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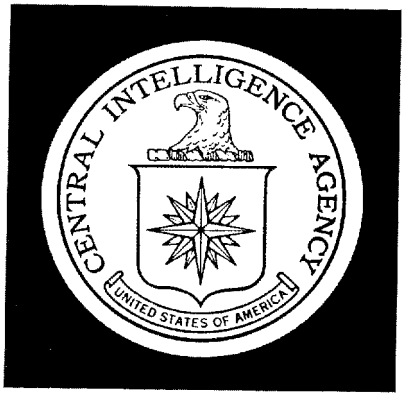

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WEEKLY SUMMARY

Special Report

Polish Communist Party Moves to the Right

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POLISH COMMUNIST PARTY MOVES TO THE RIGHT

Poland's fifth party congress will open on 11 November, with First Secretary Gomulka's 13-year-old system of rule through factional checks and balances in a shambles. Intellectual turmoil, student demonstrations, and the cumulative grievances of a decade have given factions within the party the opportunity to mount the most serious challenge to Gomulka since he regained power in 1956.

The party's hard-line, nationalistic forces no longer seek only participation in the system, but want to remold it in their own image. Gomulka brought these forces back from limbo in the late 1950s to restore economic and administrative order and also to use in destroying his liberal opponents. In the process, however, he alienated his moderate friends.

After the congress, Gomulka probably will still play an important—but no longer a dominant role. The country is likely to be run in his name by a combination of right-wing forces, ranging in outlook from semifascists to reformists, who will continue to contend for power among themselves. Domestic and foreign policy guidelines are unlikely to change, but policy implementation may move off dead center. The conflict within the party between the trends toward authoritarianism and reform will leave the system basically unstable.

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The Party Congress

On the surface, the main task of the congress, which normally lasts four days, will be to promulgate a program charting the party's course in all spheres of national life over the next four years. Its most important act, however, will be the election of a new central committee, which will choose a new politburo and secretariat at its first session, usually held immediately after adjournment of the congress.

When the congress opens, Gomulka will face a sullen population, a newly critical party rank and file, and a leadership more divided than ever before. Moreover, the opening date of 11 November is the 50th anniversary of the modern Polish state, which will evoke chauvinistic overtones.

The first national conclave over which Gomulka presided, the third congress of March 1959, marked the consolidation of his power and saw the flowering of his new system based on a factional consensus. To stabilize this consensus, Gomulka had to rely increasingly on the services of a combination of nationalist hard liners and former Stalinists. By the fourth congress, in June 1964, Gomulka had to put down a challenge from these elements. He succeeded because his opponents were at odds, and because he was the only leader acceptable to all wings of the party.

Since then, Gomulka's efforts to maintain the status quo have generated increasing opposition. Factional crises have sapped the energy of Gomulka's old guard, isolated from the mainstream of the party, and have heightened its hostility to criticism and change. As a result, the party's policies have been characterized by arbitrariness, bureaucratization, and stagnation.

The Challenge of the "Right"

The struggle that has shaken the Polish party during the past year was set off by the "right" wing of the party. It has fought against Gomulka's leadership not by direct assault, but by attacking the remnants of those dissenters on the "left" who are liberals or "revisionists."

The attack on these elements was useful to the right, but the real targets were those who formed the early core of Gomulka's system of rule: the moderates, former Social Democrats, and Jews, as well as party hacks of various political hues.

