

Report Regarding the Meeting of the Warsaw Treaty's

Political Consultative Committee,

April 17-18, 1974

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Comrade János Kádár:

I would like to pass on especially the greetings of our Polish hosts and the Soviet comrades; of course, the others send their greetings, too.

I would like to say this much about the meeting – that on the whole, it was better than the last. We should never have a worse meeting than that one. Of course, a dispute with the Romanian comrades was possible. We had the impression that for some reason the Romanian delegation and Ceausescu himself arrived in a mood that they did not want to exacerbate things; all this became apparent in the way they spoke. Despite the fact that the atmosphere of the talks was tranquil.

I must say about the talks – and it is an important matter – that there is a custom here that the participants ask to speak with the Soviets formally and informally. They have the most comprehensive view of world politics; it was good, it was a consistent political line, whose essence is: fight for détente; they did not make a particular point regarding any question. It contained pretty good elements of information. I will not go into details about the speech; it can be read in the Bureau.

The debate was one of trifling significance; this was the more important point. The speech made by the German comrades contained a particularly critical remark about the Romanian delegation's activities, its other measures in various negotiations.

Ceausescu, because it was awkward for him, dramatically rejected this critique. But that was it. He even cited the founding document of the Warsaw Treaty; they had acted in its spirit.

The other, more hidden, disputed issue, which was not exacerbated, was that the Romanian comrades emphasized that the military blocs should be dissolved. All the others said yes, but this is not on the agenda yet. There was this much of a theoretical debate. We had a lengthy discussion with Comrade Brezhnev on bilateral matters, about which I want to note that it was the “gossip” of two relieved speakers. In reality we gave a great sigh. Of which he talked a lot about Kennedy, Sadat, [but] of course not in parliamentary terms, not like at a plenum.

We talked about our bilateral relations. He said that they had received information about our CC meeting; he thought it was a consistent line; we know each other, that we are unified; he urged the delegations; we should return the visit. Seizing the opportunity, I sneaked in the month of September; I said that beside many other things we must get the work of the Congress started; perhaps early summer would not be

convenient for them; and perhaps something will come of this Helsinki thing, too. Comrade Brezhnev, without knowing his schedule for September, accepted this date in principle.

Comrade Brezhnev remarked that the whole collective of the Warsaw Treaty was crying after the rain. The situation is awful in Poland, worse than in the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union is also complaining. And the South as well. It's a big problem that the situation is such that it is across the entire front. This is what I wanted to say about the PCC meeting.

In the end the Poles gave a dinner; the host gave a speech; on behalf of the guests, Comrade Brezhnev took the opportunity and talked about our common cause in a comradely manner [and] gave emphasis to praising the soldiers. He also spoke in friendly terms about the ministers of defense, who were absent. We parted in good spirits. The atmosphere was peaceable; we parted with a kind of embrace even with the Romanians – they started it.

This is mentioned in writing, but because of its particular importance, I want to make mention of it. The Romanians are saying that we should be strengthening the political component of the treaty and not the military one; they accepted the 8-9-year-old proposal that we raised again: there should be something at the level of the Politburos or foreign ministers. But, of course, there was no decision on this score; we agreed on some kind of a unified secretariat, which of course doesn't exist in reality, and that this should deal with the preparation of the anniversary meeting. It should put a proposal before the Central Committees of the parties.

I would like to raise another question: we are going to have a parliamentary session, which will discuss foreign policy matters. I think that perhaps in the speech – and the Speaker should also speak – perhaps the PCC should be mentioned; despite this, I should mention that we have a practice according to which there is no communiqué regarding PCC meetings. Let's keep it that way, but I wonder whether it might not be appropriate to pass a three- or four-paragraph public resolution in Parliament, that the Politburo, the Council of Ministers, acknowledged and approved the delegation's work, and whether it might not be praised a little. I recommend this because it turned out that all the other parties did it, while we waited for two-three months until the Central Committee was in session. The Council of Ministers is still in session this week, and when this is over, it should be published that the Politburo of the HSWP and the Council of Ministers have approved the delegation's work.

Comrade Gyula Kállai:

I propose that the Politburo approve and accept the report. I agree with Comrade Kádár's oral amendments; it was a useful session. Regarding the proposal that Comrade Kádár now raised, I also think that this is the way the issue should be resolved. But I raise the question whether it would not be better to approve it prior to the parliamentary

session? It would make sense to issue a brief report this afternoon. Because afterwards, the situation will be a bit confusing. Comrade Puja will give a briefing on the international situation on behalf of the government and he could talk about all this differently after a report had come out on this; it could be a joint declaration by the Politburo and the government. It would be good if this could happen before Parliament is in session. It should be prepared.

I have a question: Did they eventually agree to the foreign ministers committee after the proposal had been made?

Comrade János Kádár: Yes.

Comrade Antal Apró:

I agree with the report on the many-sided bilateral talks. Concerning Comrade Kádár's proposal: I don't know whether we have a text; are we able to publish a text today? I don't think it would be a problem to publish it as a joint declaration of the Council of Ministers and the Politburo, but this requires a text. If it can be done, I support it; let it appear tonight. The speeches of the foreign minister and Comrade Kállai should deal with it with the necessary weight.

Comrade Árpád Pullai:

If the Politburo agrees with the proposal that Comrade Kádár has just made, I think it should definitely be done. It is no good after the Parliament. It cannot be commented on in Parliament. Comrade Kádár says that it should be a brief, concise communiqué; it was approved by the Politburo, by the Government, and some paragraphs of praise. Couldn't we have Comrade Puja prepare a text today, and we could approve it today? This would be best.

Comrade János Kádár:

The meeting itself unfolded in such a way that we asked for the word right after the Soviet delegation and got it. It turned out that we were in complete harmony. The Romanians spoke the following day.

As far as our proposal goes, two typed pages at the most will do. This has to be done well, of course! If the Comrades support my proposal, Comrade Pullai should be tasked at once; he should perhaps step out now and draft; let's not waste time; the Politburo should charge Comrades Pullai, Fock and myself with the approval.

There is a formal matter here: the members of the Council of Ministers. The members of the Council of Ministers should be phoned and told that because of the parliamentary discussion, a brief communiqué of praise is being published. The Politburo and the Council of Ministers will make the trip public in the course of the day. This text will do.

Comrade Béla Biszku:

We accept. We will publish the resolution.

[Translation from the Hungarian by László Borhi]