

**A RAND NOTE**

THE MEDIA AND INTRA-ELITE COMMUNICATION  
IN POLAND: THE ROLE OF "SPECIAL BULLETINS"

Jane Leftwich Curry

December 1980

N-1514/4



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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 emigres 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 emigre 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 Rand Report, R-2627, The Media and Intra-Elite Communication in Poland: Summary Report, by Jane Leftwich Curry and A. Ross Johnson, December 1980, which provides an overview analysis and conclusions, and in a series of Rand Notes, which contain more detailed analyses and documentation of the research:

- o 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.
- o 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.
- o 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.
- o 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.
- o 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



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I. INTRODUCTION

Parallel to the mass circulation media in Poland is an elaborate system of limited-circulation bulletins. These include straight translations of international wire service reports, transcripts of Western radio broadcasts into Poland (heard by millions of Poles daily), and reprints of some articles censored from the mass media. These bulletins serve as an important information source for the policymaking elite and have an important effect on mass media analyses of national and international events and on politics generally.

They are considered the most authoritative information sources in Poland. And indeed, there are clear indications that at least some of the information bulletins have had a significant impact on policymaking and the thinking of political leaders.

Internal bulletins are published on a regular basis by a number of institutions: press agencies, Polish Radio, the Main Office for the Control of the Press, Publications, and Public Performances (GUKPPiW), Party and government bodies, and research institutes. They focus on international affairs, Western analyses of and reports on the Soviet bloc, and domestic affairs. Their information sources include Western press agency reports, transcripts of Western broadcasts, Polish foreign and domestic correspondents' reports, and censored press articles. The controls on what is published in these bulletins are far looser and more indirect than those exerted on the mass media. Under normal circumstances, the leadership simply uses these bulletins for its own information but does not become involved in decisions about what should

appear in them. In fact, the leadership apparently encourages the presentation of the most critical and unpublishable information available in at least those bulletins having the most limited circulation. There are also indications that government and Party officials use these bulletins to increase their own power and have, at times, even started special bulletins to increase their influence.

What is strictly controlled at the center is the formal distribution of bulletins. The number of copies of each bulletin printed and the individuals or offices that may receive copies are evidently determined at the Central Committee Secretariat level. The distribution of a given bulletin is directly related to the institution that publishes it and the kind of information it contains. Foreign affairs information, even information that is critical of the Soviet Union, is far more readily available than domestic information or foreign critiques of the situation in Poland. The circulation of the internal bulletins reportedly ranges from few more than 12 (one for each member of the Politburo) to slightly over 1000, depending on the sensitivity of the information being presented. The less sensitive bulletins are made available to journalists and ministry officials, as well as Politburo members. The most widely circulated are the translations of Western news agency reports that are not considered quite appropriate for the public media. Accessibility changes as the political situation and top leadership change. Shifts in the position of a given individual or institution are also often reflected in changes in access to the special bulletins. In the Gierek era, when information was of greater sensitivity to the leadership than it had been previously, the least-sensitive Western

agency reports were widely available, and the slightly more sensitive reports were printed in a new bulletin having more limited circulation.

In assessing the role of the various special bulletins, it is important to note that they are far more widely read than their authorized distribution would indicate. Most of the former journalists, editors, and others connected with the media whom we interviewed reported having had access to or at least an awareness of some of these bulletins. Respondents who had received the bulletins appeared to have been fully responsible for deciding whether or not to show them to colleagues; no formal controls or sanctions for unauthorized access were mentioned.

It must be kept in mind that while the special bulletins are highly significant, they are not the only source of unpublished information available to and used by journalists and policymakers. Not only do many of those interested in foreign affairs have access to Western news media, but journalists and policymakers also get information through their own personal contacts and gossip channels.

This Note is based entirely on data from emigre respondents. Since most (but by no means all) of them left Poland in the late 1960s, the information about the Gomulka period is far more complete than that on the Gierek era.

