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FRANCO-POLISH RELATIONS AND DE GAULLE'S TRIP TO POLAND

Introduction: The state visit of French President Charles de Gaulle to Poland from 6-12 September 1967 was the object of close attention throughout the world, in part because it was the first visit of a Western head of state to Poland since World War II, in part because of the personality of the visitor. It was publicly judged to have been a great success by both the French and Polish leaders while much of the comment in the world press was far less favorable: "negative," "very meager," "pathetic"---such assessments were repeated. Both positive and negative judgments were usually made in an historical vacuum, ignoring the fact that the de Gaulle visit was not the beginning of a Franco-Polish confrontation but instead the continuation and, in a sense, culmination of a process of improving bilateral ties going back more than two years. Only in that historical context can de Gaulle's trip be understood.

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Sentiments and Interests

Improvement in Franco-Polish relations began in 1965 and was a derivative of a bettering of Franco-Soviet ties. (1) Although in 1959 de Gaulle had indirectly supported the permanence of Poland's Western Frontier, as late as 1963 Polish media concentrated on criticizing such aspects of French foreign policy as the Franco-West German treaty and the refusal to sign the Moscow nuclear test ban agreement. In 1964, Polish representatives were absent from the procession of East European foreign ministers (and Premier Maurer of Rumania) to Paris. Only in 1965, when Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko visited Paris, demonstrating the Soviet reappraisal of Gaullism, did French soundings in Warsaw meet any positive response. New Polish media, too, began to see de Gaulle's foreign policy as a more positive phenomenon. A series of mutual non-official visits followed; (2) the draft of a new long-term trade agreement was initialed,

(1) This section is based in part on Adam Bromke, "Poland and France: The Sentimental Friendship," East Europe, February 1966, pp. 9-15.

(2) For specifics see the EERA compilation, "Selected Data on Polish-US, Polish-French, and Polish-West German Relations, 1963-1966," 12 Sept. 1967.

providing for a 30% increase in trade the first year, to be achieved primarily through France's liberalization of trade with Poland, especially greater imports of coal; and cultural exchanges were increased.

These preliminary measures were followed by the official visit of Polish Prime Minister Josef Cyrankiewicz to Paris in September 1965. Welcomed with much pomp and acclamation of traditional ties, Cyrankiewicz was received by de Gaulle for three extended conversations, an honor pointing up the political importance the French government attached to his visit. In his public speeches, Cyrankiewicz, in addition to stressing bilateral ties, advocated Franco-Polish cooperation against a still-present German threat ("We are separated, not by a sea, but by the nation that so far has not proved that it knows how to live peacefully.") (3) and repeatedly thanked the French government for its support on the Oder-Neisse border issue--- a claim not confirmed by his French hosts, but not disputed either, much to the dismay of the West German government, then in the final stage of an election campaign. Such cooperation, of course, was not intended to be a substitute for the Soviet-Polish alliance---which Cyrankiewicz repeatedly praised, for its ideological rationale as well as because of the protection it offered Poland against Germany (4) ---but a welcome complement to that alliance.(5)

That this was not the French view of the importance of an improvement in Franco-Polish ties was not made explicit in public French statements in the course of Cyrankiewicz's trip, but could be seen in the joint communique issued upon its conclusion.(6) While political talks were said to have been devoted primarily to "European problems," Germany itself was not mentioned. The two states declared themselves for detente, but concrete measures to achieve detente were not formulated; only the intention to "continue contacts and exchanges of views" was stated. The communique was also silent on French support for Poland's borders, clearly a disappointment of Polish expectations.

