
**HSWP Political Committee Debate Following the WP Foreign Ministers' Meeting on
Relations with the German Federal Republic**

13 February 1967

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of the meeting of the Politburo on February 13, 1967.

1. Report on the meeting of the foreign ministers of the member states of the Warsaw Treaty.

Comrade ZOLTÁN KOMÓCSIN:

To make the picture complete, we need a small supplement to the report submitted by comrade Péter to the Politburo, because what I want to talk about is known only by a certain part of the Politburo.

Last Thursday comrade Titov called me on the phone and told me he wanted to see me in an important matter. He told me that comrade Gromyko had phoned from Warsaw – and it was also confirmed by Moscow – asked Hungary to agree to sign this protocol, that is, that comrade Péter should be given such an instruction from Budapest. Then we talked separately with comrades Kádár, Kállai and the secretaries and sent a message to comrade Péter whose essence was: we agree with the essence of the proposal and we request that, if possible, the text be worded in such a way that the Romanian step is not condemned too much; moreover, it should be made possible for the Romanians to sign it. At that time it still looked there were going to be two protocols, one to be signed by everybody, and another one to be signed by all those present except for the Romanians. Eventually the Romanians did not sign anything.

On the other hand, we sent the word to comrade Péter: he should try to finalize a wording which would not have any reverberations – though it was a confidential document not meant for the public – suggesting that the individual countries had given up their sovereignty in this issue, and one country was giving orders to another. This was then detailed in a few sentences and sent to comrade Péter.

The whole thing was thwarted by the fact that in the meantime comrade Péter had sent us the text of the draft protocol. We studied it with comrade Kádár and sent another message to comrade Péter saying that since the two messages had crossed each other we suggested he should try to enforce our proposal and somehow tone down the wording which categorically said in the draft that the establishment of diplomatic relations was not timely.

Then comrade Péter called me from Warsaw on Friday and told me that in the current situation the Poles, the East Germans and the Soviet comrades vehemently insisted on the wording of the protocol as it was finalized later.

Then comrade Titov called again saying that he was urged by Warsaw and Moscow – in the interest of unity – to get permission to sign the protocol. After all this the protocol was finalized, whose text is attached here. The only difference is that the original text said: "come to the conclusion that the condition for establishing diplomatic relations are lacking." Then they say that these conditions will be created if ... and now come these stipulations. Later the text was modified like this: "Based on the assessment of the situation the foreign ministers hold the opinion that the establishment of diplomatic relations between the FRG and those socialist countries which do not have them yet will only be possible if the government of the FRG abandons the foreign affairs goals inherited from previous governments and recognizes the current European situation." This is the same in its essential content, there is a tiny little formal difference, it is a bit more flexible, but essentially it does not make a difference. I believe there is no need to evaluate the West German situation here at the meeting of the Politburo. It is obvious that we and the Poles evaluate it rather differently, and the conclusion to be drawn are also different. What is needed here is first to take some steps with respect to the West Germans, because that is what we agreed on while Lahr was staying here. These steps will be worked out together with the ministry of foreign affairs based on the present resolutions, standpoints and discussion. But we have another starting point. The West Germans handed over their own draft concerning the establishment of diplomatic relations. There are certain things in it which we could make use of, and based on which we can lay down our position again.

The electoral meetings are coming up next week, and we will have to take some sort of a propagandistic stand at these meetings which reflect our position and is in accord with the resolution of the Warsaw meeting of the foreign ministers. This is another reason why we need to discuss the issue.

The third thing concerns the information for the Central Committee. I mean we would explicitly make it out to be information, no resolution must be made on this, since it is a current operative matter. The information would be based on today's discussion and the foregoing things, saying that the Politburo will continue its operative work in every possible direction, and later when the matter reaches a certain stage, we will inform the Central Committee again. However, at the moment it would not be desirable to tie our hands by a Central Committee resolution in any way.

Comrade JÁNOS PÉTER:

I only want to explain why comrade Gromyko turned to us in this issue. The plan to prepare a protocol was accomplished in the last minute, that is, when the meeting was convened, it did not exist. When I arrived in Warsaw on Tuesday, comrades Rapacki and Gromyko told me about this plan, saying that they and comrade Winzer had authorization to sign such a protocol. I told them I did not have such authorization. The Bulgarian foreign minister was in the same situation. The Czechoslovak comrades already knew about this idea because comrade Brezhnev had been to Prague right before the conference and the plan had been raised there, though its content had not been specified. Comrade Gromyko wanted to make sure that I would have authorization from home so that the whole procedure could be uniform. This is the explanation why they turned here.

