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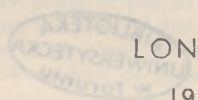
POLAND
AND THE
FOUR FREEDOMS

I.
Political Situation



LONDON

1946



I.—POLITICAL SITUATION

Poland is now a totalitarian State ruled by a Communist party. The ruling party is merely a tool in the hands of the Soviet Government, carrying out Moscow's instructions in both home and foreign policy. Home affairs are being moulded according to the Soviet design. For this purpose numerous Russian military units are kept on Polish territory, dispersed widely throughout the country and not only along the main lines of communication as is reported in some papers. Then the most important administrative and military positions have been taken over by Soviet citizens, most of whom are working for the secret Political Police. On the former German territory which is now attached to Poland, the word of the Soviet military leaders is law and the role of the Warsaw Regime's representatives comparatively negligible. Poland to-day, in fact, is ruled either by Soviet commanders or by Soviet puppets of the Warsaw Government and its organs.

This state of affairs is undoubtedly completely opposed to the wishes of all spheres of society in Poland—of the peasants and workers as well as those of the middle-class citizens and intelligentsia.

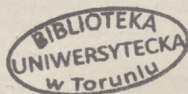
The Communists have never had much influence in Poland. At no election, either parliamentary or municipal, before the recent war, did they gain more than 2 per cent. of the votes. Without the support of a foreign Power, the present Communist Government would not have lasted twenty-four hours in Poland.

The so-called "broadening" of the Warsaw Government according to the decision of the Conference at Yalta, which brought in Mr. Mikolajczyk and a few of his colleagues, changed nothing in the existing state of the country. This becomes clear when one considers who are the pillars of the present regime—first, Mr. Bierut, the acting head of the State, secondly, the Provisional Government in Warsaw, and thirdly, the so-called "National Council," a kind of quasi-Parliament appointed by the Soviet authorities.

WHO IS MR. BIERUT ?

Mr. Eugeniusz Boleslaw Bierut was before the recent war completely unknown in the political and social life of Poland, though he played quite an important part in the Comintern. In 1921 Mr. Bierut became a Soviet citizen. He spent several years in Moscow, studying theoretical and practical politics while attached to the Polish section of the Comintern. During the years from 1923 to 1925 he acted as a secret organiser of the Communist Party in Poland, and later he took over various offices in the Comintern section for East-Central Europe, which functioned first in Vienna and then in Prague. There, in 1936, he became the leader of the Polish section of the OGPU (Soviet Secret Police, now called N.K.V.D.). During this war, he worked in Poland, secretly setting up a Communist organisation.

After so many years of preparing for a Communist revolution in Poland, Mr. Bierut has reaped his reward. After the crossing of the River Bug by the Red Army he was appointed on September 13th, 1944, Provisional President of Poland by the Soviet-sponsored Lublin Committee.



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PROVISIONAL WARSAW GOVERNMENT.

At present the Warsaw Government is based on a coalition of five parties :

1. The Polish Workers' Party.
2. The Polish Socialist Party.
3. The Democratic Party.
4. The Peasant Party.
5. The Polish Peasant Party.

Of these five groups only the last, the Polish Peasant Party, is relatively independent of Communist control. The name "Polish Workers' Party" is a mere camouflage for "Communist Party," and the three remaining parties are in reality Communist puppet groups.

The policy of the Soviet authorities and the Polish Communist leaders has from the very first been aimed at establishing a mechanism which would eventually force a Communist dictatorship upon Poland. As early as July, 1944, the Lublin Committee was set up and entrusted by the Soviet Government with the administration of the country west of the "Curzon Line." Besides the Communist Polish Workers' Party, the representatives of the three above-mentioned puppet parties joined this body. Though all three of them bear the names of authentic former Polish political groups, the resemblance goes no further. Their leaders are either all Communists or warm Communist sympathisers—sometimes Soviet agents, pure and simple.

