

**Speech by Edward Gierek at the Prague Meeting of the  
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Comrades!

Since the last meeting of the Political Consultative Committee, international relations have developed especially dynamically; there has been a sharpening of contradictions, and very important events have taken place. Comrade Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev has spoken about them here. We fully share his view.

In this complex situation our countries have pursued the correct policies and have reinforced the positions of socialism internationally. For our own part, we would like to call attention to a few questions.

From the perspective of international relations, the main question is the development of the socialist community, the growth of its power and influence. The countries of our community are beginning a new, very important phase in their domestic development. The fundamental theses of this phase were spelled out by the XXIVth Congress of the CPSU, which enriched the theory and practice of socialist and communist construction with statements of great significance in a Leninist spirit. Several fraternal parties held congresses last year, including our own party's Sixth Congress, which accepted programs whose main aims are identical: to accelerate the pace of social and economic development and to increasingly satisfy the population's material and intellectual needs. Simultaneously, the 25th Assembly of the Comecon accepted a program designed to broaden economic cooperation among our countries and to provide better conditions for socialist integration. The present direction of development opens up new perspectives for all our countries and for the socialist community as a whole and consolidates our position vis-à-vis imperialism in the economic, social and ideological fields alike.

At the same time the countries of our community have not only retained the initiative but also launched a political attack in the international arena in the interest of peace and progress.

Looking at the situation as a whole, our community has been reinforced and thus the correlation of forces in favor of peace and progress.

The favorable shift in the correlation of forces is of tremendous significance in the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union; the foreign policy of the United States is at a dead end, and its political and economic power has weakened within the imperialist camp.

The Maoist line in Chinese foreign policy poses a serious problem in contemporary foreign relations because it is irreconcilable with the principles of

socialism and the interests of anti-imperialist struggle, and its edge is directed against the socialist countries. Today, it is clear to us that the main, determining features of Maoist foreign policy and ideology are nationalism and great power chauvinism. The Maoist leadership approaches each problem in an “instrumentalist” way and subordinates them to its great power ambitions. For this reason, it goes from one extreme to the other; it wavers between the radical left and opportunistic, right-wing groups.

During the Cultural Revolution, the Maoist group destroyed the party and transformed the state of proletarian dictatorship into a national bureaucratic state of coercion. China’s evolution in a direction that is undoubtedly contrary to our principles and interests has caused its isolation within the international communist movement. Today, it is difficult to foresee the outcome of this policy. There are objective differences of interest between the United States and China. China is already paying for the political support that it received from the United States by losing the remnants of its prestige in the “Third World.” But we cannot neglect the dangerous consequences of Maoist policies, either. It is endangering the liberation struggle of the Vietnamese people and is becoming a source of tension in Asia. The most important aspect is that the hope of rapprochement with China reinforces the aggressive, reactionary tendencies in the policy of the United States.

It is the position of our party that we must act decisively to curb the harmful Maoist line. Maoist propaganda tends to target the Soviet Union, but the policy of the Chinese leadership is directed against all the socialist countries. Therefore, we must fight against it together by strengthening our unity with the Soviet Union.

We revealed the anti-Marxist character of Maoist policies for our party and people. We want our whole party and people to see: by acting against the interests of peace and socialism, Maoist policy is acting against the vital interests of Poland.

We do not believe that the Maoist line will change, but we do believe that our policies must be directed at the internationalist forces present within the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese people. Maoism is harmful to the interests of the Chinese people. Consequently, it must be a cause for resistance and protest and a cause for domestic struggle within China.

Comrades!

It is up to our meeting to give new impulse to our joint, concentrated offensive, which serves the causes of normalization, security and cooperation in Europe. In the view of our Party’s Central Committee and government, the draft declaration fully conforms to the requirements of the present situation. We would like to raise some issues related to the accomplishment of the tasks spelled out in the draft and the continuation of our joint efforts. Our present efforts are directed toward two fundamental questions:

- a normalization of relations in Central Europe;

- preparation of the all-European conference and its convocation as soon as possible.

These two questions are strongly interrelated and progress toward one engenders progress toward the other. As far as the normalization of conditions in Central Europe are concerned, we have been able to make progress. The foundations for this were laid out in the treaty signed between the Soviet Union and the FRG on August 12, 1970. This treaty opened the door to the signing of the Polish-FRG treaty, which means that the western border of Poland, the Oder-Neisse line, has been recognized as final and inviolable. The treaties between the Soviet Union and the FRG and between Poland and the FRG were a turning point in the struggle for the recognition of the GDR.

