

STENOGRAPHIC REPORT

PLENUM  
OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE  
BULGARIAN COMMUNIST PARTY  
14 MARCH 1968

09.00 p.m., Plenary Hall, Party Headquarters

**CHAIRMAN TODOR ZHIVKOV:**

Comrades, I declare the meeting of the Central Committee open.

Recently, two important international events took place – the Consultative meeting of the fraternal Communist Parties in Budapest, and the meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty States in Sofia. Due to the significant impact of these meetings, the Politburo has decided to brief the Central Committee of the Party.

Along with this, some changes have occurred in the leadership of the Greek Communist Party. Comrade [Apostolos] Grozos visited our country and informed us about these events. The Politburo has decided to brief the Central Committee on this issue as well.

Therefore, we propose the following agenda:

1. Information on the outcome of the Consultative meeting of the Communist and Worker's parties in Budapest held from February 26 to March 4. Information will be presented by Comrade Boris Velchev<sup>i</sup>.
2. Information on the meeting of the Warsaw Treaty's Political Consultative Committee held on March 6-7 in Sofia. Information will be presented by Comrade Zhivko Zhivkov.<sup>ii</sup>
3. Information on the situation in the Greek Communist Party. Comrade Stanko Todorov<sup>iii</sup> will brief us.

Are there any comments on the agenda?

**VOICES:** No.

**CHAIRMAN TODOR ZHIVKOV:**

I ask that the Central Committee members who agree with this agenda vote by raising their hands.

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Funding for the translation and annotation of this document was provided by the United States National Endowment  
for the Humanities (NEH) through Collaborative Research Grant Project RZ-50701-07,  
"The Cold War and Human Security: Translations for the Parallel History Project on NATO and the Warsaw Pact,"  
Douglas Selvage, Principal Investigator.

Against? – No. Abstentions? – No.

I give the floor to Comrade Boris Velchev.

[ ... ]

**COMRADE ZHIVKO ZHIVKOV:**

Comrades,

On March 6-7 of this year, a meeting of the Warsaw Treaty's Political Consultative Committee was held in Sofia to discuss the following issues:

- the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons;
- the Vietnam question;
- the establishment of a Staff and Military Council for the Warsaw Treaty's Unified Command.

The Politburo of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party has decided to brief the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party on the work and decisions made at the Political Consultative Committee meeting.

To a great extent, this meeting was initiated by the Socialist Republic of Romania. As early as the first half of 1967, Romania insisted that the Political Consultative Committee discuss the draft treaty on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons. The Bulgarian side replied to the Romanian comrades that this issue had in fact already been discussed in consultations with the USSR and the other fraternal states. We believe that the text, which had been coordinated between the USSR and the USA, was acceptable. Therefore, we agreed that this text be brought to the attention of the Eighteen Nation [Disarmament] Committee in Geneva, of which the People's Republic of Bulgaria is a member.

We pointed out in our reply that, if necessary, the Political Consultative Committee could discuss the draft treaty; in addition, we would appreciate complete and precise comments from the Romanian side. We also stated that we would consider any other issues for discussion by the Political Consultative Committee.

All the other fraternal nations had a similar reaction to the Romanian proposal.

With regard to the revised draft treaty presented to the Eighteen Nation [Disarmament] Committee by the USSR on January 18, the Secretary General of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, Comrade [Nicolae] Ceaușescu, raised the question of calling a meeting of the Political Consultative Committee in order to discuss the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons.

In February, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party reviewed Comrade Ceausescu's letter. The politburo replied that although there was an obvious willingness to improve the draft treaty, a revision of the Soviet draft in the current international environment could lead to complications and delays or frustrate the treaty's ratification. This would not be in the interests of the socialist nations and the peace-loving forces. If, however, the other Warsaw Treaty member states decided that it was necessary to call a meeting of the Political Consultative Committee to review the draft treaty on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons or any other current issue, our country would send a delegation.

Following consultations between the Warsaw Treaty States, an agreement was reached to conduct a meeting of the Political Consultative Committee on March 6 in Sofia.

To ensure better organization of the meeting, two preliminary meetings were held. The first meeting was at the level of Deputy Foreign Ministers, and the second one, at the level of Deputy Defense Ministers of the Warsaw Treaty States (except Albania, which is unwilling to participate in the Warsaw Treaty).

