

POLAND'S "CHINESE" FACTION

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Though the Polish Party Congress has not directly revealed anything about the major factional struggles within the PUWP, it has thrown a little more light on the activity of one anti-Gomulka group. After the First Secretary of the City of Warsaw Party Committee, Walenty Titkow, had alluded in his Congress speech to an "attempt to publish and distribute an anti-Party squib," which the Party had "recently had to deal with," Politburo member Zenon Kliszko, considered to be one of Gomulka's closest associates, furnished a few more details about the matter. Voicing his concern about the serious danger caused by the "splitting activity" of the Chinese Communists, Kliszko said, in his address to the Congress on June 19, that the Chinese leaders were attempting to appeal to "conservative and dogmatic forces in our movement which are incapable of grasping the meaning of the new times and the new tasks." The Chinese were counting on "undisciplined firebrands with unrestrained political ambitions." He went on to say that the Polish experience had shown that such groups were neither powerful nor numerous, and then got to the heart of the matter:

Only some individual Party members in Warsaw, recruited from among the dogmatists who for years have been conducting a struggle against the political line of the Party, most of them firebrands who harbor grudges against the Party for faults which they themselves have committed, have tried to "Polonize" the Chinese CP ideological platform and set this "Polish" version of "Sinofied Marxism" against the policies and ideology of our Party.

The members of this group did not have the courage to present their position openly to the Party organization to which they had belonged. Instead, they violated the Party statutes and the law, by conspiratorially distributing political calumnies against the Party, its policies and its leaders.

Kliszko concluded this section of his speech with the terse statement that "this activity was limited in scope and short-lived."

The Anti-Gomulka Pamphlet

These somewhat cryptic remarks by Titkow and Kliszko clearly refer to an anti-Gomulka pamphlet, whose existence had been reliably known in the West for several weeks. This pamphlet, some 90

pages in length and run off by a state printing establishment, may be described as a summation of all of the sins of Gomulka -- in the eyes of the old Stalinists.

He is criticized for abandoning collectivization of agriculture, for slowing down the pace of industrialization, for being too lenient toward the Catholic Church and, generally, for a pragmatic approach detrimental to the cause of socialism. The pamphlet, moreover, reportedly accused the "partisan" faction of nationalism and the "liberal" group within the Party of "cosmopolitanism" and willingness to compromise with the West.

It also attacked Gomulka for removing about 60 loyal "Marxist-Leninists" from important Party posts.

This sweeping indictment of the present Party leadership -- called, interestingly enough, "anti-theses" by those in Poland who have been in the know, obviously referring to the Party's official "Theses" which were the basis for the pre-Congress discussion -- appears to have been published some time between mid-March and mid-April of this year. According to reliable information, the authors of the document and the leading exponents of the group were three discredited former Stalinists: Kazimierz Mijal, Stanislaw Lapot and Wiktor Klosiewicz. Less solid information is available on the action taken by the Party to "deal with" this group. It appears that arrests were made, but the figures quoted in the West have ranged all the way from 30 to 300, and it is quite possible that many of those involved were merely detained for questioning.

The only definite step taken against the leaders of the group which could be detected thus far was the removal of Mijal as General Director of the Investment Bank, a post which he had held since 1957. It is, of course, quite possible that the public disclosure of the "conspiracy" may be the signal for severer repressive measures against the group.

The Pamphlet and the Chinese

These illustrations of the past record of the three pamphleteers, as well as the ideas expressed in the pamphlet itself, strongly suggest that they are instinctively attracted by the present ideological position of the Chinese. And with Gomulka being a staunch supporter of Khrushchev, who in turn is the arch-enemy of the Chinese leaders, the attraction must be all the greater. For the main thread running through the activity of the three since October 1956 has definitely been anti-Gomulkaism. This does not, however, mean that they have been deliberately operating as the leaders of a group supporting the Chinese side in the Sino-Soviet conflict. The pro-Chinese label is now a convenient one to pin on internal Party opponents in order to discredit them, all the more so because of the actual known instances of attempts by the Chinese Communists to gain support within Soviet bloc Parties. But Kliszko's characterization of the group's activity as an effort to present a "Polish version of Sinofied Marxism" would seem to indicate that the pamphlet itself did not actually echo the Chinese position.

Needless to say, this small neo-Stalinist group should also not be identified with the "partisan" opposition to Gomulka, whose efforts appear to be directed toward gradually gaining power within the framework of the normal Party and state structure. The pamphlet, moreover, actually attacked the "partisans."

Unlike the "lunatic-fringe" group which has represented so vulnerable a target for Gomulka, the "partisans" remain -- in spite of their failure to take the Politburo by storm at the Congress -- a force

which is very much to be reckoned with. This is the real hard-line danger to which Kliszko did not refer.