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# Present situation (A) in Poland, (B) in Rumania, Bulgaria and Albania (C) in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

**Report**[1]
Relations with European Non-Member Countries
Co-rapporteurs: Mr Karl K. WISTRAND, Sweden, and Mr Karl BØGHOLM, Denmark, and Mr Peter KIRK, United Kingdom

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**Draft Order**

The Assembly,

Having taken note of the Reports of the Committee on Non-represented Nations relating to the present situation in Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, Albania, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania (Document 812),

Instructs the Committee to continue its study of the situation in Central and Eastern Europe and to report thereon to the Assembly in due course.

*A -*

*Present situation in Poland (M. BOEGHOLM, Rapporteur)*

[This report is provisional. A further report will be presented at the next part-Session of the Assembly with particular reference to the economic issues of the situation in Poland].

Gomulka emerged as the hero of the October Revolution, although he neither led the actual fighting nor framed the ideology, but only took over a programme made by others. For a couple of months he was more popular than any other leader had ever been in the history of world communism. For the masses as well as for the intelligentsia he embodied the indomitable will to freedom of the Polish nation. This is no longer the case. Although the reins of power are still in his hands, he has lost the confidence of many of those who brought him to power. The basis of his power lies outside Poland. As a matter of fact Polish politics is governed by factors outside Poland itself, such as the Kremlin and the fear that a breaking of the Warsaw Pact would endanger the Western frontiers.

However, it would serve no useful purpose merely to point out that really free elections which were not dominated one way or other by foreign influence would sweep away the present Government and leave Gomulka the leader of a minority group.

An analysis of the present situation seems of much more importance. It cannot be denied that Gomulka has moved far from the days of national revolt and it has to be admitted that the differences between Communist Poland.and Communist Russia are no more what they were at the time of the October Revolution. The reason for this is not far to seek. The Hungarian Revolution fired the imagination of the young generation of the satellite countries, and an intellectual fermentation is taking place all over Soviet Europe which will ultimately dissolve that Empire, provided that Western democracy does not give up the balance of power that dominates world policy at the present moment.

Communist leaders have not been slow to grasp the fact that " national " or even " moderate" communism may easily "degenerate" into democracy and lead to thè defeat of communism itself. This is why Tito betrayed Imre Nagy, and it is the main reason why Gomulka has sought the friendship of the Kremlin and given up the sovereign power of Poland. It is hardly open to doubt that if Gomulka had to choose between East and West, he would « go East ». He is no doubt genuinely afraid of revolutionary changes in the satellite countries. This does not mean that he regards Poland as a Russian colony or that he would be ready to toe the line under all circumstances.

Poland must still be regarded as the most " liberal " country in the communist world, more liberal indeed than Tito's Yugoslavia. On the other hand, Gomulka must be more cautious in stressing national independence than Tito, at any rate as long as he has not got the same sort of contact with the West as Tito.

This fact is clearly brought out by two events from the last few months. Army Day was celebrated all over Poland on October 12th. One of the meetings was attended by highly placed representatives of the northern group of the Russian army, and in a speech before this assembly General Kuszko, who is deputy-chief of the political section of Polish army headquarters, not only found very cordial words for the Soviet guests, but went out of his way to attack the Polish generals who fought on the western front during the second world war. In his order of the day the Minister of Defence, General Spy-chalski, specially stressed the Polish-Russian brotherhood, adding that the alliance with Russia was the guarantee of Poland's present frontiers, a point which had shortly before been elaborated by Gomulka.

But, although Gomulka accepts membership of the Soviet Empire, he does not want the imperial ties to be too tightly-drawn. Shortly after Army Day he made a speech to the activists of the party which can hardly be interpreted but as a warning against a new communist international organisation. About the Comintern he said, for instance, that to start with it had served some useful purposes, but that it soon became harmful to the true interests of the working classes. Coming to the Cominform he certainly did not mince his words, declaring " nothing good can be said about it ".

As far as it can be judged from the material available, the Kremlin leaders had proposed some sort of new international organisation, but this project seems to have been turned down by Yugoslavia, Poland and perhaps also China.

