

# **The Media and Intra-Elite Communication in Poland**

## **Summary Report**

Jane Leftwich Curry  
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**Rand**

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# **The Media and Intra-Elite Communication in Poland**

## **Summary Report**

Jane Leftwich Curry  
A. Ross Johnson

December 1980





## PREFACE

The Rand Corporation is conducting a multiyear comparative study of the role of the media in intra-elite communication in Communist countries. Western analysts of the political process in "closed" Communist systems necessarily rely heavily on the published and broadcast output of the mass and specialized media. These media are in part propaganda organs, but they also have other functions. A generation of Sovietologists (and specialists on other Communist states) has had to base much of its analysis of policies and politics on interpretations of media nuances. Yet the assumptions of Sovietologists about the relationship between the media and the political actors whose behavior or attitudes are inferred from them have received little attention.

The Rand study was initiated to fill this need. Its emphasis is not on techniques of content analysis, which have received considerable attention in the past, but rather on the *process* by which politically significant material appears in Communist-country media. The study tests the validity of the usual Kremlinological assumption that the media of the USSR or other Communist countries are utilized as an instrument of power struggle and policy debate by contending leaders or groups. It seeks to establish the degree to which and the circumstances under which partisan views of particular leaders, groupings, or institutions may find expression in the controlled media.

The principal data base of the study is information obtained from extended interviews with émigrés formerly involved in the media process—as writers, journalists, editors, censors, and government and Party officials. In contrast to the many studies based on content analysis alone, and in an effort to test the often unexamined assumptions of content-analysis studies, the Rand project utilizes this data base to examine the structure and process of Communist media; the study focuses on the medium in the expectation that this will enhance the analyst's ability to interpret its message.

The study has to date included investigations of Soviet and Polish media. Work on Soviet media continues, and the results will be published when available. Polish media were selected for analysis in part because they appeared to differ more than other East European media from Soviet practice and in part because better information about their operations was available. Jane Leftwich Curry, a Rand consultant, and A. Ross Johnson collaborated on this research. Extended interviews were conducted in 1978 and 1979 by the co-investigators with 44 former Polish journalists, experts, editors, censors, and Party officials. The interviews were conducted with the understanding that the interviewees would remain anonymous; this stipulation has precluded the normal referencing of source material and has necessitated omitting some of the details of specific events. Project information from émigré interviews was supplemented with other data obtained in discussions with journalists, experts, and officials during trips to Poland. The reader may wish to have more details about events and about the authority of sources, to evaluate the plausibility of the research findings. As in any sensitive elite interviewing project, however, that natural wish must be subordinated to protecting the interests of the respondents.

The results of this work on Polish media are published in the present report, which provides an overview analysis and conclusions, and in a series of Rand Notes, which contain more detailed analyses and documentation of the research:

- N-1514/1, *The Media and Intra-Elite Communication in Poland: Organization and Control of the Media*, by Jane Leftwich Curry, December 1980, reviews the controls over and the internal organization and process of Polish media.
- N-1514/2, *The Media and Intra-Elite Communication in Poland: The System of Censorship*, by Jane Leftwich Curry, December 1980, documents in detail the structure and operations of the formal censorship system.
- N-1514/3, *The Media and Intra-Elite Communication in Poland: The Role of Military Journals*, by A. Ross Johnson, December 1980, details the structure and process of military publication.
- N-1514/4, *The Media and Intra-Elite Communication in Poland: The Role of "Special Bulletins,"* by Jane Leftwich Curry, December 1980, reviews the important role played by limited-distribution bulletins in informing the Polish leadership about domestic and foreign affairs.
- N-1514/5, *The Media and Intra-Elite Communication in Poland: Case Studies of Controversy*, by Jane Leftwich Curry and A. Ross Johnson, December 1980, describes six cases that are illustrative of discussion, debate, and controversy in Polish media.

A. Ross Johnson  
Study Director

## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS: HOW TO READ POLISH MEDIA**

This report summarizes the major features of the Polish media system, describes the specific roles and editorial processes of major types of media, and analyzes the relationship between divergences of view that appear in the media and intra-elite discussion, debate, and controversy. This report, the detailed studies of particular aspects of Polish media reported in companion Notes, and in-depth interviews and conversations with 44 individuals formerly involved with the Polish media suggest a number of conclusions for the Western analyst whose understanding of Polish affairs is based at least in part on a reading of the open Polish media.

### **ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POLISH MEDIA SYSTEM**

The Polish media system is complex. Different kinds of media play different roles, have different editorial processes, and maintain different relationships with top leaders or important officials. Analyses that confuse various kinds of media will reach misleading conclusions.

The Communist Party oversees the operation of multiple media-control institutions intended to ensure that the media fulfill the functions defined by the Party leadership. The leadership seeks to limit the influence on the media of both non-Communist societal forces and particular institutions within the Communist system. To this end, it has concentrated responsibility for control of most media in a single Central Committee section, the Press Department, which is responsible to a Central Committee Secretary and one or two Politburo members. The censorship office attempts to enforce Party guidelines for the media, which are channeled through the Press Department (this was less true in the 1960s under the Gomulka leadership). Although censorship is formally justified in terms of "state security," the great majority of interventions by the censors concern political, economic, or cultural matters.

As long as there is a modicum of leadership unity, this media-control system almost totally prohibits media discussion of sensitive topics, such as relations with the USSR, major economic policy alternatives, and policy differences among the top leadership. It closely scrutinizes media organs deemed important by the Party leadership and neglects others that are formally "Party organs." For example, in the late 1970s, Polish Television News was subjected to top-level scrutiny, while articles on subjects other than economics in the Party monthly, *Nowe Drogi*, were of little concern or interest. The media-control system directs the media to take positions on major international or domestic issues, but often far less comprehensively and more accidentally than is sometimes assumed. As one respondent noted, "There is no machine in Poland that can control, even through the huge bureaucracy of the censors, whether two articles show up on the same topic accidentally on the same day, in two different papers and with different views of an issue."

The editorial processes in the various kinds of media affect what content is published. Journals go to press on fixed days of the week, for example, so the production schedule, and not dissent by editors or patrons, may explain a deviant point of view; this was the case, for example, with the treatment of economic policy in *Zycie Gospodarcze* on the eve of the December 1970 price increases. In some cases, journalists have large monetary incentives to publish in journals other than their "own"; this, and not political calculations, may explain the appearance of an article in an unusual media organ.

Within the constraints of the media-control system, journalists remain a significant professional group, with vestiges of their pre-Communist role and influence. Indeed, the magnitude of formal censorship is itself testimony to this autonomy; respondents who had occupied major editorial posts said the fact of formal censorship sometimes gave them leeway they would have lacked if they had had to be exclusively self-censoring. "Star" journalists and prominent editors, in particular, enjoy considerable prestige and authority in their own right (albeit less under Gierek than under Gomulka) and tend to be independent actors, rather than "mouthpieces" for a political patron, within the constraints of the system.

Different types of media and different media organs play different roles within the overall media system. In most cases, these are the roles prescribed by the Party leadership, which intends for various media organs to appeal to different audiences and expects that they will emphasize particular topics and couch their output at a level of sophistication and with the dosage of ideology appropriate to their audience.

The Gierek leadership viewed Television News as the most important Party organ for mobilization and information. Television News was supervised accordingly. *Trybuna Ludu* also fulfilled this role, although it was considered a less effective instrument for mobilizing the population, and its day-to-day operations were evidently less closely monitored.

The sociopolitical weeklies were established to appeal to the intelligentsia, which is recognized by the Party leadership to be less than enthusiastically pro-Communist. These journals are allowed to engage in more discussion and sometimes to raise more controversial issues than other media. Their strength and leeway indicate that the leadership (except, perhaps, Gierek) has not sought a monochromatic media but recognizes that differences in presentation and debate are unavoidable. The role played by a specific journal of this type is, however, usually more a consequence of idiosyncratic factors—especially the personality of its chief editor—than a refined "division of labor" orchestrated by the Party leadership. This is demonstrated by the history of the best known and most widely read of the sociopolitical weeklies, *Polityka*. This journal was initiated by the Party as a forum for loyal opposition and played something of that role under both Gomulka and Gierek. But *Polityka*'s specific role and prominence are attributable to the personality of its chief editor—himself an "institution," as one respondent said—and the special nature of its staff.

Specialized publications of research institutes often do not fulfill the role of "house organs" sometimes attributed to them by Western scholars. A distinction exists in this regard between the publications of ministry research institutes and those issued by institutes of the Polish Academy of Sciences (PAN). The former (e.g., *Sprawy Miedzynarodowe*) are closely supervised by their parent ministry, but

because this supervision is a recognized part of the system, ministers and other senior officials are usually inhibited from utilizing their journals for "lobbying" purposes. Their "lobbying" (which was more common under Gomulka than under Gierek, in any case) is more likely to be carried out in media organs for which they are not responsible.

In the 1960s, academic journals enjoyed substantial independence from their sponsoring institutes and PAN itself. Their editors were often as important as the institute directors, and the journals were usually treated as "discussion organs," reflecting the professional and ideological outlook of the intelligentsia subgroup that "ran" them.

Military journals fall into two distinct subsets: political journals influenced predominantly by the Defense Ministry Main Political Administration, and professional journals supervised by the General Staff or other "line" military organs. Each type of military journal has its own function and audience. The political journals (and occasional "political" articles in professional journals) receive little attention from professional "line" officers, since these journals deal with ideological themes and concerns of political officers. Such journals as *Zolnierz Wolnosci* and *Wojsko Ludowe* do not deal seriously with military strategy and tactics and thus do not speak for the professional officer corps.

The Catholic journals affiliated with ZNAK and KIK, the major lay-Catholic groupings, are a special media category. Their editors and journalists hold and seek to publish values more at odds with those of the Party leadership than their counterparts in any other type of media. The lay-Catholic organs enjoy a certain license to publish such views—but a license that is very limited and carefully controlled. These journals are more heavily censored than any others, and they may discuss certain kinds of sensitive social issues only after those issues have been raised in more orthodox media. On the other hand, since they are marginal journals, they are often allowed to publish work by Catholic and non-Catholic writers who are barred from publishing elsewhere and, since they are religious journals, to publish religious articles that cannot appear in other media.

Internal communications channels are more important than the mass media for informing the elite about foreign and domestic affairs. Limited-circulation information bulletins issued by PAP (the Polish Press Agency) and the censorship offices pass along information that is considered unsuitable for the open media.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF PERIOD AND PERSONALITY

The media system, while relatively stable in structural terms, has operated much differently in different postwar periods. In the Stalinist era, Party values were propagated by editors and journalists, with little need for external intervention by Party or censorship organs. That system partially unraveled in October 1956. The mechanisms of media control were reestablished shortly thereafter, but the leadership, under Gomulka, paid relatively little attention to the mobilization role of the media. As a consequence of both this inattention and the general decentralization and inefficiency of the system, as well as Gomulka's personal tolerance of some discussion, the media enjoyed considerable autonomy. This top-level neglect—in terms of control, investment in media infrastructure, and coopting of

journalists as Party activists—allowed the “revisionists” of 1956 to dominate the editorial boards of many academic journals and permitted Moczar (who aspired to replace Gomulka) to exert great influence over many media organs in the 1960s. When Gierek came to power, however, he reemphasized the mobilization role of the media. Thus the media-control apparatus was centralized and strengthened, journalists were considered Party workers, and some of the relative autonomy enjoyed by media organs and journalists in the 1960s disappeared.

Informal and personal ties between journalists and editors, on the one hand, and officials and leaders, on the other, remain a feature of the Polish media system. These ties are often idiosyncratic: The head of the Press Department may support a journalist in trouble, or an editor may have personal ties with a Politburo member. Within the constraints of the system, these personal ties, rather than political calculations, often explain the appearance or nonappearance of particular articles.

### MEDIA DISCUSSION AND INTRA-PARTY CONTROVERSY

The kinds of discussions that appear in the media are a function of the degree of cohesion and the mode—policymaking or mobilizing—of the leadership. Media discussions fall into several distinct categories: leadership-initiated campaigns, leadership-orchestrated pseudo-debates, journalist-initiated discussions, lobbying, elite-sanctioned specialist discussions, elite-related policy discussions, and factional debates. Each of these categories has distinct characteristics, an understanding of which will help the analyst to distinguish among them. Factional debates and elite-related policy discussions reflect intra-elite controversy on significant issues. This reflection is imperfect; while media discussion of this kind indicates “behind-the-scenes” debate, it does not fully reproduce its arguments or identify its protagonists.

Factional debates have occurred in Poland only during crises, in 1956, and under conditions of weak and indecisive leadership challenged not from within but from below, as was the case in the 1960s. Under these unusual circumstances, Party factions or groups may control individual media organs and utilize them to present particular points of view. Factional considerations then override other categories of media discussion. The Moczar group’s domination of the media in the 1960s and its impact on such media controversies as the “egalitarian debate” were a striking manifestation of this. In the 1960s, too, strong regional Party bosses were able to influence regional media to such an extent that Party dailies served as their mouthpieces. The best example was the Silesian Party daily, *Trybuna Robotnicza*, which conveyed Gierek’s views. This was a phenomenon of the relatively decentralized system of the Gomulka period, which has subsequently all but disappeared.

There is no evidence that individual Politburo members have utilized media organs under their supposed control to propagate individual points of view. All the evidence—including the details of the operation of the centralized media-control system noted above and the personal reading habits of all the respondents interviewed for the study—invalidates this commonplace “Kremlinological” assumption for Poland. Institutional lobbying is conducted by middle-level officials, but usually not in nominal “house organs.” Bureaucratic conflict within the Central Committee apparatus can affect media content in particular cases.

In elite-related policy discussions, the boundaries between "officials" and "journalists" are often fluid, and journalists' nonpublic roles may be more important than their public roles. This was the case with several journalist-experts who were involved in the rethinking of policy on the German question in the 1960s. In other situations as well, journalists may be important participants in behind-the-scenes controversy.

Elite-sanctioned specialist discussions and journalist-initiated discussions can occur only when the Party leadership welcomes or is willing to tolerate such activities because it seeks policy suggestions on limited issues from specialist or professional groups, because it views public discussion as helpful *per se* in mitigating social tensions, or simply because it considers an issue to be marginal. Journalist-initiated debates unrelated to elite controversy have been an important feature of the Polish media system, but if the leadership concludes that an issue raised by a journalist is too sensitive, it will ban further discussion. Reactions by middle-level officials to particular stories may or may not have adverse consequences for continued discussion of the matter or for journalists personally, depending on the issues and personalities involved.

Under conditions of leadership cohesion and concern with the mobilization role of the media (and thus in the absence of factional debates), media discussions of sensitive policy issues are simply prohibited. For example, although there was considerable discussion within the leadership and among economic advisers about the 1976 increases in the price of foodstuffs, none of this was reflected in the media beforehand. As long as the leadership is relatively cohesive, the more sensitive a policy issue, the less likely is any reconsideration of it within the elite to be reflected in the media.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR THE WESTERN READER

These conclusions indicate the importance of discrimination in the use of Polish media as a tool for analyzing Polish politics. The media are neither a Rosetta stone providing an infallible guide to political life nor simply propaganda organs disconnected from intra-elite controversy. As one respondent noted, "Sometimes the media are channeled from above, sometimes from within. Everything happens, even accidents."

The apparatus created by the Party leadership to control the media is formidable. Under normal circumstances, it filters out attempts by either individual leaders or journalists even to allude to differences of views among top leaders or intra-elite discussion of issues that are deemed by the leadership to be particularly sensitive. The system thus deprives individual leaders of their own organs. Under such circumstances, it is unrealistic to expect to find even veiled references to intra-elite controversy in the media.