During the preliminary meeting of Deputy Foreign Ministers in [East] Berlin, significant differences arose between the positions of Romania, on the one hand, and the other six nations, on the other hand, regarding the draft treaty on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons. Despite the disputes, it was a useful meeting because it helped resolve some practical issues. The most significant question was the establishment of a working group with representatives from the USSR, the People's Republic of Poland and Bulgaria to work out a draft declaration on the Vietnamese question.

Due to Romania's position, the preliminary meeting of Deputy Defense Ministers in Prague did not reach a consensus on the topics of discussion.

This was also the atmosphere at the beginning of the Political Consultative Committee meeting.

I would like to note that during the discussions, Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu objected to the formulation of item three on the meeting's agenda. Instead of "Discussions on Setting up a Staff and a Military Council of the Unified Command," he suggested the general wording, "Issues of a Military Character". He based his suggestion on a transcript from the preliminary meeting of the Deputy Foreign Ministers, although such a transcript did not actually exist. After a short discussion, the other six nations voiced their unanimous decision, and the agenda was approved as initially suggested.

Allow me to proceed to the items on the meeting's agenda.

The main issue for discussion during the Political Consultative Committee meeting was the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons.

The question of nuclear nonproliferation is very important because it is closely related to European security and peace around the globe. It must be stressed that this problem should be viewed in relation to the most important foreign policy task of the Warsaw Treaty states – preventing the nuclear armament of West Germany. The ruling circles in West Germany are striving for nuclear weapons in order to implement their plans to redraw the map of Europe. Therefore, the socialist states must struggle energetically to prevent the Federal Republic of Germany from gaining access to nuclear weapons in one way or another – directly, indirectly or through groupings of states.

The issue of nuclear nonproliferation is particularly important from the perspective of the struggle against imperialism's aggressive policy on a global scale.

As the Soviet delegation headed by Comrade Leonid Brezhnev stated, the question is as follows: either effective steps will be taken to prevent nuclear proliferation, or the number of nuclear states in the world will rise quickly in five, ten or fifteen years. The problem is not only West Germany but also countries like Japan, Israel, Italy, Canada, the South African Republic, India, Sweden, Brazil and a number of other nations in the world that have reached a level of research and industrial development that would allow them to begin nuclear production. At the same time, expanding the circle of nuclear states will increase the number of those willing to buy nuclear weapons, while progress in science and technology will make nuclear production easier.

Undoubtedly, nuclear proliferation in the capitalist world will make nuclear weapons available to countries that – just like the USA and the Federal Republic of Germany – are conducting the most reactionary and aggressive policy – for example, Israel and the Republic of South Africa. Thus, imperialist countries will get additional opportunities to organize dangerous provocations in various parts of the world.

It is not difficult to predict the aftermath of the emergence of new nuclear-weapons states in those parts of the world where tensions already exist. If Israel has the atomic bomb, the Arab nations will strive to get nuclear weapons, too. If India becomes a nuclear power, Pakistan will buy nuclear weapons, too. It is very likely that similar situations will arise in Africa and Latin

America. Under these conditions, so-called “local” conflicts could easily escalate into worldwide thermonuclear conflicts.

The emergence of new nuclear states in the capitalist world will inevitably lead to considerable, new expenditures to enhance the defensive capabilities of the socialist countries, including the People’s Republic of Bulgaria.

Comrade Brezhnev voiced his opinion that the issue of nuclear nonproliferation is an issue of principle importance; it is one of the key aspects of the struggle between the two systems – socialism and capitalism. If we can solve this problem, we will find ourselves in a more favorable situation to struggle against imperialism and to counteract the militaristic and adventuristic trends in the imperialist camp. If we do not make this decision, we will have to fight imperialism under more complicated and less favorable conditions.

All this does not mean, of course, that the socialist states are trying to preserve the status quo: the existence of nuclear-weapon states and non-nuclear-weapon states in the world. The Soviet Union and the other socialist countries have been struggling consistently for nuclear disarmament, for a complete ban on and the destruction of nuclear weapons. Signing a treaty on nuclear nonproliferation will undoubtedly be an important step in the struggle for nuclear disarmament, a step on the path to our ultimate goal – complete disarmament.

The result of the continuous and difficult negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States of America was the coordinated draft treaty on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons. According to the head of our delegation, Comrade Todor Zhivkov, the draft treaty was a great success for Soviet diplomacy.

During negotiations, the USA was forced to make concessions on a number of passages relating to the basic responsibilities of nations for nuclear nonproliferation. These passages are in Article I and Article II of the draft.

According to Article I: “Each nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes not to transfer to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly; and not in any way to assist, encourage, or induce any non-nuclear weapon State to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, or control over such weapons or explosive devices.”

