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Bases for a New Communications Policy

Komunikacja Ilacznosc w Planie Szes-  
cioletnium, Vol IX, pp 19-22, Polish  
book, 1951

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EASES FOR A NEW COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

The Six-Year Plan will introduce <sup>the</sup> proper co-ordination in the field of various forms of transportation and will properly divide among them masses of goods and passengers for transporting. A uniform system will be established. Thus, the utmost use of all ways and means of transportation will be made possible.

The first objective of the changes being made will be to henceforth preserve the leading role of railroads in transportation. However, despite the absolute increase in railroad transportation, it will be decreased in proportion to other kinds of communication. For example, state truck transportation in 1949 amounted to barely 4.5 percent of railroad transportation while in 1955 it will amount to about 32 percent of railroad transportation. This does not at all mean that transportation by truck will increase at a loss to the railroads, because the principle of equal development of all forms of transportation parallel to the increase in industrial and agricultural production will be strictly observed.

The [relative] part played by narrow-gauge railways in global shipping of freight will be reduced in the Six-Year Plan, although a further quantitative, absolute increase in shipping by this form of transportation is provided for. The reason for this is that narrow-gauge railways have an important role in accomplishing the pioneer revival of formerly neglected and economically poor areas.

Another objective will be the expansion and intensification of cooperation between the various forms of transportation. The zones and boundaries will be divided up among the enterprises. Transpor-

tation by truck will be parallel to railroad transportation only along short stretches (an average of up to 60 kilometers); instead, it will handle traffic along lines perpendicular to the railroads and handle transportation to railroads. It will be a means for distributing goods. Truck transportation will be used along territories without railroads and will replace certain less important railroad lines because it is cheaper when there is little traffic. For example, the cost of one passenger-kilometer on local railroad lines (i.e. on lines with little traffic) amounted to over 20 zloty (old value) in 1949 while the cost of one passenger-mile in PKS amounted to only 4 zloty. On local lines the number of train passengers did not exceed the capacity of two buses; therefore, two buses can replace the train. Obviously this is not shown to be economically necessary in all instances.

The third objective is the slow but steady development of inland navigation. During the six-year period considerable increase will be made in the use of transportation capabilities of the Odra, which will be made suitable for large barges with a capacity of 600 and even 1,000 tons. The Odra will therefore fulfill its task in coal and ore transportation, the Wisla in transporting goods, the purpose being the partial relief of railroads and trucks. But above all we are going to develop passenger traffic on the Wisla giving special consideration to tourists and water recreation. River vessels will also serve as regular communication to the settlements along the Wisla which have no other means of communication.

The fourth objective is close coordination between the work of railroads and seaports. The fight to reduce the time that the railroad cars stand idle in the ports has been going on for years

but today the lack of proper synchronization still exists. This fight must go on.

The fifth objective is the establishment of a proper ratio between the mass of goods transported by the producer's equipment and that transported by equipment belonging to transportation enterprises. In the Six-Year Plan the part played by State transportation will increase. This will determine to an increasingly greater extent the sectors in which cooperative and private transportation enterprises will act. During the six-year period an accurate and all-around plan based on suitable technical-economic indexes and a strictly defined mass of goods for shipping by the producer will be formulated. In time the large reserves of a fleet of trucks will be opened up and transportation by truck on a state scale will be set in order. The gradual, slow limitation of shipping of products for which there is an economic demand and the transfer of the surplus to public transportation enterprises is provided for.

As a result of proper investment and policy on communications the disparities in the communications systems of the old territories and the reclaimed lands will disappear completely and no corner of the country will be without transportation and communication.

Today the overthrow of many weak theories is radically influencing the new communications policy. The realization of the Three-Year Plan and chiefly the establishment of the new Six-Year Plan are proof that those theories which had a detrimental effect on the speed of reconstruction and development in many branches of the economy have been entirely rejected.

For example, the theory that our maritime economy depends on world conditions in general and navigation conditions in particular was false. That theory said that our socialist economy is part of a world capitalistic economy and is dependent on its soundness, that our plans must be adjusted to the situation on the world market, that only to a negligible degree can we free ourselves from the negative results of crises and fluctuating conditions in the capitalist world.

Marxist economy and the example of the USSR clearly show that the maritime transport of a country building socialism can free itself from conditions in the capitalist world the same as other branches of the national economy can.

Another theory set maritime economy apart as a specific branch in which the economic laws differ from those for the whole economy. To be sure, the theory has been overthrown but not sufficiently, and even today there are, for example, attempts to set the workers in this branch apart in a special professional organization with definite autonomy.

The tendencies toward preferring the Central Shore to the neglect of the western part were radically rebuffed. In the realization of the Six-Year Plan the capitalist idea of duty-free zones was rejected in our relations with the USSR and the People's democracies, based on principles of cooperation altogether different from those under the capitalist economy.

The unfairness of the theory that we ~~can~~ not build ships ourselves, that the fleet has to be based exclusively on ships purchased abroad because it should not be built up too much, was revealed.

Unfair, too, were the tendencies toward establishing public transportation units which were to be directed exclusively by the State clients' wishes and not for the producers' economic advantage. In order that the development of our economy may be assured a regular tempo, the communications enterprises must not only be economically sound but they must also require from the agents the loading, unloading and shipping of goods that be properly organized.

At the same time attempts to impose exorbitant rates for service were eliminated. This would have been continuation of prewar capitalist attitudes toward persons and institutions who profit from the services.

Also unfair was the tendency toward liquidation of inland navigation because the cost was supposedly higher than railroad shipping. It is necessary to clearly distinguish between the mere cost of the shipping in inland navigation, which is steadily going down, and the investment costs for the regulation and drainage of rivers, because they are extra vital objectives and very essential to the soundness of our water economy, reclamation, safety from floods, exploitation of water power, and water supply for industry and the populace.