At the same time, the Treaty of Moscow also made possible the conclusion of the Quadripartite Agreement on West Berlin. As a result, the conclusion of agreements between the government of the GDR, on the one hand, and the government of the FRG and the West Berlin Senate, on the other, also became possible. We believe that the efficient implementation of these treaties, particularly the Quadripartite Agreement on West Berlin, must be linked to the simultaneous ratification and implementation of the Treaties of Moscow and Warsaw.

We believe that the procedure launched by the Brandt government will lead to the ratification of these treaties. The Brandt government has a stake in this, since rejection of these treaties would mean the failure of its foreign policy.

To this end, we are trying to make the Brandt government's struggle against the opponents of ratification easier. For the sake of this [ratification], we have permitted 25 thousand people to leave Poland in the framework of so-called family unification. At present, we are not launching a broad debate against false interpretations of the treaty, or against dissemination of the thesis that the treaties do not mean recognition of borders, but only a renunciation of the use of force to change them. When the time is ripe, the need will arise to focus exclusively on forcefully countering such representations.

Last year, we took steps to neutralize the Christian [Democratic] opposition, or at least a part of it. We will take such steps in the future as well. But we can clearly see that the revanchist forces in the FRG have not renounced their ambitions. In this situation, it is necessary, we believe, to amplify our common political pressure against these groups.

We must actively mobilize all peace-loving forces in Europe and within the European governments that have taken a stand for détente. This is not purely about ratification itself but also about exploiting the struggle that has unfolded around this issue to permanently isolate revanchist and nationalistic tendencies. We will have to struggle against these forces for a long while and counter the imperialist danger that the FRG's military-industrial complex and its growing scientific and technical forces pose for peace.

The basic preconditions for the success of our struggle, for the creation of a peaceful Europe that will strengthen the correlation of forces in favor of socialism, are the political unity in particular and the defensive capabilities of the Warsaw Treaty member-states.

We heard with great satisfaction the briefing provided by Comrade Iakubovskii, Marshal of the Soviet Union, on the measures that have been taken this past year within the Unified Armed Forces to increase the defensive capabilities of the fraternal community of socialist states. We voice our appreciation to the Command of the Unified Armed Forces for its initiative and for its consistent activity in coordinating our defensive efforts. We also support the additional measures that were recommended to further increase our defensive capabilities and to reinforce friendship and cooperation between the allied armies. Poland will persevere in carrying out its obligations stemming from its membership in the Warsaw Treaty.

We have fully supported and will continue to support in the future fraternal Czechoslovakia's position in its talks with the FRG. Recognition of the fact that the Munich Agreement was null and void from the outset is a precondition for the normalization of relations between the socialist countries and the FRG.

The conclusion of normalization means first and foremost the recognition of the GDR in accordance with all the norms of international law and with all the consequences stemming from it.

We note with particular satisfaction the consolidation of the GDR's international standing, which we were able to achieve despite opposition from the West German and international forces favoring Cold War. Today, the GDR is recognized legally and politically as a sovereign state; an ever-broadening circle of states have already recognized the GDR in international law. The GDR's participation in resolving the problems related to West Berlin reflects this. We shall continue to do everything possible in the future for the sake of the GDR's recognition, for the normalization of its relations with the FRG in accordance with the norms of international law, for its earliest admission into the UN and for its participation in international organizations as a full-fledged member.

In this regard, we think it would be useful if, according to the resolution passed at the Berlin meeting of December 1970, there would be a consultation of the foreign ministers of the Warsaw Treaty to discuss all problems related to the normalization of relations with the FRG. Such a session could be held in the fall of 1972.

Comrades! The second most important issue in the present situation is the convocation of the conference on peace and security. In terms of this issue, we fully share the position spelled out by Comrade Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev at this forum, as well as the views expressed in the draft declaration.

The idea of the conference has proved to be an important and effective tool for our political activities, and its significance has been growing rapidly. We must aim at the earliest possible convocation of the conference. The demand for its preparation already in 1972 is a mobilizing force that enables the preservation of the intensity of political activity in European affairs. The possibility of holding multilateral consultations seems realistic. Several West European countries, including France, are interested in holding such consultations without delay. There is an ongoing evolution in the position of states whose attitude was passive or negative towards the conference, and the United States, the main opponent of the conference, will not be able to ignore this evolution for very long.

