw materials, and failed to raise the standard of living beyond the subsistence level. Housing conditions were atrocious and consumer goods, in almost every respect, a luxury. The Polish masses had abundant reason to complain. Thus criticisms of the regime began to find expression in actions as well as words.

The first such outburst was precipitated by a strike at the Stalin Locomotive Works (Zipso) factory in Poznan when on June 28 the workers marched into the city's streets with banners reading "We want bread and freedom." The strike was staged against gross wage injustices which had been instituted by the authorities at the Zipso plant. Unable to get a hearing, the workers stayed away from their jobs and began what was initially to be a peaceful demonstration. But on the way to the center of the city they were joined spontaneously by thousands of sympath-

izers. The demonstration soon acquired major anti-regime and anti-Soviet manifestations as the crowd became emotional and unruly. Once in the center, fighting began between the demonstrators and the secret police. In the melee shots were fired, and the demonstration took the form of a major uprising. The crowd barged into offices of the PUWP's provincial committee, the secret police headquarters, and the army barracks arsenal. In almost every case, Polish army troops remained passive and some even sided with the rioters. The fighting lasted until the evening of June 29 and when it was over, 53 persons had been killed and 300 wounded.

The party was deeply shaken by the uprising but publicly dismissed it as the work of "imperialist agents". Cyrankiewicz, who along with several other party members flew to Poznan on June 29, declared:

"The Poznan provocation was organized by the enemies of our fatherland at a time when the party and government are greatly concerned with eliminating shortcomings in the life of the workers and making our country more democratic. Every patriot and every honest person in Poland must realize this."<sup>24</sup>

Cyrankiewicz's statement was echoed in a Trybuna Ludu editorial which also branded the event as inspired by "foreign agents" while at the same time drawing attention to reforms which the party had already effected and was planning to supplement.<sup>25</sup> Eventually, however, the PUWP recognized certain of the Poznan workers' grievances and sought to satisfy them by a rebate of taxes and the removal of unpopular local officials. By July 13, following a formal investigation, the party announced that it had failed to uncover any evidence of "conspiratorial organization".

In any event, the regime had already been irreparably damaged. The PUPP had been attacked by the very class it claimed to represent and during the demonstration shots had been fired upon the workers on Communist orders. The Poznan uprising, therefore, had been symptomatic of the deep schism which separated the party and the Polish people.

Conscious of this abyss, the PUPP Central Committee convened on July 18 in Warsaw for its Seventh Plenary session. The meeting was attended by Soviet Premier Marshal Bulganin and Soviet Defense Minister Marshal Zhukov who had come ostensibly for the celebration of the twelfth anniversary of Poland's liberation from Nazi occupation.<sup>26</sup> Under the watchful eyes of these men, the now polarizing factions of the PUPP, the one liberally inclined, the other Stalinist, played out their roles.

Ochab's opening remarks revealed that the first faction, to which he belonged, at least had reconciled itself to recognizing the Poznan uprising as justified and as a "lesson to the party". He made no attempt at evading the sad truth of the event:

"In the appraising the reasons for these incidents", he said, "it would be erroneous to concentrate attention primarily on the machinations of provocateurs and imperialist agents ... It must also be stated that the efforts undertaken by us with a view to raising the living standards of the masses were insufficient, not energetic enough, and not always consistent."<sup>27</sup>

Following his address, the party engaged in a heated discussion of past and future in which the two factions met in a head-on clash. Nowak, again speaking for the Stalinist group, denounced democratization and the growing estrangement ~~with~~ <sup>from</sup> the Soviet Union. He proposed that the party continue on the "correct road" toward socialist construction, both



in the cities and the farms. He also called for a strict control over the country's press, blaming the intellectuals and the Jews who occupied high party positions for past failures.

In spite of this bitter opposition and the presence of Bulganin and Zhukov, the party on July 20 adopted a resolution which admitted past errors and incorporated an ideological course which would lead to a gradual relaxation of Stalinist totalitarianism.<sup>28</sup>

The resolution assigned great importance to the question of agriculture. It stated that to the detriment of the worker-peasant alliance, peasants with middle-sized holdings had too frequently been erroneously termed kulaks. The distinction between the two had to be recognized, said the resolution, and the "mechanized" and "superficial" assessment of the character of a farm eliminated. In other words, it did not necessarily follow that a richer farm had to be designated as a kulak farm. The latter was defined to be one which exercises

"permanent exploitation of other people's labour in the form of systematic hire of labour and in the form of permanent usury, renting of land, speculation, repayment in labour, and so on."<sup>29</sup>

Even the policy toward kulak farms was to be "flexible" and "varied" so that restriction would not cut down their production. Thus, while it would be necessary to combat the hostile kulak farms which refused to cooperate with the state, they would be allowed to survive.

The resolution noticed that a disproportion had arisen in the country between the development of industry and the development of agriculture and urged that this gap be closed. At the same time it admitted that there had also been a disproportion between the production of

producers' goods and that of consumer goods. It thus partially, though indirectly, embraced the thesis that the output of producers' goods need not always grow at a more rapid rate than that of consumers' goods.

The party pledged itself to continuing the process of decentralization in economic planning and management and to extending the "further widening of the prerogatives of Socialist enterprises, creating foundations for wide social initiative and economic control on the part of the working masses."<sup>30</sup> This economic decentralization was to be only a part of a wide campaign to democratize the country. The resolution explained that when the party came to power it took the first step toward true democracy by eliminating exploitation but this did not totally solve the problem of relations between party, state, and masses. There was always a danger, under revolutionary conditions, that bureaucratic distortion and the transgression of collective leadership would occur. Consequently, a socialist democracy could not be developed until the struggle against the bureaucracy--which "separates the people's power from the masses" --was successfully completed.

The step by step process of democratization was to be carried out on five fronts. First, the workers would be given the opportunity for greater participation in their plants to the extent of having a say in most matters pertaining to their operation. Secondly, the autonomy of People's Councils would be broadened and they would be given more influence in economic fields. Next, the role of the Sejm would be enhanced and it would come to have a more effective control over governmental

policy formulation. Fourthly, the independence of the courts would be guaranteed and socialist legality fully observed. Finally, there was to be a development of criticism "from below" and the growth of "openness" in political life. In this last context, the resolution noted that free and bold criticism at public meetings and in the press would be an "indispensable" prerequisite for the democratization of the country's life.

The task of democratization would be carried out under the leadership of the party:

"... the party should map out the direction, draw up the guiding lines of activity of the organs of state power, supervise their activity, and exercise control over them with the active participation of the masses."<sup>31</sup>

While warning that "freedom of criticism ... must not be abused for purposes incompatible with the principles of the party", the resolution added that the party itself would be decentralized and democratized without undermining its role as the "leading force in the people's state". In fact, according to the resolution, "democratization of the country (could) not proceed without democratization of the party". In order to strengthen the party's ties with the masses, its central organs were to transfer their political activity to basic party organizations which were in daily contact with the populace. Furthermore, party powers were to be diffused, bringing to an end their concentration in the hands of the executive. More plenary sessions would be convened, and the party's district, provincial, and municipal committees strengthened.