It is a curious fact that the leaders of Eastern Germany issued a statement in which " the Moscow decision " to publish " an international Marxist-Leninist journal " was welcomed, although such a publication was not mentioned in the Moscow declaration.

About a fortnight ago a meeting was held in Prague to discuss the publication of an international periodical as the first step towards a new Cominform. Western observers in Prague have affirmed that no delegates from Yugoslavia or Poland were present at the meeting.

The ousting of the Molotov and Malenkov groups had been greeted with jubilation in Warsaw. The official party paper Trybuna Ludu stressed "the international significance " of the decisions of the Soviet. It was " the victory of living, creative Marxism-Leninism ". The comment of the Zysie Warszawy ran " the new is triumphing over the old ".

These comments have been interpreted as a proof of Gomulka's desire to stick to a middle-of-the-road communism.

Such a proof might well be needed inasmuch as many well-known Stalinists have remained in office and lately grown very active.

Moreover, so-called " revisionism " has been bitterly attacked by Gomulka.

Polish communism seems to be split up into four different groups. To the right— according to communist terminology—is the Natolin group, which consists of the Stalinists and seems to have been able to exercise an astonishing influence at the tenth party conference. The leaders of this group are Mijal, Witaszewski, Ruminski and perhaps Zawadski.

The central group gathers round Gomulka, and its leading theorist is Adam Schaff. This group is not easy to define, as party tactics plays a dominant role for many of its members. Generally speaking they assert that Soviet communism decayed because it abandoned the Leninist ideology of a " democratic centralism " that allowed free discussion on all points within the party until a vote had been taken. It is one of the main principles of M. Schaff that " real freedom of discussion " can only be allowed inside the party itself.

The third group, which is headed by Hochfeld and Helena Eilstein, is a real revisionist group, the adherents of which may even seem to be sort of pre-Lenin communists. They often quote the words of Rosa Luxemburg that a revolution which is carried out without due regard being paid to law, freedom and democratic rights will degenerate into a system of despotism.

The spokesmen of the last group, above all Kolakowski and Szaki, call themselves Marxist humanitarians. Their first demand is a society that guarantees freedom from fear to its citizens. They reject violence as a political means.

The young Polish philosopher Kolakowski is a man to be watched by all who take an interest in the future of the Polish nation. He joined the Communist Party at a very early age and is still strongly influenced by Leninist . ideology. He often stresses the importance of the idea of freedom, but he is only in favour of free discussion " of ideologies based on the principles of socialism ". He is against the re-introduction of a multi-party system.

Kolakowski is for the time being a seeker who has not yet found his way. No more incisive and pungent indictment of totalitarianism has ever been written than Kolakowski's essays The End of the Age of Myths, which remain yet to be published in Poland, but which were published just about a year ago by The New Leader. Here he defines the totalitarian State as a State " in which a person who has committed no crime sits at home waiting for the police, in which there are more spies than nurses and more people in prisons than in hospitals ".

There can be no doubt about his sincerity in trying to analyse the crises of conscience through which many a young communist is passing now. He does not as yet reject the principle that the end may justify the menas, but he has of late become fairly critical as to both ends and means. In spite of heavy attacks by Soviet inspired writers he continues his ideological criticism. In September last he wrote a series of articles in Nowa Kultura which have been characterised as the most far-reaching criticism ever written by a communist under a communist rule. Moreover he does not restrict himself to the role of critic. " No one ", he says, " is exempt from the moral duty to fight against a system of government, a doctrine or a social order which he considers vile

and inhuman, by resorting to the argument that he finds them historically necessary ". In another article, he says: " It would be far from the truth to say that the ways of thinking, feeling and doing things which have been criticised here have been completely eliminated; they are patently possessed of a virulent vitality ".

The name of Kolakowski soon became the watchward of revisionism not only in Poland, but all over Soviet-dominated Europe. As the communist State more than any other state is based on theory, revisionism is a potential danger for the whole Soviet system. That is why it is repudiated not only by the orthodox communists, but by the Khrushchev brand of communism as well.

Immediately after the Moscow declaration by the twelve Communist Parties, Pravda and Izvestia started a violent campaign against revisionism the inevitable fruits of which, it was said, would be the emergence of " national communism ", the rejection of Russian leadership and the destruction of communist unity. So far only three men have been singled out for special treatment: the Hungarian " fascist " Imre Nagy, the Yugoslav " renegade " Djilas and the Polish philosopher Kolakowski.