The mild communique notwithstanding, the Cyrankiewicz visit did mark a turning point in Franco-Polish relations. For France, it meant the somewhat tardy inclusion of Poland in its scheme of improving bilateral Polish-East European relations and thus partially overcoming the sharp ideologically contoured division of the European continent. In short, detente: the improvement of cultural and economic ties, the exchange of state visits, political discussions ---now the objective of all the Western powers. But detente, so defined, was not pursued by the Fifth Republic as an end in itself but as a tool in the service of a broader political conception, of "detente, understanding, cooperation" in Europe. This is not the place for a detailed examination of the postulates of de Gaulle's foreign policy.(7) Briefly, that policy aimed at restoring to Europe, as a geographic and cultural whole (including Russia), the control of its own affairs and its rightful place in world politics, making obsolete both the ideological fracturing of the continent and the dual American and Soviet hegemony in Europe. France would play a primary role, both in such a "European" Europe and

(3) Speech in Toulouse, Reuter, 12 September 1965.

(4) Interview in Le Monde, 16 September 1965.

(5) In his dinner toast of 13 September, he thus declared that the Soviet alliance was "one of the most important elements" of Polish security and that Franco-Polish cooperation could be "one of the important elements of security and peace in Europe."

(6) Trybuna Ludu, 17 September 1965.

(7) See, inter alia, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Alternative to Partition (New York, 1965), pp. 104-116; Free World Background Report, "De Gaulle's Drang nach Osten," 27 November 1964.

in the course of calling it into existence.

The Polish leaders' calculation of the desirability of improving relations with France was of a different order, and can perhaps be understood better if the reevaluation in Poland of Gaullism as an international phenomenon is first considered. That process became pronounced only in 1965; somewhat of a landmark was an article in Polityka(8) which appraised positively de Gaulle's European concept as reconcilable with "peaceful coexistence," in spite of its ignoring of ideological differences, even if certain specific reservations were still raised. Two concluding passages of the article summed it up well and were, at the same time, characteristic of much of the later commentary:

...the mere fact of the rapprochement between socialist Europe (including the USSR) and France is, to a certain degree, in conformity with the principles of peaceful coexistence, with the prospect of security for our continent, and, as such, it should be considered--I think--as a positive phenomenon....

De Gaulle's concept of a Europe "from the Urals to the Atlantic" (sic) certainly has many aspects which are not always clear and not always in conformity with our intentions, but, so far as it can contribute to the relaxation of tension on our continent, so far as it stresses what unites Europeans, it should not be rejected in advance.

Why this should be considered the case was spelled out by the same author later in 1965, when he stressed the anti-American and anti-West German aspects of de Gaulle's foreign policy: "Let us mention the statement of General de Gaulle that the problem of the unification of Germany must be subordinated to the problems of borders and weapons, 'along the road of understanding with all the neighbors of Germany, in the West and in the East'; the strong resistance of France against the attempts to create a Multilateral Nuclear Force with the participation of the GFR; or finally the perhaps rather unprecise idea of 'Europe from the Urals to the Atlantic,' which is explained in at least the same measure by the desire to neutralize the power of the German Federal Republic (sic) in Europe as the desire to remove American influences from our continent." (9)

Yet while the anti-American and anti-West German implications of Gaullism were stressed repeatedly, it was made quite clear by Polish political commentators that France nevertheless would remain a member of NATO as a political alliance. As Szymanski wrote, "It may seem paradoxical, but membership in two camps is, so to speak, an assumption of the policy of peaceful coexistence, and respect for certain obligations to its allies of each of the partners, an essential content of that policy." (10) In other words, France was a NATO country and not neutral. But this was hardly a negative factor. For the Polish regime, as several commentaries hinted, France was far more important as a destructive force within NATO than as a countervailing power outside it.

(8) Z. Szymanski, "Od Uralu do Atlantyku...", Polityka, 30 January 1965, Polish Press Survey No. 1818, 16 February 1965.

(9) Zycie Warszawy, 1 August 1965.

(10) Ibid.

The above evaluation of Gaullism was by far the most frequent one in 1965.(11) A derivation of it, expounded prominently by D. Horodyski,(12) viewed Gaullism in the context of a gradual modification of the sharp postwar bi-polarization of power between the USSR and the US. In recent years, he argued in Kultura, "neither the USSR nor the USA, notwithstanding their power and responsibilities, can any longer direct the international activities of its allies or followers." It followed that now "middle-size powers may exercise an important influence on the course of events, above all in their own region of the world." In these terms, too, French foreign policy was viewed as a positive phenomenon.