Finally, though confirming the party's opposition to nationalism

and "national chauvinism", the resolution, in its concluding words, dealt with a now recurrent subject which the party membership no longer seemed able to evade:

"Our party, loyal to the ideology of Marxism-Leninism, profiting from the historic experience of the CPSU and other fraternal parties, and expressing, as fully as possible, the national interests of Poland, is solving the tasks of socialist building in accordance with the conditions and needs of our country."<sup>32</sup>

The PUPP's resolution showed that the anti-Stalinist faction in the party had achieved a conclusive victory. The subsequent elections to the Politburo verified this success: of the five full and alternate new members chosen, among them Adam Rapacki and Stefan Jedrychowski, none had any substantial Moscow training and all had an extensive Western background. More significantly, the Seventh Plenum officially rehabilitated Gomulka. Though he was not given any responsible job, his full "party rights" were restored. Ochab justified the rehabilitation by claiming that the party had gone too far in 1949 when equating Gomulka's deviation with treason.

Though the PUPP, at its Seventh Plenum, took a number of steps to placate the demands of the Polish people, it did not yet make a clean or radical break with the past. This was ~~aggravated~~ <sup>reflected</sup> by the fact that the party's Stalinist faction, though temporarily compromised, remained very much a part of the government. Rokossowski retained command of the armed forces, Hilary Minc continued to control the economy, and Zenon Nowak remained in the Politburo. Thus within the party and government, strong forces still existed which clamoured for a return to Stalinism.

Among the populace, however, restlessness and dissatisfaction

continued unabated. Much of it manifested itself in the form of bold, though sometimes intentionally ambiguous, official resolutions. On August 18, for instance, the central board of the Polish Youth Union, meeting at its third plenary session, approved a resolution which declared that the Union could "fulfil its role as the leader of the youth and exert its influence only as an independent organization expressing its attitudes in its activities."<sup>33</sup>

"Our Union", said the resolution, "must become an organization whose every cell will be a center of bold, free thought, a center where the new man is shaped, freeing himself from obscurantism and religious prejudice--not a servile loyalist, not a hypocritical prattler, but a noble-hearted man, sensitive to human suffering and problems, an uncompromising revolutionary ..."<sup>34</sup>

On the same day as the Youth Union was meeting, the Central Council of Trade Unions convened and drafted a resolution similar in tone and content. Calling for democratic elections of officers, the Council demanded that "all decisions which stifle the independence and democracy of trade unions" be reviewed and abolished.

Such formal resolutions were buttressed by a growing number of public protests in which students and workers played the major role. The largest and most astounding demonstration, however, occurred at a religious festival held in Czestochowa. Nearly a million-and-a-half persons turned out to take part in the festival and to stage a mass protest against the regime's policies toward the Church. The conspicuously empty chair of the imprisoned Cardinal Wyszynski was symbolic of the grievances expressed by this large religious gathering.

While writers in the Polish press continued to intensify their

attacks upon the party, two leading Marxist philosophers questioned the party's attitude toward the Polish intellectuals.

"We have to admit", wrote Adam Schaff, "that in the broad circles of the intellectuals, the authority of Marxist ideology has been undermined. It is not a question of some hostility of the intellectuals toward Marxism, but rather a matter of continuing and serious errors committed by the Marxist camp in the conduct of science and in the ideological struggle."<sup>35</sup>

The young and influential Leszek Kolakowski, in an article printed in Nowe Drogi, demanded freedom of scientific inquiry and denounced Stalinism as a "mythology" which had perverted Marx's rationalist thought into a dogmatic religion.

"It is the task of the intellectual", he wrote, "not merely to express proper enthusiasm for the wise decisions of the Communist party but also to make sure that those decisions really are wise. Communism needs the intellectuals as free-thinking people, not as opportunists ..."<sup>36</sup>

Kolakowski decried the tendencies which had forced the intellectuals to speak in theoretical cliches, philosophically meaningless, and meant to be disguises for criminal failures of the regime:

"The Communist intellectuals demand complete freedom for independent thought without any political pressure whatsoever; they demand this freedom not only in the name of abstract scientific freedom but in the name of the interests of Communism itself. The Communist Manifesto taught us that the Communist interests are inseparable from those of mankind as a whole in the areas of both production and culture. To make Marxist theory a fetish, to reduce it to the role of a conventional, apologetic decor for a social facade, is to convert Marxism from the bloodstream of intellectual life to its poison."<sup>37</sup>

Criticism of the party's agricultural policies also continued. A leading Polish economist, Edward Lipinski, writing in Nowa Kultura, openly challenged the thesis that collective farming was superior to individual farming, an assumption which, he said, was based on an incorrect economic

theory that had brought ruin to Poland's agriculture.<sup>38</sup> He contended that the chief objective of an agrarian policy should be to increase production, not the doctrinaire application of a political theory. Lipinski received support from Po prostu which sharply criticized Soviet collectivization policies and declared them to be inapplicable to Poland.<sup>39</sup>

On September 5, the ninth session of the Sejm convened, ready to create difficulties for the party. The parliamentary debate which followed, was lively and completely unlike that of a Communist legislature. To prove its independence, the Sejm, for the first time in Poland's post-war history, turned down a governmental proposal.<sup>40</sup>

Six days later the government announced the closing of communal machine stations and the sale of machinery to peasants. As criticism of collectivization became more bitter, the party, toward the end of September, suddenly revealed that it was dissolving some collective farms because they had not proved to be successful. All attention, it was declared, would now be given to viable ones.

Events continued to move quickly amidst Poland's revolutionary atmosphere. On September 27, the trials of the Poznan rioters opened. Leading Polish sociologists, among them Joseph Chalasinski, appeared as witnesses for the defense and presented an impassioned plea in the name of humanitarianism. The trials were conducted openly and in comparative fairness as both prosecutor and defense were given an equal opportunity to make their case. The result was a series of remarkably light sentences.

Not long after the end of the trials, on October 9, the government announced the resignation of Hilary Minc, the chief architect of Poland's

economy. Then, one week later, a communique appeared in Trybuna Ludu announcing that the PUPP Politburo, at a recent meeting, had decided to convene the Central Committee for Friday, October 19. "Comrade Wladyslaw Gomulka took part in the meeting", the brief communique concluded.<sup>41</sup>

The country needed no reminder of Gomulka. The possibility of his return to power had already been apparent for some time. Ochab himself, conscious of Poland's mood and now squarely aligned with the party's liberals, saw that Gomulka represented the only possible salvation for the PUPP. Among the Polish people Gomulka had never been forgotten; his intense patriotism was known and he was now viewed as a martyr, the first victim of Stalinism. The communique's announcement, therefore, intensified the suspense in the country.

As the Central Committee began its Eighth Plenary session on October 19, tension and revolution were in the air. Amid rumours that Soviet troops were involved in suspicious moves along the country's frontiers, the Committee quickly elected Gomulka to its ranks.<sup>42</sup> This was followed by the resignation of the entire twelve member Politburo and the decision to choose in its stead a smaller body.

In the midst of these proceedings, the Committee was suddenly interrupted by the news that a Soviet delegation, led by Khrushchev and including Molotov, Mikoyan, and Kaganovich, had arrived at the Warsaw airport. Immediate negotiations were arranged between the Soviet leaders and a rapidly designated committee of the PUPP, headed by Gomulka and Ochab.