Only a few weeks ago Pravda quoted Kolakowski as having put the question: " Has the very conception of Marxism retained any meaning ? " and, according to the same source, Kolakowski's answer to his own question was that revisionism can be traced back to "social-democracy, Trotskyism, anarcho-syndicalism, etc. " In Rumania Kolakowski was attacked as a bourgeois by Contemporanul, and in Czechoslovakia an attack by the Czech theorist Filiec was broadcast in order to ensure a big audience. The Polish intellectuals did not flinch before the attack, but hit back.

All over the country clubs were founded where young intellectuals might discuss the problems of politics and philosophy. Many of these clubs took their point of departure from the Petofi Club in Budapest. Po Prostu was, above all, the champion and the co-ordinator of these clubs.

The essay European values and Polish literature by Paul Hertz which was published in the autumn and which constitutes one of the most important documents of Polish culture of today was originally given as a lecture at one of these clubs. In this lecture M. Hertz, who, incidentally, used to be an enthusiast of Soviet literature, reminds his peoples that Polish culture was always moulded by three elements viz. the Greek, Roman and Christian ideas. This return to the ideas of classical antiquity and to Christian ethics goes far to show the bankruptcy of communist ideology in Poland.

During the Youth Festival in Moscow in August last the Polish students carried the torch of intellectual freedom into the Soviet camp. According to the Polish paper Zysie Warszawy the young Poles were accused of being " revisionist ", to which their leader Broszkiewicz retorted " The best cultural policy is complete cultural freedom ".

This clash of opinions was referred to in broadcasts from Radio Warsaw. In a special broadcast from Moscow it was said that " the Polish approach to certain questions " was " opening the eyes of other delegations " from the communist camp. Two days later Radio Warsaw declared that the Polish way of thinking was exerting a magnetic pull over young Russians.

Curiously enough, even the Polish review Opinie, which happens to be the mouthpiece of the Society for Friendship between Poland and Russia, was accused of " denigrating " Russian literature. The official Polish weekly Polityka immediately came to the rescue of Opinie.

A little later a storm broke forth over an interview given by the Chairman of the Polish writers' union, Antoni Slonimski to the Japanese daily, Mainichi.

Komsomolskaya Pravda commented upon the interview in these terms: " It was a short interview, it only covered half a page, but in that interview a whole bucketful of dirt was poured on Soviet literature and culture ".

These few quotations go far to prove the fermentation that is discernible between the young intellectuals of Poland.

This fermentation, which may well lead to the defeat of Polish communism in the cultural field, is behind the new stricter enforcement of censorship. In the Western sense of the word the Polish press was never free under Gomulka, but it was nevertheless able to give fairly objective information about the Western world and to put forward certain views that were not in conformity with the views held by the Government. Therefore the closing down of Po Prostu may well mark an epoch. The comment by the official weekly Polityka which is generally taken to represent the views of Gomulka is at any rate rather disquietening. " Freedom of speech ",

mites Polityka, " ends at a point where agitation and propaganda against the social construction of this country begin. We do not prohibit different views provided that they are not directed against the foundation of our system ".

The editor of the Po Prostu, Turski, and the former editor, Lasota, were, together with eight others, expelled from the party, but it is not uninteresting to note that Lasota was allowed to keep his mandate as a member of the Sejm.

The Polish journalists who had fought hard for the freedom of the written word seem to have given up hope for the time being. The leadership of the journalists' union has been left intact, but it seems to have pledged itself to active propaganda for the party line. There is a certain amount of self-criticism in the resolution adopted by way of compromise, but the opening passage should not be overlooked, emphasizing as it does that the journalists are " proud of the fight for the improvement of the party, the démocratisation of the country, the living standard of the masses and economic recovery ".

The relative liberty of the press has gone, and promises made during and immediately after the October revolution have not been kept. Certain articles and speeches constitute today a rather curious reading:

" In October the party rallied round the nation and the nation granted political leadership to the party. " (Tygodnik Powszechny).

" The duration of the agreement depends on whether the party will carry out its own resolutions. " (the same paper).