Nevertheless, an opposing view which questioned these assumptions of a positive appraisal of Gaullism was also expressed in Polish publications in 1965.(13) Advocates of this view repeated the arguments of the standard pre-1964 negative appraisal of de Gaulle, such as that he encouraged German nationalism, but it used them to express a fatalism about the decisive voice of the two super-powers in world affairs, the false illusion of "Europe," and the impotency of smaller states in general. It followed that Gaullism was a transitional phenomenon of limited historical significance.

Raising the question of France's international significance under de Gaulle in any of the above forms also raised implicitly the question of Poland's position vis a vis the USSR. The generally expressed view denied a parallel: in conducting its independent foreign policy, France would find in Poland a willing partner for the improvement of bilateral relations, but one whose close ties with the USSR could not be at issue. As Horodyski pointed out, the Soviet alliance was the basis of Poland's security and the days of the abortive Franco-Polish security alliance, with Poland as a French "client," had passed for good, while Szymanski quoted with approval the Gaullist Notre Republique that Poland could not be detached from the USSR.(14) J. Turowicz, editor of the Znak-affiliated Tygodnik Powszechny, which always strongly supported the alliance with the USSR on geopolitical grounds, was perhaps the most explicit on this score. Traditional Franco-Polish ties could be taken up again, he wrote in an article entitled "Sentiments and Interests,"(15) precisely because Poland's security was now guaranteed by the alliance with the USSR. Before World War II, France had always faced the necessity of choosing between the interests of Poland and Russia, to Poland's loss, but now "the fact that Poland is joined in a close alliance with the USSR relieves France of the necessity of that choice...." Horodyski carried this argument further: France's rapprochement with East Europe should not be feared but be encouraged since France lacked the means to disrupt relations among the Warsaw Pact member states:

Is de Gaulle really interested in [weakening Soviet influence]? Every Western politician in power repeats the slogan about the "disintegration of the socialist camp." With some, it is a kind of alibi in following a policy of rapprochement with the USSR or other socialist states. Considering that danger, it is well to ask the question: what are the possibilities and the goals of a given state? Here, for me, there is no question that the possibilities and goals of the USA are completely different from those of France.(16)

The implication was clear: the French offensive in Eastern Europe was "safe," while similar initiatives by the US would have to be treated far more critically.

(11) Other examples in Slowo Powszechne, 18 May 1965; Tygodnik Powszechny, 18 July 1965; Tygodnik Demokratyczny, 25-31 August 1965; Trybuna Ludu, 9 September 1965.

(12) in Polityka, 19 June 1965 and in Kultura, 29 August 1965.

(13) E. Osmanczyk, in Polityka, 5 June 1965; L. Dembinski, in Tygodnik Powszechny, 29 August 1965.

(14) Kultura, 29 August 1965; Zycie Warszawy, 15 September 1965. This evaluation of the inter-war Franco-Polish alliance was of course of long standing.

(15) 10 October 1965.

(16) Polityka, 19 June 1965.

Yet even if the alliance with the USSR was not questioned, the positive appraisals of Gaullism must have suggested anew to many in the PUWP the possibility of a somewhat more autonomous or at least more active Polish foreign policy. This possibility was raised explicitly in analyses like those of Horodyski, which saw Gaullism as a manifestation of the breakdown of bi-polarization in world politics and chastized Poles for underestimating Poland's international role because she was not a superpower.(17) This admonishment was a polemical response to Osmańczyk, whose views (and similar ones) could be interpreted as signifying a doctrinaire willingness to follow passively the USSR in foreign policy. On the other hand, such views were more probably an expression of a belief that, in Poland's geopolitical position, independent foreign policy initiatives were illusory.

