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USSR-POLAND: Reactions to Foreign Communists' Criticism

*The Soviets have indicated that they are unlikely to let foreign Communist criticism significantly influence their policies toward Warsaw.* [redacted]

Moscow on Saturday publicized a letter sent to the Japanese Communist Party rebutting an earlier attack on Soviet interference in Poland. The letter argued that the fate of "socialism" in Poland was the responsibility of all Communists. It reiterated that the Poles themselves should remedy the situation, but added that Polish Communists must prevent their country from "going over to the imperialist camp." [redacted]

Last week the Soviets attacked the Italian Communists for failing to condemn "antisocialist forces" in Poland. The article, in the Soviet magazine *New Times*, also justified Moscow's efforts to preserve Communism in Poland. These attacks indicate that while the Soviets are concerned that increased pressure on Poland would strain their relations with some Communist parties, this would not be a determining factor in decisionmaking. [redacted]

If the USSR decides to invade Poland, the Soviet party probably anticipates a formal rupture with the Italian Communists and condemnation from the Spanish, Dutch, British, Belgian, and Japanese parties among others. It also would expect criticism from the French Communists, who have adopted a stronger anti-intervention posture as part of the price for participation in Mitterrand's government. [redacted]

The Soviets would try to avoid these costs by using financial and other leverage on some of the smaller, less independent-minded parties to gain acceptance of their actions. In dealing with the Spanish and Italian parties, Moscow also probably would seek to justify an invasion by appealing over the heads of the leadership of the two parties to the rank and file, who tend to be more trusting of Moscow. [redacted]

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