In their call for a purification of the party and nation, Gomulka's challengers of the right have implicitly criticized his leadership. At the same time, they have vigorously supported Gomulka's campaign against liberal dissenters. At first, Gomulka welcomed this but now he knows that their excesses have redounded against him. Like

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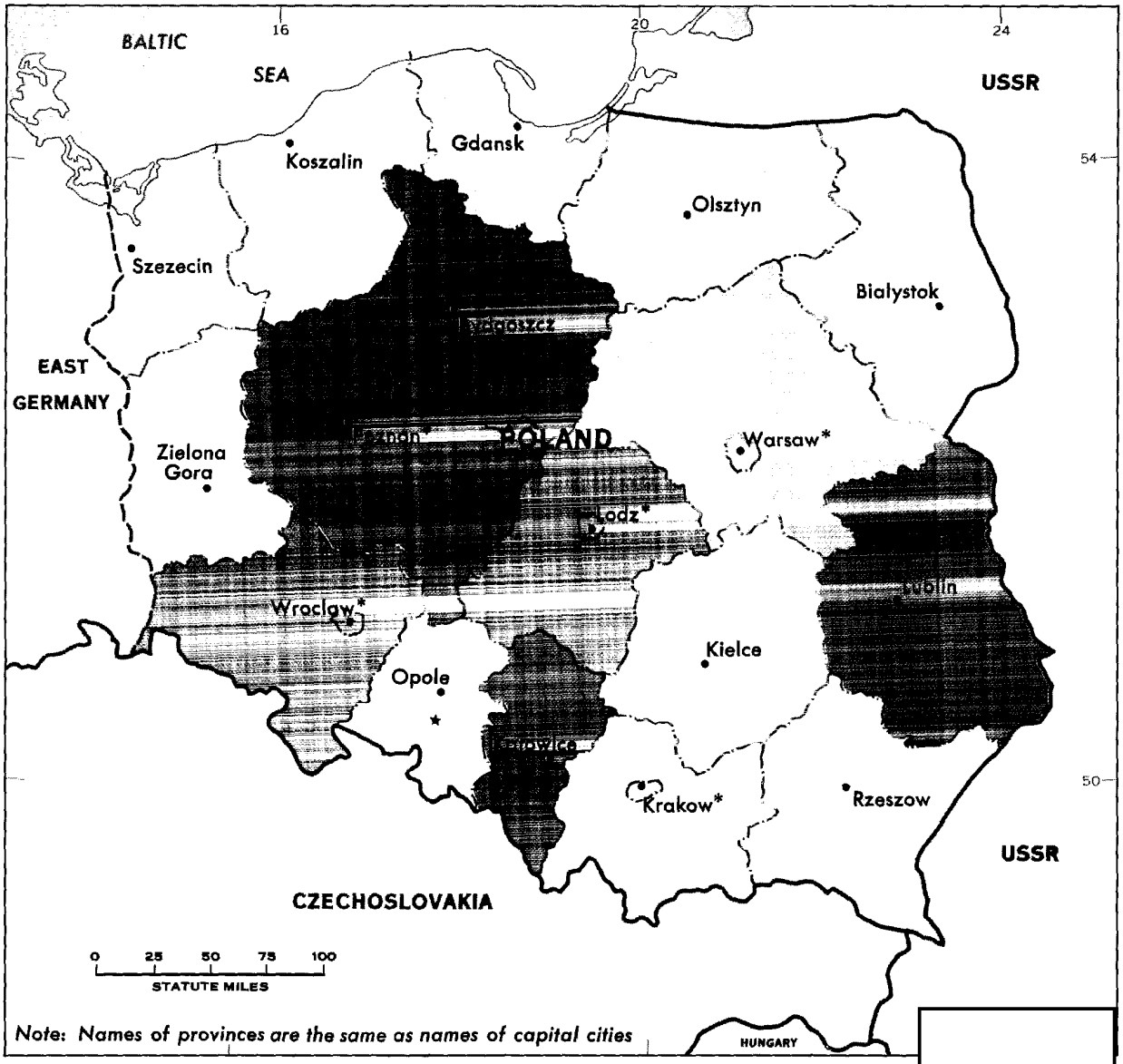
Approximate Communist Party Membership Density by Province



Note: Names of provinces are the same as names of capital cities

Membership Per 10,000 Population

700-750	400-499
600-699	300-399
500-599	260-299

**City with separate provincial status included in data for the province*

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it or not, Gomulka has seemed to be their creature.

