

# Momentous Change in East Europe

SEVEN DAYS that shook Poland and were felt all over the world began on a quiet Tuesday, October 17. That was when Wladyslaw Gomulka attended a meeting of the Political Bureau of the Polish Workers Party. It was the first time Gomulka participated in the work of a leading body since he was released from prison at the end of 1954.

Gomulka served throughout the war as a leader of the anti-Nazi underground within Poland. He was one of the founders of the Polish Workers Party (Communist Party) when it was reconstituted early in the war after having been dissolved at Stalin's initiative in 1938.

After the war he was elected general secretary of the Polish Workers Party and in 1948 of the Polish United Workers Party formed by the merger of the Workers Party and the Polish Socialist Party.

**GOMULKA STRESSED** the Polish path to socialism but in 1948 Stalin had branded such ideas as heretical and the break with Yugoslavia took place. In 1949 Gomulka was removed from his posts and then expelled from the party as a "right wing deviationist." In 1951 he was arrested and charged with being a foreign agent. He served four years in jail.

After his release the party and government admitted that he had been framed and there was no criminal act involved but it was still maintained that Gomulka's viewpoint had been erroneous.

Between the Monday when Gomulka attended the Political Bureau meeting and the Friday when the plenum of the party's central committee met, a veritable upheaval began in Poland. Organizations met and adopted resolutions, mass meetings were held, the people were speaking out.

**TYPICAL WAS** a letter addressed to the Party of the Warsaw regional committee of the Polish Youth Union which called for Gomulka's election to the Political Bureau. The letter added:

"We note that changes in the political and economic life of Poland are coming very slowly and are introduced half-heartedly.

"This is harmful to the interests of the party. That is why the Warsaw Committee of the Polish Youth Union urges the Central Committee of the Party to make a resolute stand and to speed up the process of making Polish political life free of secrecy."

On Friday when the Central Committee meeting opened, its first order of business was to elect Gomulka as a member of the committee. Meanwhile top leaders of the Soviet Communist Party flew to Warsaw to meet with the Polish leaders. They included First Secretary Nikita Khrushchev, deputy premiers V. M. Molotov, Anastas Mikoyan, Lazar Kaganovich and Marshal Konev.

Friday evening the students of the Polytechnic institute crowded into their enormous college hall and demonstrated their support for democratization. The students adopted a resolution supporting workers demands for factory councils to secure self government, for

elimination of press censorship and further stress on the Polish path to socialism. Resolutions were also read at the meeting from delegations of the huge new steel mills at Nowa Huta.

**FACTS ABOUT** the exact exchanges between the Soviet and Polish leaders are still sparse. But meanwhile the Central Committee also co-opted three political colleagues of Gomulka including Marian Spychalski. Under the Nazi occupation the latter was chief of staff of the underground Peoples Army and later vice minister of defense until Soviet Marshal Konstantin Rokossovsky took over as defense minister.

Spychalski, like Gomulka had been in prison, the former for five years and was released last year.

Meanwhile an article in Pravda, later reprinted in other Soviet newspapers, made a sharp attack against the Polish press. The Pravda article criticized, certain Polish writers for allegedly favoring the restoration of capitalism. And the article criticized the editors of Polish papers for allowing such articles to appear in the newspapers.

As the Soviet and Polish leaders negotiated, reports persisted that Soviet troops stationed by treaty with Poland had begun maneuvers. The Polish central committee immediately ordered a commission to investigate these movements.

**A CLIMAX** was reached Sunday both in mass demonstrations of workers and the election of a new Political Bureau by the Polish party, which dropped Rokossovsky, elected Gomulka first secretary and dropped several others more identified with Stalinism than the Polish path to socialism.

Gordon Cruikshank, the London Daily Worker correspondent on the spot in Warsaw cabled:

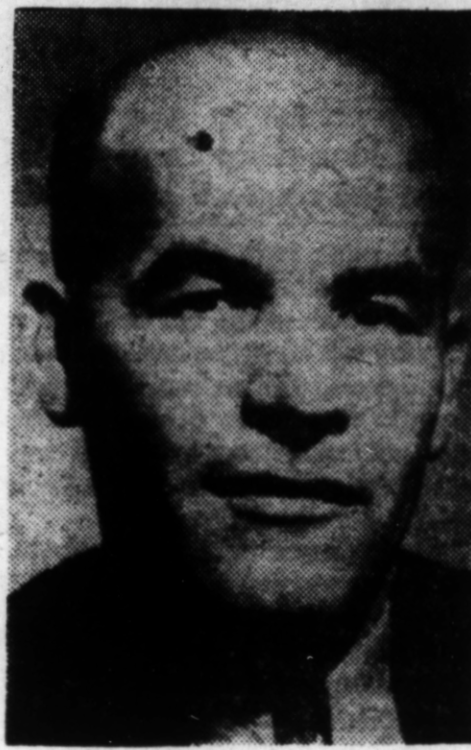
"A great mass movement is sweeping Poland and included among the main demands are (1) democratization of all aspects of life; (2) friendship with the Soviet Union but on equal terms; (3) the development of a Polish road to socialism; (4) public and not secret government; (5) workers' self government in the factories; and (6) an end to bureaucratic and other distortions."

Gomulka's speech to the central committee became the program of the new Polish leadership and was enthusiastically received by people who heard it on the radio throughout the land. The Poznan workers demonstrations had taught the government a painful lesson, Gomulka said but added:

"The Poznan workers did not protest against socialism when they went out in the streets. They protested against the evil which grew widely in our life, against deforming the basic principles of socialism."

**A REVIEW** of all the Poznan cases was undertaken by the government and only those arrested for acts of burglary or assaults were held.

The Polish Communist news-



GOMULKA

paper Trybuna Ludu took sharp issue with the Pravda criticism of the Polish press. But in meetings all over Poland, emphasis was placed on Polish-Soviet friendship as the cornerstone of Polish security.

Cruikshank called about a meeting he attended at the Rosa Luxemburg factory on Monday where a worker got up and warned:

"If our 'new friends' think we're going to be pulled out of the socialist camp, they can think again," adding: "We know the Soviet Union is our guarantee that our 'new friend' Konrad Adenauer does not grab our Western territory."

A woman scientific worker explained this further when she told the cheering throng:

"But we aren't friends of the Soviet Union only out of fear, as parasites who want protection. We have common socialist ideas and principles. But these socialist ideas mean we must have equality."

**THE NEWSPAPER** Trybuna Ludu also called President Eisenhower to order for implying that he was ready to help the Poles in their "fight." The newspaper said it realized Eisenhower's election problems but it said "Poles do not need to be included in the American election campaign." The paper warned the U. S. government (Continued from Page 5)

**IN HUNGARY**, as in Poland just before, ferment and mass demands for democratization brought an upheaval last week. But in Hungary the Communist leaders acted much later to take leadership of the sincere popular forces. Therefore, counter-revolutionaries, including sympathizers of the old Horthy dictatorship, were able to instigate violence.

Last Sunday Hungary students assembled and presented demands to the government. These included a free press, abolition of the death penalty, and also a public trial for Mihaly Farkas, the former Minister of Defense. Farkas had been arrested for participating in the frameup of Lajos Rajk and others who were framed and murdered as "Titoists" for advocating a Hungarian path to socialism.

On Monday the students of Budapest, joined by workers, were out on the streets demonstrating for the return of Imre Nagy as premier of Hungary. Nagy had become premier of Hungary after the death of Stalin in 1952 on a program of democratization against forced collectivization of agriculture and for greater stress on promoting consumer goods production.

**SHORTLY AFTER** the dismissal of Malenkov as premier in the USSR, Nagy was also dismissed in Hungary in April, 1955. Nagy was charged with "right wing deviations" and was expelled from the party. Earlier this month he was readmitted to the party and cleared of any criminal charges. But the Party leadership still delayed about accepting fully his democratization and liberalization program which was being demanded throughout the country.

By the time Nagy was named premier on Tuesday it was late because violence had already erupted. The new government declared martial law because provocative elements apparently joined with dissatisfied workers in trying to overthrow the entire regime.

Adherents of the old terrorist Horthy regime, an ally of Hitler, were evidently participating in this effort. The Nagy government called upon Soviet troops, stationed in Hungary under treaty, to help in restoring order, while promising these troops would be withdrawn



NAGY

as soon as this was accomplished.

**IN APPEALING** for an end to violence Nagy said: "The government is determined not to leave the path of reforms being discussed by the masses of the people. Our program is aimed at bringing satisfaction to the people, but not revenge."

Nagy promised to put into effect the program he had offered in 1953 when he first became premier, including amnesty for political offenders, cessation of deportations, abolition of internment camps, and an economic program tailored to improving the conditions of the working people. Nagy noted that "peaceful demonstrating students have been joined by hostile elements, who have misguided many well-believing workers and directed them into actions against our peoples democracy."