In the course of a highly dramatic conversation<sup>f</sup>, the Polish Communists were handed an ultimatum: if Rokossowski and the rest of the pro-Soviet faction did not regain power in the PUPP, the USSR would retaliate with armed intervention. At that very moment, Khrushchev told the Poles, Soviet troops stationed in Poland were on their way to Warsaw and the Red Army in East Germany was in a state of preparedness on the Western frontier. To this ominous threat Gomulka and Ochab reacted sharply: they demanded an immediate end to the military menace and refused to negotiate so long as the threat was not withdrawn.

As the drama approached a climax, news of the Soviet arrival spread throughout Warsaw. In a show of national solidarity, students and workers massed and engaged in anti-Soviet demonstrations. Detachments of the Internal Security Corps, meanwhile, led by pro-Gomulka General Komar, took up key positions in the city. Most of the regular armed forces, ignoring the expected orders of Marshal Rokossowski, readied to defend the Polish capital.

Khrushchev hesitated, then condescended to the Polish demand. He was not prepared for a nation-wide armed resistance and conscious of this prospect agreed to halt all Soviet troop movements. When the negotiations resumed Gomulka pledged the continued existence of a Communist Poland within the Warsaw Pact. He said he had no intention of burying Communism and insisted that he meant only to introduce modifications which Poland drastically needed. Satisfied that his worst fears were allayed, Khrushchev accepted Gomulka's stand and, early on the

morning of October 20, left Warsaw for home.

With that Gomulka and the party liberal faction could claim to have won the first round of the battle. Now, as Gomulka prepared to address the Central Committee for the first time in seven years, the stage was set for the return of the "Polish road to socialism".

## CHAPTER VI

### FULL CIRCLE

Wladyslaw Gomulka's three-hour address on October 20, 1956 to the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party signified the victory of Polish Communism against the ideological domination of the Soviet Union. The speech revealed essentially the same theoretical approach that had been prevalent in Poland before 1949; but now it carried the added weight of vindication, the result of the failure during the past seven years of an ideology that was fundamentally alien to Polish Communists.<sup>1</sup>

Gomulka was neither vindictive nor bitter; he spoke calmly and positively but in the process he negated the policies of the past with logic and statistics. He began by pointing to the unrealized goals of the Six-Year Plan and criticised the impossible demands made of the people. The burden placed upon the workers, particularly in the mining industry, amounted to "unpardonable thoughtlessness". Gomulka claimed that certain industrial objections were reached only at the expense of working and living conditions. He thus discounted many of the gains of the Six-Year Plan.

He was no less critical of past agricultural policies. The task of an agricultural policy, he said, must be to attain the maximum possible production, yet the party had issued directives which yielded the opposite results. Quoting statistics, Gomulka showed that collective farms had smaller results and greater production costs than private ones.

The only conclusion the party could reach from this was that the policy of collectivization was corrupt and unrealistic. Thus the cooperative farm movement had to be reorganized and founded upon four major conditions; voluntary membership, self-government, availability of machinery, and state assistance in the form of credit, priorities, and supplies. Socialism in the countryside must evolve only under circumstances of freedom; coercion can only lead to disaster for cooperative farming depends on the "deeply human sense of the community", not dogma and regimentation. It will always be the goal of Polish Communism to socialize the countryside; but that goal will be reached by education and gradual transformation, not doctrinaire enforcement. And it will be based on the principle that "diverse forms of the production community is our Polish road to socialism in the countryside".<sup>2</sup> Thus, while aiming at abolishing "all forms of exploitation of man by man", the PUPP must recognize that there are different ways of achieving this objective, determined by various conditions of time and place.

Though allotting great importance to the role of the Polish peasant, Gomulka said that the "key to the solution" of Poland's great difficulties, was in the hands of the working class. The party must be influenced by the attitudes and desires of the proletariat and must work on its behalf. But

"recently the working class gave a painful lesson to the party leadership ... seizing the weapon of strike and going out to demonstrate in the streets on the black Thursday last June (in Poznan) ..."<sup>3</sup>

Gomulka considered the Poznan workers' motivation to be legitimate but did not interpret their actions to constitute a protest against socialism.

"They protested against the evil which was widespread in our social system and which was painfully felt also by them, against the distortions of the fundamental principles of socialism, which is their idea."<sup>4</sup>

The "clumsy attempt" to present the Poznan uprising as the work of "imperialist agents" and "provocateurs" was a politically naive move. There were painful economic reasons for the workers' dissatisfaction, reasons which were predominant throughout Poland. The failings of the Six-Year Plan which kept wages from rising at the expense of the workers, created undue hardships. Now these hardships had to be alleviated. Insofar as the government will not be able to satisfy all the demands of the people, it "must tell the working class the difficult truth", take it into its confidence and put an end to the incessant lies which characterized the past era. Any other policy, Gomulka declared, would be a betrayal of the workers.

"The working class is our class, our unflinching strength. The working class is ourselves. Without it, that is, without the confidence of the working class, each of us could not in fact represent anything more than his own person."<sup>5</sup>

Gomulka was cognizant of the fact that Poland's economy had developed a large bureaucracy which had generally usurped the rights of workers to take a more direct and influential part in the administration of their work establishments. Consequently, the party must pay greater attention to improving the means by which workers' self-government could be effected and extended. "Administrative overgrowths" must be eliminated rapidly lest they "grip us at the throat" and bring ruin to the economic situation.

Gomulka then turned to a consideration of the "personality cult" in the Soviet Union and its ramifications in Poland. The cult was not, he said, something confined solely to the person of Stalin.

"(It) is a certain system which prevailed in the Soviet Union and which was grafted to probably all Communist parties, as well as to a number of countries of the socialist camp, including Poland."<sup>6</sup>

The essence of the system was that it created a hierarchic "ladder of cults" at the top of which sat Stalin, and below him the First Secretaries of the Communist parties.

"The bearer of the cult of personality was omniscient, knew how to do everything, solved everything, directed everything, and decided everything within the sphere of his action. He was the most intelligent man, regardless of his personal knowledge, capacity, or other personal qualities."<sup>7</sup>

But the greatest disaster brought on by the "personality cult" Gomulka considered to be the estrangement of proper relations within the socialist camp. There was no possibility of autonomous, independent Communist thought or action. Anyone who attempted to transgress the directives issued by the "chief cult" (Stalin) was "threatened with excommunication by his comrades". No national party could adopt its own political methods lest it be "excommunicated" by the Cominform:

"Under such conditions, could the mutual party and state relations of the parties and countries of People's Democracy on the one hand, and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Union on the other hand, be shaped on principles of equality? Clearly not."<sup>8</sup>

The cult destroyed every tendency in Poland to develop different interpretations of Marxism-Leninism. Everything at variance with the ideas of Stalin were labeled deviationist and heretical. All independent

thinkers were denounced and punished and the CPSU became the only "infallible interpreter of Marxist science". Gomulka's attack upon the Stalinist era was merciless: he condemned the slandering, falsehood, and lies, the violations of democratic principles and the rule of law, the spreading of terror and demoralization, the imprisonment of innocent people and their "bestial torture". All this, said Gomulka emphatically, must now come to an end. Domestic "Beriaism" must be liquidated and all its former and present supporters expelled from the PUPP.