Gomulka himself is responsible for the dual challenge he now faces. Since 1956, he has assumed that the main danger to his leadership came from the liberal "revisionist" wing of the party. He firmly suppressed these elements after 1956, and has tended to answer every problem since then with a swing to a more dogmatic position. Soon, there were no reformers left in the leadership, nor in the echelons immediately below it. In their place were aging, noncontroversial hacks, often men discredited by both policy and performance in the pre-Gomulka period.

The right wing of the party moved into this vacuum. Gomulka tried to appease them with small concessions without giving them the opportunity to influence policy or to wield power. But over the years, the hard-line elements have gradually changed the character of the Polish party and its power base.

The most vociferous of the two major groups of rightist challengers is the hard-line nationalistic, and anti-Semitic group led by former interior minister Mieczyslaw Moczar. Paradoxically, Moczar's faction has strong links to Gomulka. It derives from the "native" Communists or "partisans" who, under Gomulka's leadership, formed the core of the party in Poland during World War II.

Like the early Gomulka, Moczar prefers a nationalistic party and was an early opponent of the party's "Muscovite" wing. It was Gomulka's compromise with the pro-Soviet elements in 1956 that led the two to part company. Moczar and his allies remained in obscurity until 1959, when Gomulka, believing he could control them on the basis of old loyalties, brought them into his regime to help with serious economic and administrative problems.

Another rival of Gomulka is politburo member Edward Gierek. He draws his strength from his dynamic and efficient administration of Poland's major industrial center, the province of Katowice. Gierek has grouped around him discontented "technocrats," young party bureaucrats, and ideologically unassailable elements seeking economic and social reform. Gierek is the only party leader who seems to be aware of the demands of modern society.

Both Moczar and Gierek are trying to wrest control of the party from a leadership they consider anachronistic. Each has used the recent anti-Semitic purges to his own advantage. The two seem also to stand for many of the same things: clearing deadwood from party ranks, better communication between the rulers and the ruled, recognition of public opinion by the authorities, more decisiveness and consistency in policy, and strong party control of all spheres of national life.

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PROTAGONISTS IN POLISH PARTY STRUGGLE

MIECZYSLAW MOCZAR
Politburo Candidate and Party Secretary.

WLADYSLAW GOMULKA
Party First Secretary.

EDWARD GIEREK
Politburo Member, Party Leader in Katowice Province.

Nationalism is one of the basic ingredients of Moczar's campaign but is less prominent in Gierek's movement. Moczar has led the way in appealing to Polish pride in wartime resistance, exploiting to the full his role in it. Though more subtly, Gierek too has evoked the pride of national achievement in the postwar period. The implications of this veiled chauvinism for Polish-Soviet relations are not clear.

Both men have tried to establish their credentials with Moscow. Moczar, however, publicly attacks the "Muscovite" wing of the party, which returned to Poland on the heels of the Red Army, although he also pledges loyalty to the alliance with the USSR. They both espouse a viewpoint that realistically accepts the alliance with Moscow, but at the same time they try to demonstrate that Gomulka's fawning support for Soviet foreign policy needlessly demeans Poland abroad and causes unnecessary problems at home.

Despite these common interests, Gomulka's rivals are fundamentally at odds in their vision of a future Poland. Moczar, drawing support from the security apparatus and the rising militancy of disaffected local party organizations, would rely on simple

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coercion. Moreover, he has courted and won some of the same elements that would be more naturally allied with Gierek if they were in Katowice, i.e., the "technocrats," managers, and even the youth and intellectuals. But his call for change is unaccompanied by a discernible program, and it appeals mainly to those who cannot see beyond their own frustrated ambitions.

By contrast, Gierek has rejected the authoritarian approach. Implicitly pointing to the absence of strife within his own organization, Gierek stresses that he relies on "human consciousness" instead of "administrative" or police methods. More importantly, however, Gierek has a record of positive accomplishment. By Polish standards, Katowice is a model of managerial responsibility, public welfare, and a united party organization.

