

**Speech by First Secretary of the Polish United Workers' Party
Władysław Gomułka at the Meeting of the Political Consultative
Committee of the Warsaw Treaty Organization
March 29, 1961¹**

Dear Comrades!

The statement of the Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces, Comrade Marshal Grechko, is a testimony to the serious growth of the defensive power of the Warsaw Treaty member-states, along with the need to strengthen it further, given² the constant and ongoing armament of the imperialist powers and their military pacts, and given the incessantly aggressive actions of imperialism in various parts of the world.

In keeping with the mutual obligations resulting from the Warsaw Treaty, Poland has further contributed in recent years to the strengthening of its own defenses and to the defensive system of the states in the socialist camp. Joint decisions were implemented with regard to the organization, training, and material and technical supplies for armies within the framework of the Warsaw Treaty.

Poland is currently capable of contributing more to the operational and naval forces, as well as to the national defense forces, including air defense forces, active land units, and reserve territorial defense, as well as technical units to secure the workflow of the communication system and backup communications.

In recent years, we have significantly improved the quality of our army. Currently, the land forces are motorized or mechanized 100%, of which 2/3 is comprised of tank and mechanized tactical forces, while 1/3 is motorized. At the moment, the degree of mechanization is nearly 30 km per soldier.

According to plan, we are gradually modernizing the aircraft and air defense equipment for the national air force and the air defense forces. Recently, we have been introducing missiles into our aircraft and air defense forces.

¹ Ed. Note: The speech is a draft with handwritten corrections.

² Ed. Note: at this point, "the current international situation" was replaced with the remainder of the first paragraph, which was handwritten on a second page.

We have been systematically developing the navy. It is currently armed with destroyers, submarines, torpedo boats, speedboats, and minesweepers.

The fact that during the past five years, 42% of the Ministry of National Defense's budget was devoted to arms and technical equipment, not including investments, testifies to our efforts to raise the state of readiness of our armed forces and to modernize. We have already shaped the foundations that will allow us to move forward in the upcoming years with the serious changes resulting from the new conceptions for the development of the armed forces.

At the same time, we are making constant efforts to raise the technical and political level of our personnel. For example, during the past five years, the number of officers with high school diplomas, as well as general and military higher education, increased from 30% to 70%. This year, the improvement in this area will increase a further 15%. The number of officers with higher or secondary technical educations currently comprises 19.2% of the overall professional personnel at the officer level. Compared to 1955, the percentage has increased approximately fivefold. At the same time, the level of party and political activity has also grown, as has its influence upon army life.

In keeping with the recommendations contained in the report of the Supreme Commander of Unified Armed Forces, we intend, as part of our current five-year plan, to increase the level of combat readiness of the Polish Armed Forces by carrying out serious changes in the organizational, armament, and technical supply structure by 1965.

In terms of land forces, we intend to move toward two types of divisions by reorganizing the infantry divisions from motorized to mechanized ones by 1965.

We will adapt the organizational structure of the tank and mechanized divisions to the recommendations of the Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces.

We will form operational-tactical and tactical missile units in the number that was previously agreed upon.

We will bring 60% of our existing peacetime general military tactical forces up to a state of full combat readiness, while maintaining at the same time a limited

portion of the engineering and communication units in a state of immediate operational readiness.

With regard to the air forces and air defense forces on our country's territory, we foresee a modernization of the fighter aircraft through the introduction of MiG-21 fighters. The extent of this modernization will be contingent not only upon our ability to pay, but also on the delivery abilities of the Warsaw Treaty member-countries.

We have already been guaranteed deliveries of the new model of JAK-27 R planes to equip our air reconnaissance force.

In keeping with the recommendations of the Unified Armed Forces Command to accelerate the adoption of missile equipment for air defense, we would like to finish equipping the agreed number of missile units by the end of 1963 – that is, two years earlier than planned.

We are improving the command system of the national air defense by eliminating one chain of command.

We will continue to modernize the navy as well by introducing missile weapons.

In terms of reacting to cases of violation of our country's airspace by foreign airplanes or our territorial waters by [foreign] submarines, the Polish delegation agrees completely with the proposals raised by the Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces.

With regard to the issues connected to arms production, the Polish delegation shares the view expressed in the report by Comrade Khrunichev³ about the need to increase the participation of countries other than the USSR, that is, the member states of the Warsaw Treaty, in the production and mutual delivery of new types of weapons.

³ Transl. Note: Apparently, Mikhail Vasil'evich Khrunichev, deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and chairman of the State Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR on the Coordination of Scientific Research.

The proposal that Poland should enter production of T-55 tanks and should begin production of the P-35 M radar, K-13 “air-to-air” missiles and “Bumblebee” anti-tank missiles suits us well. The leadership of our party recently addressed a letter to this effect to Comrade Khrushchev regarding production of the aforementioned missiles.