According to Article II: "Each non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes not to receive the transfer from any transferor whatsoever of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or of control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly; not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices; and not to seek or receive any assistance in the manufacture of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices."

These passages from the draft treaty imply the withdrawal of plans to create multilateral or any other kind of nuclear forces in NATO.

During the negotiations, the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany tried to bring the control issue to a deadlock. The USA, however, was forced to give in. Presently, Article III of the draft treaty obliges each non-nuclear-weapon state that is party to the treaty to accept controls from the International Atomic Energy Agency, headquartered in Vienna, in order to prevent the diversion of nuclear energy from peaceful uses to nuclear weapons or to other nuclear explosive devices. The procedures and methods of control have been worked out by qualified experts with the participation of scientists from the Soviet Union and the other socialist states, and have been accepted by virtually all nations around the world. It is of particular importance that representatives from the socialist countries have also been included to work as inspectors at the International Atomic Energy Agency.

In creating the final texts regarding states' obligations to nonproliferation and control, many countries' positions were taken into consideration – both members and non-members of the Committee of 18<sup>1</sup>. Some suggestions and modifications proposed by Socialist Countries, including the Socialist Republic of Romania, were taken into account.

Of course, not all opinions and proposals were included, nor could they be included in the draft treaty. Decisions were made not only by the proposing parties, but also by the receiving parties. It is clear to everyone that the draft treaty is a compromise. It is a compromise, Comrade Brezhnev said, in form rather than content, and it does not infringe upon any of the socialist principles.

The Bulgarian delegation and the delegations from the other fraternal nations at the Political Consultative Committee meeting, with the exception of the Romanian delegation, assessed the draft nuclear nonproliferation treaty as a significant success for the efforts of the socialist states, aimed at easing international tension in Europe and the world today.

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<sup>1</sup> Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee.

What is the assessment of the Romanian comrades, what is their attitude toward this issue?

The Romanian comrades believe that the current draft treaty does not meet the standards for a treaty on nuclear nonproliferation. They propose that a number of corrections and amendments be made, which would actually be a reason to defer the talks and the ratification of the coordinated draft.

What are their amendments, actually?

a) The Romanians have suggested a new text to terminate nuclear production, to decrease and destroy nuclear stockpiles as soon as possible. In addition, if such measures fail to be taken within five years after the treaty has entered into force, the states will discuss the situation and decide on measures to be taken.

The Romanian proposal clearly goes far beyond the scope and purpose of the nuclear nonproliferation treaty. It implies that the treaty's future will depend upon the implementation of other steps in terms of disarmament, and it will enable countries that are interested in acquiring nuclear weapons to withdraw after this five-year period by claiming non-compliance with the treaty.

"The proposal made by the Socialist Republic of Romania implies the destruction of all nuclear stockpiles and means for nuclear transfer within a five-year period," Comrade Alexei Kosygin said. "This includes missiles, military aircraft, submarines and warships with nuclear weapons launchers."

It is absolutely clear that this is an unrealistic and unfeasible proposal for the time being. Moreover, the safeguards proposed by Romania, it is interesting to note, are not new. They were borrowed in full from the Soviet draft treaty on complete disarmament and other Soviet proposals. It is well known that the Soviet Union has been struggling in this direction for 20 years. Experience shows, however, that it is not feasible to solve all these problems at once, mainly due to the resistance of the USA and its allies. Therefore, without decreasing our efforts to achieve complete disarmament, which remains our strategic goal, it is reasonable to begin by slowing down the nuclear arms race. As it has already been officially announced, the Eighteen-Nation [Disarmament] Committee in Geneva has approved an amendment, stressing the demand for talks on controlling the nuclear arms race control.



Under these circumstances, the socialist countries need to decide which way to go: to link the issue of nuclear nonproliferation with other steps toward disarmament, and start futile discussions; or to sign the nonproliferation treaty and then continue the struggle for further progress in disarmament. Posing maximalist demands at present will only ruin our consensus on this issue.

c) The Romanian comrades disagree with the current wording of Article III of the treaty, referring to verification of the fulfillment of obligations assumed under this treaty. They believe that the International Atomic Energy Agency will carry out verification in areas that do not pose a danger of proliferation or in areas of exclusively peaceful nuclear activities. They thus propose restricting the area of verification only to those peaceful activities of non-nuclear-weapon signatories where there is a danger either in terms of their [the activities'] character or in terms of the quantity of special fissionable material [that is produced].