"Zionism" and Student Rebellion

Moczar's forces acquired their anti-Semitic image by exploiting the role of Jews in the Polish Communist movement and the latent anti-Semitism of the Polish people. The campaign they unleashed in the fall of 1967 was not aimed at all of Poland's 30,000 Jews, the remnant of the prewar Jewish population of over 3 million. Rather, it was aimed at removing from party, state, and cultural organizations those influential Jews who were prominent during the Stalinist period and had managed to survive by supporting Gomulka's return in 1956.

After they raised the issue of "Zionist" disloyalty, the hard liners played on Gomulka's fears of "alien revisionistic" elements. He has been susceptible to this canard, although anti-Semitism as such is not part of Gomulka's make-up--his wife is Jewish.

Over the years, Moczar's faction became more cohesive and managed to remove Jews from the public security apparatus and, more recently, from the public media. Moczar's control of these sectors, and Gomulka's reliance on him as the regime's watchdog, enabled the hard-line faction to exploit and often deliberately concoct anti-Semitic overtones to various problems, incidents, and crises.

Until last year's Arab-Israeli war, however, the role of anti-Semitism as a weapon in the party's factional struggle had been kept out of public view, primarily because Gomulka realized that his supporters were vulnerable to any open discussion of the issue. The Arab-Israeli conflict had a marked impact on both the Polish party and people, and provided Moczar's forces with an opportunity to maneuver Gomulka himself into sanctioning a discussion of the issue. Convinced by fabricated information that disloyal Jews were to blame for the magnitude of the pro-Israeli sentiment in Poland, Gomulka made an ill-fated reference in a speech on 19 June 1967 to a Jewish "fifth column." The concerted campaign to remove Gomulka's Jewish and non-Jewish supporters from the party and state apparatus then got under way.

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STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS...

Warsaw University students listen to speakers 9 March 1968 while plainclothes police (in brim hats) monitor the rally.

...AND "WORKERS" COUNTERDEMONSTRATIONS

One of numberous counterdemonstrations organized by hard liners, appealing for calm and the punishment of "Zionist" instigators of student riots. Large sign, reading "Down with the new fifth column," refers to Jews.

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Moczar called into question the loyalty of one of the key sectors of Gomulka's system, the military establishment. He exposed the widespread dissent among the military caused by the party leader's strongly pro-Soviet and pro-Arab policies. Many officers apparently questioned the value of the Polish-Soviet military alliance in the light of the crushing defeat of Moscow's clients in the Middle East. Moczar's campaign, at that time conducted strictly out of public view, ultimately resulted in the removal from key positions of several generals, mainly Jews, and in reported shifts of scores of lesser ranking officers.

Moczar probably estimated that conditions were not yet ripe for a major onslaught on Gomulka, who soon realized his mistake. Although the hard-line faction gained some significant posts in the months to follow, especially that of ambassador to Moscow, the removal of Jews and Gomulka supporters from the bureaucracy was generally limited to those in the middle and lower echelons.

By the beginning of the year, Moczar was stalemated and the spontaneous student demonstrations from 8 through 23 March must have come as a Godsend. The students, who initially sought redress of genuine academic grievances, were emboldened to widen their demands into the political sphere by events in Czechoslovakia and by the stalwart resistance of dissident intellectuals to regime dictates a month earlier.

There is abundant evidence that Moczar's use of excessive police force as well as provocateurs among the students was the key to the rapid widening of student resistance. By the end of March, the party was faced with student calls to divest itself of its monopoly of power. The quick end of the demonstrations appears to have been less the result of Moczar's repression than of the student leaders' realization that their movement lacked worker support and was being exploited in the intraparty struggle.

Moczar's purposes, however, were fully realized. Laying blame for the disturbances on the "Zionists" and "revisionists," he not only brought his reinvigorated anti-Semitic campaign into public view for the first time, but virtually ensured Gomulka's support, no matter how reluctant.

