

Polish Trade Unions Swept By Democratization Drive

By GORDON CRUICKSHANK

WARSAW.—A stormy democratization movement sweeping through the Polish trade unions has uprooted the leadership. It has redefined the role of the unions in a socialist society and established their independence, with the main tasks of defending the rights and conditions of the working people.

A recent plenum of the central council of the Polish trade unions was called in Warsaw to discuss and accept or reject the resignation of the chairman and presidency of the council.

A report to be made by a commission set up to inquire into trade union practice and policy had also to be discussed.

Normally the plenum numbers some 100-odd delegates, but on this occasion more than 600 turned up, delegations elected direct from factories, mines, mills, shipyards and other enterprises. As one speaker said: "This isn't a plenum, it is now a congress."

These delegations crowding into the large hall of the State Planning Commission, literally took over the Polish trade unions.

In the absence because of illness of Loga Sowinski, a leading trade unionist and member of the political bureau of the United Workers' Party, who was responsible for the report on the unions, Mr. Kulesza, a secretary of the unions' central council, read the report.

Referring to the past years, the report said that bureaucratic centralism had crippled the union, and the leadership had indulged in "one-man decisions."

In the face of everyday experience revealing the need to defend the workers' rights, the leaders had remained passive and become isolated from the union masses; they had been more concerned with government economic aims than the workers' just demands, the report said.

It was now necessary to clear the air and heal the wounds made by these past mistakes, injustices and abuses, said the report.

The unions henceforth will be independent organizations with the main task of defending the rights and conditions of the working people.

The unions will be involved in the governing of the country, particularly on the financial budget, employment policy, the economic development of districts, and all matters affecting the living standards of the people.

"The Polish unions have never been non-political," said the report, "therefore they should have Parliamentary representation."

In all places of work the unions will be the mass democratic basis or the new self-governing works

councils being set up. They must be the spokesmen of the labor movement and should ensure that the new councils do not become bureaucratic.

The works councils are the expression of democratization in industry, but the changes involved must be made on a mass scale and not by way of certain departments only, says the report.

Many delegates were bitter in their denunciation of the past.

A metal worker from Poznan's Zispo works recalled the way in which the central council of the union had ignored their repeated pleas for help to solve the problems that lead up to the Poznan events, the demonstration and the riots.

He said: "This attitude of the

general council was responsible for the bloodshed that followed."

When the union chairman, he pointed out, came to Poznan he had not even visited the factory.

The fact, too, that 360 functionaries were employed by the central council in Warsaw was deplored, particularly when it was related to the fact that only 100 officials were employed throughout the country.

One delegate said: "We had good unions before 1949."

Meanwhile, in the Sejm (Parliament), a bill replacing the former State Commission for Economic Planning with a new Planning Commission has been passed.

This means a legal end to economic centralism in Poland, and is intended to overcome previous distortions in the economic field.

New Hungary Strike Reported

BUDAPEST, Nov. 22. — Public transportation was at a standstill this morning, as near freezing temperatures were reported throughout the country. The two-day "total strike" which had been called to start today was said to have begun despite the announcement broadcast last night by the government of Premier Janos Kadar over Budapest Radio that the National Workers' Council had been given full legal standing which clearly defined their rights in sharing control of the nation's econ-

omy. Budapest Radio issued appeals to railroad, public transportation and factory workers to return to their jobs.

Only food services and essential maintenance were reported functioning, however.

Order Trial of Tito Critic

BELGRADE, Nov. 20. — The secretary of the Belgrade Circuit Court, Bosiljka Subotic, issued a statement to the press today announcing that the court had decided to hold Milovan Djilas on suspicion of anti-state activities.

"On the request of the state prosecutor," Subotic said, "the Circuit Court of Belgrade reached the decision Nov. 20 open criminal investigations of Milovan Djilas, on the grounds of justified suspicion that, among other things, by his statements published abroad, in which he falsely presented the facts concerning our foreign policy and internal organization in Yugoslavia, he committed an illegal act under Article 118 of the Criminal Code."

5-Day Meeting Held by CP Nat'l Committee

The National Committee of the Communist Party held an enlarged five-day meeting from Nov. 13 through Nov. 17, it was made known here yesterday of party headquarters.

The meeting heard and discussed an analysis of the election results. A public statement on the election is being prepared for release in the near future, it was said.

The meeting also discussed the events in Eastern Europe and issued the open letter on this subject to the party membership.

As its final order of business, the committee discussed a draft of a new party constitution. This is now being edited and is scheduled to be released in early December for the pre-convention discussion.