Yet the media control apparatus is not omnipotent. The media are demonstrably a useful tool for the Western analyst who seeks to understand Polish developments. Mistakes are made, as when a public criticism appeared in 1969 of Khrushchev's overtures to Bonn in 1964,<sup>1</sup> which seemed to threaten Polish interests. The

<sup>1</sup> See Note N-1514/5, Section IV.

limited autonomy enjoyed by the media establishment allows it to initiate, "from below," discussion of a variety of issues that are below the threshold of leadership sensitivity but which indicate a good deal about the nature of the political system and the society. This autonomy often extends to nominal "house organs," which do not necessarily convey the viewpoints of their sponsoring organization; institutional advocacy and image-building do occur but they are likely to be found in other media. Specialist discussions can provide insights into policy issues that remain open for the leadership. More explicit policy discussions can indicate the existence and rough contours of intra-elite discussion or controversy on policy matters. And media campaigns can presage a new policy or indicate particular leadership concerns.

When there is a lack of cohesion in the leadership, resulting in internecine Party struggle, factional viewpoints are likely to find reflection in the media. The existence or nonexistence of such debate is thus an indicator of the degree of cohesion of the leadership. Under conditions of relative decentralization, the views of regional Party bosses are found in media under their control.

In the Gierek era, the Polish media were less rewarding for both the Western political analyst and the Polish reader than was the case in the Gomulka period. Yet the media remained a useful tool, as indicated by the examples from the 1970s noted above. In the 1980 crisis, Polish media were castigated from both outside and within the media profession for their barrenness under Gierek. Once again, the media began to reflect lower- and middle-level elite discussion (although not, as of November 1980, top-level intra-Party differences).

## LESSONS OF THE POLISH CASE

This study of the Polish media was undertaken in part because more information was available about their operations than about those of other Communist states and in part because they seemed to differ most from the media of those other states. Polish media, particularly as they operated in the Gomulka period, are probably a limiting case in terms of the relative autonomy of the media establishment in a Leninist system, where the Party claims an organizational and ideological monopoly over both mass and specialized media.<sup>2</sup> Analysts and scholars who utilize the media to analyze developments in other Communist states (particularly in periods of relative liberalism or leadership weakness) will profit from an understanding of this limiting case. Knowledge of the structure and process of the media in Poland can help the student of the USSR and other Communist systems to ask more sensible questions about and to draw better inferences from the media. The Polish media control system was originally transplanted from the USSR. Provided due attention is paid to both political and cultural differences, the study of features of a more accessible East European country can serve as a useful "window" on aspects of the less-accessible Soviet system.

The findings summarized in this report suggest a number of propositions that should be considered in any study of Soviet (or other East European or Communist) media.<sup>3</sup> These propositions may not necessarily be valid in the Soviet or other

<sup>2</sup> Czechoslovak media in 1968 represent a case of the Party abandoning such claims.

<sup>3</sup> A forthcoming Rand study of Soviet media will examine the validity of such propositions in the Soviet case.

cases, but they may suggest lines of inquiry for examining the media of other Communist countries.

- The Party's monopoly over the media may have limits. Media content may be affected by initiatives "from below" and even by simple mistakes.
- Media output may be affected by a centrally defined differentiation of roles according to subject matter and audience.
- Leadership interest in specific media formats such as lead editorials, commemorative articles, and the like may vary among media organs.
- The personality of the chief editor may be the decisive factor in the profile of a particular media organ.
- The media themselves may on occasion act as an autonomous force affecting the outcome of particular policy decisions.
- Discussions among specialists may signify relatively unconstrained exploration of alternatives on issues about which the leadership remains undecided.
- Discussions of policy issues involving journalists, experts, and officials may directly reflect ongoing intra-elite controversy over policy issues.
- If the leadership is seriously divided, the views of intra-Party factions or groups may find expression in the media, and resulting factional debates may overwhelm other kinds of media discussions. Under a divided leadership, regional Party bosses may effectively control Party media in their bailiwicks; but under conditions of a relatively cohesive leadership, routine differences of views among top leaders may be filtered out of the media. Individual Politburo members may not dispose of their own media organs.
- Institutional advocacy may occur in the media, but it is least likely to appear in nominal "house organs."
- The open media may function as one part of a complex system of intra-elite communication that also embraces internal bulletins, oral information, and Western media.
- Content analysis may be a useful analytical technique, provided it is employed with an understanding of the various roles the media may play as a vehicle of intra-elite communication.



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## GLOSSARY

|             |                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CC          | Central Committee                                                                                                                             |
| AK          | Armia Krajowa (Home Army)                                                                                                                     |
| API         | Agencja Prasowa Internacionalna (International Press Agency)                                                                                  |
| AR          | Agencja Robotnicza (Workers Press Agency)                                                                                                     |
| GUKPPiW     | Główny urząd kontroli prasy, publikacji, i widowisk (Main Administration for the Control of the Press, Publications, and Public Performances) |
| KIK         | Klub Inteligencji Katolickiej (Catholic Intellectual Clubs)                                                                                   |
| MPA         | Main Political Administration (of the Ministry of National Defense)                                                                           |
| NOT         | Naczelna Organizacja Techniczna (Main Technical Organization)                                                                                 |
| PAN         | Polska Akademia Nauk (Polish Academy of Science)                                                                                              |
| PAP         | Polska agencja prasowa (Polish Press Agency)                                                                                                  |
| PAX         | Pro-regime lay Catholic organization                                                                                                          |
| PUWP        | Polish United Workers Party                                                                                                                   |
| <i>Sejm</i> | parliament                                                                                                                                    |
| ZAP         | Zachodnia Agencja Robotnicza (Western Press Agency)                                                                                           |
| ZNAK        | Lay Catholic Organization                                                                                                                     |



## I. INTRODUCTION

Western analysts of Polish affairs, like analysts of developments in other Communist countries, are heavily dependent on interpretations of the open Polish media. The media are read for authoritative enunciations of policy positions by top leaders, for statements on a variety of issues by officials at all levels, and for information on political, economic, social, and other developments in Poland.

Western observers also commonly utilize the Polish media for direct or indirect indications of policy debates and personal conflicts within the Polish Communist elite (albeit less exclusively than analysts studying the USSR, for the Polish Communist system has always been more open than the Soviet system). But assumptions about linkages between the media and the elite, while crucial, are rarely spelled out. The reader is usually left to infer the significant media nuances, the relationship between differentiated media treatment of an issue and intra-elite controversy on that issue, and the role of the political actors whose policy positions or political importance are discerned from the media.<sup>1</sup>

The Rand study has sought to help clarify these analytic issues through a detailed examination of the functions and operations of the Polish media. This report contains the summary findings of that work. Section II examines the functions that the Polish leadership intends the media to serve and considers the relationship of the media to intra-elite controversy. Section III reviews the evolution of the media system as a whole in the postwar period and highlights the sharp difference between Gomulka's approach to the media and that of Gierek. Section IV provides an overview of the mechanisms of guidance and censorship used by the Party to supervise the media. It also depicts the internal editorial processes that affect the content of Polish media. Section V describes the different roles played by and the characteristics of specific types of Polish media. Section VI reviews categories of media discussions, debates, and controversies; relates each category to elite concerns; and describes identifying characteristics of each category. The Summary and Conclusions offer observations on how a Western observer can properly interpret Polish media and how the resulting knowledge can contribute to a better understanding of Soviet and other Communist media. The Appendix describes the study approach and indicates the nature of the interview sample.

Detailed analyses and documentation of the research from which these summary findings are derived may be found in the series of Rand Notes referenced in the Preface. Sources cited in those Notes are not repeated here. While this report is addressed primarily to analysts and scholars of Polish affairs, it is intended to be useful to students of the USSR and other Communist systems as well. The reader who is not familiar with postwar Polish history may wish to consult one of the available surveys of recent Polish developments.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Implicit analytic assumptions about Soviet media in Western studies of the USSR will be examined in a forthcoming Rand publication.

<sup>2</sup> The Gierek period is reviewed in Jane Leftwich Curry, *The Polish Crisis of 1980 and the Politics of Survival*, The Rand Corporation, P-6562, November 1980. Earlier developments are reviewed in A. Ross Johnson, "Poland: End of an Era?," *Problems of Communism*, January-February 1970, pp. 28-40; and "Polish Perspectives, Past and Present," *Problems of Communism*, July-August 1971, pp. 59-72. See

This report was revised for publication in November 1980, as the Polish crisis unfolded. Point 3 of the 21 demands made by the Gdansk workers and agreed to (at least in part) by the Polish government on August 31 dealt with the media and called for

Respect for freedom of expression and publishing guaranteed by the Constitution. An end to repression of independent publications ["samizdat"]. Access to the media for representatives of all religions.<sup>3</sup>

As this demand indicates, the challenge raised in 1980 by the Polish workers to Party Secretary Edward Gierek's system of rule was not simply economic but had major political dimensions. In the 1970s, Gierek had strengthened central Party control over the Polish media and emphasized "propaganda of success." The resulting limitations on what could be reported and discussed in the media (as examined in this report) contributed to the disenchantment of many social groups, including workers, with the Gierek regime. Available details of the criticism of Gierek's approach to the media, and strivings of the media establishment and other groups for freer information, less censorship, and more honest journalism are summarized in Section III. Whether central Party control of the media would be relaxed to the extent that it was under Gierek's predecessor, Wladyslaw Gomulka, or even to the degree that it was in October 1956, remained uncertain at the time this report was published; such a development would be contingent on a more liberal, yet stable, evolution of the Polish political system under Gierek's successors.

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also Jan B. de Weydenthal, *Poland: Communism Adrift*, The Washington Papers, No. 72, Sage Publications, Beverly Hills and London, 1979, and the additional references cited within.

<sup>3</sup> Text published in *Le Monde*, August 20, 1980.

## II. INTRA-ELITE COMMUNICATION AND THE MEDIA

The leadership of the Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP), like other Communist leaderships, intends the Polish media to serve a number of functions in the Polish system, and it maintains an elaborate control system, described in Section IV, in an effort to assure that the media fulfill those intended purposes.

The media are to propagate Party-defined values and mobilize Polish society in pursuit of the political, economic, and social policies of the leadership. To be sure, just as the Polish Communist system has been less repressive than other Communist systems in Eastern Europe, the indoctrination and mobilization functions of Polish media have been defined less rigidly and pursued less consistently than elsewhere in Eastern Europe. As discussed in detail in Section III, these functions were particularly attenuated in the early Gomulka period; Gierek placed more emphasis on the propagandizing role of the media. Television News and *Trybuna Ludu* (the official Party daily) are considered the most important media organs for indoctrination and mobilization—although the results, in terms of changes in social attitudes, must be judged meager.

In utilizing the media for mass mobilization, the Party employs what we will call leadership-initiated campaigns and leadership-orchestrated pseudo-discussions in the media, as described in Section VI. In some of these campaigns, the Party takes the offensive, as it did, for example, in launching a campaign in 1975 on the thirtieth anniversary of "People's Poland." But, tellingly, most such campaigns are defensive and reactive; for example, in 1966, the Party sought (without much success) to prevent the Catholic Church from monopolizing the issue of the Millennium of the Polish state.

Polish media are also intended to serve a separate informational function in the society. This function is more pronounced in Poland than in most other Communist countries. Given Poland's European traditions and ties and its less repressive political system, Polish society has continued to expect and get more information through the controlled media than is available elsewhere in Eastern Europe. This is the evident explanation for the relatively greater number of legitimate foreign correspondents on Polish newspapers than on other East European journals. The information content of Polish media is also influenced by an important negative consideration: the need for the domestic media to occupy some of the ground that would otherwise be monopolized by Polish émigré and other foreign media directed toward Poland—particularly the Polish-language broadcasts of Radio Free Europe (RFE). Moreover, a number of Catholic publications are able to publish, within limits, church sermons and articles by both Catholic and non-Catholic authors on religious affairs and viewpoints that differ from Party-defined values.

Polish media also play a role in mobilizing and informing the elite—the leadership and apparatus of the Communist Party and government and various groups of professionals and specialists. On balance, however, the role of Polish media is quite different when viewed from the perspective of the elite rather than from that of society as a whole. Among even lower levels of the elite, the media are overshadowed by other, internal communication channels. The open media are much less

important in providing information about domestic and foreign affairs to members of the elite (particularly to the leadership and upper levels of the apparatus) than other, nonpublic channels of information. A number of limited-circulation information bulletins provide the top leadership, senior officials, and in some cases a wider elite audience with information on foreign and domestic affairs.<sup>1</sup> The most widely circulated of these is a PAP (Polish Press Agency) bulletin of foreign wire service reports on world events, the "Special Bulletin." Other bulletins containing more sensitive material are less widely distributed. These include reports of sensitive foreign developments (e.g., Western accounts of Czechoslovak affairs in 1968), transcripts of Western broadcasts to Poland (e.g., RFE broadcasts), Western media discussions of Polish affairs, and reports on domestic problems (e.g., worker unrest). These reports are frank and are not limited to what is ideologically acceptable. A restricted publication of the censorship office, *Signal*, has conveyed to the leadership material that has been removed from the open media by the censors. Another important nonpublic source of information on social moods is readers' letters to newspapers, which are routinely submitted to the Central Committee Press Department.

Important information is also conveyed to the upper levels of the elite through *ad hoc* and personal channels, including journalists. Interaction between political leaders and journalists is an important feature of the Polish system. Polish journalists have often been important conveyers of information to the elite on both domestic and foreign issues. Regional journalists are asked to submit reports on local problems to Central Committee officials, sometimes over the objections of regional Party authorities. Polish foreign correspondents—who are not only more numerous but also of higher caliber than other East European correspondents—frequently provide personal written and oral reports to top officials, as they did from Bonn in the 1960s.<sup>2</sup> Nonpublic channels enable more objective and critical information to reach the top leadership. Some of these channels are comprised of media institutions and personnel. Open media publications themselves are not, however, the principal source of information for the Polish elite on domestic or foreign affairs.

Any elite must continuously resolve internal issues of policy and power. This gives rise to discussion, debate, and controversy, in which the media are sometimes involved. In Poland, the extent of such controversy and its relationship to inter-elite political conflict have varied, depending on the period and on the policies and cohesion of the leadership.

Under a relatively cohesive top leadership, controversies on policy that involve more participants than the narrow circle of top leaders may be termed issue-related elite controversies. Such controversies have occurred continuously in Poland since at least 1956. Most of them occur behind the scenes, in the bureaucracy and in specialist and professional associations or groups, where they are expressed orally and in internal papers and memoranda; but some are also expressed in part in the media.

Such media discussions (which we call elite-related policy discussions) may be initiated by journalists or editors, by officials, or by journalists/editors *cum* officials. Sometimes publication of an article may in fact be the initial enunciation of a

<sup>1</sup> See Note N-1514/4.

<sup>2</sup> See Note N-1514/5, Section IV.

position in an intra-elite controversy; this was the case, for example, with an article in *Wojsko Ludowe* (a journal for political officers) on training political officers in the armed forces, which initiated an intra-military debate on the subject that was resolved in the Military Council of the Ministry of National Defense.<sup>3</sup> Public and private views are sometimes expressed simultaneously; for example, in early 1969, certain journalists specializing in German affairs published nuanced analyses indicating a more positive appraisal of West Germany while at the same time joining official experts in nonpublic reconsideration of policy toward West Germany.<sup>4</sup> More often, elite controversy begins in nonpublic forums and then is carried over into the media. When a repressive "social parasite" law was placed on the *Sejm* (parliament) agenda in 1971, lower-level elements of the elite expressed their opposition, first in nonpublic forums and then in the media, forcing the government to withdraw the draft legislation.<sup>5</sup> Much the same thing happened in the mid-1970s with proposed legislation on interring the mentally ill. In such cases, most of the discussion is typically carried out behind the scenes; what appears in the media is the tip of the iceberg.

