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**Account by First Secretary of HSWP (János Kádár) on the Budapest PCC Meeting of  
17 March 1969 at the HSWP Political Committee Session**

**24 March 196**

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of the March 24, 1969 meeting of the Politburo

1. Verbal report on the Budapest meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw treaty

Comrade JÁNOS KÁDÁR:

I would like to tell you about a few things concerning the meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty, presupposing of course that the resolution itself is known by the comrades.

While preparing the session the development of the military structure was an item on the agenda for quite a time. In this respect the thing is that practically came to a preliminary agreement with the exception that the well-known section 12/a of the document – which specifies: who has the right to establish that a period of danger has set in and be given broader authority – was removed for the lack of consensus. It was a reasonable agreement, for it was very urgent to regulate our activities in peacetime, but this regulation had been omitted in the basic text of the treaty, though it is extremely important to work under legally regulated conditions in peacetime. So it is a significant achievement if there is now agreement on it

The real dispute took place concerning the issue of danger and the state of war, and the Politburo and the government decided: we agree to abandon this dispute

Partly – though not fully – related to it is sub-section b too. In the course of the preparations another problem that emerged was that the Romanian deputy minister of national defense suggested that this section should also be deleted. That is what happened previously

In the course of the preparations it became necessary to convene as usual the deputy foreign affairs ministers to reconcile the text, and the deputy ministers of national defense to reconcile and verify the text. Considering the fact that the Soviet comrades – and others too – were afraid that the Romanians would start a new dispute, the deputy ministers of national defense as such were not convened in the period of preparation. The way it happened was that they said there was no need for it, since we had already agreed

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It was still during the time of preparation when, with the exception of the Romanians, all the other sides, I believe, suggested that in addition to the resolution on military issues the session should deal with timely international questions in the usual manner and issue a political communiqué in which – as is usually done – it should take a stand on timely international issues. In this regard a draft of a call addressed to the European governments was prepared

After such preparations the deputy foreign affairs ministers convened on Saturday morning, the 15th in Budapest to start negotiating the text. The situation with the text was that the military documents had been sent to us ready during the preparatory phase – there was no problem whatsoever with that. We were given a document related to the draft communiqué and the draft call with the request that in case we found it suitable we should send it out to the respective sides. This is what happened. And – so to say – formally it was acknowledged by all parties involved, they thanked for it and the preparation went on.

The problem started at item 2 of the agenda, because although we had seen the draft before, we did not have time to think about it or exchange ideas with the Soviet comrades as to how to improve on it. In our view the basic text of the draft call was very good, but the draft of the political communiqué was not. That was our opinion, but we did not have time to "quarrel", for – if I remember well – we received it on Thursday. It was so bad that we came to the following view: once we start discussing it we might end up having a huge and fruitless dispute in which there is no chance for an agreement, and this way we might jeopardize the convention of the session itself and the main objective, the approval of the military documents too. So we took a stand accordingly, and since comrade Firiubin arrived here in the meantime, we had a chance to communicate our standpoint to him, asking him to forward it to his home. This was done

We regarded the draft of the political communiqué questionable – by the way it was of some 6 to 8 pages, and it included, using the usual terminology, the timely issues, Vietnam, the Middle East, the German problem – because it very explicitly said that Israel was an aggressor, it should withdraw and our opinion was: it is out of the question that it would be accepted and signed by the Romanians, for they were not willing to do anything like it during the war either. There would not have been any dispute on the Vietnamese issue; however, the problem was that German question was outlined the usual way, that is, in such a way on which we had already had hot debates with the Romanians in Bucharest and Sofia without reaching a decent agreement. It was simply stated that the FRG was an aggressor, a revanchist, a provocateur, etc. – there was no hope whatsoever that the Romanian would accept it. They had their own standpoint according to which there were progressive forces in the FRG, too, and we have to appeal to them too, and we have to include that too. Nobody would accept it, especially the GDR not

We asked the Soviet comrades to consider what exactly we wanted and what could be a realistic goal, and then we should concentrate on that, and then we could have the session, and agreement, or if we wanted something else, then there would be a dispute, wrangling but no agreement because the Romanians would not give their signature. We also brought up the issue whether there was a need for the Warsaw Treaty or not. In our view there was, we wanted it to work, we would like to negotiate with the Romanians again very soon on some other matters, and we would be looking at these matters too

So that was the message we sent, and our message was forwarded fairly by comrade Firiubin

The partners arrived in due time in an organized fashion, everybody roared in on the day before the session, and it was good that the Soviets had arrived several hours before so we had a chance to talk with them. The essence of this Soviet – Hungarian talk was that the Soviet comrades agreed with us in everything letter by letter. They said yes, the main objective was to agree on the military issues, we should have a session, we should show that we were operating well, etc

Of course it made us a little bit more optimistic and hopeful. We agreed with the Soviet comrades that though we were the hosts, they should take the task of political campaigning, for they were the only people here that could have an impact on the sides present. The Soviet comrades promised to do so, and they did it very honestly, and we have to say that they had a lion's share in the convention, the work and the success of this conference

As far as the accommodation is concerned, the Soviet delegation – they were quite a lot – was put up in the guest house, and the other were staying together on the island. The Soviet comrades came down to the island at 7 in the evening and talked with each of the delegations – with some even twice – until quarter past 12. We also met them that night and they told us what they had achieved. They were in a somewhat embittered mood, saying that they had worked very hard but the result was nil, for whenever they went to a different room, they heard a different view.