At the 8th party conference Gomulka said " one cannot escape from the truth. If it is kept secret, it will emerge as a threatening ghost ". At the 9th party conference Gomulka talked more about centralisation than about democracy and liberty, but he still rejected the idea of a monolith state.

These were the times when anti-Stalinism was in vogue. The Minister of Agriculture, M. Ocham, first secretary of the party in the pre-October days, answered the attack by the Stalinists on the new policy with the works: " We have had enough of speeches written with imported ink ". Although this declaration con-stitued a reply to the Stalinist leader Mijal's charges that Gomulka's road to communism consisted in a " capitulation to capitalism ", the real attack was certainly directed against the Kremlin's intervention in the domestic politics of Poland.

At the 10th party conference Gomulka abandoned the middle-of-the-road policy in order to fight revisionism. He did not deny the existence of a " dogmatic " (i.e. Stalinist) faction, but said that the best way of defeating dogmatism' would be to defeat the revisionist. Revisionism, he went on, is much more dangerous than dogmatism, because it provokes an ideological chaos and breaks up party unity. The dogmatists' faults consist above all in their longing for a return to former methods, whereas " socialism would glide into an abyss " if the revisionists had their say.

Gomulka's collaboration with the Stalinist elements is certainly a source of danger, but it would be too early to maintain that he has turned a Stalinist himself as some of his enemies seem to think.

Only a few months ago, M. Adam Schaff, who is his chief lieutenant in the ideological field, wrote: " The political and moral shock of the preceding period dealt a mortal blow to blind faith. Anyhow, we in our country shall not return to it, as such attitudes, once shattered, do not lend themselves to reconstruction. Application of force is useless in this respect ".

As for Gomulka's own speeches at the tenth party conference, the published version of the conference proceedings is known to be incomplete. The prepared speeches seem to have been published, but not Gomulka's interventions in the debate. Gomulka is said to have been infuriated by the violence of the different Natolin (Stalinist) speeches and to have answered in unmistakable language. He is even said to have referred to the Natolin leader Mijal as a foreign agent (i.e. of the Sovier Union).

Another of the Natolin leaders, Mazur, who is said to be the most intelligent of the whole faction, has been sent as ambassador to Prague, which under the circumstances must be regarded as a sort of political exile.

At the same time very severe sentences were passed on the former Deputy Minister of Public Security and his henchmen.

All this tends to show that Gomulka has not given up his ideas of a Polish " road to communism ", as opposed to the Russian road.

On November 5th Pravda published an article by Gomulka in which he stressed the differences' between the various " national roads to communism In the same issue the Alban-nian leader Hoxha stressed the importance of ideological and political unity in the communist world.

In a speech before the Sejm on the last day of 1957 the Polish Premier Cyrankiewicz called attention to the fact that there was much to be learned from the West in the economic sphere. " We should learn from the West ", said the Polish Prime Minister, " how to organise work. We should learn how to achieve a high level of productivity, how to be industrious, provident, thrifty and modest in Jiving. We should remember that people in the West have achieved their higher standard of living by working diligently and efficiently. This is something we can learn from them ".

As a matter of fact, Western influence seems to be preponderant in the economic field. This is what Gomulka said before the party conference of the Democratic party on January 15th: " Our policy towards the artisans and small-scale private enterprises has undergone no change... there is room in Poland for the development of private handicrafts and services and also for private trade. "

It might be added that the de-collectivisation of agriculture is still going on. Before the Revolution of October there were more than 10,000 agricultural " co-operatives ", at present there are only 1,724. Under this process agricultural production has gone steadily up. Generally speaking the Polish peasant is much better off than the Polish worker. In August the official party paper, Trybuna Ludu, published some extremely interesting statistics showing the standard of living of a Polish worker. In coal-mining the average monthly wage amounts to 2,344 zl., in metallurgy 1,614 zl. and in the textile industries 1,124 zl. The monthly cost of living amounts roughly speaking to about 2,400 zl. That is to say that the worker must work over-time in order to be able to cover his expenses. Only the coal mines form an exception.

The Polish strikes are not inspired by political motives. They are the result of wages that do not cover the necessary expenses. The standard of living of the Polish worker compares unfavourably, not only with conditions in Czechoslovakia, but even with conditions in the Soviet Union and in Eastern Germany.