In other cases, the leadership may welcome public discussion of a policy-relevant issue, because it solicits policy suggestions and sees utility in (or no harm done by) a confrontation of viewpoints among specialists or others. Such media discussions, which we term leadership-sanctioned specialist discussions, may reflect elite controversies of a specialist and technical nature not directly related to decision-making. Discussions on the subject of military economy in the Military-Political Academy and the General Staff Academy, for example, published in part in military journals, were welcomed by military and Party leaders.<sup>6</sup> More politically contentious were discussions in the 1960s within the research institute of the Polish Peasant Party on agricultural policy, reflected in part in the institute's journal, *Wies Wspolczesna*. These specialist discussions on agriculture were tolerated by Gomulka personally on the condition that they remain isolated from actual agricultural policymaking<sup>7</sup>—a situation that applied to other professions as well, indicating their relative autonomy and isolation from policymaking under Gomulka.

Intra-elite controversies that involve sensitive policy issues, however, may not be reflected at all in the media. Indeed, given a modicum of leadership unity, the more sensitive a disputed issue, the less likely it is to find even implicit public expression in the media. Important editors or journalists may be significant private participants in such intra-elite controversies, but they know that the system does not permit public reflection, that (as documents of the censorship office published in the West<sup>8</sup> show) any attempt to broach certain subjects in print will be censored, and that efforts to have a patron in the leadership overrule the censor in these areas will fail. Apparent examples are the elite reconsideration of price policy prior to price increases in June 1976 (which were rescinded after worker protests) and intra-elite discussion of Poland's foreign economic policy throughout the 1970s.<sup>9</sup> In

<sup>3</sup> See Note N-1514/3.

<sup>4</sup> See Note N-1514/5, Section IV.

<sup>5</sup> See Note N-1514/5, Section V.

<sup>6</sup> See Note N-1514/3.

<sup>7</sup> Interview data.

<sup>8</sup> *Czarna księga cenzury PRL*. Aneks, London, 1977-1978. 2 vols.

<sup>9</sup> Interview data.

such circumstances, limited-distribution information bulletins may be used for policy advocacy. One specialist had his articles published abroad so that they would be conveyed to top officials in the internal bulletin reporting Western media commentary on Poland. Another individual, a chief editor, wrote a frank article in the 1960s on the folly of a particular media campaign, knowing that the article would be censored and printed in the internal bulletin of censored articles.<sup>10</sup>

Under Gierek, ministers and other officials were careful not to attempt to utilize the journals over which they could exert some institutional influence to advocate their views, particularly in the sensitive area of economic policy. Such activity, which we shall call lobbying, occurred frequently during the more decentralized Gomulka period. At that time, strong regional Party committees sometimes overruled initial censorship objections to articles (or directly inspired such articles) on "forbidden" economic topics (e.g., articles on housing supply and export industries in Lodz), the publication of which served local economic interests.<sup>11</sup> Under Gierek, institutions and organizations still attempted to utilize the media to further their own interests, but the available evidence suggests that this occurred more in terms of image-building than policy advocacy, and generally did not involve putative "house organs." For example, given the importance attached to Polish Television under Gierek, a number of organizations, including the defense and interior ministries, resorted to "out of channels" initiatives with the staff of Television News to ensure that they received extensive and favorable coverage.<sup>12</sup>

In normal times, discussion and controversy among top leaders do not find expression in the media. The media-control apparatus is subordinate to a single Central Committee Secretary and a designated Politburo member, and it is successful in preventing the media from publishing information on leadership discussion. None of the respondents we interviewed read the media for information on top-level discussions; all tracked shifts in the relative power of individual leaders, not through seeking nuances in leaders' statements, but through published reports of leaders' activities and especially through oral information and rumor. As one former Central Committee official noted, "Warsaw is a very gossipy town."

The media do not reflect top-level leadership conflicts as long as the leadership remains reasonably united. In periods of leadership crisis, such conflict is reflected in the media. This was the case in October 1956 and again in the late 1960s.<sup>13</sup> In 1956, during the liberalization that occurred in the Polish October, the media-control system itself crumbled. The censorship office abolished itself, and the media became an autonomous political force—a precursor of developments in Czechoslovakia in 1968. As late as May 1957, *Zycie Warszawy* (the major Warsaw daily) autonomously (i.e., not as the mouthpiece of top Party leaders) distorted editorially the thrust of Gomulka's speech to the Ninth Plenum of the Party Central Committee so as to suggest that Gomulka was still backing the liberalization measures of 1956 (when in fact he had retreated substantially from them).<sup>14</sup>

<sup>10</sup> See Note N-1514/4.

<sup>11</sup> See Note N-1514/2.

<sup>12</sup> See Note N-1514/1.

<sup>13</sup> See Note N-1514/5, Section II.

<sup>14</sup> Gomulka's speech, published in *Zycie Warszawy* on May 10, stressed reconsolidation of Party rule and struggle against "revisionism." The editorial commentary, published on May 24, was entitled "The Continuation of October" (i.e., perpetuation of the liberalization of October 1956) and did not mention revisionism. The editorial, prepared within *Zycie Warszawy*, resulted in severe criticism of the editorial

In 1968, the Moczar group<sup>15</sup> sought to utilize the media it had largely "captured" after the mid-1960s in intra-Party conflict. This factional influence swamped what would otherwise have been issue-specific, elite-related policy discussions or leadership-sanctioned specialist discussions, giving rise to what we shall call factional debates. These factional debates included a controversy over patriotism *cum* nationalism, conducted primarily between *Polityka* and *Kultura*; a controversy over education reform centered mainly in *Zycie Literackie* and *Walka Mlodych*; a controversy on egalitarianism waged by *Polityka* and *Zycie Gospodarcze*, on the one hand, and Moczarite journals, on the other; and a controversy over sociology.<sup>16</sup>

The Moczar forces gained their influence in the media not through contested factional struggle but by default. The Moczarites were not a top leadership element contending for power—they were a second-echelon group that sought to utilize the media and other instruments to force their way upward. Their media offensive was not actively resisted by Gomulka. Indeed, the neglect of the media and the decentralization of the political system under Gomulka permitted strong regional Party leaders to put forward distinctive points of view in the media they controlled. (The best case in point is that of Silesia, where Gierek firmly controlled the regional media during his tenure as regional Party First Secretary.) Neither the 1956 case nor the 1968 case involved reflection in the media of top-level factional or personal leadership conflict under conditions where the media-control system itself remained intact; no such use of the media has occurred in Poland.

Because the media-control system is quite effective except in periods of crisis, much significant intra-elite controversy is not reflected in the media. By the same token, not all media discussions are expressions of intra-elite controversy. As will be shown in Section VI, Polish media contain a large class of discussions (initiated entirely "from below" by journalists, and hence termed journalist-initiated discussions) that are either ignored by the elite or are criticized by a particular office or personality, without major ramifications. Such discussions are possible because the Polish media have enjoyed a significant degree of autonomy. While that autonomy was considerably reduced under Gierek, it was not eliminated (see Section III).

Figure 1 presents a typology of the categories of media discussions we have defined, showing that the type of discussion is related to the cohesiveness and the mode (policymaking or mobilizing) of the elite. Under conditions of pronounced intra-Party factionalism, almost any media discussion can become a factional debate. The examples of media discussions mentioned in this report are noted at the appropriate points of the matrix. Characteristics of the various types of media discussions are analyzed more extensively in Section VI.

Figure 1 suggests a number of relationships between the character of the leadership and the types of media discussion that appear:

- The more unified the leadership, the less likely it is that either leaders or journalists will initiate a broad-based or highly critical discussion. The

board by the Central Committee Press Department, and the editorial was "corrected" by another entitled, "The Political Line of the Party," published on June 2, which said the Ninth Plenum had condemned revisionism as the "main ideological danger." A purge of the *Zycie Warszawy* editorial board, begun earlier in 1957, was then completed.

<sup>15</sup> A coterie or faction (the "Partisans") grouped around former Interior Minister Mieczyslaw Moczar. See Note N-1514/5, Section II.

<sup>16</sup> See N-1514/5, Section II. Profiles of these journals are to be found in N-1514/1; *Walka Mlodych* is the journal of the youth association.

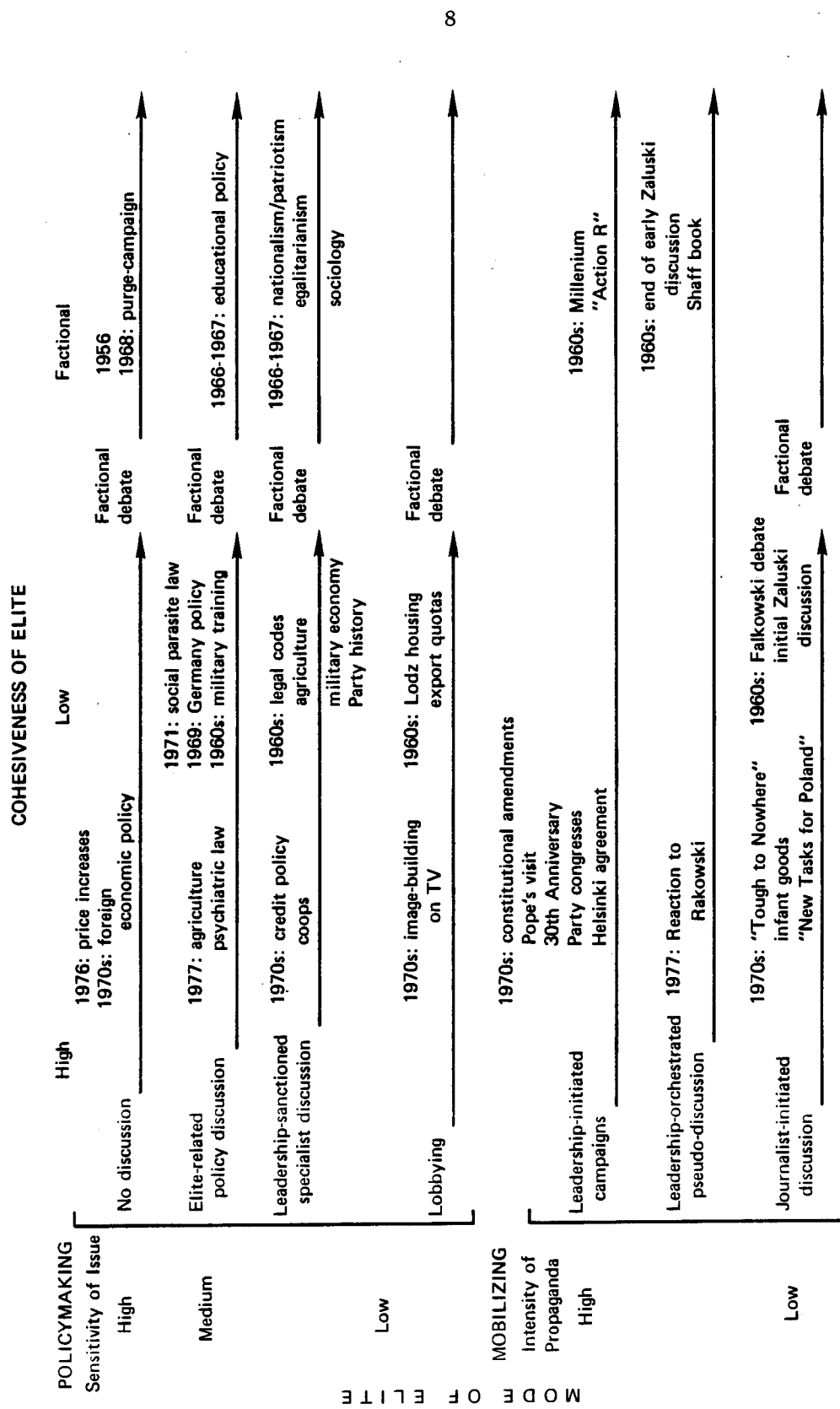


Fig. 1—Typology of discussions in Polish media

more divided the leadership, the more likely that journalist-initiated discussion on specific topics will appear. The greater the factional struggle within the leadership, the more likely are highly critical attacks on key issues and personalities.

- The more the top leadership is committed to or identified with a given policy or issue, the less likely is any critical discussion of that issue to appear. What appears in the media will be a campaign for support initiated by the leadership or a pseudo-discussion, also orchestrated by the leadership. The more marginal an issue is to the leadership, the more likely it is that wide-ranging media discussion will be initiated by journalists. The more tolerance the top leadership has for media debate and the less it is concerned with mobilizing the population, the more wide-ranging will journalist-initiated discussions be. Such media debate is unlikely to affect policy or even deal with specific policy issues.
- When the leadership is reconsidering a policy issue, the more sensitive the matter, the less likely it is to be broached in the media. The less sensitive, more technical, or limited the issue, the more likely it is to be discussed publicly.
- The more the leadership is split factionally, the more likely are media discussions of all kinds to become a direct or indirect part of internecine Party struggle.

### III. THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE MEDIA SINCE 1945

The position of the media in the Polish Communist system has not been constant but has changed several times since the end of World War II as a consequence of different perceptions of the proper role of the media and varying degrees of concern on the part of the successive Party leaderships.<sup>1</sup> Changes at the top have resulted in structural and functional changes in the organization and operation of the Central Committee Press Department and the censorship office (the Main Administration for the Control of the Press, Publications, and Public Performances, GUKPPiW), changes in the way various state bodies deal with the media, changed patterns in the relationships between editors and journalists and the Party and state leadership, and fluctuations in the autonomy of individual media organs.

During the Stalinist period, much of the media was so closely linked to the Party apparatus that little supervision as such was required; and the rest was narrowly circumscribed and rigidly controlled. The Stalinist system was undermined after 1954, and widespread public criticism appeared, first in student and cultural journals such as *Po Prostu* and then in the mass media. In mid-1956, the censorship office, GUKPPiW, virtually ceased to function; in October, it was (temporarily) abolished at the initiative of its own staff. The journalists' association became a major institutional center of liberalism. The Stalinist media system disintegrated—as it was to do in Czechoslovakia in 1968—and for six months the media operated semi-independently, as an autonomous political force. Key media organs, especially *Zycie Warszawy*, supported Gomulka's return. In October, acting autonomously rather than as the mouthpiece of the Pulawy group (the liberal Party faction that backed Gomulka's return), *Zycie Warszawy* helped insure that he was named First Secretary.

Although Gomulka benefited from the strength of the media in 1956, he immediately sought to end the wide-ranging media criticism that extended to fundamental principles of the Communist system and Soviet policy. Meeting with a delegation of journalists in October 1956, Gomulka cited Soviet complaints about the free-wheeling press as a "counterrevolutionary" tendency that could potentially require Soviet intervention. Journalists, he said, had to behave "like realists and not romantics." Thereafter, as Gomulka consolidated his own power and re-consolidated Party rule, the autonomy of the media was gradually reduced. Yet it was not eliminated; Gomulka's use of the media as a mobilization tool was limited in comparison with both the previous Stalinist period and the Gierek era that was to follow.

#### THE GOMULKA ERA

The special status of Polish media in the Gomulka period was a product of three factors: the overall *status quo* policies of the leadership, Gomulka's personal attitudes, and persistent intra-elite conflict.

<sup>1</sup> See Note N-1514/1, Section II.

Gomulka's system of rule, known in Poland as the "small stabilization," emphasized perpetuating the *status quo* circa 1960 and placed relatively little emphasis on mobilizing and modernizing Polish society. There was therefore less need for the media to activate the population and to generate support for Party goals. Journalists were expected to provide Polish society with information, a positive view of the nation, and "criticism of real, important, and visible errors in our everyday life." They were directed to maintain a dialogue with society so that the people would not be dependent on Western news sources (the success of Western broadcasts was constantly cited as an indication that journalists were not performing these tasks adequately).

This attitude on the part of the leadership encouraged the expression of considerable controversy and criticism in Polish media. Gomulka was generally disinterested in the media and he disliked journalists personally, yet he accepted the legitimacy of media controversy and criticism that did not challenge the fundamental principles of the political system he had established.