"The party must consider its good reputation. It must be clean. And if anybody consciously besmirched its good name he can have no place in its ranks."<sup>9</sup>

As for the internal administration of the party, there must be a return to the concept of democratic centralism. In the past, Gomulka said, party members had propounded Leninist standards of party life without adhering to them. Decisions were undemocratically arrived at, there was a complete absence of criticism, and discussion was non-existent. The party must embrace entirely the principles of Leninism.

"In the forefront of these principles one should place the problem of the election of party authorities, the openness of party life, the right to maintain one's own views while observing the principle that majority decisions are binding on all party members."<sup>10</sup>

The party consequently will continue to depend on strong internal unity but that unity will be the result of decisions openly and freely arrived at without the influence of threats or coercion. Simultaneously, the party must seek to establish a clear demarcation between its own sphere of jurisdiction and that of the state apparatus. The party will maintain

its role of leadership but the demarcation "will be such as to make everybody responsible for his own work". The alternative is a situation in which nobody is responsible and both the party and the state suffer.

"The principle that the party and the party apparatus do not govern but guide, that the task of governing belongs to the state and its apparatus must be expressed in the concrete substance of work and its practice and not only in words as is still widely done today."ll

The party apparatus itself must be decentralized. The practice of taking active workers away from the factories and putting them to work in the party or state apparatus must also be halted. This policy has led to an overgrown party bureaucracy while at the same time weakening the efforts of work establishments to effect self-government. The party will become the "living life of the working class" only when the vast majority of active leaders are working "shoulder to shoulder" with the workers in the plants and factories.

Devoting particular attention to the subject of the Sejm and its role in Polish life, Gomulka said that the legislature must occupy the place assigned to it by the constitution. This meant that it would truly become the supreme organ of state power and would begin exercising the "highest legislative and controlling power". To this end the Sejm must increase the number of its yearly sessions, relieve its members of gainful employment during those sessions to enable them to give full concentration to legislative matters, and enhance the role of committees so that they may speak authoritatively on questions of legislation. The



Sejm must come to have control over the state apparatus and executive organs. This could be realized by ~~establishing a special committee~~ **restoring a body known as the Supreme Chamber of State Control which** ~~that~~ would be subordinated directly to the Sejm and not to the government. Proper and forthright criticism must come from the Sejm as is to be expected from a parliament. The issuing of decrees by the Council of State should be restricted to urgent problems and the Sejm should be guaranteed the right to annul or amend those decrees:

"This is how in broad outline I would see the Sejm in its role of legislator and controller of the state administration. A sensible definition of the powers of the Sejm and even extension of these powers beyond the limits envisaged in the constitution, accompanied by a sensible definition of the tasks of the party towards the state apparatus, do not lead to a collision between the Sejm and the political substance contained in the thesis on the guiding role of the party."<sup>12</sup>

To enhance the position of the parliament, Gomulka pledged that the people would be allowed to "elect and not only to vote" in the forthcoming national elections:

"Those candidates who enjoy the greatest confidence will be elected. It is clear that those who do not enjoy the confidence of broad sections of electors will not be elected to the future Sejm."<sup>13</sup>

The re-evaluation of the role and functions of the Sejm, according to Gomulka, ~~will~~ **would** constitute one part of the general democratization program which the party must carry out. In the past, many party members wavered and vacillated on this issue but now it was essential that the party make absolutely clear its intentions.

"The road of democratization is the only road leading to the construction of the best model of socialism in our conditions. We shall not deviate from this road and we shall defend ourselves with all our might not to be pushed off this road."<sup>14</sup>

Nor will the party allow anyone to use the process of democratization to

undermine socialism. The party itself will be at the forefront of this process and will ensure that it "truly leads to the democratization of relations in all spheres of our life".

Turning to Polish-Soviet relations, Gomulka prefaced his consideration of this subject with a discussion of socialism. He said that it was no less inadequate to define socialism as a "social system which abolishes the exploitation and oppression of man by man" than it was to define an aircraft as a machine that can rise into the air and fly. The definition must be completed to include the lessons of past history. The construction of socialism had been preceded by the scientific theory of socialism, created by the first classics of Marxism. These were never intended to be complete and, as a matter of fact, were meant to be supplemented by ideas based on experience and applicable to special times and conditions. That is why the concept of "different roads to socialism" was valid.

"What is immutable in socialism can be reduced to the abolition of the exploitation of man by man. The roads of achieving this goal can be and are different. They are determined by various circumstances of time and place. The model of socialism can also vary. It can be such as that created in the Soviet Union; it can be shaped in a manner as we see it in Yugoslavia; it can be different still.

"Only by way of the experience and achievements of various countries building socialism can the best model of socialism under given conditions arise."<sup>15</sup>

When the Second World War ended, the Soviet Union ceased to be the only country building socialism. The Communist parties in People's China and in the People's Democracies became confronted with a variety of problems which had never existed in the Soviet Union. Thus it was necessary to review and redefine certain methods previously used by the

Bolsheviks in the USSR. Stalin, however, refused to acknowledge the existence of different conditions and thus forced the socialist camp to follow a path that often led to economic and social disaster. In the process, he also destroyed those principles which should have been the foundation of the relations between socialist countries.

Gomulka described these principles in the following statement:

"The mutual relations between the parties and states of the socialist camp do not and should not give any cause for any complications. This is one of the main features of socialism. These relations should be shaped on the principles of international working class solidarity, should be based on mutual confidence and equality of rights; on granting assistance to each other; on mutual friendly criticism, if such should become necessary; and on a rational solution, arising from the spirit of friendship and from the spirit of socialism, of all controversial matters. Within the framework of such relations each country should have full independence, and the rights of each nation to a sovereign government in an independent country should be fully and mutually respected. This is how it should be and--I would say--this is how it is beginning to be."<sup>16</sup>

Later in his speech Gomulka denounced all "persuasions ... which strive to weaken our friendship with the Soviet Union", but this earlier statement was a clear party pledge of national autonomy and an emphatic declaration of the new nature of Polish-Soviet relations. It could also be considered as the theme of Gomulka's speech. He had made two central arguments: first, that Poland badly needed elements of democracy, be it in the economy, in agriculture, in parliament, or in the party; secondly, that Polish Communism could find a rationale only in a policy of priorities for national interests and could be effective only under conditions of independence. As Gomulka himself said, this meant that Polish socialism could develop only in accordance with Polish requirements. Essentially, therefore, his speech to the Central Committee amounted

to a restatement of the ideology he had always espoused and which had characterized Polish Communism when he held power before 1949. But insofar as the last seven years had seen the consolidation of an ideology so diametrically opposed to his own, Gomulka's speech on October 20, 1956 symbolized the revolution which had taken place in Polish Communist thought.

The Central Committee consolidated the gains of that revolution the next day when, by secret ballot, it elected a new Politburo. The Committee's choices signified a harsh blow for the Stalinist faction: among others, Gomulka, Ochab, Cyrankiewicz, and Morawski were easily elected while Rokossowski and Nowak were dropped. In effect, this meant that Rokossowski's days in Poland were numbered. Immediately afterward, Gomulka was unanimously chosen First Secretary of the Central Committee.

In a resolution adopted before adjourning, the Committee approved in full the political and ideological line advanced by Gomulka during his address.<sup>17</sup> In fact, the Eighth Plenum's resolution was an almost word by word reiteration of Gomulka's speech. Its predominant theme also was identical to Gomulka's: socialism was to be built strictly in the spirit of the Polish situation and Poland would remain a part of the Communist bloc, but equal and independent.