Comrade ANTAL APRÓ:

I wonder if there was any talk of it, whether the Soviet comrades said anything suggesting that now, after so many years, they might think, or the events might indicate, that their steps taken at that time [in 1955] had not been right. At the moment there are two different positions in a cardinal issue within an alliance. The protocol that was made says that the establishment of diplomatic relations between those socialist countries

which of not yet have such relations will be possible ... etc. But the Soviet Union is also listed as a country endorsing it, among those who say these relations should only be established when the aforementioned conditions are met. I just pose the question: do these conditions have any reality in the near future? Will this step take us in the direction of easing the tension in Europe? What I want to ask is what kind of underlying forces or factors, beyond those that were described, motivated the issue, for we have been preparing for it for months, and these comrades know our standpoint very well.

Comrade JÁNOS PÉTER:

The Soviet comrades did not explain what the difference was, why they had established diplomatic relations 12 years ago and why the same would not be right to be done now by other socialist countries. Rather, it was explained by the Polish and the German comrades. Comrade Winzer explained it referring to the different current situation, but comrade Gomulka also talked about the issue at the reception where he gave a speech. Comrade Gomulka explained it by saying: that was a time in 1955 when the issue, the plan of the German peace treaty was at stake, and as one of the four great powers responsible for the German case it was necessary for the Soviet Union to establish diplomatic relations with the FRG, however, now it would primarily endanger the position of the GDR. It was not explicitly said this way, as I am putting it, but my overall impression was that some recent propagandistic announcements by the FRG concerning the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Romanians had had a strong and unfavorable influence on the inner political atmosphere of the GDR and on the attitude of people living in the Western part of Poland as a result of which – contrary to earlier plans that were known to be emerging by everybody – the leaders of Poland and the GDR acted very rigorously and proposed such a viewpoint to the Soviet comrades. This element is reflected in the protocol in as much as it was discussed at the conference, for comrade Winzer explained their criticism of the Romanian attitude by saying that the Kiesinger press release concerning the Romanian step caused a lot of confusion in their internal affairs, and they had no time to wait, they had to come forward pretty soon.

Comrade JÁNOS KÁDÁR:

So far we have seen these things in the following way when we were dealing with them. But before I turn to this, I want to clarify what exactly we want from the Politburo.

First of all, approval for the steps that have been taken. On the other hand, both the Politburo and the Central Committee need an internal standpoint in the present situation. What we need is a standpoint of principle which is at the same time obligatory and can serve as a starting point for what we need to do in our policy and diplomacy in general but also in our foreign policy.

As far as the issue itself is concerned I would like to shed some light on how I view it, what is all right and what worries me a bit, which to some extent is in conflict with the position adopted by the Politburo when discussing the problem.

First I have to refer to the joint conference and the position that was adopted in Bucharest which, I believe now, even in retrospect, can only be assessed as the right move. It was good and appropriate, and it had a good impact in the parties, on the general public in the party, and the West could not attack it very much either. And it had its impact in various concrete ways too, for even the Hungarian People's Republic had its chances for certain moves – we even talked with a government of a NATO country -, and they said something could be done with this Bucharest communiqué. So we have to state that it was right.

It was a completely new element that in the meantime the West German government had fallen and a new coalition government was formed. This fact brought about a new situation. The formation and the political assessment of this government was viewed very differently by the socialist countries. Prompted by its internal situation the GDR reacted upon this new government instantly and very sharply, saying that this [government] was worse and more dangerous than the previous one. Our position is somewhat different from this. So this is the first thing that modified the situation in some sense after Bucharest.

The other thing that surprised several countries of the Warsaw Treaty was that after its vague communiqué the West-German government took some concrete steps, it took the initiative and entered into negotiations with four socialist countries with the specified goal that it wanted to restore diplomatic relations with them. These four governments started to deal with the thing on the basis of the Bucharest resolution. In principle they viewed it as one area of our fight, and they believed that restoring diplomatic relations was not against our resolution. This was the second element.

Then there was a third thing that the West German and the Romanian governments agreed to establish diplomatic relations, and they both declared it. So there are these three new elements here.