The disturbances demonstrated how badly Gomulka's hold had been shaken. His major speech on 19 March was tardy, weak, and defensive. He appealed for calm and absolved the students of blame, but he endorsed the line that "revisionists" were responsible for the outbursts. Characteristically, he sought to temper Moczar's anti-"Zionist" drive by drawing distinctions between loyal and disloyal Jews and by cautioning against anti-Semitic excesses.

The speech demonstrated in many ways, the erosion of Gomulka's authority. The Moczar-controlled press characterized it as a "report

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of the politburo delivered by Gomulka," an unprecedently slighting reference and a clear indication that one-man rule had already been transformed into collective leadership. More importantly, however, Gomulka failed to prevent the subsequent widespread purges of prominent Jews and liberals from nearly all the major spheres of national life.

Gomulka's display of weakness must have been the decisive factor that galvanized Gierek into entering the struggle. To Gomulka's unconcealed dismay, his speech on 19 March was interrupted by chants of Gierek's name from an audience made up of selected party activists.

The "pogrom" atmosphere surrounding Gierek's decision to take the plunge into the factional struggle probably accounts for his strong speech in late March when he appeared to endorse Moczar's extreme positions, including the attack on "Zionism." In retrospect, however, it is clear that the speech was an effort to tap many of the same forces of frustrated ambition within the party that had answered Moczar's call. In all of his subsequent public statements, Gierek has ignored the "Zionist" issue and has cautioned against excesses.

Whether Gierek's moderation is evidence of an uneasy alliance between him and Gomulka is not

Hand-picked party audience hears Gomulka's speech on 19 March 1968. Placards read "Cleanse the party of Zionists," "Act quickly - no half-measures," and "We believe in you, comrade Wieslaw" [Gomulka].

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POLISH PARTY LEADERSHIP Oct. 1956—Nov. 1968

	October 1956	Post-IIIrd Congress March 1959	Post-IVth Congress June 1964	Pre-Vth Congress November 1968
POLITBURO	Cyrankiewicz			
	Gomulka			
		• Gierek (co-opted at IIIrd Congress)		
	Jedrychowski			Jaszczuk (co-opted Jul '68)
		Kliszko (co-opted at IIIrd Congress)		
	Loga-Sowinski			
	Morawski	(resigned Nov '59)		
	Ochab		(resigned Jul '68)	
	Rapacki			
		Spychalski (co-opted at IIIrd Congress)		
				Strzelecki (co-opted Nov '64)
			Szyr (co-opted at IVth Congress)	
			Waniolka (co-opted at IVth Congress)	
	Zambrowski	(removed Jul '63)		
	Zawadzki		(died Aug '64)	
CANDIDATE POLITBURO Created at IVth Congress				
			Jagielski	
			Jaroszewicz	
			Strzelecki (replaced by Jaszczuk from Nov '64 to Jul '68)	▪ Moczar (co-opted Jul '68)
SECRETARIAT	Gomulka			
	Albrecht	(removed Jan '61)		
	Gierek	(removed at IVth Congress)		
	Jarosinski			
			Jaszczuk (co-opted Jul '63)	
		Kliszko (co-opted May '57)		
	Matwin	(removed Nov '63)		
				Moczar (co-opted Jul '68)
		Morawski (Replaced Ochab from May '57 to Jan '60)		
	Ochab		(co-opted Jan '60 and replaced by Wicha Nov '64 to Jul '68)	
			Starewicz (co-opted Jul '63)	
			Strzelecki (co-opted Jan '60)	
			Tejchma (co-opted at IVth Congress)	

- Gomulka's "Old Guard" or pro-Gomulka moderates
- Gomulka's challengers:
  - ▪ Authoritarian, chauvinistic, anti-Semitic "Partisan" leader
  - • Tough, independent, reformist "technocrat"
- "Revisionists"
- Pro-"Partisan" on selective issues

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entirely clear, but both men know that only through a combined effort can Moczar's challenge be checked. What is clear is that Gierek's influence on the national level has significantly increased since the "March events," and that, in braking Moczar's drive to power, Gomulka has had to make major compromises with Gierek's forces.