The leader of the puppet Socialist Party in Poland, Mr. Edward Osobka-Morawski, has been appointed Premier of the Warsaw Government. He, again, is a figure completely unknown to political circles. Before the outbreak of the recent war, he was an obscure, insignificant member of the Polish Socialist Party. During the war, he left this party and set up a small group under the name of Polish Socialist Workers' Party, which kept in close contact with the Communists. With the establishment of the Lublin Committee, he suddenly emerged as the leader of the Polish Socialist Party, but without any mandate of its true leaders or of any of its members. Mr. Osobka-Morawski is simply a tool of the Communists, and working with him are a number of Communists and persons who belonged—without any support from the masses—to the extreme left-wing of the Socialist Party.

Thus one can understand why some of the puppet leaders of the Polish Socialist Party (for instance, Mr. K. Rusinek in the columns of the Warsaw daily, *Robotnik*) sponsored a union between the (puppet) Polish Socialist Party and the Polish Workers' Party. The Communists also have this aim in view. A declaration to this effect was made by Mr. Gomulka, leader of the Polish Workers' Party and Vice-Premier of the Warsaw Government during a Congress meeting of the Polish Workers' Party in Warsaw on December 1st, 1945. Both parties have already issued joint election lists during the so-called elections to the Workers' Council which has been set up in factories and mines. They also stress the need for the creation of a joint bloc for the next General Election.

Mr. Osobka-Morawski's party was recently joined by Mr. Zulawski, who in June, 1945, took part in the Moscow negotiations for "broadening" the Warsaw Government. Then he tried to set up his own party

in Poland under the name of the Polish Social Democratic Party, but he could not get permission from the Warsaw Government to do so. Eventually he joined the puppet Polish Socialist Party. But in connection with his decision he did declare that there were Socialists both inside Poland and abroad who definitely opposed the Warsaw Government. These men represent the authentic Socialist movement with all its traditions of fighting in the name of freedom and democracy.

The two remaining puppet parties are the Peasant Party and the Democratic Party. They, too, are led by specially trained Communists or sympathisers with Communism. And these, again, only have the name in common with the authentic parties before the war.

At the end of December, 1944, the Lublin Committee became the so-called Polish Provisional Government. In July, 1945, it was claimed to have been broadened by the addition to it of Mr. Mikolajczyk.

Actually the "broadening" process only very slightly altered its character. Sixteen of the twenty-one members of the Government, that is to say, more than 75 per cent., are Communists or representatives of Communist-controlled parties (Polish Socialist Party, Peasant Party, Democratic Party). Of the remaining five members, four are Mr. Mikolajczyk and his followers and the fifth, the Socialist, Mr. J. Stanczyk, joined the Government in a personal capacity, as he held no mandate from his party.

All the important key-positions are held by Communists and their sympathisers. For example :

Mr. Osobka-Morawski	...	Premier.
Mr. Gomulka	First Vice-Premier.
Mr. Rzymowski	...	Foreign Minister.
Mr. Radkiewicz	...	Minister of Security.
Mr. Mine	...	Minister of Commerce and Industry.
" Marshal " Rola-Zymierski		Minister of National Defence.
Mr. Matuszewski	...	Minister of Propaganda and Information.

And so on. Recently the administration of the former German territories now annexed to Poland was entrusted to the Vice-Premier, Mr. Gomulka.

Mr. Mikolajczyk's followers are well aware of the character of the Communist-controlled puppet parties set up to deceive public opinion in Poland and abroad. Mr. Mikolajczyk's London paper, the weekly *Poland of To-morrow*, published on December 9th, 1945, an article in which it was asserted that the Communist Polish Workers' Party—from behind the facade of several parties—aims at making itself supreme.

As has already been said, the Communists have taken all the most important positions in the country such as those of Provincial and District Governors, the directors and managers of all the bigger industrial and commercial undertakings.