"The party believes", said the resolution, "that ways of socialist development can be different in various countries and various historical conditions, and that this abundance of forms of socialist development adds to its strength on the international scale."<sup>18</sup>

Couched in such terms, Polish Communism resurrected its traditional nationalist tendencies. For Polish Communist ideology, the revolution of October 1956 meant the completion of a full circle.

## CONCLUSION

The 1956 revolt of Polish Communism against Soviet domination succeeded owing to the personality of Gomulka and the reasoned conduct of the Polish people in time of crisis. Unlike Imre Nagy, his counterpart in Hungary, Gomulka realized the necessity for moderation in the face of Soviet threats. He never allowed himself to be carried away by the wave of anti-Soviet feeling in those critical days of October. And, also unlike their counterparts in Hungary, the Polish people, sensing the futility of an attempt at a total revolution, remained calm and restrained when such qualities were most needed.

In the immediate post-October days, Gomulka took two steps to further placate the demands of the population. On October 28, Poland's spiritual leader, Cardinal Wyszynski, after nearly three years of detention, was freed from house arrest. His release set in motion negotiations between the party and the Catholic hierarchy which were to culminate in a new modus vivendi for Church-State relations in Poland. Gomulka's second action was revealed on October 29 when the party announced that Marshal Rokossowski had returned to the Soviet Union "on leave". With him went thirty-two high ranking officers of Soviet origin. These two events served to consolidate the gains of the Polish upheaval of 1956.

In the Western world the results of the "Polish October" were received with a good deal of surprise. Since the end of the Second World War, when Stalin made Russia an imperialist power, the Communist camp had shown remarkable internal discipline and acquiescence in Soviet

domination. The ~~one~~ <sup>major</sup> exception had been the experience of Yugoslavia which in 1948 broke with the Soviet bloc and became the first Communist state to live outside of it. Considering, however, the potential difficulties, the Soviet Union, between 1947 and 1956, had managed to maintain a relatively firm hold over Eastern Europe and its close to one hundred million inhabitants.

A study of Polish Communist ideology reveals that the motives for the October revolt were present long before 1956. The uprising against Soviet imperialism did not spring from a vacuum: it had its roots in the history of Poland, a history ill-prepared for a materialistic philosophy, but even more so in the very core of the Polish Communist movement. Nationalist sympathies characterized the movement prior to World War II and the extent of their influence became clearly evident in 1947 when Polish Communists came to power.

Officially, the patriotic wing of Polish Communism did not exist during the Stalinist era. To look for signs of national inclinations in the prevalent ideology of this time is a futile search: those who controlled Communist thought in Poland, both from Warsaw and Moscow, controlled it well. But it was more than chance which allowed a man like Gomulka, with all that he represented, to survive and to do so under relatively favourable conditions. Why is it that his ideological counterparts in Czechoslovakia, in Hungary, in Bulgaria, suffered a fate far worse, when their sins were no less serious than Gomulka's? The answer to this question may be sought in the subconsciously sympathetic

attitude of Bierut toward Gomulka but is more readily found in the historical and psychological influences which have shaped Polish Communism.

Because political theory is so closely linked with political practice, it cannot be studied in exclusively philosophical terms. Polish Communist thought between 1947 and 1956 is a remarkable example of how far an ideology can not only reflect but can also form a political situation. In part this is due to the importance and weight which Communism everywhere allots to theory. There are few political movements that are as hostile to revision, as proud of dogma, as inebriated with ideals. Because it seeks to explain history, Marxism-Leninism tends to divide life into artificial categories; because it considers itself a science, it works with social forces as if they were mathematical concepts; and because its ends are Utopian, it recognizes no deviation from the scientifically prescribed course. In all these respects, Polish Communists have sometimes been no less fanatical than the Bolsheviks.

Like Lenin before them, the Polish Communists have relied on ideology as a force of guidance and inspiration. But this loyalty to doctrine has led to wide discrepancies between word and deed. In part this discrepancy is also due to the fact that Marxism, which is the foundation of Communism, has never been an intrinsically totalitarian ideology. It was humanitarian long before it became totalitarian. Yet their humanitarian goals have not come true and the Communists have refused to recognize the injustices of their society. To admit the wrongs it has committed would be to blemish the ideology of Communism; so in



the name of dogma, Communism must live a lie.

Nevertheless, Communists like Gomulka, who opposed Stalinism, refused to accept a creed based purely on ideological slogans. The essence of Gomulkaism lay in its rejection of the rule of ideology. And this was anathema to Moscow. For within the Communist world, though force is its predominant characteristic, the first signal of political conflict is given by ideological disputes. Gomulka's crime was that he failed, or chose not to, recognize the exclusively Soviet privilege of interpreting Marxism-Leninism. Furthermore, he did it, from the Soviet point of view, in a particularly obnoxious manner by arousing what is no less anathema to Communism: nationalism.

Outwardly, of course, the Polish case never admitted to nationalist deviation. But the "Polish road to socialism" could be easily recognized as a form of nationalism. Gomulka ~~never~~ <sup>rarely</sup> insisted on a "Polish road" without simultaneously speaking of the need for Polish independence. **But** /~~t~~hese two preconditions for the successful development of socialism in Poland, as Gomulka viewed them, did not necessarily have anything to do with one another. Yet Gomulka never saw them as separate. His equation of independence with the "Polish road" must have originated in nationalistic sentiments.

Gomulka's patriotic inclinations are also imbedded in his stress of the adjective "Polish". When explaining the need for different methods, Gomulka did not speak in purely economic terms: there were constant references to Polish history, Polish traditions, even Polish patriotism. They revealed his subconscious attitude rather than any

deliberate political intentions. But even inadvertence, in this case, provides a clue to the beliefs of the man.

Gomulka's emphasis on a "Polish road to socialism" may have been merely an attempt to stress national self-interest within a Communist framework. But even that would spell difficulties for international Communism and consequently for the Soviet Union: to give priority to internal considerations means inevitably to move toward a subordination of international efforts. There can be no sustainable ideological unity if the dogma is subjected to a variety of conditions and in the process adjusted to specific requirements at the expense of the purity of the doctrine.

In the mind of Stalin there was never any question that the "Polish road" was a reflection of nationalistic aspirations. Accordingly, in the eyes of the Soviet Communist party, it was a form of modern revisionism which

"finds expression in negation of the common features of socialist revolution and the building of socialism, laws that are obligatory for all countries, irrespective of national peculiarities."<sup>1</sup>

Thus whatever his true intentions were, in the eyes of the Bolsheviki Gomulka represented the "heresy of nationalism".

In spite of its sometime irregular course, when viewed against the historical conflict between its Luxemburgist and nationalist traditions, there was a certain logic to the development of Polish Communist thought between the years 1947 to 1956. This logic consisted in the fact that the official theory always headed in one of two directions: during 1947 and 1948 toward more autonomy, from 1949 to 1954 toward dogmatic

domination, and from 1954 until October 1956, periodic vacillations notwithstanding, back to unfettered, pragmatic progress. A graphic presentation would have it reach a peak, then drop, then climb back to the apex. A dramatic presentation would conceive it as a struggle between the two forces of Polish communism: the one patriotic, nationalistic, the other Marxist in the most classical sense.