The main issue during the forthcoming period remains the determination of our strategy and steps related to the conference. Undoubtedly, our main aim is to lay the foundations of collective security in Europe. This would be facilitated if the European states undertook such obligations as the renunciation of force or the threat of use of force; respect for the sovereignty of other states; non-intervention in the affairs of other states; recognition of the inviolability of territory, and recognition of the equality and independence of all states. Recognition of and strict adherence to these principles would mean the beginning of the construction of a European security system.

Simultaneously, we should be even more active in European forums in terms of raising questions related to cooperation, especially in the fields of economic and scientific-technical cooperation. These issues have elicited lively interest on the part of other countries and have stimulated actions on their part toward convening the conference.

At present, we cannot agree with the attempts directed at inviting the Common Market to participate in the conference's preparation and to secure its participation in the conference. These attempts are aimed at all-European recognition of the Common Market and hence facilitation of its plans pushing for the Common Market's expansion to all of capitalist Europe.

And since I raised this question, I recommend that we deliberate on whether to hold consultations at the necessary level regarding our countries' policies toward the Common Market. In our policies toward the Common Market, we will strictly adhere to the guidelines approved at such a consultation. In the face of the coordinated and concerted policies of the Common Market, we must come up with one of our own.

The question of arms control, which has reappeared in our meeting's declaration, has great significance in terms of pressing forward with our offensive directed at the further consolidation of European security. There is a specific relationship between this question and international security. The relationship between these problems is particularly acute in the region of military confrontation, including Central Europe. The socialist countries' initiative in June 1970 to reduce the troops stationed on the territory of the European states, and then the important proposals made by Comrade Brezhnev at



the XXIVth Congress of the CPSU in this regard have brought about – in our view – a favorable polarization of forces within NATO and has deepened the interest of some NATO states in halting a further increase in the FRG's military potential and in limiting the means of the United States to use military factors as tools for its policy of domination in Western Europe.

Poland stands ready to contribute to the joint activities of the socialist countries directed at the control of arms and armed forces in Europe.

Lately, significant progress has been made in the development of bilateral relations between the socialist countries and several Western European states. This has helped reinforce the peace-loving and realistic political forces and has limited the impact of the U.S.'s global policies. Comrade Brezhnev's visit to France is an example of the possibilities stemming from the development of bilateral relations.

Poland is also stepping up its activities in this regard. We intend to expand our relations with France and the Scandinavian countries this year. We are going to exploit the constructive possibilities, especially in the economic field, in our relations with other countries as well.

Comrades! The Polish delegation fully approves the draft declaration on the questions of European peace, security and cooperation. We think that it provides a good foundation for our future activities aimed at the convocation of the all-European conference on peace, security and cooperation and conforms to the tasks stemming from the present development of international relations. I can state with particular satisfaction that the draft document fully conforms to the action program passed by the VI Congress of the PUWP.

The complexity of the tasks facing us in the field of foreign policy requires that we both deepen and broaden our unity of action. This question is closely linked to the issue of reinforcing the unity and cohesion of the socialist community in a broader sense, to our fraternal links with the driving force of our community: the Soviet Union, and to the necessity of reinforcing [fraternal relations] with each other as well. Our political and ideological unity is deepening, along with our consciousness of the community of fate of our countries. Our experience demonstrates that the strength of our community lies in unity, and the foundation that reinforces this unity lies in the correct and successful work of [socialist] construction in our countries.

The present international situation and the need for the socialist countries to retain the initiative in setting and resolving the tasks of foreign policy requires that we raise the level of consultations on international problems and that we develop a mechanism to guarantee the joint elaboration of the foreign policy of the Warsaw Treaty member-states on the basis of current requirements.

Among the decisions to be made by the Warsaw Treaty member-states are various ways to enrich the present forms of consultation. We think that the present practice for

consultations and the coordination of foreign policy within the Warsaw Treaty could be amended to include not only more frequent convocation of the Political Consultative Committee but also the regular convening of discussions and experts' meetings within the framework of the Foreign Ministers' Council.

We recommend that this question be discussed at this meeting in order to strengthen and modernize the organizational structure of the Warsaw Treaty, which serves as a sure guardian of the peaceful interests of our states, protects our security and exerts a positive influence on the international system.

Finally, I would like to express our cordial thanks on behalf of myself and the whole Polish delegation to the leaders of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party and the government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic for the cordial welcome and the excellent organization of our meeting.

*[Translation by László Borhi]*