They are also in control of all the chief social, economic and cultural organisations because the Warsaw Government simply appoints the boards of these bodies, making them up of Communists and their sympathisers as well as from a good number of secret political police

agents. Their policy is to get control of all fields of public life by setting up numerous bodies. For instance, the "Peasants' Self-help Association" seems on the surface an organisation of professional and welfare character, but is in reality nothing more than an instrument of political pressure—intended to "mould" the peasantry. It has been granted numerous privileges by the Warsaw Government. It has the right to handle the assignment of seeds, cattle-breeding and agricultural equipment for the peasants. It has the last word on the so-called agricultural reforms, and in this way the peasants are absolutely dependent upon the ruling Communists.

Moreover, all the means of influencing public opinion—the entire Polish Press, publishing bodies, broadcasting system—are in the hands of the Communists.

THE SO-CALLED NATIONAL COUNCIL.

The so-called National Council of Homeland plays the part of a provisional Parliament and is even more one-sided in its composition than the Warsaw Government. It has by now 437 members, of whom 90 per cent. are Communists or their sympathisers. The Polish Peasant Party of Mr. Mikolajczyk has not more than 10 per cent. of its seats and has, therefore, to demur to the prevailing political atmosphere.

Under such conditions the sessions of the National Council are very similar to those of the former German Reichstag during the Hitler regime, as well as to the parliamentary sessions of other totalitarian States. Usually there is no discussion whatsoever on the passing of the more important bills proposed by the Government. The recent treaty between the Warsaw and Soviet Governments, for instance, which handed over to the Russians the eastern half of Poland with her two historic cultural centres of Lwow and Vilno, was ratified in this way. Everyone who knows the views and feelings of the Poles on this question is aware how utterly opposed they are to this decision of the National Council.

This same body quite arbitrarily usurps the power of Parliament. It carries out fundamental changes in the political, social and economic structure of the country which under normal circumstances only the chosen representatives of the people have the right to make. In this way, Poland has not only been transformed into a Soviet vassal State, but against the overwhelming majority of public opinion is being adjusted to the Soviet pattern in every field of public life.

The whole country is spread under the net of the Provincial, District and Local Councils, all dependent upon the National Council of Homeland. These organisations, too, are composed mainly of Communists and exercise strong influence on the administration of the country, bearing close resemblance to the Russian central, provincial and local "Soviets." The 1921 Constitution of Poland, to which the Warsaw claims to be pledged, did not foresee these "councils."

THE STATE OF THE POLISH POLITICAL PARTIES.

None of the genuine political parties have any possibility of developing a programme of action, save, perhaps, for Mr. Mikolajczyk's, but that, too, cannot function unhindered.

The Polish underground State was based on four main political groups. These were, reading from Right to Left :

- The National Democratic Party (or National Party).
- The Christian Labour Party (or Christian Democrats).
- The Polish Peasant Party.
- The Polish Socialist Party.

All these parties before the war were strongly opposed to dictatorship and firmly democratic in their principles. They unanimously agreed to combat German aggression to the utmost and to act in conformity with the Western Powers of Europe and with Russia. During the five war years they worked in a coalition, jointly directing the underground movement throughout the country. Many of the prominent leaders and members of the groups lost their lives in this activity.

It could therefore be reasonably expected that their representatives should form the first coalition Government in Poland when the war came to an end. But what is the present situation of these four parties ?

The National Democratic Party has been denied any right whatsoever by the Warsaw Government. This Party is, with the Polish Socialist Party, the oldest political organisation in Poland, having always had a great following among the town and country population, especially in Western and Northern Poland. It believed in co-operation with the Western Powers and friendly relations with Russia—was considered, in fact, the most "Russophile" group in Poland. Its leader, Mr. Roman Dmowski, who died at the beginning of 1939, had led Polish politics during the first World War, as the President of the Polish National Committee in Paris together with I. J. Paderewski. On behalf of his country he signed the Treaty of Versailles.

This Party's activities have now been prohibited, say the Warsaw Government, because certain sections of it were pro-Fascist. This assertion is, of course, entirely without foundation. The Communists call anyone a "Fascist" who dares to stand against them. In this instance the accusation is absolutely false and grossly unfair to a political movement which fought with all its strength and enormous sacrifice against the Nazi invaders.