## Excerpts From Gomulka Speech

Following are excerpts from the text of an address last Sunday by Wladyslaw Gomulka.

The key to the solution lies in the hands of the working class. The future depends entirely on the attitude of the working class and that attitude depends on the party policy.

The working class taught the Government a painful lesson. The Poznan workers manifesting in the streets called with a loud voice: Enough of this, one cannot live like this, we must return from the wrong way.

They did not do it lightheartedly. It is evident that the cup was more than full.

The Poznan workers did not protest against socialism when they went out in the streets. They protested against the evil which grew widely in our life, against deforming the basic principles of socialism.

It was a great mistake to picture the Poznan tragedy as a work of agents and provocateurs. The causes of the Poznan tragedy lie in us, the party, the Government.

The six-year plan, advertised as a stage in advancement of the living standards, disappointed the hopes of working classes.

There would be no Poznan riots if the leadership of the party would not conceal the truth. There would be no bloodshed if the leadership of the party would candidly reveal the truth.

It is not enough to change the

people in the government to improve the situation. It is necessary to make changes in the system of government. All bad parts in our model of socialism must be exchanged for better ones. This takes time and courage.

The cooperative movement is good and just but has been distorted by incompetent men. What is needed to build the cooperative movement is a creative thought for which, however, no party holds a monopoly.

The imbecility of the agricultural policy in the past period brought ruin to many an individual farmer.

The deliveries of agricultural products to the state are a remnant of the wartime. The quotas should be revised in favor of the farmers, especially in the western and northern provinces of Poland.

The perspective of abolishing deliveries should excuse nobody toward the state. The deliveries are a form of tax, and taxes have to be paid everywhere, not only in our country.

There is more than one road to socialism. There is the Soviet way. There is the Yugoslav way. And there are other ways.

In the Soviet Union the place of discussion within the party has been taken by the cult of personality.

Every country has the right to be sovereign and independent. I would say it begins to be so.

The cult of personality cannot be limited to the person of Stalin. In other countries an individual, hierarchic ladder of cult has been instituted with secretaries of the Central Committee of the parties occupying the second place from the top. In every country the top man on the ladder of the cult knew everything, controlled everything, decided about everything, irrespective of his knowledge and abilities. If a decent, modest man would be chosen to such a position, he would feel ill at ease and one could say he was ashamed of occupying it.

The road of democratization is the only road leading toward the construction of the best model of socialism in our conditions. We shall not step aside from this road and we shall defend ourselves with all our means so as not to allow ourselves to be pushed away from this road.

But we shall allow nobody to exploit the process of democratization against socialism.

## Excerpts From Nagy Speech

Following are excerpts from the speech by the new Premier Imre Nagy on taking office:

The gist of my program is a broad democratization of Hungary's public life, the construction of socialism according to our specific Hungarian characteristics, and a basic improvement of the Hungarian people's standard of living.

I am calling on all Hungarians, men, women, workers, farmers, the youth and the intellectuals: be firm against provocateurs, keep order.

We must join forces to avoid any further bloodshed.

We cannot permit that our sacred national program be soiled by blood. The government is ready for the task of peaceful construction.

The government is determined not to leave the path of reforms being discussed by the masses of the people. Our program is aimed at bringing satisfaction to the people, but not revenge.

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# POLAND

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against interference into Polish affairs.

On Monday the top law making body, the Sejm met to discuss democratic elections scheduled for December 16. For the first time in post-war Poland the election will

be based on the completely free choice among competing candidates. And the Sejm, Gomulka said in his speech, must be the real power in the land.

On Tuesday, Oct. 24 all was quiet in Poland. Polish sources reported that Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev had called Gomulka by telephone and congratulated him on his election as first secre-

tary. Khrushchev also indicated that with some reservations he agreed with the outlook of the Polish Communists. And significantly, Khrushchev apologized for Pravda's attack against the Polish press.

As a delegate of Polish Communist leaders prepared to leave for Moscow for further discussions with Soviet leaders it was becoming clear—friendship based on complete equality and independence was far more reliable than "friendship" which is imposed. Not only was Poland on the pathway of democratic socialism but it now was fashioning conditions for ending the age-old enmity between Poland and Russia which has been used with such disastrous consequences for our country and the whole world in the past by German militarism.

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