In this respect Polish Communist ideology was not only extending the clash of concepts which it inaugurated nearly a century ago, but was also revealing itself as a symptom of the nationalist disease which has infected the whole Communist movement. Nationalism has been and will be a menacing threat to international Communism. But it will not be obviated by physical coercion or the mental paralysis of dogma. Communism and nationalism will be reconciled only when Communism ceases to deny the political reality of national differences. It is this reality which has invalidated the science of Marxism and it is this reality which the experience of Polish Communist thought has in fact reconfirmed.

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION: THE ROOTS OF POLISH COMMUNIST THOUGHT

1. It is perhaps symbolic that the first mention in history of the existence of the Polish state should begin with an account of a frontier struggle between Poles and Germans.
2. Stefan Zeromski, quoted in Bernadotte E. Schmitt (ed.), Poland, (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1945), p. 329.
3. The dictum is attributed to Josef Pilsudski.
4. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party, (London, 1946), pp. 37-38.
5. The actual number of workers alone was 290,000.
6. Quoted in M.K. Dziewanowski, The Communist Party of Poland: An Outline of History, (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1959), p. 17. This historical introduction to the Polish Communist movement is based primarily on Dziewanowski's book.
7. The merger took place in December 1899. The party's full name came to be the Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and of Lithuania.
8. Quoted by Dziewanowski, op. cit., p. 61.
9. The party was originally called the Communist Workers' Party of Poland (CWPP) but the adjective "Workers" was dropped in 1925.
10. Quoted by Dziewanowski, op. cit., p. 78.
11. Quoted by Tadeusz Daniszewski, in "The Fighting Way of the CPP", Nowe Drogi, No. 12, November-December 1948, p. 144.

12. Stalin may also have considered this to be an excellent opportunity to rid the Polish Communist movement of all nationalists.
13. Władysław Gomułka, "Strong Through Unity", Nowe Drogi, No. 1, January-February 1947, (pp. 4-14), p. 12.

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CHAPTER I: GOMULKA AND THE POLISH ROAD TO SOCIALISM

1. Trybuna Wolności (Tribune of Freedom), December 22, 1944, quoted by Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, The Soviet Bloc: Unity and Conflict, (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1960), p. 53.
2. In The Struggle for a People's Democracy, (Warsaw, 1947), p. 323, quoted by Brzezinski, op. cit., p. 53.
3. "Strong Through Unity", Nowe Drogi, (New Roads), No. 1, January-February 1947, pp. 4-14. In this initial issue of Nowe Drogi, the editors announced that they named their journal Nowe Drogi because Poland was in the process of developing "new roads" to socialism.
4. Gomułka specifically mentions the following countries: France, England, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Rumania, and Italy.
5. Roman Werfel, "The Essence of Our State and the Problem of Bureaucracy", Nowe Drogi, No. 3, May-June 1947, (pp. 113-130), p. 118.
6. "On the Ideological Attainment of the PPR and Questions About the Party Before the Day of Unification", Nowe Drogi, No. 10, July-August 1948, (pp. 71-82), p. 74.
7. "On Guard", Nowe Drogi, No. 1, January-February 1947, pp. 16-18.
8. Ibid., p. 17.
9. "From A United Front to an Organic Unity", Nowe Drogi, No. 3, May-June 1947, pp. 6-25.

10. Ibid.
11. Roman Werfel, "An Explanation of Some Fundamental Problems", Nowe Drogi, No. 7, January-February 1948, (pp. 124-141), p. 127.
12. "On the Ideological Attainment of the PPR and Questions About the Party Before the Day of Unification", Nowe Drogi, No. 10, July-August, 1948, p. 73.
13. Quoted by Brzezinski, op. cit., p. 26 from E. Kardelj, On People's Democracy in Yugoslavia (New York, no date), p. 14.
14. The "White-Collar Workers" are generally referred to by the Polish Communists as the urban middle strata.
15. Roman Werfel, "The Essence of Our State and the Problem of Bureaucracy", Nowe Drogi, No. 3, May-June 1947, pp. 113-130.
16. Roman Werfel, "An Explanation of Some Fundamental Problems", Nowe Drogi, No. 7, January-February 1948, p. 131.
17. In the Struggle for a People's Democracy, p. 199, quoted by Brzezinski, op. cit., p. 53.
18. "Strong Through Unity", Nowe Drogi, No. 1, January-February 1947, p. 12.
19. "Our Problems", Nowe Drogi, No. 3, May-June 1947, (pp. 26-34), p. 34.
20. Ibid., p. 34.
21. Ibid., p. 33.
22. Wladyslaw Bienkowski, "The Practice and Theory of People's Democracy", Nowe Drogi, No. 7, January-February 1948, (pp. 118-123), p. 121.

23. "A Common Party - A Common Ideology", Nowe Drogi, No. 9, May-June 1948, (pp. 16-20), p. 16.
24. "What Kind of Unity We Build", Nowe Drogi, No. 9, May-June 1948, (pp. 1-6), p. 4.
25. Ibid., p. 5.
26. "From a United Front to an Organic Unity", Nowe Drogi, No. 3, May-June 1947.
27. Ibid.
28. "On a New Stage", Nowe Drogi, No. 8, March-April 1948, (pp. III-XII), p. III.
29. See for instance his "From the United Front to the Unity of the Labor Movement", Nowe Drogi, No. 8, March-April 1948, pp. XIII-XXII.
30. "In The March Toward Socialism", Nowe Drogi, No. 9, May-June 1948, (pp. 7-12), p. 12.
31. Nowe Drogi, No. 9, May-June 1948.
32. "Important Aspects of Our Economic and Social System", Nowe Drogi, No. 10, July-August 1948, pp. 83-106; Minc had different ideas in May 1945. At that time he said: "We reject as fantastic and outright provocation, insinuations spread by our enemies to the effect that in agriculture the government intends to introduce a collective economy, that after the land reform, kolkhozes will be established. We stand firmly by individual peasant farming." (Glos Ludu, May 5, 1945), quoted in "The Swiatlo Story", News From Behind the Iron Curtain, March 1955, p. 13.
33. Ibid., p. 87.
34. See "Current Party Problems in the Sphere of Economic and Social Policies in the Countryside", Nowe Drogi, No. 11, September-October 1948, pp. 156-183.

35. See Chapter III.
36. "On Actual Methods of Planning in Poland", Nowe Drogi, No. 8, March-April 1948, (pp. 17-38), p. 36.
37. "Plan for Rebuilding the Economy", Nowe Drogi, No. 1, January-February 1947, (pp. 65-73), p. 68.
38. Hilary Minc, "The Character and Tendencies of Development of Our Industry", Nowe Drogi, No. 3, May-June 1947, (pp. 35-44), p. 38.
39. Mieczyslaw Popiel, "Fundamental Tendencies in the Development of Work Competition", Nowe Drogi, No. 7, January-February 1948, pp. 25-42.
40. Nowe Drogi, No. 7, January-February 1948, facing p. 49.
41. Eugeniusz Szyr, "Complicated Problems of Our Economic Policy", Nowe Drogi, No. 9, May-June 1948, (pp. 82-109), p. 82.
42. "Plan for Rebuilding the Economy", Nowe Drogi, No. 1, January-February 1947, pp. 65-73.
43. Wladyslaw Bienkowski, "Problems of Cultural Policy", Nowe Drogi, No. 7, January-February 1948, pp. 77-86.
44. The PPR's delegates to the Cominform meeting were Jakub Berman and Aleksander Zawadzki.