## II. SPECIFIC SPECIAL BULLETINS

### POLISH PRESS AGENCY INTERNAL BULLETINS

The producer of the largest number of limited-circulation bulletins is the Polish Press Agency (PAP). PAP has issued at least four separate special bulletins:

1. The Biuletyn Specjalny (Special Bulletin) for foreign affairs, with separate sections on the capitalist world, "socialist countries," and the world economic situation.
2. A more informative but less accessible special bulletin on world events (the "white pages") for the top political leadership.
3. A very restricted-circulation bulletin, Polska w Oczach Zagranicznych (Poland in the World's Eyes), providing reprints of Western and emigre media accounts of the situation in Poland.
4. A limited-access special bulletin on internal Polish events.

The Biuletyn Specjalny is a combination of Western news agency and media articles translated into Polish and Polish foreign correspondents' special reports. In the 1960s, about 1000 copies of this 150-page journal were distributed by special messengers at 1:00 p.m. daily. The readership included specific editors and journalists,[1] Politburo and

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[1] Reports on the receipt of the Biuletyn Specjalny by journals vary. The number of copies received and the access of journalists to this Biuletyn seem to be determined by factors such as editor-staff relations and the ability of journals to pay for multiple copies. Zycie Warszawy received four copies daily in the 1960s. These were then read regularly by 15 staff members. In the offices of some socioeconomic

Central Committee members and officials, some regional Party Committee heads,[2] ministers and heads of ministry departments, high military officers, officials of political-professional organizations such as the Association of Polish Journalists, some members of the Institute of International Affairs, the Higher Party School, other academic-research institutions, and some foreign embassies. Individuals other than those designated, though, clearly had regular or sporadic access to the Biuletyn through their personal connections or because of their "need to know." One respondent reported,

In theory, the Biuletyn Specjalny was to be kept locked in a filing cabinet and seen only by the journalists who had the right to see it. Sometimes, though, it was loaned out on the basis of friendship. Or editors of PAP simply took copies out and showed them to friends. This was one of the major channels of information in Warsaw.

There are some indications that in the Gierek period this specific pattern may have changed somewhat: The Biuletyn Specjalny apparently was divided into two editions--a general, less controversial edition with more public circulation and a more restricted-circulation edition. The patterns of production and use appear, however, to have remained the same.

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journals, access to the copies received is almost total. But in the office of one regional journal where staff-chief editor relations were not good, few journalists had access to the Biuletyn Specjalny and those who did could only take notes on it and return it to the chief editor. Another journalist reported that "PAP bulletins were sent to the chief editor but were, as a matter of course, read by the assistant editors, managing editor, and journalists who were interested."

[2] One respondent reported that lower-level województwo and powiat officials received a weekly summary bulletin--a truncated version of the daily Biuletyn Specjalny.

Ironically, many of those who use the Biuletyn have free access to the foreign press from which many Biuletyn items are taken. But the Biuletyn translations remove any language barriers. For those with access to the Biuletyn but not to the more exclusive "white pages," it is the most reliable, easy to use, and extensive source of foreign affairs information that can be used in journalists' public analyses and commentaries. Although no references may be made to the Biuletyn Specjalny as a source of materials, and Polish correspondents' reports published in the Biuletyn cannot be quoted directly, journalists are expected to use it as background material for their articles on foreign affairs. Instead of quoting the Biuletyn Specjalny, journalists must attribute ideas, comments (including direct quotations), and information to "various sources," or use phrases such as, "according to this or that information," "according to our information," or "according to information that we have received." They may also refer to specific Western papers, agencies, or journalists whose statements are reprinted in the Biuletyn. However, the fact that information or commentary is published in the Biuletyn Specjalny does not mean that it will be free from censorship when it is included in media articles. Rather, the journalist, commentator, or editor must make his own evaluation of what will be permitted, just as he does with information from other sources.