This pretext has been obviously invented by the Communist group in order to eliminate a factor whose strong hold on national life was proving inconvenient to them.

The Christian Labour Party (Christian Democrats) were a compact group before the war, wielding particular influence in Upper Silesia, but also to some extent in other districts of Western Poland. This Party, too, played an important part in the underground movement through the war. Its representative, Mr. Jankowski, imprisoned now in Moscow, was Vice-Premier of the Polish Underground Cabinet. In November, 1945, the Warsaw Government officially allowed this party to function, but at the same time took every precaution to deprive it of independence. Under Communist pressure, its Executive was invaded by people who before the war—far from having anything in common with its creed—represented an entirely different ideology. For instance Mr. Widy-Wirski, the Governor of Poznan, is now Vice-President of the Party's Central Executive Committee, though he is a radical

left-wing and anti-clerical. Under such circumstances no Party could be expected to preserve true independence. In its present official version it is of a more or less semi-puppet character.

The authentic Polish Socialist Party, as was mentioned above, is not allowed to resume its action. Its name, as well as its daily *Robotnik*, were taken over by the puppet Polish Socialist Party, which participates in the Warsaw Government.

Only the *Polish Peasant Party* among the four main parties is allowed some freedom. Mr. Mikolajczyk, on his return to Poland at the end of June, 1945, saw at once that the puppet Peasant Party was completely dominated by the Communists and that there was no way of altering this state of affairs. He therefore decided to establish an authentic party, which he called the Polish Peasant Party in order to distinguish it from the Peasant Party. The new group began work in September, 1945, with the permission of the Warsaw Government. Mikolajczyk thought that he would thus be able to oppose Communist dictatorship and achieve fair elections in Poland whereby a true picture of Polish public opinion would be given.

But the Communist reaction to this showed the difficulty such a project had to face. The ruling Communist group at once organised a ruthless campaign by Press and radio against the Polish Peasant Party. Many of its most prominent leaders have been arrested and some of its executives murdered, crimes which public opinion lays at the Communist door.

At the same time the Communist rulers decided to prevent once and for all any chance of opposition by the authentic political parties. On the 3rd of November the Communist-controlled National Council adopted a resolution allowing only six parties to function in Poland, namely, the Communist Polish Workers' Party, its three puppet Parties, the Christian Labour Party and Mr. Mikolajczyk's Polish Peasant Party.

From all this only one conclusion can be drawn—that no party of the opposition has the slightest hope of action in the Poland of to-day.

PRESS AND PROPAGANDA.

In pre-war days Poland published 2,700 periodicals, which represented all the political and social trends from extreme Right-wing to the Communists. The Nazis destroyed this Press during their occupation, forbidding any kind of periodical in the Polish language. Only in Central Poland, seat of the so-called "General Government," did a score of official German papers appear in the Polish language. But very soon an influential underground Press grew up in the country, roughly amounting to about one hundred and fifty dailies, weeklies and monthlies—the mouthpieces of various different sections of the Polish Underground Movement.

Only with the entrance of the Lublin Committee into power did the independent Polish Press cease. At present, two hundred and seventy periodicals are published for the entire country, almost all of them controlled by the Warsaw Government. The only exceptions are three or four religious weeklies, *Tygodnik Powszechny* in Cracow, *Tygodnik Warszawski* in Warsaw, and two others. They must write very carefully and abstain from any criticism of the existing political

system. In fact, each editor has to avow his loyalty to the existing regime, which, of course, in practice makes any sort of criticism impossible.

Amongst the Government Press, the Polish Peasant Party has only four papers at its disposal—one daily and three weeklies. The rest, over two hundred and sixty periodicals, are in the hands of the Communists, who use them entirely for their own ends.