*Gomulka and the Church*

Special mention must be made of the religious problem in Poland. The Polish people is one of the most Catholic in Europe. Between a third and a half of the Communist party's membership go to Mass every Sunday.

Gomulka no doubt knows that he is dependent upon the benevolent neutrality of the Church. This accounts for the strange fact that religious instruction is being given in Polish State schools.

At the same time he seems to fear the immense influence of the Primate of the Polish Church, Cardinal Wyszynski. This is why he runs his own private Catholic movement—the so-called Pax Movement—-which is headed by the former Fascist leader M. Piasezki. It is a curious fact that the former Fascist Piasezki in the after-war years turned into a fervent Stalinist, and many people think that he even today is more representative of the Kremlin than of the Polish Government.

It should not be forgotten that just before the dramatic events of October 1956 the Warsaw newspaper, Slovo Pow Szechne, published an article under the signature of M. Piasezki in which the Polish people was warned that any irresponsible Polish move would be likely to provoke Russian measures of a military nature. Now he is leader of one of the greatest organisations in Poland which publishes papers and books and runs a great number of industrial and commercial enterprises.

A Polish newspaper wrote a few months ago that " Pax " has over 66 million zlotys in fixed capital over 100 million zlotys in circulation, including 11 million in hard money in banks and safe deposits of various enterprises. Last year it showed a profit of 100 million zlotys of which no less than 38 million were spent in order to cover the deficit of their political enterprises including all sorts of publications. " Pax " is exempted from income tax as well as from any kind of payment to the Government treasury from profits. The Pax daily newspaper is, with a circulation of about 200,000, one of the biggest in Poland. In order to understand present-day Polish politics one will have to put the question why this enormous Catholic organisation is being maintained. It seems probable that the Gomulka regime sees in " Pax " a means of dividing the Catholic population and so preventing its unity under the leadership of Cardinal Wyc-zynski, who is the greatest figure of Poland today.

It seems as though Gomulka will have to make certain concessions to the Church authorities. The charity organisation Caritas was taken out of the hands of the Church in 1949, and Gomulka has always refused to give it back. But, according to a statement from the Cardinal's office, the Polish Government has agreed to a long-standing Church request to deal directly with the United States Catholic organisations on the question of charity.

At the same time it was announced in New York that an exchange programme would link an American university with the Catholic university of Lublin in Poland. It is believed to be the first example of its kind.

It would serve no useful purpose to depict the Gomulka system as a democratic or semi-democratic system. This is not the case, but, on the other hand, he has his own place in the hierarchy of international communism and he does not always see eye to eye with the Kremlin leaders. It is not in the interest of Western democracy that he should be too dependent on Russian help.

It was much against the wishes of the Kremlin that he negotiated an American loan. And he certainly did not follow Russian advice when he allowed the American charity organisation CARE to resume its activities in Poland.

It has been the object of this report to show that Polish youth is not lost to the cause of democracy and that there is a widespread wish in the Polish people to resume contacts with the democratic world. It is up to the Western countries to facilitate such contacts.

For the time being the fermentation between the young Polish communists constitutes the gravest problem for Eastern communism. A leading Polish journalist is quoted as having said: " To blame Beria is good enough for Soviet babies. To accuse Stalinism will satisfy Polish simpletons. But we Polish communists have to analyse what is wrong with Leninism, which started it all. "

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*Present situation in Rumania, Bulgaria and Albania (Mr. KIRK, Rapporteur)*

*INTRODUCTION*

1. There is little to report on the developments in these three countries which shows any marked departure from the pattern in the other satellite States. In all three, the struggle between the "national Communists", or "revisionists ", and the " Stalinists ". or " conservatives ", which has been raging throughout the Communist world since October 1956, still appears to be going on, though it is now quite clear that, in these three countries at any rate, the Stalinists have, to all intents and purposes, won the battle.

