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MEMO ON THE POLISH SITUATION

Polish-American trade negotiations are now being conducted in Washington at the request of the Administration.

The President and the NSC both decided that aid should be given to Gomulka to indicate that Poland had an alternative to complete dependence on the Soviet Union. The idea evidently is to encourage similar independent trends in other eastern European countries under Moscow's control.

Secretary of State Dulles made a legal finding that Poland was not under the Kremlin's domination.

Coal mining machinery, cotton and some other agricultural surpluses are their immediate needs. It is my understanding that the Poles are interested in a \$100 million Export-Import Bank loan to purchase coal mining machinery to modernize Poland's coal industry; that they seek \$200 million worth of agricultural surplus products and about \$30 million in private loans to buy fertilizer and other farm equipment.

It should be pointed out that Poland is both isolated from the West and surrounded by Soviet states.

The future of Poland may well decide the future of Germany, and the future of Germany may well be the key to peace in Europe, if not the world. A Poland inclined toward the West would weaken the puppet communist government in East Germany and could conceivably hasten the day of German unification.

Sympathetic consideration to Poland's request could mean the bolstering of the Gomulka regime. It is possible that Gomulka could not long survive without economic aid from the United States because the economy of Poland is in a dangerous state after a decade of inefficient government and exploitation for the benefit of the Soviet Union.

There are 50,000 Soviet troops in Poland, which is still a member of the Warsaw Pact, and the Soviet troops are there by contractual right to maintain a military line of communication across Poland to their 22-division garrison in East Germany.

If aid is extended by the United States, it could well prolong the life of the Gomulka government which is communist, but it would represent a calculated risk between two evils -- Moscow control or Warsaw control. The Gomulka government is communist, but not Stalinist. If it fails, it would have no choice because Moscow would re-impose its authority and assume almost absolute control of the country.

Aid to Gomulka does represent the payment of blackmail to communism, but it would benefit the Polish people. As has already been indicated by someone, it would be like sending food into a jail to feed and ^{sustain} assist the prisoners. In the process it eases the burden on the jailers. The vast bulk of the Polish people are prisoners, and to fail to feed them would be to doom most of them to misery and many to death. The survivors would then be under Stalinist jailers and not Gomulka's.

Gomulka, in a party address last October, admitted that acre for acre, privately owned farm land produced 37% more than the state (collective) farms and 17 percent more than the cooperative farms.

He also admitted that the daily output per worker had dropped by 12% since 1949. He blamed the Communist Party for the immense economic difficulties which now confront the country.

While conditions in Poland are by no means ideal and the January Parliamentary elections were admitted to be controlled by the Communists, it appears, according ^{to} the Western Montana Catholic Register of March 10, 1957, that the "freedom now enjoyed by the

Polish people would have been inconceivable six months ago.

"Freedom of speech, of the press, and of assembly have made great strides. But the greatest step forward has been toward freedom of religion.

"Only a few days after Gomulka came to power, the Catholic Primate of Poland, Cardinal Stefan Wysynski, who had been deprived of his office and his freedom for three years, was able to resume his rightful place in Warsaw.

"The reign of terror of the Stalinist era in the years 1948 to 1956 was over, and the many Bishops and scores of priests who had been jailed were free again.

"The culminating point came on Dec. 7, when a joint Church-State commission announced an agreement in which the Communist regime guaranteed full religious freedom and expressed its willingness to remove all obstacles that had been erected against the Church.

"That agreement provided for religious instruction in the schools and for government-paid chaplains in hospitals, prisons, and other institutions.

"So major have been the concessions to the Church in Poland that her position can now be compared favorably to that in such other predominantly Catholic countries as Mexico and Argentina.

"Poland's political leadership confronted by the tanks that back old-time Marxist regimes on all frontiers, and by ousted but still vocal Polish Stalinists who naturally would seize any opportunity to

regain power, continues to proclaim its staunch adherence to Marxian-Communism and the 'Polish road to Socialism.' It must.

"But, if it keeps on making concessions toward freedom, it may in fact be Communist in name only. And, with God's help, it could possibly wind up more in/with the natural law and the social teachings of the Church than many nations of the so-called free world are now.

"It could thus establish the pattern whereby the other Communist nations could peacefully throw off their chains and accord to every man his God-given dignity.

"It might be that the democratization of Poland is but another Red tactic to gain a firmer grip on the Polish people, and that when the regime is more firmly entrenched the brutal repression could ~~begin~~ begin again. Thus economic assistance to Communist Poland is a gamble.

"The U.S. has long given help to Yugoslavia and other countries where mention of the rights of man is but a mockery.

"In the case of Poland, however, if definite assurance were given that American aid would actually help the Polish people and would not be siphoned off by the Soviet Union, it could possibly be a crucial factor in the future of the world."