

Soviet Is Taking The News Calmly

Moscow

For the first time since the Watergate scandal came to light, Richard Nixon's struggle to stay in office received front-page treatment in the Soviet press yesterday.

The Soviet radio also broadcast frequent bulletins from the official news agency Tass during the day.

As expected, there was no official Soviet comment on the President's resignation. The impression here was that although Soviet leaders are following political developments in the United States with great interest, they do not regard the situation as a crisis in Soviet terms.

According to diplomatic sources, Leonid I. Brezhnev, Soviet communist party

leader, intends to continue his summer vacation in the Crimea, and there have been no high level meetings of Soviet communist party of government officials to discuss the change in American administration.

According to a Western diplomat, one Soviet official said privately, "It's too bad this has happened. I regret this. At the same time, we must recognize that personalities are not all that important. Perhaps we can say that Nixon has made his contribution."

At lower levels of Russian society, reactions varied. Foreigners were often asked if they knew anything about President Ford — how old he was, what he looked like, and so forth.

New York Times