The introduction of these volatile and unclear criteria defining the areas subject to control would actually create a real possibility that some countries could avoid the process of verification by the International Atomic Agency and begin manufacturing their own nuclear weapons in violation of their obligations under the treaty. The fact that the same nuclear materials could be used both for peaceful and for military purposes makes this possible. The Romanian delegation's fears that inspections in their current state could be used as a tool for intervening in domestic affairs are completely baseless. The only purpose of verification is to ensure that the peaceful nuclear activities of non-nuclear-weapon states are not used to produce nuclear weapons. In addition, Article IV of the treaty explicitly declares the inalienable right of all parties to the treaty to develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, along with their right to participate in the fullest possible exchange of scientific and technical information in this area.

Comrade Alexander Dubček, head of the Czechoslovak delegation, stated: "Given that the verification issue was one of the most difficult to coordinate; that the current version of the text on verification is acceptable to the main groups of states participating in the discussions on the draft treaty; and that the formulation in the text is mutually balanced, it would be unrealistic now, and not in our interest, to demand new changes. Such changes could take us back to the initial disputes related to the principles and forms of control and could threaten the treaty's ratification."

The Romanians suggested that the UN Security Council, together with the International Atomic Energy Agency, inspect those non-nuclear-weapon states that are hosting foreign military bases. The purpose is to prevent any possible access to nuclear weapons through these bases.



It is impossible to implement such a proposal because we cannot expect the states hosting foreign military bases or the states that own these bases to allow such inspections.

d) The Romanians have proposed a new passage for the treaty that obligates nuclear-weapons states never, under any circumstances, to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states -- i.e. to enhance the guarantee given by nuclear-weapons states to non-nuclear-weapon states.

The issue of guarantees, it is well known, has been raised repeatedly by a number of non-aligned nations. In reply to these demands the Soviet Union – as early as 1966 – agreed that the treaty would include a provision banning the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon signatories that have no nuclear weapons on their territories. The USA, however, opposed this proposal, so it was not published in the coordinated draft.

The Romanians are currently bringing up this issue again. If we compare the Soviet text on guarantees with the Romanian one, it becomes clear that the Romanian text lacks a very significant element – the requirement that the states receiving guarantees should have no foreign nuclear weapons on their territories.

It is necessary to emphasize that when we talk about giving guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon states against nuclear attack, we should take into account that it is impossible to treat all non-nuclear states equally. There are nations, even among the USA's allies, that had stored neither their own weapons nor foreign nuclear weapons. Norway and Denmark are such states. However, there are non-nuclear-weapon states, like West Germany, for example, on whose territory American atomic and hydrogen bombs are stored, along with nuclear-tipped missiles and other nuclear weapons that are a real threat to the security of the socialist states. Comrade Alexei Kosygin was absolutely right when he stated: "To give West Germany a guarantee that no Soviet nuclear weapons will be used against it, would mean giving a present to the Pentagon, to the USA, and to the German revanchists."

Given the non-aligned nations' reasonable concern about their security, the Soviet Union took the initiative to solve this complicated matter outside the treaty framework. According to some information, an agreement has been reached between the USSR, the USA and Great Britain to come up with a joint declaration that will oblige nations with nuclear weapons to protect [other] nations in the case of nuclear blackmail or nuclear threat. This procedure has to do with the UN Security Council.

(e) The Romanians have suggested that a conference be arranged every five years. This conference would analyze the fulfillment of obligations by all states that are party to the treaty. This proposal would bring a considerable amount of instability to the treaty and could be misused by the adversaries to nuclear nonproliferation. West Germany, for instance, could state that not all obligations were fulfilled during the last five years and use this as an excuse to withdraw.

The press announced that the Soviet Union had agreed to an amendment permitting the convocation of a conference every five years, but only when a majority of the parties to the treaty decided to do so. This formulation provides enough guarantees for both the treaty's implementation and its stability.

The latest Romanian proposal aims to remove a passage in the draft treaty stipulating that any state seeking to withdraw from the treaty should inform the Security Council about the extraordinary circumstances that have jeopardized its vital interests and have forced the nation to make this decision. Comrade Ceausescu justified this proposal based on the principle of sovereign equality between states and their exclusive right to make decisions regarding matters that threaten their interests.

The purpose of this text is to prevent some countries from withdrawing from the treaty. This mechanism was proposed by several delegations during the negotiations on nuclear nonproliferation in 1966. This is an additional guarantee for the treaty's stability and is based on the deterring influence of world public opinion.