Against this background of public discussion, it seems clear that the major rationale of the Gomulka leadership in responding to French overtures in 1965 was simply the desire to diminish the American presence in Europe and that the Polish leaders' assessment that that would be the net effect of Gaullism was a derivative of the Soviet calculation. Once the Soviet attitude had been demonstrated by Gromyko's April 1965 Paris journey, and with continued Soviet approval,(18) Gomulka could pursue an improvement of bilateral relations with France with the assurance that this was in the interest of the "socialist camp" and in line with its pursuit of "collective security" in Europe. This primary motivation was probably reinforced, however, by at least two specific, Polish Communist considerations. First, to encourage de Gaulle was to strengthen a counterbalance to West Germany in Western Europe, a consideration of greater immediacy to Poland than even the USSR. Second, it did seem to offer a way to increase Poland's international prestige, a rather feeble continuation of the type of political proposal embodied in the Rapacki plan which would show the world that, while closely tied with the USSR, Poland remained a distinct international entity.

Guided by these different motivations, France and Poland showed their willingness to continue the process of rapprochement initiated with the Cyrankiewicz visit. In October 1965, the French Minister of Finance visited Warsaw to sign the long-term economic agreement, and also had talks with top Polish political figures. In May 1966, Zenon Kliszko led a Polish parliamentary delegation to France. The same month, French Foreign Minister Couve de Murville arrived in Warsaw after previously visiting Bucharest and Sofia. On the eve of his departure from Paris, he had affirmed France's interest in improving relations between the "European states of the East and the European states of the West,"(19) and in Warsaw, he praised the Polish nation as "indomitable, ardent in her will and in her independence."(20) As for the German question, he reportedly reaffirmed de Gaulle's 1959 statement in private, while not mentioning the issue of borders in public, and supported eventual German reunification "on terms acceptable to all."(21) The Polish leaders, for their part, praised French measures contributing to the emergence of a system of "collective security" in Europe. Bilateral cultural ties were also stressed during the visit; a five year cultural agreement was signed and the French cultural center reopened in Warsaw. Following

(17) Kultura, 29 August 1965.

(18) E.g., Pravda, 18 September 1965.

(19) Radio Warsaw, 12 May 1966.

(20) PAP, 19 May 1966.

(21) Press conference of 21 May, as reported by PAP.

the visit, the French national holiday was celebrated in Warsaw at a high level, with three Politburo members, including Premier Cyrankiewicz, attending the French Embassy reception--in great contrast to the comparable American celebration that year.

The next important development in Franco-Polish relations came at the end of January 1967, when Polish Foreign Minister Rapacki traveled to Paris for further political talks. In view of Poland's strenuous efforts at that time to neutralize as much as possible the effects of the Bonn government's new Ostpolitik, it was not surprising that the talks were devoted primarily to the German question. (22) Yet while Rapacki temporarily weakened the Polish regime's demand that West Germany fully recognize East Germany as a precondition for a normalization of Polish-West German relations, there was no indication that the positions of the two countries had in fact come any closer. The Rapacki mission was nevertheless praised as useful by both sides, and it was followed by a visit of Polish Minister of Education Jablonski to Paris at the beginning of February, in the framework of the bilateral cultural agreement. In April, Polimex, the Polish foreign trade agency, placed an order in France for a complete nitrogen fertilizer plant worth a reported sixty million dollars, to be financed by long-term credits--the largest Polish transaction ever made in the West.

De Gaulle's Visit to Poland

Following these preliminary steps came de Gaulle's state visit to Poland. The French President thus honored the Polish Communist leaders with his first visit to East Europe after Moscow (Bucharest was to have been his second stop), and the Polish leaders responded accordingly, treating their visitor to a host of honors, including invitations to address the Sejm and to speak to the nation over radio and television.

In the course of seven days of festivities and political talks, de Gaulle and his advisors (including Foreign Minister Couve de Murville and Minister of Education Peyrefitte) stressed three subjects of primary political importance. First, the French leaders advocated again the continued improvement of bilateral relations in all areas, including regular political consultations, returning again and again to the historical Franco-Polish relationship. It was in this context that, speaking at lunch in Katowice, de Gaulle referred to the "solidarity" between France and Poland as "comparable to no other in Europe." (23) This traditional relationship was to be harnessed to the task of uniting Europe, establishing---he told the Sejm---"from the Atlantic to the Urals, a policy and a practice...of detente, entente, and cooperation." De Gaulle also called upon "Europe" to make its influence felt outside its borders; specifically, in his remarks on the evening of 6 September, he held out the prospect of Franco-Polish initiatives to end the war in Vietnam.