The Political Chess Game

Although Moczar was able to force the removal of many of Gomulka's followers, he was generally prevented by Gomulka and Gierek from placing his own men in the vacated positions. In mid-April, Gomulka's close associate, former defense minister Spychalski, was shifted to the ceremonial post of head of state, but the other governmental changes neither enhanced Moczar's position nor adversely affected Gomulka's. In the Foreign Ministry, where an entrenched group of Jewish moderates was susceptible to hard-line attack, the situation is yet unresolved, but Moczar's forces have been so far denied a decisive voice in the implementation of policy.

These stalemates apparently impelled Moczar to try for the first time to force changes in the party leadership. Drawing on his strength in the middle and lower echelons of the party organization, he evidently attempted to convene an early central committee plenum. Gomulka, who could still rely on his politburo colleagues but was less confident of his support in the central committee, reportedly resisted these efforts in order to consolidate his forces. When the plenum was finally held in early July, Moczar's gains were substantial but not yet enough to give him control of the party.

Moczar was appointed to the junior (nonvoting) policy making post of candidate politburo member, but the pro-Gomulka majority was maintained by the simultaneous promotion of candidate politburo member Jaszczuk to full membership in place of ailing former head of state Ochab. Similarly, the luster was taken off Moczar's appointment to the party secretariat, where he assumed outgoing party secretary Wicha's security functions, by the dilution of his control over the Interior Ministry, where he was replaced by the deputy minister who reportedly was the least responsive to him. Moreover, the new interior minister is said to be related by marriage to Gierek. If true, this suggests that once again, in return for support, Gomulka had struck a compromise with Gierek's followers.

Gomulka was also able to prevent the resignations of several central committee members under fire from the hard liners and to get unanimous approval of a draft party program that reflected his views throughout. The program, which is to be approved at the party congress, makes no mention of the anti-Semitic campaign. It stresses, instead, Gomulka's claim that "revisionism," exploited by the West, is the main danger faced by the party.

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Nevertheless, Gomulka admitted for the first time that there were "differences within the leadership" over some of the provisions of the draft party program. Moreover, he clearly did not have his usual control over the plenum, and could not prevent open clashes between his supporters on the politburo and those of Moczar on the central committee. Finally, despite Gomulka's call to "remove the Zionist question from the party's agenda," Moczar's forces have continued their anti-Semitic campaign, albeit without the previous level of publicity.

Soviet Support and the Impact Of the Czechoslovak Crisis

Throughout the party struggle, Moscow has made it clear that it supports Gomulka. As early as April, the Soviet ambassador in Warsaw publicly stressed Moscow's noninterference in the internal affairs of the Polish party, but he eulogized Gomulka. Moreover, the Soviet party press reprinted verbatim Gomulka's two most important statements this year on party policy.

Even before the intervention in Czechoslovakia, the Soviets thus showed a strong predisposition to support the known quantity of Gomulka and some awareness of the more nationalistic character of his rivals. Moscow probably is now most interested in stability in Eastern Europe and, most particularly, in Poland.

Since mid-August, Moscow's demonstrated willingness to use force in order to ensure the fidelity of Eastern European regimes has added a factor to Polish party factionalism absent since 1956. Then as now, Gomulka has used the specter of direct Soviet intervention in Polish affairs to try to unify the leadership. He appears to have achieved public solidarity by his colleagues and rivals on the Czechoslovak issue, but only at the cost of his increased isolation within the leadership and of deepened factional splits.

Probably neither Moczar nor Gierek favored Polish participation in the intervention. Others within the top levels of the party were reportedly against the move, possibly including former defense minister Spychalski and his successor, General Jaruzelski. Numerous other middle-echelon Polish officials have privately observed that the Warsaw Pact intervention was a "mistake." These officials especially deplore the impact that Polish participation has had on Warsaw's relations with the non-Communist world. Significantly, the party's central committee has yet to endorse formally Poland's participation in the intervention.