2. The most interesting development was undoubtedly the proposal by the Rumanian Premier, Stoica, last September, for the formation of a Balkan Pact consisting of Rumania, Bulgaria, Albania, Greece, Yugoslavia, and Turkey. There seems to be little doubt that this proposal was mainly aimed at the Greek Government; the Yugoslavs were expected to reply, as they did, that they would consider it, and the Turks, no doubt, were also expected to treat the proposal with contempt. But I think there was a determined attempt to exploit the temporary estrangement of Greece with Turkey and the United Kingdom over Cyprus, and it will have been a grave disappointment to the Kremlin, who must have been behind the offer, when the Greeks absolutely refused to have anything to do with it. Under those circumstances the proposal has lapsed.

*Rumania*

3. The Stalinist dictator, Gheorghiu-Dej, who holds the post of Communist Party Secretary, is apparently in complete control, with no one there to challenge him. His hold appears to have been strengthened following the death of President Groza, when he secured the election to that office of a political nonentity, Ion Maurer, the Foreign Minister, .as almost the only thing known about Maurer is his unflinching allegiance to Gheorghiu-Dej. Maurer is an ethnic German, and his appointment may be designed to quiet sentiment, particularly among the ethnic Germans, in Transylvania, who seem to have been a little restive since the Hungarian events.

4. Following the Molotov purge in the Kremlin, Dej carried out a small purge of his own among men accused by him of the same crimes as Molotov, that is, Stalinism. All that is known of the two men who were purged from the Central Committee, Chisinevschi and Cons-tantinescu, however, suggests that, if anything their views were far more liberal than those of Dej, and that they were in fact purged because they were almost the only leaders of the Rumanian Communist Party who might have replaced him. No information has been forthcoming as to what has happened to these two men, but they appear to be still at liberty.

5. As in the Soviet Union, the main discontent with the regime now shows itself in the field of literature and the arts, and the regime has had to lay down some pretty stern edicts against so-called revisionism in this sphere. Rumanian writers and artists seem to be a good deal more skilful than their Russian counterparts in putting accross their opposition, and the Government seems to have been a little baffled in dealing with it.

6. In the economic sphere, some attempt has been made to provide better living standards for the people, but the Soviet exploitation of Rumanian heavy industry still weighs very heavily on the country. Current trade agreements provide for the early delivery of ships, oil equipment, railway equipment, cisterns, trucks, tugs, tractors, electric machinery, Diesel engines, pumps and turbines, construction and agricultural machinery, machine tools, and other metallurgical products. As Rumania possesses few raw materials of her own, other than oil, it is clear that the large Russian exports of iron ore and coking coal into the country are being used solely for manufacture and re-export to the Soviet Union.

*Bulgaria*

7. The Stalinists appear to be in complete control. Chervenkov, the leading Stalinist, who was ousted in 1956, still holds no official position in the Party, but his chief henchmen, Yugov and Zhivkov, as Premier and First Secretary respectively, fully represent his views. Chervenkov— after spending two years in the Soviet Union—has now returned to Bulgaria. He is clearly not in disgrace in the same way that Rakosi is. Two of his leading adherents were put into key-positions in journalism as recently as the end of January, and this is only the last of a series of changes going on throughout last year in which revisionists have been replaced by Stalinists.

8. The arts, as in Rumania, form the main focus of opposition, and it is noteworthy that the main purges recently have been in this field. In his apparently junior post of Minister of Education, Chervenkov, when he is in Bulgaria, can obviously play a leading part in this battle, and at a long meeting of the Union of Bulgarian Writers in December, he attempted to reimpose Party discipline. He does not appear to have been successful, as further meetings have had to be arranged for this month.

9. I feel that I should draw the Committee's attention to the large number of young people from Bulgaria who are " volunteering " to work in Siberia under the virgin lands scheme. Granted the high level of unemployment—about 70,000—in Bulgaria, I find it difficult to believe that even the 10,000 publicly described by the regime as being volunteers (the real figure may well be considerably higher) would really wish to cut themselves off completely from their homes and families, and undertake unpleasant work under extremely unpleasant conditions. The Committee may well feel it worth-while to make further investigations on this point.

10. A further attempt has been made to make life easier for the population, by the raising of family allowances and other benefits, but the standard of living remains low. In particular, forced collectivisation, which now covers about 95 per cent of the total acreage of farm-land, is causing real hardship. As in Rumania, exploitation by the Soviet Union, mainly in the field of agricultural produce, seems to be going on as much as ever.