#### CHAPTER II: THE ECLIPSE OF NATIONAL COMMUNISM

1. From his speech to the Central Committee, Nowe Drogi, No. 11, September-October 1948, p. 14.
2. Nowe Drogi, No. 11, September-October 1948, p. 63.



3. Ibid., p. 25.
4. Ibid., p. 144.
5. Ibid., p. 143.
6. "Unity - A New Stage in the Struggle for a Better Future", Nowe Drogi, No. 12, November-December 1948, (pp. 3-19), p. 13.
7. "The Ideological Declaration of the PUWP", Nowe Drogi, No. 1, January-February 1949, (pp. 5-21), p. 11.
8. Ibid., pp. 5-6.
9. See Introduction.
10. "The Ideological Declaration of the PUWP", Nowe Drogi, No. 1, January-February 1949, pp. 11-12.
11. Ibid., p. 12.
12. Ibid., p. 11.
13. Ibid., pp. 18-19.
14. Ibid., p. 18.
15. Ibid., p. 19.
16. Ibid., p. 20.
17. N. Farbierow, "On the Character of a People's Democracy State", Nowe Drogi, No. 3, May-June 1949, (pp. 158-163), p. 158.

18. The figures are given by Bronislaw Minc in his "On Certain Economic Laws in the System of a People's Democracy", Nowe Drogi, No. 3, May-June 1949, pp. 247-261.
19. "Ideological Foundations of the United Party", Nowe Drogi, No. 1, January-February 1949, (pp. 23-47), p. 28.
20. Speech delivered on January 10, 1949, quoted in Rapports Entre L'etat et les Eglises en Pologne (1945-1954), December 16, 1959, p. 13.
21. Roman Zambrowski, "Actual Problems in the Countryside", Nowe Drogi, No. 2, March-April 1949, (pp. 81-112), p. 93.
22. Ibid., p. 97.
23. Franciszek Jozwiak-Witold, "The Party and the Unaffiliated", Nowe Drogi, No. 3, May-June 1949, (pp. 1-14), pp. 1-2.
24. Ibid., p. 2.
25. Ibid., p. 11.
26. Ibid., p. 7.
27. Ibid., p. 14.
28. See "Lessons of the Rajk Trial", Nowe Drogi, No. 5, September-October 1949, pp. 13-24, and Edward Ochab, "The Fight Continues", Ibid., pp. 25-37.
29. Ochab, Ibid.

30. Born in Warsaw in 1896, Rokossowski volunteered for the Russian Army in 1914. He later rose in the ranks of the Red Army and during World War II held important commands. In 1943 he commanded one of the army groups in the region of Stalingrad and in the same year became Commander-in-Chief of the central front. He was thus in charge of Soviet troops advancing through Poland at the time of the Warsaw Uprising and which stood idly by during the Uprising.
31. Nowe Drogi, September-October 1948, p. 144.

### CHAPTER III: THE STALINIST PERIOD

1. See Chapter II, page 49.
2. Quoted in Rapports Entre L'etat et les Eglises en Pologne (1945-1959), December 16, 1959, p. 13.
3. For text of agreement see New York Times, May 14, 1950.
4. Ibid.
5. Quoted by Dziewanowski, op. cit., pp. 246-247.
6. "The Six-Year Plan for Economic Development and the Construction of Socialist Foundations in Poland", Nowe Drogi, No. 4, July-August 1950, pp. 7-52.
7. Ibid., p. 37.
8. Ibid., p. 36.
9. Ibid., p. 39.
10. Josef Stalin, Problems of Leninism, (Moscow, 1953), p. 689.

11. "About the Constitution of the Polish People's Republic", Nowe Drogi, No. 8, August 1952, (pp. 3-18), p. 5.
12. Ibid., p. 14.
13. Paragraph 1, Article 10, Social and Economic Chapter of July 22, 1952 Constitution.
14. Ibid., paragraph 2.
15. Aleksander Zawadzki, "The Existence and Role of National Councils as United Organs of Authority in Our People's Democracy", Nowe Drogi, No. 2, March-April 1950, (pp. 101-126), p. 104.
16. Article 34.
17. Article 35.
18. Article 37.
19. Article 36.
20. Article 14.
21. Legal Problems of the Constitution of the Polish People's Republic, (Warsaw, 1954), quoted by Brzezinski, op. cit., p. 75.
22. Ibid., Volume II, p. 85, quoted by Brzezinski, op. cit., p. 75.
23. Quoted in Oscar Halecki (ed.), Poland, (New York, 1957), p. 230.
24. "Poetry in the Service of the Revolution", Nowa Kultura, April 16, 1950.
25. Quoted in Halecki, op. cit., p. 241.

26. Quoted in Halecki, op. cit., p. 231.
27. Jerzy Putrament, "Problems of Polish Literature in the Face of the Six-Year Plan and the Fight for Peace", Nowa Kultura, January 21, 1951.
28. Quoted in Halecki, op. cit., p. 232.
29. Quoted in Halecki, op. cit., p. 232.
30. Quoted in Halecki, op. cit., p. 234.
31. "The River", Nowa Kultura, September 17, 1950.
32. "On Stalin's 71st Birthday", Nowa Kultura, December 24, 1950.
33. Nowe Drogi, No. 6, November-December, 1949.
34. Ibid.
35. For eulogies on Stalin's death see Nowa Kultura, March 15, 1953 and Nowe Drogi, No. 3, March 1953.
36. Jerzy Miller, "The People's Candidate", Nowa Kultura, September 28, 1952.
37. "The Road of a Generation", Nowa Kultura, January 6, 1952.
38. Nowa Kultura, April 20, 1952.

CHAPTER IV: THE THAW

1. Swiatlo's broadcasts were later published in condensed form in News From Behind the Iron Curtain, March 1955, "The Swiatlo Story", pp. 3-36.
2. J. Litwin, "The Administration of Public Security and Order", Administrative Law (Warsaw, 1953), Volume IV, pp. 5-15.
3. Ibid.
4. "The Swiatlo Story", News From Behind the Iron Curtain, March 1955, p. 8.
5. Ibid., p. 22.
6. Ibid., p. 13.
7. Quoted in Ibid., p. 35, from a broadcast over Radio Warsaw, November 1, 1954.
8. Nowe Drogi, No. 12, December 1954, (pp. 3-18), p. 4.
9. Quoted in Halecki, op. cit., p. 173.
10. Quoted in Clifford R. Barnett et al, Poland: Its People, Its Society, Its Culture, (New Haven, Conn., 1958), p. 97.
11. Quoted in Ibid., p. 97.
12. Jadwiga Siekierska, "Artists Should Decide About the Arts", Przegląd Kulturalny, No. 8, February 24-March 2, 1955.
13. See his articles in Przegląd Kulturalny during most of 1955.