Currently, we do not yet have detailed knowledge regarding all the issues related to entering production of the aforementioned types of weapons. We think that our first priority is for our experts to become familiar with the technical documents and the production technology, which would constitute a basis for carrying out an analysis of our own production capabilities and our needs in terms of cooperation.

We would like to begin production of armored personnel carriers (APCs) in cooperation with Czechoslovakia. We are conducting talks on this issue. We think that when it comes to such important and massive equipment as APCs, it is particularly important to choose production of the most appropriate type, although the issue of conformity cannot be neglected.

It is difficult for us to say anything concrete at the moment regarding production of the LA-17 flying drone. The main issue here is the quantity and delivery deadlines for MiG-21 fighters to our army. The earlier delivery of these planes would allow us to cease production of MiG-17 planes at an earlier date; this, in turn, would allow us to free up the necessary productive capacities. Moreover, the adoption of a decision to begin production of the LA-17 requires investigation of a series of questions, such as: the extent of cooperation, the necessary command apparatus, material needs, etc. However, we have clarified the possibility of beginning production of an airplane for schooling and training for our own needs and for the needs of the other Warsaw Treaty countries. This issue should be considered in determining the division of production. The initiation of this production in Poland, in our opinion, would permit other countries to increase their production of MiG-21 planes.

The necessity of beginning production of the new types of weapons in our countries, with the most economical inputs, requires greater focus on a proper division of production. This is why we also consider it necessary to maintain the principles for determining specialization approved at the conference of the representatives of communist and workers' parties in May 1958. We thus consider

it misguided that certain countries should make new investments to begin production of an armament in such cases when previously-developed but unused productive capacities exist in other countries.

In connection with the need to modernize the arms production and the recommendations presented on this matter by the Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces, we have adopted a decision to increase military expenditures for the purchase of armaments by 6 billion zloty – that is, 15% above the previously-approved limits in the plan for 1961 – 1965. Arms imports will increase by 100 million new rubles above the original stipulations in the plan. This means that our military expenditures for 1961-1965 will increase by over 80% in comparison with the previous five-year plan and by over 130% for arms imports. In the current five-year plan, armaments expenditures will constitute more than 50% of the entire budget of the Ministry of National Defense. The growth in arms production will also demand additional investments.

These are difficult and challenging tasks, especially given our country's economic situation. Equipping the Polish Army with modern weapons is connected – by necessity, to a great extent – with major imports, above all, from the Soviet Union. The value of the arms imports established in the current five-year plan amounts to around 590 million new rubles, including around 515 million rubles for those from the Soviet Union, excluding cooperative imports. This means that if we maintain the present conditions of payment for arms deliveries from the Soviet Union as of April 16, 1960, then our indebtedness in the current five-year plan will rise by 217 million new rubles. In addition to the payments for arms deliveries in the amount of 330 million new rubles in the upcoming five-year plan, we will also be paying off the credit that we took out in the previous period in the amount of 73 million new rubles. With regard to our overall balance of payments with the socialist countries, it is an additional burden for us during the 1961-1965 period in terms of repaying the credit that we took out for civilian purposes in the previous period in the amount of 320 million new rubles. In sum, our account balance with the socialist countries, in terms of long-term credits received and repaid, shows a worsening of the situation in comparison to the previous five-year plan of around 385 million new rubles.⁴

⁴ Ed. Note: At this point, an entire paragraph in the original text was crossed out: “Given this situation, the proposal put forth by Comrade Khrushchev to change the terms of payment for arms deliveries and to increase clearing payments to 50% of the value of the deliveries, would result in the necessity for us to

Our plan for 1961-1965 is tight. We budgeted a larger increase in investment expenditures than in national income. In the current five-year plan, in comparison to the previous five-year plan, the portion for investment is rising in relation to national income. A significant part of the investment expenditures has been designated for developing the raw material base, including, among other things, the construction of copper and coal mines with long production cycles. As a result, the growth in investments will not bring the corresponding results in production during the current five-year-plan – only later. This will be reflected in a certain decrease in the share of Poland's industrial production in the overall industrial production of the Comecon in 1965 as compared to 1960. We had to set a lower growth in real wages in the five-year plan than in the other Comecon countries, but one should add that real wages in 1960 were around two percent lower than in 1959.

In the next five years, the construction of apartments will improve only slightly our current, difficult housing situation since almost the entire output in housing construction is being devoured by the needs stemming from population growth.

Despite our economic difficulties, we have significantly increased expenditures for equipping our army and reorganizing it. We will do everything within our possibilities to further strengthen the national defense of the People's Republic of Poland and the entire socialist camp.⁵

Dear Comrades!