The Biuletyn Specjalny is produced by a small group of older journalists (many of whom are former foreign correspondents) working relatively independently within the Polish Press Agency. In the 1960s, the various special bulletins were the direct responsibility of the chief editor of PAP. At least in the 1960s and early 1970s, he was said not



to have interfered directly in the selection of materials for or the publication of the Biuletyn. His only contacts with its staff were at occasional meetings with the heads of the various Biuletyn departments, where he informed them of leaders' concerns and interests. Such meetings were felt to have played a much smaller role in the composition of the Biuletyn Specjalny than similar meetings of editors and staff members of mass-circulation journals. Beyond this and the fact that Biuletyn staff positions were all nomenklatura positions,[3] there was evidently no perceptible direct or indirect pressure on or intervention in the work of the staff. The decisions as to how widely information should be disseminated were routinely made by Biuletyn editors after they had received all copy from wire services and Polish foreign correspondents. At times, individual Polish correspondents filed specific reports for a particular limited bulletin.

In the 1960s, the Biuletyn staff was organized into regional departments, e.g., American, Chinese, Middle Eastern, Western European (with special divisions for important countries like West Germany), Eastern European, and Soviet. A respondent described the editorial process as follows:

The journalists in each department began work at 7:00 a.m. with a quick reading of agency telexes. On the whole, they then selected the information that they wanted to include. The chief editor also read his copy and marked what he thought should be included. These were only the things that he felt were very important. After a quick reading, the journalists

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[3] The chief editorship of the Biuletyn Specjalny is probably a Secretariat nomenklatura position. Other staff positions, filled by individuals who have been foreign correspondents or who have dealt extensively in international affairs, are probably in the Press Department nomenklatura.

discarded the information that they thought was unnecessary. The chief editor called the regional editors and told them how many pages they were to be allotted. Then, at 9:00 a.m., the journalists began to dictate information for the Biuletyn. If they felt they needed more space, a decision was made on an ad hoc basis.

Ultimately, then, decisions on the use of the various Western press agency reports and Polish correspondents' special articles in the Biuletyn Specjalny were made largely on the basis of information content and editors' personal evaluations of what was or was not significant information.

The treatment of events in Communist countries is one of the most sensitive areas in Polish mass-media reporting. The normal pattern in the public media usually is to either (1) use TASS press agency reports, (2) follow Soviet coverage patterns, or (3) publish very positive and limited reports on the USSR and East European Communist countries and negative reports on the situation in China. But in the Gomulka era, the Biuletyn Specjalny used Western and Polish correspondents' reports, rather than Communist agency reports, as the sources for information. Although the chief editor sometimes was directly involved in decisions about what to reprint about Communist countries, there was no apparent sense of having to cater to Soviet sensibilities on the Soviet bloc or China. Articles were reported to have "covered all aspects of life," and the editors responsible "tried to publish the 'juiciest' and most interesting articles. This, at times, even included specific information on troop maneuvers."<sup>[4]</sup> For information concerning China, the editors made heavy use of special reports by Polish correspondents.

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[4] Interview data.

There is no clear information as to whether this editorial process changed under Gierek. We do know, however, that the most widely available edition of the Biuletyn Specjalny is today far less open in its reporting of events in other Communist nations or in the West.

The one major deviation from this pattern of relatively open reporting on other Communist countries noted by the respondents was the handling of the Czechoslovak reforms of the mid-1960s and the subsequent Soviet invasion. On this issue, full information was accessible through special channels only to the top leadership. According to one respondent,

The 2000 Words manifesto from Czechoslovakia, the presence of German troops in the invasion force, the arrest of Dubcek in Moscow, etc., was printed in shortened form in the Biuletyn Specjalny. But, it was printed in full in the "white pages" for the Politburo. Even with what was reprinted, the language of the reports in the Biuletyn Specjalny mirrored that of the public press.