With regard to this issue, Comrade Kosygin stated: "Comrade Ceausescu's statement that Article X restricts national sovereignty seems unreasonable. Having signed the United Nations Charter, all of us have agreed to delegate to the Security Council the main responsibility for supporting international peace and security. Therefore, there is no reason to believe that announcing the motives for withdrawing from the treaty to the Security Council could restrict in any way a state's sovereignty. This issue can never arise in relation to any socialist state, as long as the Soviet Union has the right of veto in the Security Council, and will never let the imperialists infringe upon the sovereignty of any of our allies and friends."

Comrades, these were the main considerations of the Romanian delegation regarding the draft treaty on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons.

What political assessment and what conclusions can be drawn from Romania's position?

First of all, the Socialist Republic of Romania is raising demands for changes in the Soviet draft. These changes are either unacceptable or unrealistic given the international situation today. The policy of the Romanian comrades, regardless of their intent and goals, implies deferring and hampering the treaty's ratification. This is in the interest of the treaty's opponents, including West Germany.

It should be underlined that the efforts of West German diplomacy have been focused so far on preserving the *status quo* among the treaty's opponents. Extremist circles in the USA are acting in the same way. The West German revanchists and American extremists are betting on some hesitation among the 'close-to-nuclear' states. In their industrial and research development, these states are close to designing their own atomic bomb.

The plot of the treaty opponents is to defer negotiations once again and to fail to meet the deadline for completion set by the General Assembly – March 15 of this year. The time factor, it is well known, is playing a very important role. It is important that we take advantage of this moment and not pass it up. As Comrade Willi Stoph pointed out, the Bonn Government is trying to hamper negotiations and to gain time in order to complete their systematic preparations for nuclear-weapons production.

The head of the Polish delegation, Comrade [Władysław] Gomułka, voiced his concern that any changes in the treaty at this stage would threaten to delay its final ratification. This would be a good reason for the treaty's opponents to defer its ratification, or even to reject it.

Next, the Romanian position, it should be pointed out, is subjective, and it does not take into account the current international situation. Comrade [János] Kádár, head of the Hungarian delegation, identified the main weakness in Romania's proposals: they are unfeasible and could be used in practice as a reason to postpone the treaty's signing. Comrade Dubček added that the easiest thing would be to take a red pencil and correct individual passages in the treaty. Of what benefit will these 'corrections' be, however, if the treaty is not signed by the parties [to it]?

All this would result in passing up an extremely favorable opportunity at a time when the imperialist forces have differing views on nuclear nonproliferation. This is a moment at which we can isolate the extreme imperialist circles by joining the efforts of all socialist and all peace-loving nations.

The stance of the Romanian comrades implies that the socialist nations that are members of the Committee of Eighteen will not be able to present common positions regarding some basic

problems of disarmament in future. This is a factor that will create additional difficulties for the socialist states in the struggle for peace and disarmament.

The Romanian position will inevitably lead to strong disagreements between Romania and the other fraternal nations, as well as some separatist acts.

The Romanian delegation did not respond to the appeals of all the delegations to join the common position on nuclear nonproliferation. Romania declared that it was going to put forth its proposals to the Committee of Eighteen, and it has done so. In this way, Romania has initiated a policy of hampering and deferring the Geneva negotiations. Undoubtedly, Romania will continue with this policy in April or June when the issue is expected to be discussed by the UN General Assembly. We should take into account that the treaty's ratification requires a two-thirds vote from the UN member-nations and the signatures of at least 40 states. Therefore, it is more necessary than ever to unite the peace-loving forces now and to coordinate effectively, especially among the socialist nations, in order to block the activities of extremist forces and to approve this important international document.

All these facts demanded that the six countries – the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the Hungarian People's Republic, the German Democratic Republic, the People's Republic of Poland, the USSR and the CSSR – had to come up with a statement. This statement was later published in the press. In it, the countries voice their support for the Soviet Draft and state that they are willing to complete negotiations in the Committee of Eighteen by the deadline of March 15, 1968; that they approve of the draft for the UN General Assembly, and that they expect that the nuclear nonproliferation treaty will be signed and enter into force.

Given the special importance of the topic of nuclear nonproliferation, and as a result of the irreconcilability of the Romanian delegation, the six fraternal nations have unanimously decided to inform the world public about their position on this topic.

Comrades, I would like to underline once again that our delegation, headed by Comrade Todor Zhivkov, confirmed its full support for the Soviet draft treaty on nuclear nonproliferation, as well as its solidarity with the comments and conclusions of the Soviet and other fraternal delegations regarding the treaty's immediate approval.

