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USSR-POLAND: Soviet Reaction to Recent Events

The Soviets have not commented publicly on the demotion last week of hardline Politburo member Olszowski, the postponement of the papal visit, or Premier Jaruzelski's easing of some martial law restrictions. In their formal message yesterday on Poland's National Day, President Brezhnev and Premier Tikhonov expressed approval and support for efforts to revitalize the Polish party. At the same time, however, they stopped short of expressing confidence that current measures to cope with political and economic difficulties would be adequate.

Comment: The sparseness of Soviet commentary may stem from mixed feelings about recent events and a desire to await their impact before passing judgment. The Soviets are likely to be uneasy about the downgrading of Olszowski, who is particularly close to the Kremlin ideologically, but they may hope that it at least will reduce strife in the party. The limited concessions Jaruzelski announced on Wednesday probably allayed Soviet concerns that he would move too far toward conciliation. Although the Soviets may have reservations about the large-scale release of detainees, they appear confident of the regime's ability and determination to maintain order.

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