The limited cohesiveness of the ruling elite further encouraged media controversy. Ministerial officials and regional Party leaders often used the media to put forward their own viewpoints. Strong regional Party leaders, such as Gierek in Silesia, effectively controlled the regional media. On marginal policy issues, journalists themselves, knowing that the leadership was weak and divided, initiated and published controversial stories. And beginning in the mid-1960s, the Moczar group (discussed in Section II) gained influence over a number of key media organs and used them in its struggle for political power.

The Moczarites courted journalists, appealing to their professional and career interests. They backed journalists in their demands for better access to information and called for even sharper media criticism, which they sought to direct against their opponents. At the same time, they appealed to journalists' and editors' desire for enhanced positions in society by socializing with them, offering them favors, giving them material for articles, and then protecting their articles from censorship. The Moczarites' nationalist campaign was appealing to large numbers of journalists. Moczar directed anti-Semitic attacks against many of the very individuals who blocked younger journalists' upward mobility, so alliances with the Moczarites presented real possibilities for career advancement—and attracted many journalists. By spring 1968, the Moczar group effectively controlled much of the media establishment, which was ostensibly subordinated to the Politburo and Gomulka himself.<sup>2</sup>

The relationship between the Party leadership and the media in the Gomulka period was relatively distant. The media were treated with "benign neglect." Central Committee Secretary Arthur Starewicz, responsible for media affairs, claimed in 1967 that the Party "abstains from petty involvement in thwarting the initiatives of journals, that it does not lead the press by the hand, that the editorial staff has

<sup>2</sup> See Note N-1514/5, Section II. Moczar joined the Central Committee in 1945 but lost his seat in 1948 as a "right-nationalist deviationist." He was reelected to the Central Committee in 1956 and became Deputy Interior Minister. In 1964 he was promoted to Minister of Interior Affairs and assumed the chairmanship of ZBoWiD, the veterans organization. In the wake of the March 1968 crisis, he became a candidate Politburo member and Central Committee Secretary with responsibility for security affairs. He gained full Politburo status in early 1971, after Gierek replaced Gomulka as First Party Secretary, but was unable to retain a power base and was ousted from his Politburo and Secretariat posts in December 1971 and became head of the Supreme Control Chamber, a government post traditionally filled by fading political figures. In late 1980, Moczar made a dramatic political comeback.

many possibilities to select issues and carry out the craft of journalism in all of its forms." Although the formal structure of Party control over the media had changed little from the Stalinist period, the involvement of the leadership in supervising the media was usually reactive rather than directive. The Central Committee Press Department and GUKPPIW were neither centralized nor consistent in their control of the media. Their decisions were normally *ad hoc* and were often affected by the interests and pressures of particular institutions and Party groupings. Regional Party bodies exercised primary control over the media of their respective regions. Ministries and other state bodies were able to ignore media criticism, which was sharper during this period than at other times but was largely unrelated to policy. Editors and journalists were not courted as professionals (although "stars" who had connections with Party leaders were able to use these connections informally to publish). Acceptable lines of discussion were often unclear to journalists prior to publication. As was the case in many other areas under Gomulka, actions were critiqued but not necessarily controlled.

Gomulka's passivity toward the media changed with the student demonstrations of March 1968 and the resulting political crisis. This, coupled with the strength of the Moczar group in the media, stimulated the Gomulka leadership to seek a more orchestrated media establishment and stress the propaganda role of the media. That initiative paved the way for Gierek to transform the Polish media system.

## THE GIEREK PERIOD

Gierek considered the media to be a prime force in Polish life. He prescribed a "propaganda of positivism" and imposed a system after 1970 that marked a major departure from Polish journalism traditions and the wide-ranging media discussions that characterized the Gomulka period. Polish media were now managed more closely by the Party and were expected to play a major role in mobilizing the population, especially in support of economic policy. This far overshadowed their role as an autonomous conveyer of information and critical opinion.

These changes meant nationwide implementation of the mobilizational model for the media that Gierek had developed in the 1960s in Silesia, which had the highest percentage of Party journalists in Poland. Now, journalists throughout Poland were expected to be political activists who worked to fulfill Party goals, not autonomous professionals. This politicization expanded the functions of journalists to include both public manipulation of information to support Party policy and private actions to strengthen ties between the Party and the population. Journalists were expected to act as propagandists and agitators for Party policy outside the confines of traditional journalism; they now had to sponsor entertainment and festivals, participate at various levels in the Party leadership, and lead community projects. Gierek's chief supervisor of the mass media, Central Committee Secretary Jerzy Lukaszewicz, stated that while "He who is not against us is with us" was an adequate measure of commitment for the technical intelligentsia, ideological workers (including journalists) had to be those "who are within the Party and are involved in Communist Party affairs." The press, radio, and television, traditionally elements of "cultural affairs," were now considered parts of "Party life."

Organizationally, the authority of the Central Committee Press Department over both Warsaw and regional media was greatly strengthened in the early 1970s. An administrative reorganization in 1975 (which replaced the previous *vojvodships* with smaller units) effectively ended regional Party control of regional media. While the journalism profession received more attention under Gierek than it did under Gomulka—material rewards for journalists were increased, and greater resources were devoted to the development of a media infrastructure—journalists' status depended on their positions in the Party. Leading journalists were recruited into political circles (but were isolated if they advocated professional interests that were in conflict with Party policies). Journalists' policy suggestions were solicited through nonpublic channels, increasing the apparent significance of the profession. At the same time, the privileges that had been accorded prominent journals and journalists in the past decreased relatively, as benefits were distributed more equally to all journalists and emphasis was placed on a monochromatic press that supported but did not compete with Party leaders for public loyalty.

This Party-defined mission of the media under Gierek put discussion and criticism in a new and different position. Criticism was viewed as a method of developing a socialist outlook, focusing not on goals of society or policies and programs of particular institutions, but on the "negative elements in society: waste, laziness, and the lack of social discipline which influence the functioning of institutions." Response to such criticism was the responsibility of Party organs at a given level, not of other segments of the media.

This approach to the role of the media made discussion of alternative solutions to a social problem unacceptable. Gierek's philosophy of media management assumed careful coordination to present Party policies in the most positive light, so they could most effectively mobilize the population. Disputes and differences were to be avoided. The journalist's policy role, based largely on his contacts with public opinion, was to be exercised through private, Party channels and not expressed publicly. In brief, Gierek's media system was much more "Soviet" than that which had existed under Gomulka.

## THE 1980 CRISIS

After 1976, it became evident that Gierek's program of socioeconomic modernization had failed. Social tensions increased and a variety of oppositional, "dissident" groups became active. Disillusionment with the Gierek program was widespread in the journalism profession and the media establishment. The Central Committee Press Department exercised increasingly onerous control over even politically prominent editors. Respected journalists were kept on the sidelines.

The barrenness of the official media contributed to an explosion of "samizdat" or underground uncensored publications, in quantities and of technical quality that far surpassed Soviet underground publications. Prominent writers, weary of battling the censors, stopped writing for the official media entirely and published only in the "uncensored press." The circulation of and access to these publications by

intellectuals and professionals was sufficient to undermine the Party's monopoly over the written word.<sup>3</sup>

Socioeconomic tensions in Poland reached crisis proportions in mid-1980, when one of the government's repeated attempts to precipitously increase the price of foodstuffs led to an outbreak of strikes that assumed massive proportions, especially on the Baltic Coast. In contrast to the situation in 1970, violence was avoided, the workers stuck to their demands, and the government was forced to agree to far-reaching economic and political concessions. One of the workers' formal demands was for freer information and access of the Church to the mass media. The government accepted this demand in part in its agreement with the Gdansk Interfactory Strike Committee of August 31, which provided, *inter alia*, for a new censorship law, including an appeals procedure in the courts, and radio broadcasts of Church masses.<sup>4</sup>

The ensuing months of political ferment brought widespread public criticism of propaganda policy and media control under Gierek. As a PAP commentary noted:

... much criticism has been expressed recently against the functioning of our mass media, and especially against edited, over-controlled information, which does not correspond to social needs or reflect the maturity of our society.<sup>5</sup>

A resolution of the students' association Main Administration condemned Gierek's "propaganda of success" as "a crucial reason for the crisis of social faith" which "impoverished our nation's ability to think."<sup>6</sup> Perhaps the most damning critique was that of Karol Malcuzyński, a prominent journalist and *Sejm* (parliament) deputy, in a speech to the *Sejm* on September 5:

For years the mass media have declined. The concept and the practice by which they were controlled was fundamentally false. . . . In the mid-1970s, the propaganda of success—which was primitively conceived and crudely implemented—became an obstacle to discussion and consideration of the economic and social costs of [Gierek's policy of rapid economic development]. . . . From 1976 to 1980 this propaganda was nonsensical. It increasingly irritated the people, because it increasingly contradicted the facts, the general sense of public opinion and social consciousness. At first this propaganda was irritating, but there came moments when it bordered on a provocation of the people. Central direction of the mass media was carried to the extreme, resulting in complete control not only of information but also of commentary. With few exceptions, it was impossible, not only to use one's own thoughts but even to use formulations that departed from the prescribed models. . . . with each passing year, censorship was more active. In this [*Sejm*] chamber there are twelve journalists, including several chief editors. They can recount not just tens, but hundreds of examples of censorship that border on the ridiculous.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See Charles Sawyer, "Beating the Censor," *The New York Times Book Review*, October 5, 1980; interview with Miroslaw Chojewski, head of the underground publishing house Nova, *The New York Times*, May 28, 1980; Tadeusz Szafar, *Contemporary Political Opposition in Poland*, mimeographed, 1979; Adam Bromke, "The Opposition in Poland," *Problems of Communism*, September-October 1978, pp. 37-51; "Poland from Inside: Part I," *Survey*, Autumn 1979. The content of this underground press was periodically reviewed in *Radio Free Europe Research*.

<sup>4</sup> Text in *Polityka*, September 6, 1980.

<sup>5</sup> *Trybuna Ludu*, September 9, 1980.

<sup>6</sup> Resolution of the 16th Plenum of the Main Administration of the Socialist Union of Polish Students, *Sztandar Młodych*, September 23, 1980.

<sup>7</sup> The full text was carried by dpa, the West German news agency, on September 7, 1980. The Polish media carried only a brief summary.

Accompanying this sharp criticism of the media under Gierek were calls from the journalism profession and from outsiders as well for a relaxation of controls over and a reshaping of Polish media. Several proposals for reform (not abolishment) of the censorship system were made. Addressing the *Sejm*, Malcuzyński noted:

No reasonable person in Poland with a sense of responsibility demands today the complete abolition of censorship. What is needed is to limit its area of responsibility, its powers, and its criteria of evaluation, and to establish a procedure for appealing its decisions.

At the same session, Janusz Zablocki, *Sejm* deputy of the lay-Catholic ZNAK group, suggested that censorship of *Sejm* deputies' speeches (a regular practice) violated the Constitution.<sup>8</sup> A prominent sociologist called for greater access to information, warning of "the practice of hiding behind alleged state secrets" and advocating legal regulation of the scope and supervision of the censorship office and a regularized process for appealing its decisions.<sup>9</sup> A student group called for a "Tsarist" system of censorship, i.e., control of the mass media but relative freedom for specialized media.<sup>10</sup>

The journalist association became an active participant in this public discussion of reforming Polish media. At a plenum of its Main Administration on September 12, there were calls for freer information, guarantees that journalists could engage in criticism, and participation of journalists in reforming censorship and the media system generally.<sup>11</sup> At regional meetings of journalists, there were calls for decentralization of the media and for giving staff journalists a voice in the selection of their supervising editors.<sup>12</sup>

At the same time, the independent trade unions recognized by the government in the August 31 agreement attempted to publish their own viewpoints, both in the official press and in new publications they controlled. The Gdansk independent union was able to publish an evidently largely uncensored column in a Gdansk daily, *Dziennik Bałtycki*. The unions imported their own printing presses and issued their own publications—a fundamental challenge to Party control over the mass media.

As of October 1980, when the writing of the present report was completed, the outcome of this public discussion of the proper role of the Polish media—like the outcome of the Polish crisis itself—was uncertain. However, the discussion had conclusively demonstrated the extent to which Gierek's system of media control had alienated Polish journalists and the media establishment itself and how much the system was at odds with the interests and values of major segments of the elite, as well as Polish society in general. It also showed the importance that the elite, journalists, and average citizens alike attached to the Polish media.

<sup>8</sup> Text in *Slowo Powszechne*, September 10, 1980.

<sup>9</sup> Jerzy J. Wiatr, "Conditions of the Dialogue," *Kultura*, Warsaw, September 7, 1980.

<sup>10</sup> Dispatch from Warsaw, *The Los Angeles Times*, October 22, 1980.

<sup>11</sup> PAP dispatch, *Trybuna Ludu*, September 23, 1980.

<sup>12</sup> See, e.g., Report on a Meeting of Szczecin Branch of the Journalists' Association, Szczecin Radio Domestic Service, September 20, 1980, *Foreign Broadcast Information Service*, September 22, 1980, Vol. 2, p. G17; Resolution of a Meeting of the Lodz Branch of the Journalists Association, Lodz Radio Domestic Service, September 18, 1980, *Foreign Broadcast Information Service*, September 19, 1980, Vol. 2, p. G5.

#### IV. EXTERNAL CONTROLS AND INTERNAL ORGANIZATION

The basic editorial structure and process in Polish media have remained relatively stable since World War II. Differences between journals have resulted from the felt needs of staff members, the personalities of individual editors, or natural evolution. But the output of each media organ is a product not only of its internal organization but of the attitudes of its journalists and editors, their contacts and sources of information, and the leeway given them by external factors—primarily Polish Party and government authorities, but also Soviet officials and, to a much lesser degree, the journal's audience.

At times, Party and government bodies have made contradictory demands on the media. Party control, although paramount, has sometimes been exerted through veiled mechanisms. Party leaders have expected journalists to provide critical information and analysis through public and private channels on specific individuals, institutions, and policies while not allowing press criticism to reach a high level or become generalized. State institutions, on the other hand, have felt that the media should be supportive rather than critical in their coverage. The influence of state bodies has been much less pervasive than Party influence but more visible in denying journalists access to information and in post-publication criticism of specific articles or journalists.

Since 1956, Soviet influence over the Polish media has generally been indirect and has been exerted via the Polish leadership.<sup>1</sup> Soviet officials closely monitor Polish media after publication, and in the 1960s and 1970s, the Soviets reportedly registered specific complaints about the Polish media at high-level bilateral meetings. Soviet suggestions and complaints were also reportedly registered regularly to the Polish Central Committee apparatus, especially the Press Department, and Soviet officials in Warsaw sometimes made informal suggestions about media coverage directly to journalists or editors. But none of the respondents we interviewed had been directly criticized by Soviet officials or journalists for their publications. A few respondents noted instances of direct, out-of-channels Soviet intervention to Polish authorities (e.g., a call from a Soviet official to a censorship office to protest the treatment of a Soviet theme in a Polish publication), but such direct intervention seems to have been the exception rather than the rule.

The influence of the audience is by far the least important and most indirect of the external factors affecting the content of Polish media—but it is still not insignificant. Most journalists consider it important to be read and known. But their sense of their readership is vague; it is based on infrequent surveys of readers, informal personal contacts with readers, individually addressed letters, and the

<sup>1</sup> Polish respondents were unable to shed much light on Soviet attitudes toward the Polish media. Although the Soviets may have been reassured by Gomulka's reestablishment of control over the media after 1956, they may not have been comfortable with some of the relatively free-wheeling journalist-initiated media discussions of the 1960s, and they may have found Moczar's attempts to utilize the media for factional purposes disturbing. On the other hand, they could have been reassured by Gierek's centralization of media control.

reaction of professional journalists to each other. Journalists' ability to be responsive to their audiences is severely constrained.

## PARTY SUPERVISION

The Party influences the mass media in all areas, from personnel policy to circulation controls, and at all levels, from primary Party organizations to the Politburo.<sup>2</sup> The Party itself generally guides rather than controls, the extent of the guidance varying depending on whether a journal is formally a Party or a non-Party journal and on the personal political position of the chief editor. But there is no media organ in Poland for which Party supervision is not a primary factor.