"The main purpose of the Soviet draft treaty on nuclear nonproliferation," Comrade Zhivkov said, "is to prevent the West German militarists' access to nuclear weapons. This is the reason why they are opposing the treaty. To create conditions that delay the treaty's signing would mean in

fact supporting the opposing Western forces. The ratification of the nuclear nonproliferation treaty is a necessity. It should take place as soon as possible because it would not be surprising if the USA changed its position on this issue.”

The Political Consultative Committee meeting also discussed the issue of Vietnam.

The undeclared war of the USA against the Vietnamese people has turned almost completely into an American war. The results so far have not been comforting to the aggressors and their allies; they have been unable either to deal with the patriotic forces in South Vietnam or to achieve their goals in North Vietnam. The broad offensive operations of the patriotic forces in South Vietnam that began at the end of January this year, the establishment of bodies to represent the people in liberated regions, and the establishment of new patriotic organizations have all proved that the liberation struggle of the Vietnamese people has entered a new phase. The main reasons for their success are: the dedicated struggle of the Vietnamese patriots, who are demonstrating very high morale, stamina and selflessness; the moral support of the socialist countries and all peace-loving peoples of the world; and the military support of all socialist countries, particularly the Soviet Union.

Our support to Vietnam would have been much more effective, had Mao Zedong’s group not created difficulties in coordination among the socialist nations, and had they [the Chinese] not boycotted the transport of weapons and other equipment through Chinese territory en route to Vietnam.

Lately, Vietnam has been making diplomatic efforts to settle the Vietnamese question by political means, which we welcome and support. As a result, not only the peace-loving community, but also some Western governments like France, Sweden and Italy have been trying to influence the US Government to find a peaceful solution to the Vietnamese question. The only reason for the lack of negotiations is the U.S. Government, which does not want a peaceful settlement of the Vietnamese issue and has stepped up its military escalation. All this increases the danger of the conflict’s expansion and creates a serious threat to world peace.

The Political Consultative Committee approved a special declaration in this regard on the threat to peace arising from the expansion of American aggression in Vietnam. This declaration was published in the press, and all the comrades have had the opportunity to read it. I would like to comment only on the declaration’s creation and adoption.

The preliminary meeting of Deputy Foreign Ministers in Berlin tasked Bulgaria with working out a draft declaration. We informed the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam that the Political Consultative Committee was going to adopt such a declaration.

The declaration includes the comments of the Vietnamese as voiced by their deputy foreign minister to our representative in Hanoi.

The Romanian delegation made some strange comments on the declaration. Nevertheless, Romania signed the declaration.

Romania proposed a new passage for the draft, stating that the main source of tension in the world at present is U.S. aggression in Southeast Asia. All other delegations voiced their opinion that the main source of tension in the international arena is NATO and its imperialistic policy in Europe. In order to reach consensus and sign the declaration, a passage was approved stating that "one of the main sources of tension in the world" was the aggression of the USA and its allies in Vietnam. Obviously, the Romanian proposal underestimated NATO's role as a source of tension in the world.

The Romanian delegation suggested that the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) be excluded from the list of nations supporting the US aggression since the FRG had not sent troops to Vietnam. The Romanian position was not shared by the other delegations, whose arguments were voiced by the delegation of the German Democratic Republic. The German comrades emphasized that the FRG was also directly supporting U.S. aggression. The Federal Republic of Germany is one of the countries openly supplying materials and moral support to the Americans. Recently, we have become aware that not only some circles in the FRG are supporting the aggression but also the West German Government. This fact became clear during Chancellor Kiesinger's visit in the USA.

Due to Romania's tenacious insistence, the head of the German Democratic Republic's delegation, Comrade Walter Ulbricht, declared that they would not mention the FRG in the declaration. However, at a meeting of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, they are going to state officially that this was at the request of the Socialist Republic of Romania.

It was necessary to hold a meeting of the foreign ministers to approve a text stating that other countries are also responsible, "including reactionary, revanchist circles in the FRG, which are rendering political and material support to the U.S. aggressors".



The third topic of discussion during the meeting of the Political Consultative Committee was the issue of the establishment of a Military Council, a Warsaw Treaty Unified Command, and a Committee on Technology.

As we all know, the Warsaw Treaty was established on May 14, 1955, in order to counter the expanding aggression of Western policy and to retaliate against the German Federal Republic's integration into NATO.

