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POLAND: West Condemned for Interference

TASS yesterday criticized the US and NATO for allegedly interfering in Poland's internal affairs. Official Polish statistics indicate that the government has more individuals under detention than it did at the beginning of the year.

TASS reported yesterday that Polish Foreign Minister Czyrek and Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko discussed "a number of questions of Soviet-Polish relations and topical international problems." The brief description of the talks emphasized the discussion of disarmament and highlighted President Brezhnev's proposals on INF made during his visit to Bonn in November.

The ministers condemned "attempts by the US as well as by some other NATO countries to interfere in the internal affairs of Poland." TASS also charged yesterday that NATO's statement on the situation in Poland constitutes "impermissible pressure" on a sovereign state and contradicts the UN Charter and the Helsinki accords.

Comment: The emphasis on disarmament--usually the most publicized theme of Warsaw Pact foreign ministers' talks--probably was intended to impart a "business as usual" flavor to the Czyrek-Gromyko talks and to highlight a subject that the Soviets believe to be of greater concern to the West European public than martial law in Poland.

Statistics on Detentions

A government spokesman over the weekend claimed that since the imposition of martial law, 5,927 individuals have been detained, of whom 918 have been released. In addition, 1,433 have been arrested, of whom 276 have been sentenced and 17 acquitted.

Comment: The regime distinguishes between the two categories by claiming that the detainees have not been charged with a crime. They have been taken off the streets to prevent them from leading or becoming involved in resistance to martial law.

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The statistics indicate that the regime has more individuals in custody now than it did 12 days ago. Government officials have been noticeably reticent about when these people will be released, but it is clear that the regime fears many would quickly become involved in political activity on Solidarity's behalf.

This perception suggests that many of the detained will not be released for several months at the least. This issue will continue to generate tensions between the Church, the Vatican, and Western governments on the one hand, and the Polish regime on the other.

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