### Leadership Influences

The Party Politburo influences and controls the media both through institutional channels and through informal, occasional, personal involvement on the part of its members. Institutional control occurs largely through the personnel selection process. One Politburo member is selected to supervise propaganda and ideology; another is selected to be the formal, final instance for appeals against censorship decisions. Jan Szydlak and Edward Babiuch, respectively, fulfilled these functions in the 1970s.<sup>3</sup> The Politburo selects a Central Committee Secretary responsible for propaganda and ideology (Jerzy Lukaszewicz in the 1970s) and approves nominees for top Central Committee Press Department positions. A number of key media posts are also Politburo *nomenklatura* positions, including the editorships or directorships of GUKPPiW, PAP, *Trybuna Ludu*, *Nowe Drogi* (the Party theoretical monthly), and the major publishing houses.

The First Secretary and other Politburo members set the overall tone for the media through pronouncements and public speeches. Politburo-level statements and other official Party documents are carefully monitored by journalists to help in evaluating what and how they should write.

Politburo members have also on occasion been directly involved in mediating conflicts between media organs and GUKPPiW, or between Central Committee departments with contradictory views of whether or not something should be published. There is only one known case where the entire Politburo made a decision to permit a specific publication. That was Moczar's book *Barwy walki* (*Hues of Battle*), a glorification of the Communist underground in Poland during World War II, which was approved with some deletions.<sup>4</sup> During the Gomulka period, most such decisions were made by designated individuals. For example, the Politburo member responsible for the media, Zenon Kliszko, reversed the approval of the Central Committee Organizational Department for publication of a sensitive article on Party organizational affairs in *Nowe Drogi*.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See Note N-1514/1.

<sup>3</sup> See Note N-1514/2.

<sup>4</sup> Interview data.

<sup>5</sup> Interview data. But there is no known case, even in the Gomulka period, of a Politburo member intervening directly and personally in publication disputes to ensure publication of a particular viewpoint.

The Central Committee Secretary responsible to the Politburo for the operations and content of the media supervises the Central Committee Press Department and is ultimately responsible for all Central Committee *nomenklatura* decisions involving the media. The Central Committee media organs, *Trybuna Ludu*, *Nowe Drogi*, and Polish Television News, are directly subordinated to him, and he is in direct and frequent contact with other key chief editors.

### Central Committee Press Department

Central Committee members themselves have no direct influence on the media beyond whatever personal influence or pressure individual members may exert in specific cases of censorship or difficulty in gaining access to information. It is the Central Committee Press Department<sup>6</sup> that is the linchpin in the system of Party control over the media. Under Gierek, the Press Department quadrupled in size (from 10 to 15 to about 50 members), centralized in itself authority over the media, and became more preemptory and aggressive in its dealing with journalists, editors, and other government and Party organs with media responsibilities, including GUKPPiW.

The Press Department controls most personnel appointments in the media. The Press Department *nomenklatura* includes most chief and managing editorships; department editorships of important media organs like *Trybuna Ludu*, *Nowe Drogi*, and Polish Radio and Television; mid-level editorships of publishing houses; and mid-level positions in GUKPPiW. The Department probably proposes most of the candidates for higher-level *nomenklatura* positions as well. This control gives the Press Department great influence over the general tone of the media.

The Press Department is continually involved in directing media operations. Its officials, known as "instructors," are each assigned to a group of media institutions dealing with a specific subject or having similar political importance. The instructors must keep in constant contact with these journals, read and critique them, give directions to editors as to coverage of specific topics, review censors' decisions, and approve any proposals for changes in the journals. Respondents we interviewed who had held high editorial positions generally found the Press Department instructors quite critical of their journals. Since the 1975 administrative reorganization, the responsible instructors have met not only with the chief editor of the regional Party journals but also with a local advisory board of regional Party secretaries and prominent officials, who provide information about local problems. The enhanced role of the Press Department in the Gierek era gave its instructors more authority even vis-à-vis chief editors who hold high Party positions.

The Press Department organizes regular meetings with chief editors or their delegates and periodic special meetings on topical concerns. At these meetings, Party or government officials or specialists review specific topics. Press Department officials then instruct the editors about how particular issues should be presented, and about what cannot be mentioned. Editors are able to raise questions and problems. In addition to these meetings, the Press Department issues written instructions on the overall tone and specific details of media coverage of major events (e.g., a Party Congress, the American Bicentennial, or the Pope's visit).

<sup>6</sup> Formally, since 1975, the Press, Radio, and Television Department. Originally, this body was known as the Press Bureau.

The Press Department also supervises GUKPPiW. In the Gomulka period, the Press Department was the primary but not the exclusive supervisor of the censorship office. It issued directives, reviewed censorship operations, and was one of the referees of disputed censorship decisions. But other Party and government bodies influenced the decisions of the censorship office as well. In the Gierek era, all instructions to GUKPPiW as to what should be censored were channeled from the Press Department, which took over publication of the internal bulletin of significant censored articles, formerly issued by GUKPPiW itself (this bulletin is discussed in more detail below). All censorship appeals were handled by the Press Department instructor in charge of the specific journal or his supervisor, except in cases where a chief editor had personal entrée to a top leader.

The Press Department also has a key reporting function. It provides the leadership with most of its information on media activities. It commissions surveys from various research institutions on media coverage of specific events, the treatment of specific themes by particular journals, readership, and public attitudes on various topics. It regularly receives compilations of letters to journals from readers and it prepares periodic reviews of the media for the Politburo.

#### Other Central Committee Departments

During the Gomulka period, Central Committee departments other than the Press Department were closely involved with media coverage of topics in their areas of responsibility. These departments held their own press conferences and briefings. They intervened to help or stop the publication of specific articles, and sometimes they inspired articles directly. For example, the Industrial Department once "commissioned" a specific article from a particular journalist, and the Science Department inspired a negative review of a book in a specialized journal.<sup>7</sup> Other departments were especially active in the cultural and economic areas; the selection of editors of cultural and economic journals and decisions as to their coverage of various topics were made jointly by the Press Department and the Economics or Cultural Department. Central Committee departments might clash with ministries, as happened when the Science Department and the Ministry of Culture clashed over distribution of the *Polish Writers' Dictionary*; in such cases the Central Committee department has generally won.<sup>8</sup> In cases where Central Committee departments have been in conflict (with the Press Department usually desiring more limited coverage and criticism than the functional department), decisions have either been negotiated informally on the basis of the relative strength of the department heads and responsible Party Secretaries involved or bucked upward to be decided formally at the Secretariat or Politburo level.

Various Central Committee departments have also been actively involved in the work of the respective departments of *Trybuna Ludu* and, to a lesser extent, of *Nowe Drogi*. The Central Committee departments had the right to approve the heads of these departments, and the chief editors of the journals often had to reconcile the various Central Committee department pressures.

Under Gierek, as noted earlier, the Press Department became the dominant factor in all Central Committee decisions affecting the media. It had the right to

<sup>7</sup> Interview data.

<sup>8</sup> Interview data.

override other departments, and it evaluated and forwarded to the media proposals from other departments for coverage of issues. The exceptions to this rule were scholarly publications issued by the Academy of Sciences (PAN), supervised by the Science Department; open military publications, supervised by the MPA (Main Political Administration of the Ministry of National Defense, which has the status of a Central Committee department); textbooks and journals published for and by specific ministries or institutes, supervised by the appropriate functional Central Committee department; and Catholic journals, supervised jointly by the Administrative Department and the Press Department.

### Regional Party Influences

Regional (*vojvodship*) Party bodies exercised strong influence over regional media in the Gomulka period. In regions that had a strong Party leader, notably Silesia under Gierek, the media and the regional censors enjoyed significant autonomy from the center and were essentially controlled by the regional Party organization and Party Secretary personally. Chief editors of regional Party journals were generally members of the regional Party committee and were often included in its executive board. They were nominated by the regional committee, with approval by Warsaw, which was a mere formality.

Gierek's centralization of the political system eliminated regional strongholds and cut the linkage between the regional media and the regional Party bosses. After the administrative reorganization of 1975, regional journals continued to cover the territory of the old *vojvodship* while representing the number of smaller political units (*powiaty*) that replaced it. But direction of the media was centralized in Warsaw. Conflict among the various *powiaty* often left regional journals dependent on their Central Committee instructor for consistent direction; his authority in any case was expanded. As a result, regional leaders were left without media organs and with little real influence over the media.

### MINISTRIES AND OTHER STATE INSTITUTIONS

State institutions control the media through prevention and intervention at two points in the journalism process: access to information and its publication.<sup>9</sup> The control of access to information occurs on an *ad hoc* basis, with officials often seeking to prevent exposure of problems in their areas of responsibility. Although the right of journalists to information of this kind is guaranteed by law, as well as by periodic directives from the Premier and the Party First Secretary, and institutions are legally bound to respond rapidly when they are criticized in the media, there is little enforcement of the regulations. Journalists must often play Party patrons off against government bureaucrats in order to get information. Indeed, most journalists consider access to information to be their major professional problem.

Officials may also attempt to use their connections with their superiors to prevent publication of information about or criticism of their institution. An official

<sup>9</sup> See Note N-1514/1.

may make informal telephone appeals or threats to the journalist and his editor, or he may take more direct action and attempt to get a formal ruling from the censors' office preventing publication of information or criticism on a particular topic.

## THE CENSORSHIP OFFICE

The censorship office, GUKPPiW, is formally a government institution subordinate to the Council of Ministers.<sup>10</sup> But in reality it is an organ of the Central Committee Press Department. It exerts political control over all legal, open Polish media, ensuring that they do not publish military, economic, or other government secrets. It is subdivided into various departments handling everything from name cards to feature films and dramas to the mass media. Its officials make decisions on the basis of directives by the Press Department and their own personal sense of what is politically acceptable. GUKPPiW decisions may be appealed, ultimately to the Party Politburo, but this seldom happens because of the time strictures involved and the low probability of a reversal.

In the Gomulka era, regional censorship could differ substantially from that of the center simply because of the autonomy of regional censorship offices, which were often more responsive to local Party leaders than to Warsaw. Under Gierek, when media control was centralized, the regional censorship offices were made branches of the Warsaw central office.

The work of the censors is veiled not only from the public but from the journalism community itself. Not only is public mention of the very institution of censorship normally forbidden, but the regulations by which the censors work are not known by journalists or even by high-ranking editors (with the possible exception of Radio and Television News editors, who must work against short deadlines). Most discussions about what has been censored and why occur between the chief editor or the managing editor and GUKPPiW. Journalists and lower-level editors generally have no contact with censors; their information about censorship is anecdotal and they must infer patterns about what can and cannot be published. In the 1970s, GUKPPiW adopted personnel recruitment and advancement policies that were intended to change this situation. Working for the censors' office no longer was to be considered a lifelong career; rather, it was to be an entry point for training a new generation of journalists and editors. The Gierek leadership evidently hoped that these new cadres, knowing how to censor, would be self-censoring (as are Romanian and Hungarian journalists, for example).

This has not happened, however, and censors work on the basis of detailed directives as to what may and may not be published. A set of these directives for 1974-1976 has been published in the West<sup>11</sup>—the first such censorship documents available since the publication of the Smolensk archive. The directives pertain largely to specific issues or institutions, e.g., prohibitions against criticizing most heads of foreign governments or domestic foreign trade enterprises. They do not cover major domestic or international events; censorship decisions on such matters

<sup>10</sup> See Note N-1514/2.

<sup>11</sup> An annotated translation of these documents is being prepared at Rand.

are based on guidance provided in written "Instruction Notes" and in meetings between the censors and their directors, and on individual censors' own political sense. Respondents who had worked as censors in the Gierek era claimed that, in fact, less than half of their decisions were based on specific directives; most were based on internalized "natural censorship criteria." Personal judgments were even more important in the Gomulka period, when fewer specific directives were issued.

Censors must attend an initial training course and periodic "refresher" courses. They also regularly receive materials prepared by a GUKPPiW evaluation group that reviews past censorship decisions, notes cases of excessive or insufficient censorship, and compiles statistics on journals and writers censored. Censors also receive internal Party analyses of various issues and media.

Individual censors working with the mass media are assigned in teams of two or three to specific journals or radio or TV programs. Those working with print media normally receive and review the first copies of all pages as they are typeset. They then read each entire issue, not only for specific details in individual articles but also for the general tone of the issue and for the implications of the layout. Any censored pages are given to the editor in charge, who decides whether or not to appeal the changes mandated by the censors. Editors of dailies usually do not have the option of immediate appeal simply because of time pressure, so any appeals must request publication in a subsequent issue. Weeklies and monthlies have greater time flexibility, and their editors are often more personally committed to making sure that articles they approve are in fact published. These editors appeal censorship decisions more frequently—first, to the censor's supervisors and, if this is not effective, to Central Committee officials (or sometimes to top leaders who are known personally by the chief editor). Such appeals are normally effective only when the censor's decision was based on individual judgment rather than a regulation.

The censorship of other media is determined by the special character of the media themselves. Radio and television material that is prepared in advance is given by the journalist first to his editor and then to the censor. Live broadcasts cannot be censored in advance, but the censor is able to black out a broadcast if it transgresses the boundaries of acceptability. In the 1970s, live discussion programs were discouraged, and even news broadcasters had to present an outline of their texts in advance.

Procedures and regulations for book publishing are generally the same as for the mass media. Book manuscripts are first approved in concept by the publishing office of the Ministry of Culture and are then approved in detail by the publishers before they reach the censors. The censors then have considerable individual leeway in reviewing the manuscript, and there is more time flexibility for appeals and discussions between editors and censors.

In spite of Gierek's emphasis on centralization, the development of detailed sets of regulations, and training of censors attuned to political trends, censorship is not uniform or consistent. Individual censors often make independent judgments on nuances, and the strictness of censorship is normally inversely proportional to the size of the audience. What is deemed suitable for one journal may be viewed as inappropriate for another. Journals and writers who have been censored frequently in the past are more carefully scrutinized than those who have stayed well within the Party line. Journals with high-ranking chief editors do not get away with less

editorship; such editors are willing and able to take risks with what they try to publish and therefore submit more controversial articles to the censor than other editors would dare. Mieczyslaw Rakowski, chief editor of *Polityka* (a weekly intended for the intelligentsia), is the best example of this. Books, films, and stage productions may be approved simply as evidence of cultural liberalism and because of the prominence of their authors or producers, but censors may then be ordered to allow only negative reviews or, more frequently, to allow little or no mention of the book or production. Wajda's film, *Man of Marble*, was allowed to be shown but could not be widely reviewed.

This process of censorship has made GUKPPiW highly vulnerable to factional infighting in times of crisis. In 1956, when there was no clear Party line, the censors eventually refused to censor anything, in part because they were unsure as to what they could safely censor and in part because they were affected by the liberal and reform currents of the time and felt that censorship should be abolished. In 1967-1968, Moczar used his control over the security service to implant his own supporters in GUKPPiW, purge his opponents, and intervene in censorship decisions, ensuring that articles critical of the Moczarites' opponents would pass through censorship unchallenged. (In normal times, however, the security service has had little influence over the censorship office.) In other crises, the leadership has been united enough and the time span of the crisis short enough to insulate GUKPPiW from internecine Party struggle.

## THE EDITORIAL PROCESS

A Polish editorial office is organized in much the same way as an American editorial office, except that instead of a private publisher, there generally is a sponsoring organization: a Party body, a social or union organization, or a minor Party or Catholic group.<sup>12</sup> Some weeklies have no formal sponsoring organization, but are published by RSW Prasa (the main publishing house). A normal mass media publication has a chief editor, one or more assistant editors, a managing editor, various department editors, and staff journalists specializing in particular subjects (e.g., economic, social, foreign affairs, or sports) or in specific audiences (e.g., women or youth). The precise breakdown of departments is determined by the goals and audience of the journal. Organization of work within the journal depends on such factors as the character, political position, and attitude of the chief editor; the nature of the staff; the audience and subject; and the involvement of the sponsoring organization. Academic journals and most monthlies have no writing staff, only editors to process and edit manuscripts. An editorial board may have from two members (in the case of specialized academic journals) to twenty (in the case of *Nowe Drogi*).