Moczar has leaked rumors of his opposition to Poland's participation. He has also used the Czechoslovak crisis to revive discussion of the "Zionist" danger, while Gomulka and the rest of the leadership have been flailing

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away at "revisionism" as the basic cause of Czechoslovakia's "errors."

The intervention in Czechoslovakia may have strengthened Gomulka's position vis-a-vis Moscow, but it has weakened him at home. It has also created, on the eve of the congress, a popular mood of depression, shame, and apprehension.

The powerful Roman Catholic Church has remained silent on the Czechoslovak events, as it generally has on the domestic political crisis as a whole. The party has reciprocated the church's restraint, and has maintained the uneasy truce that has prevailed for the past two years. Cardinal Wyszynski reportedly has been rewarded with a passport, a document he has been seeking for several years.

Outlook

In terms of policy, no new departures can be expected from the congress. It will put its stamp of approval on a party line--antirevisionist, antiliberal, anti-intellectual, and nationalistic--that has been formed during the struggle of the past months. Nominal concessions--in effect bribes--may be made to those social groups that have been and will be most involved in the party crisis. The intellectuals, for example, are once again being courted by the hard-line faction.

The party will probably tread water on other domestic policies, paying only lip service to an expanded role in public affairs for the people in general and youth in particular. Improvements in economic planning and management will be stressed, but no major initiatives in the country's lagging economic reform programs are expected.

The regime's support of the Warsaw Pact and of increased East European economic cooperation will remain inviolate, on paper at least. The congress is also likely to be the forum for a major restatement of Poland's anti-West German position, which will figure prominently in the justification of its role in the Czechoslovak intervention. Warsaw's standing proposals for disarmament and European security are likely to be stressed as evidence of a continuing devotion to East-West detente.

The most important business before the congress, however, will be the endorsement of the new power relationship between Gomulka and the new, younger forces of the party represented by his challengers, Gierek and Moczar. Moczar may gain a full seat on the 12-member politburo. Gierek, who reportedly has been loathe to come to Warsaw except as party leader, nevertheless may accept a major government appointment, possibly the premiership.

Premier Cyrankiewicz has long been rumored in line for the post of foreign minister to replace the prestigious Rapacki. The future of Rapacki, who has been inactive since April, will have

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to be resolved by the congress. According to a variety of sources, he may lose his politburo job as well as his ministry. Others whose politburo positions have been shaky include planning chief Jedrychowski, trade union head Loga-Sowinski, and the deputy premier in charge of investment, Szyr, a Jew who is particularly vulnerable.

All of these men belong to Gomulka's old guard, and the appointment of their successors in the politburo may reveal the strength of the contending factions. Apart from Moczar himself, however, there are few among his faction eligible for a politburo post. Gierek, already a full politburo member, may seek an ally by promoting Defense Minister Jaruzelski's appointment to the politburo.

The secretariat and the central committee are likely to be the real battlegrounds between Gierek's and Moczar's forces. Jewish party secretary Starewicz, responsible for the general area of propaganda and culture, has been rumored to be ripe for ouster. In the 160-seat central committee, whose apparatus has already been infiltrated by Moczar's forces, changes are likely to be decidedly anti-Semitic in nature, although its Jewish members now form no more than ten percent of the total. It still remains unclear to what extent Moczar will be able to fill vacancies with his own supporters.

With Gomulka's power increasingly parceled out among contending forces, the issue of his formal position within the party is no longer central. Whether or not he remains as nominal head of the party, his future will be largely out of his hands, depending in part on his rivals, and in part on developments in Moscow and in Prague. Gomulka, however, is temperamentally unpredictable. Clearly under strain, he might well retire from the scene while he can do so with grace.

Communism in Poland has never faced a more narrow range of alternatives than it does today, with its future probably lying somewhere between contending challengers Gierek and Moczar. It may be Poland's misfortune that rigid authoritarianism might once again be imposed upon this nation of stubborn individualists.

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