14. Leon Kruczkowski, "The Cultural Front in the Light of the Third Plenum", Nowe Drogi, No. 3, March 1955, pp. 3-10.
15. Ibid., p. 7.
16. "On Current Literary Discussions", Nowe Drogi, No. 6, June 1955, (pp. 16-37), p. 16.
17. Ibid., p. 17.
18. Ibid., p. 20.
19. Ibid., p. 37.
20. See Chapter III, pp. 86-87.
21. "Poem for Adults", Nowa Kultura, August 21, 1955; the translation is by Lucjan Blit, first published in The Twentieth Century, No. 158, December 1955, pp. 504-511, and reprinted in Paul Zinner (ed.), National Communism and Popular Revolt in Eastern Europe, (New York, 1957), pp. 40-48.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. Quoted by S. L. Shneiderman, The Warsaw Heresy, (New York, 1959), p. 38.
25. "The Dispute Over the Understanding of Culture", Przegląd Kulturalny, No. 39, September 29-October 5, 1955.
26. See Chapter III, pp. 82-83.
27. "The Dispute Over the Understanding of Culture", Przegląd Kulturalny, No. 39, September 29-October 5, 1955.

28. "Questions About Humanism", Przegląd Kulturalny, No. 5, February 2-8, 1956.
29. "In the Search for Truth or Upon What Do We Build Our Humanism", Przegląd Kulturalny, No. 41, October 13-19, 1955.
30. "Inquiry and Dogmatism", Przegląd Kulturalny, No. 43, October 27-November 2, 1955.
31. See for instance Helena Jaworska, "For a Quicker and More Universal Fulfillment of the Resolutions of the Second Congress of the ZMP", Nowe Drogi, No. 5, May 1955, pp. 12-21.
32. Helena Kozłowska, "Observations on the Style of the Work of our Party Apparatus", Nowe Drogi, No. 1, January 1955, (pp. 73-84), p. 78.
33. Josef Olszewski, "On Certain Bureaucratic Tendencies in the Style of Party Work", Nowe Drogi, No. 1, January 1955, (pp. 85-100), p. 89.
34. Helena Kozłowska, "Observations on the Style of the Work of our Party Apparatus", Nowe Drogi, No. 1, January 1955, p. 84.
35. See Władysława Chmielewska, "In the Matter of Collegiality", Nowe Drogi, No. 3, March 1955, pp. 93-96.
36. See for instance articles in Nowe Drogi, No. 7, July 1955, pp. 61-82.
37. "For an Increase of Our Creative Effort and Ideological Work", Nowe Drogi, No. 10, October 1955, (pp. 3-12), p. 4.
38. Ibid., p. 4.
39. Ibid., p. 7.
40. One month earlier, on February 20, the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union took place in Moscow. Its impact upon Poland is discussed in Chapter V.



41. "Mythology and Truth", Przeglad Kulturalny, No. 14, April 5-11, 1956.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid.
44. "For the Restoration of the Citizen's Right", Przeglad Kulturalny, No. 14, April 5-11, 1956.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.
47. "Does the Right to Repair the Machine Belong Only to Him Who Ruined It?", Przeglad Kulturalny, No. 14, April 5-11, 1956.

#### CHAPTER V: THE ROAD TO OCTOBER

1. For the text of the communique see Nowe Drogi, No. 3, March 1956, pp. 43-44.
2. Ibid., p. 44.
3. Trybuna Ludu, February 19, 1956.
4. "The Lessons of the 20th Congress of the CPSU", Nowe Drogi, No. 3, March 1956, pp. 28-42.
5. Ibid., p. 35.
6. Ibid., p. 37.

7. See his "With What Are We Fighting and What Will We Attain in Opposing the 'Personality Cult'", Nowe Drogi, No. 4, April 1956, pp. 18-29.
8. Gomulka had been quietly released from detention at the end of 1954. Ochab's statement was the first public announcement of Gomulka's release.
9. "The Resolutions and Recommendations of the 20th Congress", Trybuna Ludu, April 7, 1956.
10. Po prostu, June 1, 1956, quoted by Dziewanowski, op. cit., p. 355.
11. "The Lessons of the 20th Congress of the CPSU", Nowe Drogi, No. 3, March 1956, pp. 28-42.
12. Trybuna Ludu, April 24, 1956.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Jerzy Morawski, "The Lessons of the 20th Congress of the CPSU", Nowe Drogi, No. 3, March 1956, p. 30.
16. "The Resolutions and Recommendations of the 20th Congress", Trybuna Ludu, April 7, 1956.
17. "The Lessons of the 20th Congress of the CPSU", Nowe Drogi, No. 3, March 1956, p. 30.
18. Trybuna Ludu, April 24, 1956.
19. Radio Warsaw, April 21, 1956, quoted by Brzezinski, op. cit., p. 236.

20. Jerzy Morawski, "The Lessons of the 20th Congress of the CPSU", Nowe Drogi, No. 3, March 1956, p. 28.
21. Ibid., p. 29.
22. Ibid., p. 31.
23. Quoted in Halecki, op. cit., p. 553.
24. Trybuna Ludu, June 29, 1956.
25. Ibid.
26. On July 21, Bulganin delivered a stern, threatening speech to the Seventh Plenum. See Trybuna Ludu, July 22, 1956.
27. "On the Political and Economic Situation and on Problems of Party Unity", Nowe Drogi, No. 7-8, July-August 1956, (pp. 138-167), p. 141.
28. The text of the resolution is printed in Nowe Drogi, No. 7-8, July-August, 1956, pp. 196-219.
29. Ibid., p. 204.
30. Ibid., p. 201.
31. Ibid., pp. 214-215.
32. Ibid., p. 219.
33. Trybuna Ludu, August 24, 1956.
34. Ibid.

35. Actual Problems of Cultural Policy in the Field of Philosophy and Sociology (Warsaw, 1956), quoted by Brzezinski, op. cit., p. 236.
36. "The Intellectuals in the Communist Movement", Nowe Drogi, No. 9, September 1956, (pp. 23-31), p. 31.
37. Ibid., p. 31.
38. Nowa Kultura, September 9, 1956.
39. Po prostu, September 30, 1956.
40. On August 24 the Sejm's legislative committee had for the first time failed to endorse a decree which the Council of State had passed. The committee recommended that the decree (dealing with civic documents and registrars) be submitted to the Sejm for approval with appropriate amendments.
41. Trybuna Ludu, October 16, 1956.
42. Also chosen were Spychalski, Zenon Kliszko, and Ignacy Loga-Sowinski, all expelled with Gomulka in 1948.

#### CHAPTER VI: FULL CIRCLE

1. Gomulka's speech is printed in Nowe Drogi, No. 10, October 1956, pp. 21-46.
2. Ibid., p. 36.
3. Ibid., p. 27.
4. Ibid., p. 27.

5. Ibid., p. 27.
6. Ibid., p. 39.
7. Ibid., p. 40.
8. Ibid., p. 40; Gomulka reveals here his old displeasure at the expulsion of Yugoslavia in 1948 and his continuous skepticism toward the Cominform or any international Communist organization.
9. Ibid., p. 41.
10. Ibid., p. 43.
11. Ibid., p. 43.
12. Ibid., p. 45.
13. Ibid., p. 45.
14. Ibid., p. 42.
15. Ibid., p. 38.
16. Ibid., p. 39.
17. For text of the resolution see Nowe Drogi, No. 10, October 1956, pp. 3-13.
18. Ibid., pp. 12-13.

CONCLUSION

1. See p. 24 of the preface to V.I. Lenin, Against Revisionism (Moscow, 1959).

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L'Etat et les Eglises en Pologne (1945-1959)".



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