The other foreign affairs bulletins (the "white pages" and Poland in the World's Eyes), which are issued by the same group in the PAP, contain far more critical articles of more direct relevance to the Polish leadership. Their circulation is significantly smaller than that of the Biuletyn Specjalny. They were reportedly distributed in the 1960s to top officials and also to the chief editors of Nowe Drogi, Trybuna Ludu, Zolnierz Wolnosci, and, normally, Zycie Warszawy and Polityka. These leading editors received the bulletins to help them prepare responses to international crises and foreign criticism. The chief editors who had access to these bulletins were reported to have occasionally brought specific sections to the attention of selected journalists.

In addition to foreign news, the "white pages" prints reports by Polish foreign correspondents of particular political sensitivity. The treatment of the Prague Spring that appeared in the "white pages," for example, was considered too sensitive to be made available to the 1000 recipients of the Biuletyn Specjalny. In the 1960s, some of these special reports were marked for the closed "white pages" by the sources, and others (including Western agency stories) were simply assigned to them by the chief editor of the Biuletyn Specjalny. He based these decisions, in part, on the suggestions of his managing and department editors. Much of the stress in the "white pages" is on the publication of critical information about other Soviet bloc countries (in addition to articles on foreign events such as Watergate, considered too sensitive to be discussed by a broader elite readership). In fact, our respondents maintained that correspondents in other Bloc countries were encouraged to relay the most critical and sensitive information and evaluations possible, especially during crises.

The other PAP bulletin, Poland in the World's Eyes, is a compilation of all the articles on Poland that appear in the Western press (including the emigre press). Normally, the materials reprinted in this bulletin have been highly critical of Poland and the Soviet bloc. They have dealt, for example, with

the Polish economic situation; internal Party battles; battles between various groups in the Politburo and in the Central Committee; positions of members of the Politburo, ministries, and government; and changes or perspectives on these individuals. No matter what criticisms were put forth about the leadership (Gomulka), [they were translated directly].[5]

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[5] Interview data.

PAP also publishes a special bulletin dealing with domestic events. Apparently the control of the content and distribution of this bulletin in the 1960s was much stricter than that over any of the foreign affairs bulletins; no comparable information is available on the situation in the 1970s. The domestic affairs bulletin was reportedly distributed only to the Politburo and some Central Committee members, including the chief editors of Trybuna Ludu, Nowe Drogi, Polityka, and Zycie Warszawy. [6] The chief editor of PAP's domestic service was responsible for deciding which information would be public, which would appear in the domestic limited bulletin, and which would remain private and uncirculated in print at any level. In doing this, he was directly responsible to the head of PAP. Apparently the domestic bulletin contained information "on strikes, factory accidents, unfulfilled plans, money problems, etc.," sent in by PAP domestic correspondents. [7]

Other press agencies (Agencja Robotnicza, Polish Western Agency, and, after the mid-1960s, Interpress) have at times produced bulletins analogous to those of PAP. In 1968, Interpress started a rival series of special bulletins to compete with the PAP series. Interpress had an entire Department of Press Analysis producing compilations and analyses of Western press coverage. These topics were selected by the head of the Department of Analysis, apparently based on his perceptions of the need for or requests from officials for information on a specific topic.

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[6] We were unable to verify whether the chief editors of Polityka and Zycie Warszawy did, in fact, have access. The situation may have varied over time, depending on leadership policies and the position of the chief editor and his journal vis-a-vis the leadership at any given time.

[7] Interview data.

In the late 1960s, Interpress also published a bulletin of West German press articles which the Western Press Agency had begun in the early 1960s. This bulletin was intended to provide Party and state officials as well as leading specialists on German affairs with "the most representative and factual analysis of the situation." But, as with all bulletins, no guidance was given as to what should be used in the mass media. In this period, therefore, no matter what was translated, most journalists used quotations from "safe" journals like Soldaten Zeitung, which was considered "the most ready example of continuing Nazi tendencies in Germany." [8]

#### POLISH RADIO MONITORING BULLETIN

Polish radio publishes a very limited circulation bulletin with transcripts of all foreign radio broadcasts monitored by Polish radio about Poland and for Polish audiences. This bulletin reports what is broadcast by Radio Free Europe, Voice of America, and the BBC (this information is never reprinted in the international Biuletyn Specjalny) for Polish audiences. Its circulation is as limited as that of the domestic special bulletin.