Ideas for articles come from two basic sources. First, the chief editor gets suggestions and instructions on particular topics from official Party meetings or directives, meetings of the Executive Board of the sponsoring organization, or personal contacts. He then communicates such ideas, either directly or as "his ideas," to the staff. Second, journalists and department heads generate their own

<sup>12</sup> See Note N-1514/1.

ideas for articles from their contacts among specialists, officials, political leaders, or the population at large. Most articles published by established journalists are self-initiated.

The department head of the journal accepts or rejects a proposed article topic on the basis of information from the chief editor and his own contacts, as well as a yearly or quarterly editorial plan of general topics to be covered. If the idea for a specific article is accepted, the journalist then researches and writes it. He gathers information not only from various institutions' "press releases" but also from his personal contacts and expertise. Journalists writing foreign affairs articles also use the limited-distribution information bulletins of PAP. While officials may make it difficult or impossible for journalists to get access to information, they do not have the right or, under normal circumstances, the opportunity to read what is written before publication. Only in the case of formal interviews does an official who has provided information to a journalist have the right to approve the material in advance.

Once an article has been written, it is submitted to the department editor for editing and approval. In most cases, both the writing and approval of an article take longer than they do in the Western press. Polish journalists may work on a series for months. The department editor then decides whether the article merits publication, whether it is so sensitive that it should be read by the chief editor or a deputy, and when and where it should appear. He is also responsible for routine editorial commentary—including routine foreign policy editorials in *Trybuna Ludu*. All copy except wire service and late-breaking news in dailies is read, copyedited, and laid out by the managing editor or the "duty editor" for that edition.

Normally, the copy then is typeset and two copies are run off, one for a staff member to proofread and one for the censor (who works either in a special room in the printing plant or in the main censorship office). The censor makes corrections and remarks, which are then either accepted or appealed by the chief editor or his assistants. Once any appeals are heard and decisions made, the issue is corrected, rechecked, stamped as approved by the censor, and distributed. The size of the press run is determined not by the journal but by the publishing concern and ultimately the Central Committee Press Department. The leadership has been reluctant to allow popular and critical journals to expand their circulation to meet popular demand.

Although journalists are not directly involved in the censorship process, they are vitally concerned with the outcome, since they are generally paid a basic wage, with supplements based on how much they publish. For most journals, the supplements account for more than 40 percent of a journalist's earnings. Journalists also have a financial incentive to publish additional articles in journals other than their own. Such outside publication is rarely politically motivated, but it does require good contacts with other editors and is normally done only by leading journalists.

The work of the journal is discussed internally in a number of forums whose impact is a product of the position of the chief editor and the collegiality and status of staff members. One or more meetings between the editors and the staff are held to prepare each issue. In media organs with small and medium-sized staffs, there are also all-staff meetings—for every issue of most weeklies and periodically for dailies—to discuss the upcoming issue and reactions to the past issue. Some journals have an advisory board of experts, policymakers, Party officials, and staff

members. These boards normally merely rubberstamp proposals made by the editors and staff and give general evaluations of previous issues.

The key characteristics of the editorial process in Polish media are thus censorship, both internal and external; the slow pace of work due to the lack of modern equipment and the tradition of long, general, analytical articles rather than timely information; and the swing role of the chief editor as the ultimate judge of what will be emphasized, submitted for publication, and appealed from censorship. The chief editor often plays a variety of political roles, from membership on the board of the sponsoring organization to holding political positions in his own right. In these roles, he serves as a channel for information from journalists to the leadership and vice versa, as a lobbyist for the rights of the journal or journalists, and sometimes as an independent political actor. He is in constant touch with officialdom; the chief editors of major media organs communicate with Party and government officials in person or on the *rzadowka*, the special telephone system equivalent to the Soviet *vertushka*.

The mechanics of publishing can affect media content in ways that are politically important. For example, because of *Zycie Gospodarcze's* publishing cycle (and not by political calculation), its December 20-27, 1970, issue was distributed with an editorial defending the December 1970 foodstuff price increases just as they were rescinded.<sup>13</sup> As another example, GUKPPiW took exception to an article in a Krakow paper after publication; the article appeared in copies distributed in the surrounding countryside rather than in the city edition, not because of political infighting but because the regional edition was printed and distributed first.<sup>14</sup> Finally, the lengthy publication process of quarterlies precludes their involvement in fast-breaking media events. Thus, the fact that quarterlies did not join the brief media campaign of early 1977 in support of constitutional amendments was not necessarily a sign of passive resistance on the part of their editors.

<sup>13</sup> Interview data.

<sup>14</sup> Interview data.

## V. DIFFERENTIATED MEDIA ROLES

The external controls and editorial processes described in Section IV generally hold true for most mass media. But the operation and content of specific media organs are affected by a variety of factors, including their designated role, special leadership interest, sponsoring organization interest, personal predilections and connections of the chief editor, and the nature of the staff.

The Party authorities formally prescribe a specific role for each media organ, although a strong editor with his own political goals may modify or ignore this prescription. This role differentiation involves subject matter and target audience, which in turn dictate a specific tone. Mass dailies, for instance, can be divided into four categories:

- *Party dailies*, sponsored by national or regional Party bodies and responsible for putting forth the Party's viewpoint.
- "*Readership*" dailies, published in major population centers by RSW Prasa. These papers are also intended to put forth the Party line, but less directly and openly. They contain more "features," critical analyses, and intelligentsia-oriented articles. Their target audience is white-collar workers.
- *Evening tabloids*, like their counterparts in the West, primarily mass-directed, easy-to-read information and entertainment papers with broad appeal and little emphasis on politicization.
- *Minor Party dailies*, (i.e., organs of the Peasant Party and the Democratic Party), originally sanctioned in order to appeal to the least "reachable" segments of the population and bring them around to support the Communist system. These papers were originally directed toward peasants and private craftsmen, but this specific focus has gradually disappeared.

The position of individual media organs has varied with the degree of top-level interest in their activities. While the media as a whole benefited from increased investment in the Gierek period, there was also an attempt to equalize media organs, so that particular journalists and editors did not become institutions unto themselves. The *Trybuna Ludu* staff, which was given the privileges of Central Committee department officials under Gomulka, lost its special privileges vis-à-vis other papers. Although *Trybuna Ludu* was still considered the authoritative Party paper, the Gierek leadership showed more interest in Polish Television.

Many dailies and periodicals are sponsored by specific organizations or groups and directed at specific audiences, e.g., women, trade union members, or specific professions. The impact of this sponsorship on a journal's coverage varies. In the 1960s, the trade union organization supported the initiatives of its organ, *Głos Pracy*, but was not directly involved in editorial matters except when the union and its leaders were attacked by the Moczarites in 1968. PAX (a generally pro-regime lay Catholic organization), on the other hand, has considered its journals (*Ślowo Powszechne*, *Kierunki*, and others) as mouthpieces for the organization and its late leader, Bolesław Piasecki. Piasecki was closely involved in major editorial deci-

sions, and when subordinates tried to take a different tack, they could usually do so only in a very veiled manner.

The sponsoring organizations of other journals have played minor roles. The editor of *Prawo i Zycie*, Kazimierz Kakol, was able to adopt positions quite different from those of the journal's nominal sponsor, the lawyers' association, and to support Moczar in the 1960s. Indeed, in the 1971 media controversy concerning the social parasite law, *Prawo i Zycie* opposed the position of the lawyers' association and supported the stance of the Ministry of Justice; conversely, the Ministry's "house organ" advocated viewpoints espoused by the lawyers' association.<sup>1</sup>

The critical factor in determining the character of a media organ is often its chief editor. The role of *Zycie Warszawy* under Henryk Korotynski in the 1960s was very different from its role under the editor in the 1970s, Bohdan Rolinski. Under Korotynski, *Zycie Warszawy* was actively involved in initiating media discussions, while under Rolinski it followed the Party line as closely as *Trybuna Ludu*. Another example is *Prawo i Zycie*, which shifted from being an active Moczarite organ in the 1960s under Kakol, covering topics far beyond legal questions, to being passive and uncontroversial under Andrzej Dobrzynski in the 1970s.

In some cases, the character of an editor's staff exerts a crucial restraining force on his power. When the staff is stable and close-knit and composed of prominent and respected journalists, like the *Polityka* staff in the 1960s, it is less malleable and more involved in editorial decisions. An editor without such a staff has more autonomy, but he is less able to establish public authority, because his journal is of lower quality. This was the case, for example, with *Kultura*, a cultural weekly.

## THE PARTY MEDIA

In Poland, as elsewhere in the Communist world, one group of media organs is officially sponsored by the Party leadership.<sup>2</sup> Each of the three ideological journals in this group is aimed at a specific audience within the Party: *Nowe Drogi* is addressed to central Party officials and the Party intelligentsia and is supervised at the Politburo level; *Zycie Partii* is addressed to regional and low-level Party activists and is controlled by the Central Committee Organizational Department; and *Ideologia i Spoleczenstwo* is addressed to the lowest-level Party agitators and is under the Secretary responsible for propaganda. The PUWP also sponsors a scholarly journal, *Z Pola Walki*, issued by the Central Committee Institute for Party History, and two mass media organs, *Trybuna Ludu* and Polish Television News.

These Party media organs are exempt from political control by GUKPPiW (although they are still censored for inadvertent errors) and are supervised at a much higher level than other media. Except for *Z Pola Walki*, each sees itself (and is seen by the public) as a mouthpiece for the Party leadership. In fact, however, direct top-level supervision and control is the exception rather than the rule. Coverage of major, sensitive issues may be supervised personally by Politburo or Central Committee Secretariat members. The play given by Polish Television to major

<sup>1</sup> See Note N-1514/6, Section V.

<sup>2</sup> See Note N-1514/1, Appendix.

Gierek speeches was supervised on occasion in the 1970s by Szydłak, Babiuch, and Lukaszewicz jointly in personal visits to the studio; and the *Trybuna Ludu* editorial of March 13, 1963, on the establishment of a West German trade mission in Warsaw, was approved by Starewicz and deputy foreign minister Winiewicz.<sup>3</sup>

All of the Party journals are well funded. Unlike other media organs, they have not been pressured to be financially self-supporting, and their staff members' salaries are far higher than those of their peers on other media.

Like their non-Party counterparts, the ideological journals primarily publish articles submitted from outside. Their staffs are small—in the 1960s, *Nowe Drogi* had a stable staff of 12. Although they avoid topics regarded as sensitive by both the leadership and the editors, principally economic and foreign affairs, the ideological journals tend to be marginal to Party concerns and enjoy considerable autonomy. The *Nowe Drogi* staff receives approval of its monthly plan from the responsible Party Secretary, who also approves articles by top officials. Lead articles are reviewed, at least formally, by the responsible Politburo member. But most individual articles are discussed only by the author and editor or chief editor. Few substantive changes are ever made in these articles, and there is apparently little leadership interest.

The Party apparatus pays much greater attention to the mass Party media. Individual department heads of *Trybuna Ludu* are in direct contact with their respective Central Committee department heads, who may influence editorial content, even though they seldom involve themselves directly in editorial decisions. The chief editor, a Central Committee member, must sometimes balance competing demands from the Central Committee apparatus. As the Party daily, *Trybuna Ludu* does not take part in journalist-initiated media discussions, nor may its articles (or those of other official Party organs) be attacked directly by other journals. Other journals are sometimes told to model their coverage on *Trybuna Ludu*, but it has a relatively less elevated position within the Party hierarchy than it has had in the past. Its chief editor in the late 1970s, Józef Barecki, was not as politically prominent as his predecessors. Much of the direction for the paper evidently came from the Press Department, not from higher levels, and only the established journalists on the staff had a modicum of authority. In the Gierek era, Polish Television assumed some of the functions formerly exercised by *Trybuna Ludu*.

## SOCIOPOLITICAL WEEKLIES

The core group of journals in Poland—those that set the tone of the media and dominate most of the press discussions—are the sociopolitical weeklies.<sup>4</sup> These journals were established by the Party leadership to provide the intelligentsia with information, to substitute for intelligentsia journals begun in 1956 that were found to be too liberal, or to appeal to specific social groups. *Zycie Literackie* was established in the late 1940s in Krakow to involve the local intelligentsia. *Polityka* and *Kultura* were formed in the post-1956 period to substitute for banned liberal journals. *Zycie Gospodarcze* and *Prawo i Zycie* were used by liberal reformers in 1956

<sup>3</sup> See Note N-1514/5, Section IV.

<sup>4</sup> See Note N-1514/1, Appendix.

to popularize economic and legal issues; they eventually lost their liberal aura but remained significant specialist journals. *Literatura* was formed in 1970 in an attempt by the Gierek leadership to court the intelligentsia by providing an organ for segments of the literary intelligentsia that had never supported *Kultura*.

These sociopolitical journals figure prominently in media discussion, debates, and controversy. Their staff members are the most prominent individuals in the journalism profession. Their chief editors have normally been powers in their own right—several have been Central Committee members. These connections allow the chief editor to make judgments about the feasibility of publishing on a given topic and to take the risks involved in printing a critical article. Patronage exists, but it is used more often by the editor to increase his journal's leeway to publish on sensitive topics than by the political patron to have his viewpoint propagated via the journal. Most of these journals were directly engaged in the factional infighting of the mid-1960s.

*Polityka* is not only the leading sociopolitical weekly but the leading journal in Poland. For over 20 years, it has addressed itself to the liberal, technical intelligentsia. There is a great deal of cooperation and interaction among its staff, which is one of the most stable in Poland. This has facilitated a shared *Polityka* philosophy, which staff members and other journalists characterize as embracing internationalism (as opposed to narrow nationalism), socioeconomic pro-modernization, rationalization, and liberalism in social and cultural affairs. *Polityka*'s chief editor since 1958 has been Mieczyslaw Rakowski, Poland's best known journalist and a political factor in his own right. Rakowski had a close personal relationship with Gomulka, which made *Polityka* a target of the Moczar forces in the mid-1960s (but also helped it to survive). Later, Rakowski identified *Polityka* and himself with the Gierek program, but in the mid-1970s, the Rakowski-Gierek connection weakened and *Polityka* lost its special position. One indication of this was the sharp media criticism of Rakowski in November 1977 that was apparently orchestrated by the Central Committee Press Department; in that case, however, Rakowski was still able to have the last public word.<sup>5</sup> The journal became more closely controlled by the Central Committee Press Department—many of whose officials were connected with the Moczarist group in 1968—and *Polityka* became more censored and less able to successfully appeal censorship decisions.

*Kultura* has been identified with two diametrically opposed outlooks. Until 1974, when Janusz Wilhelmi ceased to be chief editor, *Kultura* was patriotic-nationalist, disinterested in questions of socioeconomic modernization and distrustful of democratization. *Kultura* emphasized a positive line about the heroism of Poles during World War II and the anti-Communist Home Army (AK) underground, connecting itself closely with Moczar. Since 1974, when Dominik Horodyski took over, the journal has increasingly taken a liberal, internationalist position. The staff has almost completely changed, and *Kultura*'s circulation and authority have subsequently increased.

*Zycie Literackie* was started by Wladyslaw Machejek in the late 1940s to appeal to the Krakow literary intelligentsia, traditionally a strong but insular grouping, and has continued to be his own organ. With the exception of its involvement in the Moczar campaign, *Zycie Literackie* has been less oriented to political and economic affairs than have *Polityka* and *Kultura*.

<sup>5</sup> See Note N-1514/6, Section VII.