*Albania*

11. There is little that need be said about this country, which is scarcely anything more than a military base for the Soviet Union. Fear of outsiders seeing the great defence installations, particularly the enormous submarine base at Valona, was probably the cause of the forcing down of a British commercial and a United States military aircraft in December under circumstances strongly reminiscent of the Corfu incident of 1946. Except for these incidents, and the expansion of Soviet installations, the country seems to continue on its traditional uneven course.

12. Some excitement was caused last Spring by the defection of a leading Albanian Communist, General Panajot, to Yugoslavia last May, but this seems to have been caused by a personal quarrel with the Party leadership, rather than from ideological reasons. An attempt was made by Khrushchev to bring about a reconciliation between Albania and Yugoslavia last autumn, but it was not very successful.

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*Present situation in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania (M. WISTRAND, Rapporteur)*

*Estonia*

13. Soviet Policy Unchanged. — No general changes in Soviet policy have taken place, at least as far as Estonia is concerned. The Communist Party of Estonia was eager to express its satisfaction with, and praise for, the resolution of the June Plenary Meeting of the C. C. of the C. P. S. U. concerning the " anti-party group of Malenkov, Kaganovich and Molotov." For that purpose workers' meetings at factories were organised all over the country in the summer, as well as meetings of the local party organisations. At the 10th Congress of the Estonian C. P., too, the same satisfaction and approval was voiced. Some new steps towards a decentralisation of the administrative apparatus were taken, particularly with regard to the powers of the local Soviets, which were enlarged. Needless to say, however, this does not take place within the framework of democratic centralism. Its purpose is rather to get more work out of them and consists therefore of enlarging their sphere of authority in the field of finance and in economic matters. The drive for a carefully controlled rapprochement between the people in Estonia and the outside world continues. Persons from Estonia continue to visit foreign countries, including India, in groups. Estonian athletes visited Finland and a Finnish team and a Swedish soccer team visited Estonia. Correspondence of Estonians with relatives abroad is continuing, too. No mass arrests or deportations have been reported. To assist in the harvest work about 2,500 young persons were dispatched to Kazakhstan in the summer of 1957, but returned to Estonia when the harvest was over.

14. Economy.—In June 1957 the new Council of National Economy was established; subordinated to it are ten individual administrations. A number of industrial ministries were abolished and a total of about 420 enterprises responsible for about 80 per cent of the total industrial output of the country subordinated to the new Council. In agriculture, where nearly 80 per cent of all income is derived from animal husbandry, an increase of 30 per cent in milk production and of 40 per cent in meat production is reported. The figures refer to the combined output of the sovkhozes and kolkhozes during the first half of 1957 as compared to the same period in 1956. However, no appreciable improvement in the income of the kolkhoz peasants can be expected. The total agricultural output is still barely about 50 per cent of the pre-war one. The colonial exploitation of the country is increasing. On the one hand, goods which are in short supply in Estonia are being exported to the U. S. S. R., proper. On the other hand, the State pays for deliveries at extremely low prices and sells the commodities thus obtained at surprisingly high prices to the customers. Thus a litre of milk costs in a State shop exactly four times as much as the producer was paid. The profits obtained in this manner finance the industrialisation. In other words: it is at the expense of the working people and the forcibly lowered living standard in Estonia that industries in Estonia are being enlarged.

15. The wave of Dissatisfaction of the Population.— According to the Communist sources the situation in Tallinn Polytechnic Institute still gives a headache to the Party functionaries. Various steps are being taken as precautionary measures against possible disturbances. The seriousness of the situation for the Communist authorities is revealed by the fact that the first secretary of the Estonian Communist Party, Ivan Kabin, found it necessary to discuss the subject at the recent tenth congress of the Estonian C. P. where he maintained, among other things, that relics of "bourgeois nationalism " are still alive in the consciousness of the people, and complained that propaganda of Western imperialists, and more particularly of the Estonian refugee centres acting in cooperation with the imperialists, was having a detrimental influence in the country. One cause of dissatisfaction is the presence of a large number of Russians in Estonia. This dissatisfaction is spreading so far that the Communist functionaries fear that it will engulf the whole nation, including the Party members. The standard of living of the population is another cause of dissatisfaction. A small amelioration of conditions during the past few years could not prevent open demonstrations of dissatisfaction. The main cause of discontent is, however, the Communist regime itself. The authorities keep complaining about the bourgeois nationalist attitude of the population. True, they have never revealed how widespread it is. On the contrary, according to them only a few people are affected by the bourgeois nationalist mentality. While denying its existence, the authorities have admitted at the same time that the bourgeois nationalist mentality has very deep roots in the consciousness of the people, and that despite all efforts at re-education it has been impossible to eliminate it to date. This conflicting attitude is quite understandable because, for obvious reasons, the Communists cannot afford to admit the extent of dissatisfaction.