We are conferring here about the future strengthening of the defense forces of the Warsaw Treaty states, and, in doing so, the forces and unity of the entire socialist camp in accordance with the unanimous resolutions of last November's Moscow Conference. In connection with this, the Polish delegation cannot but express its opinion about the actions of one of the Warsaw Treaty member-states – namely, Albania. The facts contained⁶ in the letter of the Supreme Commander of

decrease our arms imports in the amount of around 117 million new rubles. That is, the state of our national economy does not permit us to further burden our balance of payments.”

⁵ Ed. Note: This paragraph was inserted in place of the original paragraph, which was crossed out. The original paragraph read as follows: “Given this situation, we would like to ask the Soviet comrades to maintain the currently binding conditions for the payment of arms deliveries with regard to Poland.”

⁶ Ed. Note: At this point, the words “in the letter of the CC of the CPSU and” in the original are struck out.

the Unified Armed Forces addressed to the Defense Minister of the People's Republic of Albania compel us all to take a decisive stance. These are facts, which, gently speaking, attest to a complete lack of responsibility and ill will on the part of the leadership of the Albanian Workers' Party.

The question inevitably arises: What does this leadership want, and where does it want to go? Likely, it fully realizes that its behavior, its attitude toward the Soviet Union and the leadership of the CPSU, and to all of the members of the Warsaw Treaty, undermines the unity of the socialist camp and, at the same time, it goes against the interests of the Albanian nation and contradicts the basic principles of proletarian internationalism.

This behavior was on display in its full brilliance at the latest congress of the Albanian Workers' Party. It is impossible to discuss here the entire congress, which took a course contradictory to the resolutions of the Moscow Conference. What are we to think, for example, about the shocking revelation of the First Secretary of the Albanian Workers' Party regarding⁷ an alleged attack on Albania by Yugoslavia and Greece in coordination with the American Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean Sea (other comrades already spoke about this here today)? Is it thinkable that the government of a Warsaw Treaty member-country in possession of such important information as an organized attack against its territory, would not immediately inform the Supreme Command of the Unified Armed Forces, but instead would conceal this information from its allies for several months? But, this is exactly what the government and the leadership of the Albanian party did. What are we to think about all⁸ this? Who needs this and why?

One cannot dispel the fear that this whole unskillful staging was thought up in order to mount some sort of Beria-style provocation. Rightly or wrongly, it suggests to us a correlation with the recent arrests carried out in Albania of renowned Albanian communists, who were designated enemies of the people from the tribunes of the IV Congress of the Albanian Workers' Party. We want to state with full resoluteness and seriousness that the arrest of Comrade Lira Belishova, a member of the Politburo of the Albanian Workers' Party, as well as the chairman of the Party Control Commission Comrade Koço Tashko, and the planned trial against them, is not just an internal matter for Albania. This type of a trial redounds

⁷ Ed. Note: At this point, the word "about" was struck out, and "regarding" as substituted by hand.

⁸ Ed. Note: At this point, the word "all" was inserted by hand.

incredibly negatively upon the entire international communist movement and causes great damage to it.

We think that in such cases the other parties of the socialist camp should have the right to look into the entire matter before a trial. We have contacted the leadership of the Albanian Workers' Party with a concrete request that they consent to the establishment of a commission comprised of representatives from several parties in the socialist camp and that they permit it to look into the matter. This would surely be beneficial also for the Albanian Workers' Party and the entire international communist movement.

We fully support the proposals of Soviet comrades regarding the issue of the naval base in Albania. They are an expression of the Soviet Union's goodwill and its desire to create conditions under which a normalization of the situation can ensue, if there is goodwill on the Albanian side.

We also fully agree with the assessment of the policy of Albania's leadership carried out by⁹ the comrades who preceded me here.

We would like to believe that the Albanian leaders will get off the false and dangerous path upon which they have been treading for some time now. This is in the best interest of both Albania and the entire socialist camp.

Comrades!

The main goal of our meetings is to consider concrete steps¹⁰ aimed at strengthening the defensive power of the Warsaw Treaty states. In this regard, our conference will undoubtedly fulfill its task. At the same time, we will strengthen the basis of our policy for securing peace, the policy of peaceful coexistence, and thus implement the policy delineated in the documents of the Moscow Conference of the 81 communist and workers' parties.

Poland will carry out to the best of its abilities the resolutions that will be adopted at this meeting of the Political Consultative Committee.

⁹ Ed. Note: At this point, the following text was crossed out: "the Central Committee of the CPSU as well as in the statements of."

¹⁰ Ed. Note: The word "steps" was added by hand.

[Translation from the Polish by Margaret (Małgorzata) K. Gnoinska]