Second, de Gaulle counseled a more far sighted Polish policy towards Germany, the absence of which was a major factor in his decision to visit Warsaw first after Moscow. On the one hand, he stated unambiguously France's support for the Oder-Neisse frontier. (24) This was more than repetition: in 1959 he had spoken of German borders, whereas now he endorsed Polish borders. On the

(22) This was stressed in Polish comments on the talks. See Trybuna Ludu, 31 January 1967.

(23) Quotations are from the French and Polish radio coverage and from Trybuna Ludu.

(24) He referred to Poland "within frontiers which are and must remain her own" (at dinner on 6 September); "consolidated within the limits of its borders" (television address); to Gdansk and Silesia as Polish; to Zabrze as "the most Polish of all Polish towns." Yet the joint declaration at the conclusion of the visit did not affirm this support.

other hand, he urged Poland to adopt a more conciliatory attitude towards West Germany. As he pointedly told the Sejm, "France, which like Poland is a neighbor of [Germany] and has, particularly in the last century, suffered seriously as a result of Germanic ambitions, undertook after the collapse of the Reich, from the moment the Germans renounced their bad deeds, to develop with her neighbor across the Rhine sincere relations of reconciliation." In his talks with Ochab on 7 September he characterized the division of Germany as abnormal and supported reunification, "provided the question of borders and armaments are not open." (25) He also made clear his refusal to recognize East Germany, and avoided shaking hands with its ambassador upon his arrival (by talking instead at length with Soviet Ambassador Aristov).

Third, in a series of hints and allusions, he encouraged Poland's leaders to follow a more independent foreign policy. De Gaulle obviously did not go to Poland to urge a "reversal of alliances," as Courve de Murville put it at the end of the visit, (26) and it was probably the extreme press speculation along such lines which led him to maintain, addressing a committee of the National Assembly before the visit, that it was "normal that Poland should be linked with the Soviet Union." Yet, de Gaulle made clear in Poland, links could not be equated with subservience. He hailed repeatedly Poland's national personality. He told Ochab that Poland "must be in the first ranks" of nations. He warned against being absorbed by "an enormous foreign mechanism." At lunch in Sopot he was the most direct: "[France] hopes that you will look a little further, and see a little bigger perhaps, than you have been obliged to do so far. You will certainly overcome the obstacles which appear to you to be unsurmountable today. You all understand what I wanted to say." He spoke of the "center" of Europe as distinct from the "east" implying that Poland would play an important part in the former---an attempt to inject substance into the concept of the geographic area encompassed by the Rapacki and Gomulka plans. That de Gaulle was indeed speaking obliquely about Polish-Soviet relations was underlined by his refusal, just as a year ago in Moscow, to take advantage of his presence in a Communist country to voice his now standard attacks on American hegemony in world affairs.

De Gaulle subordinated all other considerations to the aim of talking with the Polish leaders on these three points. Evolution of the East European political systems is a necessary condition for the emergence of a unified Europe in the Gaullist conception, but, just as in Moscow the previous year, de Gaulle made no gesture in Poland which could be interpreted as directly encouraging or appealing for internal liberalization. The gap between regime and nation was passed over in silence---perhaps an inescapable concomitant of detente, no matter who the actors. The desired and widely-anticipated meeting with Primate Wyszynski, too, was abandoned in the face of regime opposition, and out of solidarity with the Primate, Cardinal Wojtyla also absented himself from Cracow during de Gaulle's visit. Yet the Church did not fail to welcome and honor the French President, linking his visit with the Polish people's aspirations for freedom. Dedicating a new church in Warsaw on the afternoon of the French President's arrival, at the same time as the official welcoming ceremonies, Wyszynski greeted de Gaulle and linked his visit with the hope "that the spirit of freedom, love of man, and mutual understanding would overcome all other plans, programs, and aspirations." Wyszynski also welcomed de Gaulle in a personal letter praising France as a "symbol of liberty" and adding that the Polish nation "lives in hope of the justice which she expects from history." He was also welcomed by Bishop Nowicki in Gdansk, where he

(25) Koven, in the International Herald Tribune, 8 September.