#### THE CENSORSHIP OFFICE BULLETIN OF CENSORED ARTICLES

The censorship office, GUKPPiW, serves not only to block information from the media but also as a pipeline through which information is taken out of public channels and transmitted directly to the leadership. In the Gomulka era, GUKPPiW published an internal circulation journal,

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[8] Interview data.

Sygnaly (Signals), which printed articles the censors had barred from publication in public journals. Sygnaly was then selectively circulated to the Party leadership and to editors of top-ranking Party papers. It was not given wide circulation within the journalism community or the censors' bureau, since its role was not to present examples of what should or should not be written but to "signal" public feelings and unrest.

As a result, journalists regarded having their stories published in Sygnaly not as a punitive act but as a positive step in calling issues to the leadership's attention. Sometimes they in effect wrote for Sygnaly. The bulletin was considered a particularly important conduit by those who did not write for "prestige" journals. It was often the only means by which regional and minor press journalists could get their stories read by the elite. But prestigious journalists have also made deliberate use of Sygnaly. For example, a large segment of press opposition to the draft psychiatric law of the mid-1970s was reportedly published in Sygnaly. In another instance, a chief editor wrote an extremely bold article in response to pressure by Gomulka on the press to report more positively and extensively on a specific international issue. The article was censored and printed in Sygnaly, as its author intended, thus indirectly demonstrating the impracticality of the particular media campaign Gomulka desired. Another journalist prepared an article on a particular social issue with the intention of having it censored and printed in Sygnaly, as it in fact was.[9]

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[9] Interview data.

That Sygnaly was, at least in the 1960s, produced by the directors of the GUKPPiW rather than the Central Committee Press Department made it one additional potential "outside" source of information on the workings of the media establishment and the actual tenor of public opinion (as perceived by journalists). Normally, no punitive action was taken against journalists whose censored articles were printed in Sygnaly, since Party leaders valued this additional channel. Nor was Sygnaly used by the political leaders as a means of controlling the work of the censors. Censored articles had to be appealed to Party leaders, and only through these discussions, not through publication in Sygnaly, could Party leaders be stimulated to intervene.

The status of Sygnaly in the Gierek period is unclear. It appears that Sygnaly was used by the Party leadership until at least the mid-1970s for the purposes discussed above. However, the Central Committee Press Department reportedly played an active role in the publication of Sygnaly under Gierek. As the Press Department expanded and became the only institution of appeal and approval for censored articles, Sygnaly appears to have been closed down (or at least its distribution was limited still further). The absence or restriction of Sygnaly strengthened the Press Department's control over information available to the leadership and enhanced its ability to present the image of a completely controlled media in the late 1970s.

#### OTHER LIMITED PUBLICATIONS

Various ministries and Party bodies also publish reports for the leadership, based on the information they gather in the course of their



work. Special bulletins and "news releases" are put out sporadically by all ministries. Some of these are intended as background material for journalists, and others, certainly, are commissioned reports for the leadership. In the 1960s, these internal bulletins also became instruments of factional struggle. Moczar apparently utilized a bulletin of the Interior Ministry to strengthen his position within the top Party leadership in order to promote an anti-Semitic campaign prior to 1968. He did this through sporadic "selective distribution" of the bulletin or through the withholding of certain items from it.

Research institutions such as the Higher Party School and the Institute of International Affairs also produce special reports and studies or translations for the Party leadership. For instance, the Institute of International Affairs has done limited translations of books that could not be published in Poland, either at their own initiative or at the request of a Party official. These translations were sent to Party officials and ministry heads. As another example, the Institute for the Study of Capitalism has made periodic analyses of Western radio broadcasts. [10]

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[10] Interview data.

III. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SPECIAL BULLETINS

Internal-circulation bulletins, as formal nonpublic channels of information for Party leaders, government officials, journalists and editors, academics, and other well-placed members of the elite, are a critical element of the system of intra-elite communication in Poland. They allow the political leadership to be well informed about the domestic and foreign situation. They are, in fact, a source through which officials can obtain access to certain critical information on events elsewhere in the Communist world and on Western media analyses of the situation in Poland itself.

But the special bulletins also provide information to a wider circle of the elite, including those leaders and officials who are below the very top. Others, including journalists who may not be fluent in foreign languages, have access to at least some of the bulletins, and this information allows them to use Western sources in presenting their arguments in the open media and in forming their own judgments about international and domestic politics. None of our interviewees reported reading the Polish press for more than routine information; all reported reading the internal bulletins and using various gossip channels to inform themselves about the political situation. With this background of information, they were able to publish their own writings in the media and interpret what was being written by others. Hence, the controlled mass media notwithstanding, there exists an "informed public" in Poland with access to objective information--far more information than ever appears in the public media. The plethora of bulletins in circulation

clearly indicate the variety of alternative information sources that are built into the Polish system for the leadership. Top leaders who are interested in receiving information from a variety of sources have a readily available resource, and the middle-level elite is informed to a far greater degree and with far less orchestration than is normally assumed by those who read only the mass media.

In times of intense factional struggle within the Party, groups seeking their own advancement may also use the special bulletins as instruments. This was the case in the mid-1960s, when the Moczarite offensive encompassed not only the media but the limited-circulation information bulletins as well. As noted, Interpress (the Moczarite-backed competitor to PAP) inaugurated its own special bulletins, and Moczar manipulated Interior Ministry bulletins in support of his cause. He was greatly helped by the fact that Gomulka's personal assistant, Walenty Namotkiewicz, had developed Moczarite leanings, and these were reflected in his screening of materials for Gomulka. The extent to which the Moczar group succeeded for a time in monopolizing both internal and public means of information is exemplified by the fact that top officials who opposed the Moczarites had to inform Gomulka personally about domestic events, such as the purges of specific individuals, which were omitted from the various internal bulletins.[1]

Western media can also be deliberately used in leadership intrigue. Western news and commentary about Polish affairs, however critical, is faithfully conveyed to the top leadership through Poland in the World's Eyes and the monitoring bulletin of Polish radio. No doubt, most of the

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[1] Interview data.

well-informed coverage of internal Party developments published in Western and emigre media can be attributed to Poland's more open political system, as compared to its Warsaw Pact allies, and the historic legitimacy of the Polish emigration. But some of that information is the result of conscious "leaks" by leaders or senior officials, intended principally for other domestic figures, not foreign readers. The Moczar group indisputably sought to so utilize Western media to boost their cause in the 1960s. As one respondent pointed out,

When we read the [issues of the Paris edition of] Kultura that were made available in the library, it was clear that that kind of information could only have been sent out by those in a high position and that they were using it to create a position for themselves.

At lower levels, too, professionals, journalists, and others on the fringes of the elite have occasionally written for the Western or emigre press just as they may write "censorable" articles, in order to reach the Polish leadership. For example, one respondent who was barred from continuing a series of critical articles in the specialized Polish media, published subsequent installments in a Western Communist journal in the expectation (which was subsequently realized) that they would soon circulate among top Party officials.[2]

These conclusions and examples point up the complexity of the system through which information is conveyed to the elite and by which intra-elite controversy is expressed in Poland. Special bulletins and private information sources are principal channels through which the elite informs itself about domestic and foreign affairs. The special

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[2] Interview data.

bulletins serve to convey to top officials both censored domestic articles and articles published abroad. The information conveyed is far more critical, diverse, and objective than that which normally appears in the Polish media. And although personal ad hoc channels play a critical role in informing the top leadership, especially about domestic developments, the special bulletins are among the most important information sources available to the elite. Almost guaranteed a top-level Polish audience, these bulletins and, occasionally, the Western media can serve as vehicles by which individuals or groups can seek to gain influence and power.

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