16. Communist Party Counter-measures. — Obviously the Communists are hampered by the fact that they most carefully ignore the true causes of discontent and must, therefore, combat symptoms instead of causes. First they allege that the dissatisfaction of the population is caused by propaganda of hostile elements, more particularly of Estonian refugees abroad. Fierce attacks have been launched against Estonian writers and artists in exile. An intensification of Communist propaganda is still regarded as the most important method to overcome the difficulties. It is now directed against the nationalist feelings of the population and towards the reeducation of the people in the spirit of Soviet patriotism, but thus far no progress has been discernible.

17. Cultural Life.—The Party draws a sharp line between Estonia's independence period and the Communist era. The older classics of Estonian science, literature, art and music of the pre-independence period had already been recognised, but only very few were recognised from the independence period. In the first half of 1957 an intensive discussion took place as regards the Communist attitude towards Estonian culture in the independence period. It ended with a grudging recognition of its importance in the cultural life of the people. The official Party line towards the Estonian writers is expressed by First C. P. Secretary Käbin who said: " It must not be forgotten that the ideology and partisanship of art and literature must be observed under all conditions. Workers in literature and art must help us to build a Communist society. "

18. The Church.—The Church is only tolerated by the Communists, and the Party is officially against religion. The Head of the Church and ministers are appointed by the M. V. D. The main value of the church officials, from the Communist point of view, is the propaganda conducted through them.

*Latvia and Lithuania*

The above report is applicable to conditions in Latvia and Lithuania, too. There is one difference, however: from Latvia great numbers of young people, mostly university graduates, have been sent to work in various parts of the Soviet Union with the result that the country itself suffers from a shortage of qualified specialists. Otherwise the situation is more or less the same, and the same are also the difficulties of the authorities with the " bourgeois nationalist " mentality of the population.

*What are the prospects?*

Observers abroad may, under the present conditions, fall victim to certain illusions of more radical changes for the better. However, since much of the routine remains unchanged, there is not much hope for essential improvements in the near future.

An example is the so-called " economic decentralisation " which appears so impressive at a distance. According to that definition, the three Baltic republics became " separate economic units. " Does it suggest that a considerable step was taken towards a broader autonomy ?

One of the most important resources of a " separate economic unit " is obviously its manpower. A " separate economic unit " should have the right and the means to use its economy for its own needs. Agriculture in the Baltic States has been suffering for many years not only from the great disorganisation caused by collectivisation but also from an acute scarcity of manpower. Harvesting, in particular, is always badly delayed. Nevertheless, great numbers of the Baltic youth from the cities, including hundreds of university and college students, had to harvest, not in their home countries but in the fields of Kazakhstan in the so-called " virgin lands ", some 2,000 miles away. This was planned in Moscow, and the local republics had nothing to do but to recruit their contingents on a " voluntary " basis under the auspices of the local Komsomol organs. The National Economic Council constituting a so-called " independent " or " autonomous " economic unit did not dare—or perhaps it did not even occur to it—to object to such displacement of its resources. It is, however, remarkable that the harvesting campaign in Kazakhstan received less publicity in 1957 than before.

The exploitation of the countries' industrial resources follows the same pattern. The electric motors of the Tallinn factory Volta are used all over the U. S. S. R. and in the countries of the Soviet bloc, while Estonia itself is short of electric motors. Household gas produced from Estonian oilshale supplies Leningrad while Tallinn is short of household gas.

This suggests that much of the " independence " of the " economic units " is only theroretical.