*Prawo i Życie* grew out of the liberalization of 1956. Sponsored by the lawyers' association, its original goal was to popularize legal discussions. In the mid-1960s, because of the personal ambitions and ties of its chief editor, Kazimierz Kakol, the journal became a leader of the Moczar campaign, in spite of opposition from most of its permanent staff and its supervisory board. In that period, it dealt with topics far removed from legal issues. After the decline of the Moczar group, the journal, under a new chief editor, returned to popular legal and criminal questions.

*Życie Gospodarcze* was launched in 1956 as the journal of a group of young revisionist economists. Its chief editor for the last 20 years, Jan Glowczyk, was a member of that group. *Życie Gospodarcze* has an advisory board of government and Party officials as well as academic economic specialists. It has ties with the Ministry of Finance, the National Bank, and the Ministry of Labor. Its 30 staff journalists are encouraged to report on how the economy could be better managed, although its emphasis on light industry and limited foreign investment created some friction with the Ministry of Mining in the 1970s.

One other journal, *Przegląd Techniczny*, became prominent in the late 1970s as a highly critical and well-funded economic journal. Until 1976, it had been a trade magazine of the engineers' association (NOT). Then, at the initiative of the Minister of Machine and Engineering Industry and the head of NOT, *Przegląd Techniczny* became a highly critical, investment-oriented journal able to attack inefficiency in specific industries.

#### CATHOLIC MEDIA<sup>6</sup>

Since 1956, two groups of "Catholic" press have existed in Poland. One group was run by the pro-Communist PAX and was closely supervised and directed by its former leader, Bolesław Piasecki. The journals in this group (including *Ślowo Powszechne* and *Kierunki*) enjoyed considerable autonomy in the 1960s and 1970s, partly because they were considered to be a necessary link between the Catholic believers and the Party, and partly because of Piasecki's political ties. The journals have been well funded with PAX's profits from its sales of religious objects. Piasecki blatantly used the PAX media in the 1960s to support the Moczarite cause.

The other Catholic journals are affiliated with ZNAK, the independent Catholic parliamentary group, and the Catholic Intelligentsia Clubs (KIK). These journals (including *Tygodnik Powszechny* and *Wieża*) have been published since 1956 by a relatively stable group of lay Catholic intellectuals not closely connected with the Church hierarchy. The ZNAK and KIK journals are heavily censored, so they are unable to publish anything blatantly political—including the parliamentary speeches of their delegates. They are allowed to discuss critical issues only after such issues have been aired in other media, as was the case, for example, with the 1971 media discussion of the draft social parasite law. And they are restricted in

<sup>6</sup> This and the following discussions (of press agencies, radio and television, and research institute and academic publications) are based on interview data and other sources. More complete analyses of these specialized media, comparable to those in Notes N-1514/1 and N-1514/3, was not possible within the scope of the project.

their circulation. Within these restrictions, some ZNAK journals (most prominently, *Tygodnik Powszechny*) have used such tactics as long, drawn-out arguments with the censors, stylized and veiled wording, and silence to signal their positions. Some of *Tygodnik Powszechny*'s writers periodically publish in the West, and the journal publishes Catholic and non-Catholic writers who are unable to publish elsewhere.

Other ZNAK-affiliated periodicals, especially *Wież*, are edited by the members of Catholic discussion groups. These journals also publish articles both by their own members and by non-Catholic writers who cannot publish elsewhere; this is permitted because of the journal's tiny circulation.

## PRESS AGENCIES

During the Gomulka period, Poland had a number of specialized press agencies, in addition to the official Polish Press Agency (PAP). API was established to provide news and features to the non-Party media and was originally published by the "Czytelnik" Publishing House. It was merged in the 1960s with Agencja Robotnicza (AR), whose original function was to provide foreign news to regional and local non-Party papers. Zachodnia Agencja Prasowa (ZAP) provided coverage of Western affairs to the Polish media and propagated Poland's image in the West. These tasks were taken over in the mid-1960s by Interpress. In 1967-1968, the Moczars group promoted Interpress as a rival news service to PAP, and during this period, it broke into the domestic market and incorporated AR. Today, like the Soviet agency Novosti, Interpress serves as the official "host" for foreign journalists in Poland and as Poland's information service abroad.

PAP, as the official news service, is subject to strict, top-level direction. PAP editors are in constant contact with the Central Committee Press Department, and major communiques are cleared directly with Central Committee Secretaries or Politburo members. In addition to its public domestic and foreign news services, it also publishes a variety of limited-circulation information bulletins for the leadership and leading journalists, who may use this information in their analyses.

PAP stories are censored by GUKPPiW and transmitted for publication in the mass and specialized media (although they are recensored upon publication for any inadvertent errors). Some PAP stories are transmitted with instructions concerning their use. For example, certain key communiques are ordered published by all media, while particular feature articles may be published in the non-Party press only. With the exception of articles designated as obligatory in their entirety, editors may use their discretion in shortening (but not altering) PAP releases.

PAP is also the sole distributor of releases from other news agencies such as TASS. For major events, it may specify how a given foreign release is to be used, but normally this is left to the editor (or, in the case of dailies, to the night journalists who take last-minute releases and fill the space left for them by the editors). Many journals send correspondents abroad to provide more readable foreign reporting. Poland's corps of foreign correspondents has been larger and of higher quality than that of other East European countries, and some of these correspondents have served as important channels of private information to top officials.

## RADIO AND TELEVISION

During the Gomulka period, Polish Radio was utilized as an instrument of mass information. Its news reports were centrally directed and usually taken exclusively from PAP. But, at least until the mid-1960s, it also broadcast the bulletins and commentaries of a number of prestigious commentators who enjoyed considerable latitude in their work. Regional radio stations were autonomous from Warsaw during this period.

Under Gierek, however, the possibilities for radio journalists or regional radio stations to initiate programming were emasculated. Regional stations were subordinated to Warsaw, and formerly prestigious radio commentators were deprived of their privileged positions and forced to submit to formal pre-broadcast censorship by GUKPPiW. In most cases, they left the Radio.

Prior to the 1970s, there was little central control over what appeared on Polish Television, although various ministries and political leaders courted the TV. Strong regional Party leaders had power over regional programs, just as they controlled the local press. Moczar saw the potential of television and infiltrated it.

In the Gierek era, Polish Television became the most important single medium for mass mobilization. Gierek's confidant, Maciej Szczepanski (formerly chief editor of the Silesian Party newspaper), was named head of Radio and Television. Television was exceptionally well funded, so it could undertake extensive technical modernization and treat its top journalists as a privileged elite. Television News was expanded and was made a Central Committee organ like *Trybuna Ludu*. As such, it was supervised not by the Central Committee Press Department, but at a higher level. In the mid-1970s, Central Committee Secretary Lukaszewicz and Politburo members Babiuch and Szydlak frequently came to the studios to supervise coverage of major events, including many Gierek speeches.<sup>7</sup>

Leaders and staff alike evidently take this role of Television News seriously. Newscasters are advised to think of their audience as the "first hundred families." Videotapes of each program are regularly distributed to Politburo members, and leaders attempt to maximize their coverage. The same is true of institutions; heads of offices and institutions regularly make "out-of-channels" approaches to the Television News staff in efforts to maximize favorable coverage. The Interior Ministry and the Defense Ministry have reportedly also been quite active in courting television and providing its staff with technical assistance.<sup>8</sup>

## RESEARCH INSTITUTE AND ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

A variety of specialized publications are issued under the auspices of various research institutes and other scientific or academic organizations. These are special-purpose journals dealing with specialized topics and directed to specialists and professionals working in a particular field. Such journals enjoy varying degrees of independence from their parent organization. The chief editor is invariably chosen or approved by the sponsoring organization, but the editorial board itself is usually of mixed composition and includes outside specialists. As specialized

<sup>7</sup> Interview data.

<sup>8</sup> Interview data.

journals directed to limited audiences, these journals are permitted to publish facts or opinions that the censors normally would delete from mass media.

A sharp distinction exists between publications of ministerial or other governmental research institutes and publications of academic institutes under the auspices of the Polish Academy of Sciences. The former are much more closely controlled by their sponsoring institute or ministry and are normally supervised by the respective functional department of the Central Committee, not the Press Department. *Gospodarka Planowa* (an economic weekly), for example, is closely linked to the State Planning Commission. *Sprawy Miedzynarodowe* (a foreign affairs monthly published by the Polish Institute of International Affairs) is closely tied to the Foreign Ministry, which not only approves its publication plan but normally reviews articles on critical foreign policy subjects prior to publication and sometimes commissions articles directly.<sup>9</sup> Such journals do not publish policy-sensitive research products of their parent institutes; the results of such research are conveyed directly and privately to the parent ministry. The routine articles in *Sprawy Miedzynarodowe*, for example, must be "bland" and are of little significance for foreign policy officials.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, when a prominent personality writes in such a journal, careful editorial attention is paid to the content of his article. Precisely because they can be held responsible for the content of institute- or ministry-sponsored journals, ministry officials are careful to avoid "particularist" remarks which could be interpreted by their colleagues as improper special advocacy. Nuanced statements by officials are thus least likely to be found in their nominal "house organs."

The academic and scholarly publications are more independent of their parent organizations. This independence was quite pronounced in the Gomulka era, when groups of liberals in 1956 found refuge in and continued to dominate such bodies as the Institute of Sociology and the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of Sciences (PAN), where they were usually ignored by Party authorities. The journals of these institutes, e.g., *Studia Socjologiczne* and *Studia Filozoficzne*, enjoyed *de facto* independence not only from PAN but from their parent institutes as well. Editorial discussions were carried out on narrow professional grounds among groups of largely like-minded specialists. It was these informal groups, not the sponsoring organizations, that dominated the respective journals, to the extent that professionals with different outlooks simply did not publish there. In sociology, for example, *Studia Socjologiczne* was the "organ" of the "Warsaw School" of sociologists led by Adam Schaff, while *Przegląd Socjologiczny* was the "organ" of the "Lodz School" headed by Jozef Chalasiński. Because of their specialized nature, such journals contained materials that could not be published in the mass media; 30 to 40 percent of what was published in *Studia Socjologiczne*, for example, reportedly fell into this category. The foreign edition, *Polish Sociological Bulletin*, was permitted even greater latitude by the censors.<sup>11</sup>

Scholarly and academic publications thus enjoyed considerable autonomy in the Gomulka period and utilized this autonomy to publish materials that sometimes departed considerably from the prevailing ideological orthodoxy. This diver-

<sup>9</sup> Interview data.

<sup>10</sup> Interview data.

<sup>11</sup> Interview data.

sity was not a sign of leadership conflict. Rather, it was a sign of the relative pluralism of the social sciences and related disciplines under Gomulka. Academic and professional journals were generally given more leeway because they were read by small groups of experts—and apparently were not read by the leaders. Only when a prospective article attracted unusual attention, for example, if it were presented to a specialists' conference convened by a Party official, might its publication be prohibited. Such was the fate of one article banned from one of these journals by the Central Committee Science Department (which was responsible for PAN publications).<sup>12</sup>

After 1970, the relative autonomy of academic specialists was reduced. In sociology, philosophy, and cultural affairs, the "revisionists" of 1956 emigrated or were silenced, and the specialist journals fell into the hands of Party loyalists, who saw that their content was more in line with—if not always an echo of—Party orthodoxy.

### MILITARY PUBLICATIONS

There is a sharp distinction between the professional journals and the political journals (and other publications) issued under the aegis of the Ministry of National Defense.<sup>13</sup> Political journals, including *Zolnierz Wolnosci* (the military daily), *Wojsko Ludowe* (a monthly for political officers), and *Zolnierz Polski* (a weekly for soldiers), are subordinated to the Main Political Administration, which is responsible for the nomination of their chief editors, constitutes the most decisive influence in their editorial councils, and closely supervises their editorial policy. As open publications, these political journals are censored by GUKPPiW as well as the General Staff military censorship office. Professional military publications, on the other hand, are subordinated to "line" military bodies; e.g., *Mysl Wojskowa* (the major professional monthly) is subordinated to the General Staff, and *Przegląd Wojsk Ladowych* (the ground forces monthly), to the Chief Inspectorate for Training. These professional bodies are most influential in nominating editors, in the work of the editorial council, and in overall supervision. As "nonpublic" journals, even those with the widest circulation are censored only by the military censorship office of the general staff, not by GUKPPiW.

Each type of military publication has its own function and audience. The political articles that are published from time to time in the professional journals are, by and large, window dressing and are viewed as such by both editors and readers. Correspondingly, the professional or technical articles in the political publications of the armed forces are normally not taken seriously by Polish military professionals.

In each type of journal, most of the articles are signed; they are explicitly "discussion articles" which represent "responsible" individual viewpoints presented within the constraints of the review, editorial, and censorship processes. The more public the journal or other publication in question, the fewer the specifics of military affairs that can be addressed and the greater the political intervention

<sup>12</sup> Interview data.

<sup>13</sup> See Note N-1514/3.

from the MPA and GUKPPiW. This political connection makes it likely that conflict within the top Party elite will be reflected in the political journals of the military; this was the case in both 1956 and 1968. The professional journals, on the other hand, are likely to remain insulated from intra-Party conflict. Within the overall constraints of the system, such journals reflect important concerns of military professionals, relatively free of specific MPA or other political interference.

## VI. MEDIA DISCUSSIONS, DEBATES, AND CONTROVERSIES

Discussion, debate, and controversy have been common in the Polish media since the mid-1950s. Some discussions have been initiated by top leaders; others, by journalists. But many key issues have not been allowed to appear in the media at all. Section II discussed a number of categories of media discussion and their relationship to intra-elite controversy. This section examines various types of media discussion (categorized in Fig. 1) in greater detail.

### MEDIA CAMPAIGNS AND CONTROVERSIES

Party leaders may either direct or suggest informally that the media carry out campaigns that focus on particular events or problems. In *leadership-initiated campaigns*, the leadership uses the media to mobilize public opinion on an issue about which it has taken a position. Media articles present different aspects of the issue, but seldom, if ever, are critical viewpoints conveyed. For instance, the leadership issued guidelines for media campaigns covering the Polish Millennium in 1966, various Party congresses, the American Bicentennial, the Helsinki Conference, the 30th Anniversary of "People's Poland," and the Pope's visit to Poland.<sup>1</sup> It belatedly organized a media campaign in support of the Constitutional amendments of 1976, with the Central Committee Press Department dictating the selection of officials and professionals who were to endorse the amendments and the content of their statements. The Press Department also dictated the number and content of purported readers' letters in mass dailies. No contrary viewpoints could be published.<sup>2</sup> At a more mundane level, the media were instructed to publicize "Action R" (a campaign to increase economic reserves) in the 1960s.<sup>3</sup> Although the leadership clearly directs these campaigns, journalists are nevertheless often able to pick a focus, set the tone, and determine their own level of participation.

The leadership also sometimes orchestrates pseudo-discussions to provide a forum for an attack on an unacceptable position or to generate public support for a given policy. The existence of such *leadership-orchestrated pseudo-discussions* indicates a belief on the part of the leadership that controversy is not only a useful pedagogical device, but also a necessary element for satisfying the public. In these discussions, different viewpoints do emerge, but one view is clearly "proven" wrong.

Media debates often occur in response to articles that the leadership was unaware of in advance or that had more resonance than the leadership had anticipated. Individual articles initiated "from below" or journalist-initiated discussions then become a stimulus for leadership-orchestrated pseudo-discussions. For example, *Polityka* chief editor Rakowski's self-initiated article on decentralization in

<sup>1</sup> See Note N-1514/2.

<sup>2</sup> See Note N-1514/5, Section VI.

<sup>3</sup> Interview data.