A secret protocol to the Treaty established the position of a Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces, whose staff and troops would be assigned to the Unified Armed Forces by the member-states. In addition, the Supreme Commander was tasked with drafting a Statute for the Unified Command, which was approved by the Political Consultative Committee in 1956.

The institution of Permanent Representatives of the Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces was established by a special resolution of the Political Consultative Committee in 1961.

It is important to emphasize that the Unified Command, its organs, and the Unified Armed Forces have played an essential role in enhancing the Warsaw Treaty's defensive capabilities.

Recently, however, due to the aggressive course of the imperialist nations, on the one hand, and the separatist activities of the Chinese leadership, on the other hand, the situation in the world has become very complicated. The U.S. imperialists and their NATO partners have succeeded in building up strong armed forces and in establishing a joint command for both peacetime and wartime operations. The policy of the Bonn revanchists, along with the half-million strong army that they have established with their allies' support, is a serious threat to peace in Europe. All this raises the question of how to further consolidate the defensive capabilities of the Warsaw Treaty's armed forces. Dealing with this issue will require a maximum coordination of efforts in building up armed forces both for peacetime and especially for wartime operations.

The acquisition of complex modern equipment and armament and the radical changes in military tactics have increased demands for improving the preparation and command of the Warsaw Treaty's armed forces. Under these circumstances, both the statutes and the structure of the existing Warsaw Treaty military command, it turns out, are incapable of ensuring the defensive capabilities of the socialist countries.



Postponing the establishment of a joint command within the Unified Armed Forces for wartime is a matter of particular concern. It is obvious that the Unified Command and the Warsaw Treaty's Unified Command in their current status are not in a position to play a leading role. This might endanger our collective defense. It is well known that the lack of a unified command was one of the main reasons for the defeat of the Arab nations in June 1967.

Taking this into account, a number of Warsaw Treaty members, including our country, raised the issue of establishing an effective military command for the Warsaw Treaty's forces. In response to this challenge, at the end of 1965, the Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces put together a proposal to improve the status, composition and organization of the Warsaw Treaty's military command structures.

Basically, the essence of the proposal was as follows:

Article 6 of the Warsaw Treaty provides for the establishment of auxiliary bodies as necessary. In compliance with this article, it was proposed that a Military Consultative Council be established to work alongside the Political Consultative Committee. The prerogatives of the Military Council would include discussion of important defense-related issues and the elaboration of proposals and recommendations to the Political Consultative Committee and the national governments. Given that the Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces, his deputies and the ministers of defense would be members of the Military Consultative Council, it was expected that this would make the council the most competent, reputable and powerful military body within the Warsaw Treaty.

The proposed draft statute for the Unified Armed Forces envisages some expansion of the prerogatives of the Unified Command. Along with the preparation of the Unified Armed Forces, it was proposed that the Unified Command assume control of planning for wartime operations, supplies, equipment and armament, the coordination of research and experimental work in the forces, etc.

To enable the Unified Command to successfully accomplish these functions, it was suggested that its structure be broadened and improved. Generals and officers should become members of the staff. These generals and officers would represent their national armed forces, and their number would be proportional to the number of their national troops in the Unified Armed Forces.

It was proposed that a Committee on Technology be established within with the Unified Command. The function of this committee would be to make recommendations and proposals

regarding the acquisition of equipment and armament, to render qualified support to the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance in defining the directions that the development of defense industries should take, and to deal with the issues of research assistance.

At the request of most nations, the draft statute provides for maintaining the institution of permanent liaisons to the Supreme Commander of the Warsaw Treaty forces in the future. These liaisons are playing a significant role in improving the relations and interaction between the Unified Command and the national commands, as well as transferring the valuable experience of the Soviet armed forces to the armies of the Warsaw Treaty.

It must be underlined that the Supreme Commander's proposal for improving the structure and organization of the command bodies in the Unified Armed Forces fully comports with the interests of all the nations individually, as well as the community as a whole; this proposal does not replace national commands or infringe upon the prerogatives of national governments. As early as the first discussion of this proposal in February 1966, the chiefs of the staff of all the Warsaw Treaty member-states (except for Romania) voiced their full support for the draft. The proposal was not accepted only due to Romania's objection.

What are essentially the Romanians' differences?

The Romanian objections center on placing further restrictions upon the prerogatives of the Unified Command of the Unified Armed Forces and its bodies and limiting their role.

