

not to upset a finely balanced status quo. Within this framework, several changes have occurred in recent months that slightly favour Brezhnev and policies of moderate innovation. Thus, Shelest's demotion was accompanied by Ponomarev's rise; but Shelest retained his seat as a voting member of the Politburo, while Ponomarev became a candidate only. Shelest's replacement in the Ukraine was however a protege of Brezhnev's. The accession of Dolgikh to the Secretaryship in charge of heavy industry may presage a policy change, as he was most active in implementing the 1965 economic reform. Finally, Polyanskiy's removal from the Politburo in February 1973 could favour a loosening of foreign policy, if reports that he was in favour of the invasion of Czechoslovakia are correct. The opposition of Suslov and others to extensive East-West collaboration may therefore constitute a vigorous attempt to alter Brezhnev's policy preferences, rather than a challenge to his leadership. As of November 1972, East Europeans reported that Soviet moderates were riding high, and that the political atmosphere had rarely been as favourable.

On balance, Brezhnev and his entourage seem able at least to consider the possibility of a new approach to East-West relations that escapes the confines of neo-Stalinism and begins to conform to the Genoa precedent. Thus in a letter to Nixon in February 1973, Brezhnev observed that

*The XXIV CPSU position as reported by*