(26) Interview on Radio Luxembourg, 12 September.

attended Mass. On that occasion de Gaulle praised the thousand-year role of the Church in Poland. In his television speech he also referred to Poland's "thousand year old faith," while previously, in a brief reply to Wyszynski's letter, he wished the Church "prosperity." This was an acknowledgment of the Church's position in Poland. But it was by any standard a limited acknowledgment, making clear, more than any other aspect of his trip, the political restraints imposed by detente.

This approach---as was only to be expected---paid few or no immediate political dividends. The Polish leaders could fully support de Gaulle's appeals for improved bilateral ties including "regular consultations," and largely agree with his conceptions on Vietnam and the Middle East;(27) here, the concepts "peaceful coexistence" and "Europe" partially converged, as reflected in some of the authoritative Polish commentaries on the de Gaulle trip. The Polish analysis of Gaullism was now even more positive, in terms of its alleged anti-US and particularly anti-NATO stand, than in 1965---although France was still not treated as a "neutral" country. "Having satisfied himself of the peaceful intentions of the USSR," Horodyski now wrote, "considering that the balance [of world power] was threatened by American militarism, de Gaulle made a turn. In my view, taking up cooperation with the socialist countries, France wants to counteract the tension caused by the USA...."(28) While probably a genuine appraisal, this estimate, of course, made all the more justifiable Poland's pursuit of rapprochement with France. At the same time, it was emphasized more strongly than previously that it was a socialist Poland with which France was dealing.(29)

The Polish leaders also made the predictable extensive propaganda use of the French support for the Oder-Neisse border (and, even more, selected extremist reactions in West Germany), but did not display the slightest interest in revising their attitude towards either the Germany question or the relationship with the USSR. The Polish regime's arguments on both scores were repeated, without the usual diatribes, by Gomulka, addressing the Sejm after de Gaulle. Pointedly remarking that the prewar alliance with France had not saved Poland from Hitler's attack, and that its birth had been decided "on the Eastern Front," he affirmed:

...friendship and alliance with...the Soviet Union...together with the treaties...with other socialist countries of East Central and South East Europe, including our Western neighbor, the German Democratic Republic, is the cornerstone of the policy of the Polish People's Republic and the basic guarantee of its security.

For this reason, "France today can, for the first time, shape friendly relations with Eastern Europe without the dilemma of choosing between Poland and its powerful Eastern neighbor." What was more, Europe was not menaced by the dual hegemony of political "collossi," as de Gaulle had suggested, but only the "outside intervention" of "the power from beyond the ocean." As for the German problem, its solution required "the acceptance of the existence of two equal German states." Poland would be ready "to establish normal relations with" the FRG "if its state policy will be based on new, realistic postulates." He did not repeat Poland's standard three preconditions for such a normalization, but these had been restated by Ochab in his first talk with de Gaulle.(30)

(27) As expressed in the final "declaration," (PAP, 12 September,) which, however, did not mention joint action on Vietnam.

(28) Kultura, 10 September 1967.

(29) Ibid.; Stefanowicz, in Slowo Powszechne, 12 September.

(30) DPA, Reuter, 7 September.