To edit any type of periodical in Poland one must get special permission, till now withheld from any section of the opposition. None of the Polish pre-war dailies or weeklies, except for the Cracow *Piast*, organ of the Polish Peasant Party, has been revived. Despite this virtual monopoly of the Press by the Communists, periodicals are submitted to advance censorship, which means that the papers of Mr. Mikolajczyk are frequently confiscated.

The printing-shops come under the same monopoly. None was handed back to their owners after the war. Nearly all are Government-managed, or under two Government-controlled Co-operatives—"Czytelnik" and "Książka." The Co-operative "Czytelnik" publishes a number of Communist dailies and weeklies. They control almost all book production, too, with the general result that only Communist propaganda pamphlets ever see print.

The afore-mentioned Catholic weeklies and the periodicals of Mr. Mikolajczyk have great difficulty in obtaining paper, amounts in any quantity being given only to the Communist organs.

The official Press Agency—the "Polish Press Agency," as it is called—is the only news agency existing in Poland, and is, of course, the organ of the Warsaw Government.

All broadcasting stations are in the hands of the Government and the Director of political auditions is the Soviet officer, Nadin.

Censorship of the Press as well as the selection of news put out by the Government Agency is done by members of the Communist Polish Workers' Party, which also controls the broadcasts. It is impossible for an opposition member to give a talk on the radio.

All the Government Press periodicals make repeated attacks on Great Britain and the Western Powers as a whole. These assaults have lately much increased in ferocity and are undoubtedly inspired from Moscow. It is clear that the Soviet intends to sever the tie which has bound Poland for centuries to Western civilisation.

Secret and open propaganda aims at the deterioration of Poland's relations with her neighbours, especially those with the Czechs, Slovaks and Ukrainians. Invisible provocateurs try to stir up trouble between Poles and Jews, for which the "reactionaries" or "Fascists" are always blamed. In reality, the Polish people desire nothing more than to live in peace with their neighbours and fellow-citizens.

GENERAL ELECTION.

None of the conditions agreed upon at Yalta for a free and unfettered election in Poland has been fulfilled. The ruling Communist group is well aware that their real following in Poland is very small, and so they want at any price to avoid a secret and fair election. To achieve their aim they employ various means.

One of these is to prevent either of the above-mentioned two big Polish parties—the authentic Polish Socialist Party and the authentic

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National Democratic Party, from taking part in the forthcoming elections. This, of course, is directly opposed to the Yalta decision, which was supposed to ensure the right of all political groups which were democratic and anti-Fascist to participate in the poll. It is, moreover, in complete disagreement to the Polish Constitution of 1921, by which it was allowed to set up a party in Poland without permission from the Government. According to the declaration of Lord Pethick Lawrence on the 28th of November, 1945, in the House of Lords, the British and Warsaw Governments agreed that the General Election in Poland should be held on the basis of the Constitution of 1921, and the election law of the year 1922.

The Communists are also trying at all costs to bring about a joint "electoral bloc" as in Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, because it is only by this means that they stand a chance of obtaining a majority in Parliament. They can, of course, from the outset count on the support of the three puppet parties.

The Polish Peasants' Party is in an entirely different position. This group, if it could go to the polls with a separate list of candidates, would have a great chance of success. Hence the attempts of the Communists, by methods of increasing pressure and terrorism, to force Mr. Mikolajczyk to join the "bloc." It is not enough that Mr. Mikolajczyk, in order to gain a minimum freedom of action, adjusts his terms and expressions to the pattern dictated by the Warsaw regime. The ruling usurpers do not want to lose their predominance nor even to share it.

Election under conditions like these would be merely farcical. If they are to be fair at all, the following conditions must first be fulfilled :

1. All the Polish political parties which participated in the anti-German underground movement during the recent war must be allowed to function.
2. Freedom of the Press must be restored.
3. All political prisoners must be set free and all concentration camps must be closed.
4. The Russian troops and police (N.K.V.D.) must leave Poland.
5. Foreign observers must be appointed to supervise the election.

But even these conditions would not improve the situation unless the atmosphere of tenseness and terror which the Communists have created is removed.

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