The Romanians believe that extending the rights of the Unified Command would infringe upon the sovereignty of national commands (which are responsible only to their governments with regard to national defense and leadership of the armed forces). Therefore, according to Romania's opinion, the Supreme Commander has no right to command troops. The role of the Unified Command is limited to counseling and advising the national commands, without any obligations. Placing the Unified Command in such a situation would result in its demise.

Romania is strongly against the establishment of a Military Consultative Council to work with the Political Consultative Committee. Romania's proposal is to establish a Military Council within the Unified Command, where the national armed forces will be represented by the deputy defense ministers. This council would have a decisive role in relation to the Supreme Commander, and its decisions would be taken with complete unanimity. These decisions would be implemented only after the approval of national governments.

However, this proposal contradicts the Leninist principle of “undivided authority.” To approve this proposal would mean depriving the Unified Command of the possibility of making a command decision when one council member disagrees. Besides, the presence of deputy ministers on the Military Council decreases the council’s reputation.

The Romanians do not object to enhancing the staff’s organization. They suggest, however, that the staff’s function should be limited exclusively to the exchange of information.

Ignoring the responsibility of the Soviet Union for ensuring the Warsaw Treaty’s defense, the enormous experience of the Soviet Army, and the reputation and training of the Soviet military leaders, the Romanians suggest that the positions of Supreme Commander and Chief of Staff of the Unified Armed Forces be occupied by generals and officers from all the Warsaw Treaty’s armies. They also propose the elimination of the institution of permanent liaisons to the Supreme Commander from the national armies.

Despite the huge difference of opinion, a meeting of the defense ministers in May 1966 approved the Soviet proposal for a statute for the Unified Armed Forces and the organization of Warsaw Treaty military bodies. The Romanian Defense Minister signed the statute (although with reservations regarding the role and place of the Political Consultative Committee, the establishment of a Military Consultative Committee, and preserving the institution of permanent liaisons to the Supreme Commander).

Nevertheless, in July 1966, shortly before the opening of the Political Consultative Committee meeting in Bucharest, the Romanian defense minister declared that he was withdrawing his signature from the statute for the Unified Armed Forces. At this time, he handed over the Romanian draft, which was a significant step back from the agreement reached so far.

As a result, the Political Consultative Committee was unable to make a decision and tasked the Defense Ministers to work out a new proposal.

After multiple discussions, an agreement in principle was reached to establish a Military Council within the Supreme Command. This Military Council would have advisory functions and also help establish a deployed staff and a Committee on Technology. The number of participating generals and officers is proportional to the number of troops in the Warsaw Treaty’s armies. The Romanian delegation agreed that the positions of Supreme Commander and Chief of Staff would be assumed by marshals and generals from the Soviet armed forces. A general consensus was

reached as well that the issue of permanent liaisons to the Supreme Commander from the fraternal armies be resolved by mutual, bilateral agreement.

Under these circumstances, the Supreme Commander decided to raise with the Political Consultative Committee the issue of establishing the Military Council, a staff and a Committee on Technology. At the same time, it was also proposed that a statute for the functioning of these bodies be put together and presented since the Romanians had different opinions.

The Romanian delegates opposed this proposal at the preliminary meeting of the deputy defense ministers in Prague.

Despite the previous consensus, Romania opposed the establishment of military command bodies in the Unified Armed Forces prior to accepting a statute for their functions. As a result, the Political Consultative Committee at their meeting in Sofia decided for the second time to postpone discussion of this issue. The committee tasked the defense ministers and the Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces with preparing and proposing a new draft statute for the Unified Armed Forces, a staff, a Military Council and a Committee on Technology within six months.

We should stress that in the current complex international situation, it is in the interests of the socialist countries to proceed with resolving the issue of the Unified Armed Forces' command for both peacetime and wartime. It is anticipated that this problem will be rectified in the near future.

As we know, the Political Consultative Committee meeting adopted a joint communiqué, which was signed by the heads of all the participating delegations.

Comrades, these are the main issues that were topics of discussion at the Political Consultative Committee meeting. Conclusions must be drawn [from them].

*(Central State Archive, Sofia, Fond 1-B, Opis 38, File 2, p. 12, 63-101)*

*[Translation by Jordan Baev]*

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<sup>i</sup> Boris Velchev – Member of Politburo and Secretary of CC BCP (1962-1977).

<sup>ii</sup> Zhivko Zhivkov – Member of Politburo, First Deputy Prime Minister (1962-1971).

<sup>iii</sup> Stanko Todorov – Member of Politburo, Secretary of CC BCP (1958-1971), Prime Minister (1971-1981), Speaker of the Parliament (1981-1990).