On the question of dependence on the USSR, Polish media could do no better than echo Gomulka's words, (31) which were even stronger than those of Cyrankiewicz in Paris in 1965 and which seemed to reject even the "Central Europe" of the Rapacki plan. Faced with the obvious disparity on the German issue, they dwelt on what united. Trybuna Ludu stressed on the day of de Gaulle's arrival that Poland and France agreed that the German question would be resolved through detente, provided existing borders were respected and there was no access to nuclear weapons. After de Gaulle's renewed support for German unification, Polish commentaries insisted it was not an urgent issue for him either; (32) after his indirect contrast between French and Polish willingness for a reconciliation with West Germany, the different approaches were laid at the door of Bonn, not Warsaw. (33)

Poland and Europe

Any balance of the de Gaulle visit, as the culmination of two years of improving Franco-Polish relations, depends entirely on the system of accounting applied. In terms of immediate political gains for de Gaulle, there were none, as could only have been expected, while the prestige of the Polish regime was increased at a time when, following its highly unpopular stand on the Middle East crisis, such support was sorely needed. In terms of the immediate assumption of detente that a good "atmosphere" is a positive political phenomenon, the visit was clearly a success. In terms of long term effects---the final figures will not be in for a long time to come. But the de Gaulle visit has reinforced the general tendency (which de Gaulle by no means initiated, and in which state visits and summit talks are less important than generally assumed) towards communication across the ideological barricades, which may in time lead to their gradual erosion.

In terms of unity with Moscow and hostility to West Germany, Gomulka's response to de Gaulle's pleas was not encouraging in the least. But there may be elements in the PUWP who are less rigid on both scores, and this could offer some hope for the future. As for Germany, in such institutions as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs there may be a less negative appraisal of developments in West Germany and less enthusiasm about Ulbricht, with respect to Poland's long-term interests. As for the relationship to the Soviet Union, in spite of the still widespread tendency to lay at the door of Moscow unpopular measures for which Gomulka in fact bears the responsibility, one wonders if the Rumanian example is entirely without impact---the lack of a renewed discussion of the international role of middle-sized powers notwithstanding. It must seem highly ironic, to say the least, to many in the Party, that Communist Poland, which in 1956 won Moscow's acceptance for the first time of the principle of the sovereignty of each "socialist state," has made so little use of the freedom of maneuver which it could in fact enjoy. Such reservations could only have been reinforced greatly in the wake of the Middle East crisis and the de Gaulle visit.

Symptomatic of such thinking could have been some of the arguments developed not long before de Gaulle's visit, not in the Party press, but by Sejm Deputy Stanislaw Stomma in Tygodnik Powszechny (34) which, as Editor Turowicz's words cited above again showed, had always defended the alliance with the USSR

(31) Trybuna Ludu, 11 September.

(32) Słowo Powszechne, 9 September.

(33) Ibid., 12 September.

(34) "Geopolityka czy Glassboro?", Tygodnik Powszechny, 23 July 1967, Polish Press Survey No. 2091, 7 September 1967.

on geopolitical grounds. Restating his defense of that alliance "as the axiom of our raison d'etat" (but explicitly not on ideological grounds) and maintaining that world politics would still be shaped by the two (or, with China, three) superpowers, Stomma nevertheless struck some dissonant notes. While German policies were still a threat to Poland, he maintained, "It would be a disaster if, for instance, conflict with Germany were to constitute the axis of our foreign policy. We want to have good neighborly relations with the whole German nation...." Condemning German "revisionist tendencies," he omitted the usual Party invective against West Germany. The alliance with the USSR, Stomma also wrote, did not consign Polish policy to passivity:

...the key lies in alliance with the Soviet Union. While accepting this formula, Polish policy neither condemns itself to passivity, nor will it give up its own initiative, nor lose its own identity or its own methods.

In the light of the Middle East crisis, and Stomma's silence on "Israeli aggression" and the criticism of Poland's policy voiced by his colleague Lubenski in the Sejm, it seems clear that Stomma's formulation was a normative plea for the future, not a positive description of the present.(35)

It remains to be seen of course, to what extent sentiments such as these might have any real impact within the PUWP. In any case, it would seem, the possibility of their influencing Polish foreign policy will arise only after Gomulka passes from the leadership.

A. Ross Johnson

(35) For an "orthodox" rebuttal of the article which saw nefarious implications in even raising the question of "passivity," see J. Chlopecki, "Miejsce w Swiecie," Kierunki, 23 July 1967.