The deputy ministers of foreign affairs negotiated – with short breaks – from 10 in the morning on Saturday to quarter past 3 in the morning on Sunday, with no success whatsoever

One interesting element in the talks and discussions that were underway was that the Poles suggested – but only when talking with the Soviets – that the Chinese should be condemned. It was raised there but nowhere else. Apart from that they had very good comments concerning the text – very strong insertions - , especially concerning the FRG.

I forgot to mention: it was we who suggested to the Soviet comrades that the plan to issue a political communiqué should be dropped, because it seemed that it would be impossible to agree on it, - and instead we should issue a call. We could also have a short communiqué in which one or two sentences are said about Vietnam, the Middle East, but this should be done by saying that there is a resolution adopted by the Security Council, - and we could refer to the Soviet initiative in some way. It does not say anything about an aggressor, etc., still it is a position of principle. As far as the FRG is concerned we agreed that we would perhaps mention the Bucharest formula. We agreed on this but the first phase of the negotiations was not successful. Then at night we agreed that the Soviet side would request not to start the session at 10 but we should postpone it until 3 in the afternoon so that we could continue with the negotiations.

The next day the negotiation was resumed. It was already getting half past 12 and we were waiting for the results. Then we swung into action. The Soviet comrades were still negotiating with the Poles, and we said: comrade Erdélyi should rush in and say: we suggest that the first secretaries and the prime ministers should meet at 2 to discuss how we could start at 3. They accepted it. We agreed to what we had already had consensus on: if one section falls, we might perhaps agree on the other one. We said section b. should stay. The Soviet comrades went as far as saying: we do not need b. either, and it would be the best if one of us, preceding the Romanians, suggested dropping section b.

Then we had managed to liquidate the big political communiqué so much that even the small one was left incomplete. It does not contain the word Vietnam; it does not contain the word Middle East. We were truly sorry about it and in a more private conversation we shook our head but it was already half past 2, and we did not even dare to bring it up to the Soviet comrades, who had done an enormous job indeed.

With respect to the text of the call the situation was that there was one Polish and one Romanian position only. There was one very sharply worded Polish position, and there was a usual Romanian one talking about sovereignty, that we are sovereign, etc. The two of them did agree with each other on something and we accepted it. And as I can see it, everything that had to be included in the call was included in it. So this was the meeting got started, but during the preliminary talks we agreed that we would not argue anything.

The Czechoslovak side was the next to provide that chair of the session. Dubček had arrived here in an awful state. When I told Dubček that they would have the chairmanship he got very nervous and said he should discuss it with the Politburo.

The opening of the conference looked miserable. They gave his report in a very harsh, soldierly and frightening language, and nobody demanded the floor. Then comrade Brezhnev requested permission to speak – we were in the meantime arguing with Dubček and company, because they wanted to speak. The Soviet side made a short speech, one that was proper in such a situation, then we demanded the floor and the Czechs went crazy, and since Dubček did not know how to give himself the floor, eventually they did not speak.

Eventually we had come to an agreement on an issue of enormous importance. Now we have a legal organization of the military contract of the Warsaw Treaty that we did not have before – and I only wish we had the political counterpart of it too. In this context I told comrade Brezhnev at dinner that practically only the two of us had spoken at the meeting, those two sides that had always wanted to have this meeting.

We agreed to the draft call and the communiqué which remained incomplete. We are very sorry about it because we could have agreed with the Romanians, for the welcoming speech of the Romanian delegation delivered at our jubilee ceremony did contain the few sentences on which we wanted to agree.

This is the heart of the matter. I do not want to praise the importance of it particularly, we have talked about it several times. It has great importance. Seven sides were together, and after painful months and years an agreement was made, and a call was accepted.

We also agreed that what we had not been able to achieve together should be done by the respective sides separately. Therefore we requested that e.g. comrade Kállai's speech should contain the words Vietnam, the Middle East, China. Though it was not raised during the negotiations in a wider circle. It was the Poles who brought it up.

The required documents were signed. With respect to the military document there was a Romanian proposal, which was by the way right, that the general secretary should put original copies at the disposal of the governments. Then there was another proposal concerning the nature of the resolution. It was accepted by everybody. It said that the documents should not be treated as documents of the Political Consultative Committee, but rather as those of the governments participating at the meeting, because it looked different

from an international aspect. The same applies to the call too, it was not issued as a call by the conference but as one by the sides participating at the conference.

Concerning this last thing there was a proposal which is still on the agenda. It was suggested that the call should be published, but the Hungarian People's Republic, as a sort of a trustee, should hand it over to the governments of the European countries through diplomatic channels, or – as also suggested – to the secretary general of UN. I do not know how this thing stands now, but I can see that when the Soviet delegation had gone home they decided to ask the Hungarian side to send the document to the European governments through diplomatic channels. We agreed to continue to negotiate this issue, and if all the parties involved agree with it, we will take the necessary steps.

So much about the conference itself.

*[Translation by Andreas Bocz]*