1977 became the object of sharp criticism apparently orchestrated by Press Department officials.<sup>4</sup> But in that case, Rakowski was able to appeal to the leadership level and was allowed to have the last word—an indication of disarray or disunity in the elite with factional overtones. Another “debate” appeared after Politburo members read Adam Schaff’s book, *Marxism and the Human Individual*, which they had not seen prior to publication. The pseudo-discussion was published in the December 1965 issue of *Nowe Drogi* to make clear the regime’s position. Other such “debates” on deviant Marxist viewpoints had been organized in previous issues of *Nowe Drogi*.<sup>5</sup> Following a journalist-initiated discussion in the early 1960s on Zbigniew Zaluski’s book, *Seven Cardinal Polish Sins* (which raised nationalist issues), Central Committee Secretary Starewicz directed *Trybuna Ludu* to “sum up” and end the controversy,<sup>6</sup> which it did editorially on April 23, 1963. In other cases, interviews are arranged so that leaders can answer “critical” questions by journalists and set forth “correct” ideas.

If the Party is internally divided, factions or groupings may initiate media discussions on issues that they think will enlarge their bases of support and weaken the position of other contenders for power. Such *factional debates* occurred in 1956 and in the wake of the Moczarite media offensive of the 1960s. By their own admission, the Moczarites sought control of the media by courting working journalists and editors, installing their own supporters in media positions, and founding new media organs. They then used the media in an effort to create a ground swell of support for themselves by emphasizing popular issues such as nationalism, anti-Semitism, and egalitarianism and by attacking their political opponents. It was the Moczarites who initiated media discussions on patriotism, educational reform, egalitarianism, and the role of sociology in the mid-1960s, as well as the “anti-Zionist” campaign of 1968.<sup>7</sup>

Officials sometimes ask journalists to write a series or an article on subjects ranging from a current play or a commemoration of the holiday of a foreign state to the accomplishments of a particular industry. Officially commissioned reviews of cultural events are a form of mini-campaign, while discussions of industrial achievements constitute a form of *lobbying*, with the initiator usually a middle-level official interested in furthering his own interests or projects by appearing to have public support. In the 1960s, strong regional Party leaders often engaged in such lobbying (see the examples from Lodz in Section II).

Even in media discussions initiated “from above” by the Party leadership, by an intra-Party group, or by a single individual in a position of authority, journalists can often affect the character and intensity of the discussion. Established journalists react negatively to being told outright what to write and are able to remain silent. One prominent former journalist reported that only once in his career was he approached directly by a Central Committee official and asked to write a particu-

<sup>4</sup> See Note N-1514/6, Section VII.

<sup>5</sup> Interview data. In the *Nowe Drogi* discussion of Schaff’s book, several Polish experts on Marxism displayed considerable sympathy for Schaff’s views. But the discussion was introduced by Andrzej Werblan, head of the Central Committee Science Department, and summed up by Politburo member Zenon Kliszko; both were much more critical and emphasized the Party leadership’s reservations. The book and the *Nowe Drogi* discussion are reviewed in Adam Ciolkosz, “Marxism and the Individual,” *East Europe*, May 1966.

<sup>6</sup> Interview data.

<sup>7</sup> See Note N-1514/5, Section II.

lar article. Leaders usually approach low- or middle-level journalists, making suggestions indirectly and offering assistance if the journalist is willing to deal with a given subject. Even so, the journalist may have to use his own resources and contacts to gain access to the information necessary to write the article. More fundamentally, interaction between officials and prominent journalists in particular is so constant that the journalists themselves often find it difficult to distinguish when they are acting on their own (perhaps stimulated by their knowledge of internal Party developments), when their positions are part and parcel of their journalism work, and when they have subtly "been used."

The distinction between initiation "from above" and initiation "from below" is particularly tenuous in the case of factional debates. Undoubtedly, most of the "Moczarite" articles of the 1960s were initiated by journalists themselves, yet the political effect of these articles was the same as that of stories planted by Ministry of Internal Affairs officials. The distinction is similarly somewhat artificial in cases where a journalist publicizes the viewpoint of a middle-level official. The official may initiate such publicity, or the initiative may come from a journalist, but the result serves the same purpose. For instance, when regional censors blocked a story on the inability of factories in the region to fill their export orders because they lacked needed imports, the journalist was able to appeal to the regional Party Committee head, who directed the censors to clear the story as ammunition against criticism from Warsaw that his region was not fulfilling its quotas.<sup>8</sup>

This interrelationship between journalists and leaders and officials notwithstanding, the majority of the discussions and critical articles that appear in Polish media are initiated not by the leadership but by journalists themselves. Such *journalist-initiated discussions* occur on issues journalists consider significant but which are of limited concern to the leadership. The issues often are so marginal to the leadership that there is no elite response or involvement in the media discussion at all. This was true of the "Falkowska debate" of the mid-1960s on the proper role of the journalism profession, which was expanded into a veiled critique of broader issues; there was no elite response either to the topic itself or to the underlying themes.<sup>9</sup> Discussion of such issues frequently appears in the media without elite involvement, continues—even in vitriolic tones—and then ends of its own accord, with no indication that any official took it seriously or even read it. One such discussion in the 1970s concerned the need for better and more available goods for infants.<sup>10</sup>

In some cases, officials may object to a discussion, but without much effect. For example, the Ministry of Heavy Industry objected to a series in one daily, but after some temporary difficulties, the journalist in question was exonerated.

Journalists also usually take the initiative in *leadership-sanctioned specialist discussions*. We know of no cases of a leadership-orchestrated discussion among specialists, although the leadership may actively encourage journalists and specialists to organize discussions themselves. Or leadership involvement may be completely passive, with the discussion initiated entirely "from below." Specialist discussions have occurred over the drafts of numerous legal codes, including the labor code, the family code, and the basic administrative code.

<sup>8</sup> Interview data.

<sup>9</sup> See Note N-1514/5, Section III.

<sup>10</sup> Interview data.

*Elite-related policy discussions* of more sensitive or policy-related issues, such as the 1971 discussion of the draft parasite law<sup>11</sup> and the nuanced treatment of the German question in the 1960s,<sup>12</sup> may be initiated by journalists as well, but as noted, journalist-elite ties are so close as to make this distinction artificial. Only in a few cases do journalists as such seem to have taken the initiative in discussions of truly fundamental issues. One example was *Zycie Warszawy's* frank and free-wheeling series of mid-1970, "New Tasks for Poland," in which participants criticized pervasive economic, social, and political stagnation, warned that Poland might face a threat to fundamental national interests in the altered European environment of the 1970s, and called for new policies and (implicitly) new leaders. The first article in the series, by a prominent sociologist, Jan Szczepanski, was blocked by the censors until a companion article by Stefan Bratkowski was added. (Bratkowski's article was not much less critical, however). The series then began in the issue of June 4, 1970; the reaction of the leadership was "mixed," but the series was allowed to continue.<sup>13</sup> Such a discussion could only have occurred in the late Gomulka period, when the leadership was weakest; it would have been unthinkable under Gierek.

In the 1970s, journalists could initiate discussions on sensitive topics only indirectly. Therefore, they focused on "safe" subjects, attributed controversial statements or ideas to "safe" actors, or used allusions. In a controversial 1977 article on decentralization, Rakowski dealt explicitly with a less critical ideological issue—the extent of decentralization—but he was actually dealing with the need for citizen involvement and responsibility in decisionmaking. Nevertheless, the article provoked an orchestrated response that helped make clear to all journalists the limits of permissible criticism. A 1978 *Polityka* series on unemployment used "readers" as a foil and the unemployment issue as a shroud for a veiled warning against increased repression.<sup>14</sup>

When media discussion of an issue is prohibited, as was the case, for example, with the widespread popular objections to the adoption of constitutional amendments in 1977, journalists may express their own viewpoints through formal and informal private channels.<sup>15</sup>

## CHARACTERISTICS OF MEDIA CONTROVERSIES

The various kinds of media discussions have some distinct characteristics which can help the reader of the Polish press to distinguish among them.

### Involvement of Specific Media Organs

Leadership-initiated campaigns usually appear in mass dailies without specific group sponsorship or audience targets, and on radio and television. Leadership-

<sup>11</sup> See Note N-1516/5, Section V.

<sup>12</sup> See Note N-1514/5, Section IV.

<sup>13</sup> Interview data. The discussion is reviewed in Michael Costello, "The Poles Look at Their Country and at Themselves," *Radio Free Europe Research*, September 16, 1970.

<sup>14</sup> See Note N-1514/5, Section VII.

<sup>15</sup> See Note N-1514/5, Section VI.

orchestrated pseudo-discussions are typically published in *Trybuna Ludu* and *Zycie Warszawy*, because the leadership knows that Party sponsorship will be assumed and the discussion widely read. Under Gomulka, discussions confined to media of a given region were orchestrated by the regional Party leadership, but this has been less feasible since Gierek's centralization of the media. Journalist-initiated discussions and elite-related policy discussions occur in media that are not formal mouthpieces for the "Party line" (i.e., they do not appear in *Trybuna Ludu*, television or radio, or, normally, regional Party papers) and that have the resources and staff to prepare and publish discussion articles. These are principally the intelligentsia-oriented, sociopolitical weeklies (*Polityka*, *Kultura*, *Zycie Literackie*, *Prawo i Zycie*, and *Literatura*) and specialist and academic journals. Prior to the mid-1970s, this group included *Zycie Warszawy*. The liberal Catholic intelligentsia journals, *Tygodnik Powszechny* and *Wies*, are under such close scrutiny of the censors that they are able to publish discussion or criticism only if an issue is marginal or has already been discussed critically elsewhere.

Economic discussions are normally considered much too sensitive to be allowed even in specialist economic journals, partly because of political ramifications and partly because these journals are directly identified with individual ministries or Central Committee departments. Because their circulation is so small, noneconomic specialist journals are able to present more controversial ideas than can the larger-circulation weeklies. Leadership-sanctioned specialist discussions occur both in these specialist journals and in the sociopolitical weeklies. But such journals are unable to participate in fast-breaking events because of the time lag in publication; they are able to engage only in limited *ex post facto* analysis.

Lobbying was pronounced in regional journals that were under the control of regional Party leaders in the 1960s. Today, it is generally found in media other than nominal "house organs," which are likely to be either too obviously identified with institutional interests (e.g., the publications of the various economic research institutes) or too autonomous (e.g., the journal of the Ministry of Justice). Factional debates occur throughout the media, including the political (but not professional) publications of the armed forces.

### Timing and Scope

Leadership-initiated campaigns appear universally and simultaneously, with journals following the same patterns of coverage. Leadership-orchestrated pseudo-discussions tend to be short and concentrated. Articles are commissioned and coordinated before the debate begins, so again there is no time lag. Other journalists are barred from participating. In cases of leadership-orchestrated responses to journalist-initiated discussion, the responses are rapid and interrelated. If the journalists get permission to counterattack, their response is often delayed and may not deal with all of the arguments raised. Lobbying involves a series of articles or a single article prepared in advance. Factional debates, often reflected in a multitude of topics being discussed simultaneously, continue as long as factionalism within the Party is rampant; they end abruptly when factionalism declines.

Journalist-initiated discussions tend to be protracted and diffuse. The appearance of an article in the press stimulates other journalists to respond, and it takes time for them to write and publish their articles. If an issue is raised sporadically

after the bulk of the debate has concluded, it is clear that the leadership sees it as marginal. Elite-related policy discussions and leadership-sanctioned specialized discussions, too, tend to be lengthy.

### Topics

Leadership-initiated campaigns and leadership-orchestrated pseudo-discussions involve broad economic, social, political, or ideological issues or specific events. These are not generally considered legitimate subjects for media criticism by journalists. Lobbying involves discussion of concrete institutions or issues. Factional debate is often disguised as a cultural or social debate, but it is generally more specific and policy-oriented than journalist-initiated discussion. It may appeal to natural cultural predilections, such as nationalism or egalitarianism, in order to get popular support, and criticism tends to be *ad hominem*.

Many social and cultural topics may normally be assumed to be of limited interest to the leadership. Journalists are allowed to initiate their own discussions on such topics. Although these discussions are often critical, they tend to be carried on within the ethics of the profession. Individuals are not attacked personally, and they can defend themselves. Specific instances of maladministration by low-level Party and state organs are also usually legitimate subjects of journalist-initiated discussion.

Journalists may sometimes advocate controversial positions on underlying issues by taking what is on the surface an ideologically pure stance to bolster themselves against attack. Or they may use obscure arguments of professional interest to make implicit criticisms of the system, since explicit discussion of specific professional or specialist issues is sanctioned by the leadership. Finally, elite-related policy discussions deal with the policy at issue but generally reflect only part of intra-elite controversy.

### Participants

In leadership-initiated campaigns or leadership-orchestrated pseudo-discussions, the participants tend to be either journalists with high Party positions, low-level journalists, or official Party propagandists. These campaigns may emphasize large numbers of readers' letters. In factional debates and in purely journalist-initiated discussions the participants are either well-known or middle-level journalists or specialists. Leadership-sanctioned specialist discussion involves experts. And elite-related policy discussion involves both prominent journalists and officials and experts.



## Appendix

### A NOTE ON METHODOLOGY

Rand's study of the role of the media in intra-elite communication in Communist countries is based principally on extended interviews with individuals formerly involved in the media process—as writers, journalists, editors, censors, and government and Party officials—who subsequently emigrated from their countries and who are now in the West.

The study team compiled the names and professional biographies of Polish émigrés with the requisite backgrounds, and subsequently requested 46 interviews. Forty-four interviews were conducted in 1978 and 1979; two of the individuals approached declined to be interviewed. The interviews were requested and conducted with the understanding that the respondents would remain anonymous. This condition has precluded the normal referencing of source material. It has also necessitated omitting some of the details of specific cases and events that are known to the co-investigators.

As a group, the interviewees occupied numerous media positions at three levels: as journalists and writers, as editors, and as Party and government officials with responsibilities for the media. A breakdown of positions or career specialties follows; in many cases, individual respondents fall into several of these categories:

- Officials responsible for the media (9)
- Key editors (chief, deputy, managing, department) (25)
- Editorial advisory board members (3)
- Journalists (14)
- Foreign correspondents (8)
- Press agency personnel (5)
- Social science professionals (7)
- Military media personnel (7)

These interviewees thus had extensive first-hand knowledge of most aspects of the Polish media system, although they lacked detailed knowledge of Politburo and Central Committee Secretariat decisions and procedures affecting the media. While the information gathered for the study is hence poorest on this upper level of the system, a number of the respondents did have first-hand dealings with, and knowledge of, Secretariat and Politburo members, and the study does make use of their testimony.

Most of the respondents—36 of the 44—emigrated from Poland in conjunction with the 1968 domestic crisis. Thus, the co-investigators have been attentive to a possible bias in the "sample," with reference to the late 1960s in particular. They therefore have compared the accounts of these respondents with those of respondents who emigrated at other times and with the other sources of information described below. In general, no significant bias was found, even on such issues as the Moczarite purge campaign.

Project interviews were conducted in Polish or English by the co-investigators, both of whom are specialists on Polish affairs. One (Dr. Curry) is also a specialist

on Polish journalism. An open-ended interview protocol was utilized which included both standard queries for all respondents and questions focused on the specific background of individual respondents. Interviews were conducted in conjunction with a careful reading of the relevant Polish media. In some cases, it was possible to ask respondents to comment on the origins and significance of specific articles that they had published. Interviewees' recollections of published material were subsequently checked in the Polish media (in some cases requiring rechecking with the respondent). Respondent testimony was also examined for consistency with the accounts of other respondents and with other information (including the often illuminating accounts of Western journalists in Poland). In addition, respondent information was compared with impressions gained by the co-investigators, as Rand researchers, in discussions with Polish officials, journalists, and specialists during visits to Poland. The study also draws on Dr. Curry's doctoral dissertation, *Polish Journalists in the Policy Making Process: A Case Study of the Impact of Professionalization* (Columbia University, 1980), which involved extensive fieldwork in Poland prior to Dr. Curry's affiliation with Rand. That research included interviews with some 150 journalists and officials and a written survey of 89 Polish journalists. Some sections of the present study directly utilize material from this doctoral dissertation, as referenced in the Rand Notes published in conjunction with this report and listed in the Preface.

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