Concerning the third one the first thing I want to say is that there had virtually not been any real consultation since Bucharest as far as the new West German government and its concrete diplomatic initiative are concerned, and no consultation either on the fact that the Romanians had agreed to do so and that they had declared their decision. So in this new situation there are new elements, significantly different elements emerge in this issue and there has been no consultation. And part of these new developments is that first the government of the GDR and then the Polish leaders promptly and rather nervously responded to it and took up a standpoint after the West German – Romanian agreement as well. From this point of view the standpoint of comrade Gomułka deserves attention. It is extremely categorical. Not literally, as it is recorded in the minutes, but this is roughly what he said. And in the meantime we always consult on every step of ours and do not get a response to anything. Maybe in the eyes of the public it was not that far-reaching but we, who are concerned with this matter here in the Politburo and the government, knew that what was at stake was the fact that the diplomatic relations would be established. And this is roughly how our delegates went to Warsaw.

We discussed with comrade Péter before he left that it was rather unfortunate but there was another new factor as a result of these events, namely that the imperialists, the West Germans managed to change the whole propaganda of this thing for their own good. They managed to turn the whole situation around by issuing government communiqués and systematically distributed press releases. Now the whole thing is no longer viewed as the breaking of the Hallstein doctrine, but just the other way round. They took the initiative into their own hands, they indeed divided us, they pointed out that we had a difference of opinion, etc., they managed to create a victorious atmosphere for themselves, and then it seemed that the socialist countries were standing in line waiting to establish diplomatic relations, and they did not care about the GDR, the GDR became isolated. And unfortunately there is some truth in it.

This was the situation when comrade Péter left. We said we would request that these events should be taken up one by one, the whole new, modified situation that arose after the Romanian – West German agreement and it should be dealt with. And of course we might have an opinion of our own about the Romanians, because the information we had received from them was not adequate, for we first learned about the fact that

the agreement had been made from Kiesinger's press release. This was in the afternoon on Wednesday, and it was only on Friday that the Romanians informed us that the agreement had been made. In spite of all this we said: it has to be accepted as a fact that the agreement had been made and there is no point in cursing the Romanians for it retrospectively, because they would not undo it anyway, and it would instead give even more pleasure to our enemies for they would see that they had managed to set us against one another. So we have to face this situation. What we have to look at is what we should do now. So we said to comrade Péter: it seems to us that even from the point of view of only the Hungarian People's Republic it would not be right if in this present situation the FRG and the Hungarian People's Republic established diplomatic relations in the same way in three or four weeks. Instead this is what happened.

The comrades told us they had the impression over there that the East Germans, the Poles and the Soviet comrades felt that the Hungarian government already had a resolution to establish diplomatic relations whatever should transpire. The same was written and advertised in the Western press.

We pointed out some problems in the course of events. In our view this text is not healthy, not good. We should have said instead that taking the new situation into account, the fact that the enemy had managed to turn the whole thing around and use it to instigate, we should perhaps stop here and create a front somewhere in a line further back.

Unfortunately there are embarrassing questions for us that are hard to answer. I think I mentioned the other day that last Wednesday we had a talk with comrade Brezhnev and I brought it up that the foreign minister of the Soviet Union should also prepare for this meeting, and then comrade Brezhnev said something like this was not what determined the fate of Europe, the thing should be looked into, etc. And he even dropped a sort of a hint that yes, it was quite peculiar that they had diplomatic relations. There is a problem of principle here as well as a political problem. Twelve years ago the Soviet Union, in a very different situation, of course, established diplomatic relations, and it did not worry them at all when they had to fight against the German militarism. Now there is an agreement like this with another socialist country. We cannot say that it is wrong in principle. But we cannot say it either that what is right in principle is that the other socialist countries should still not establish diplomatic relations. If they had said that under the present circumstances the enemy can make use of it for its own good, and this is why it is not desirable to establish diplomatic relations, it would be acceptable politically and in principle, but merely saying that the conditions for it are not available, well, it is, to say the least, odd. They were available six months ago, but now they are not? And I also called attention to the fact: the list of names does not sound right, for it is not right that the foreign minister of the Soviet Union is also among those who state that the conditions for establishing diplomatic relations are not available for those countries which have not yet done so. It would sound much better if the Poles, the East Germans, the Czechs, the Hungarians and the Bulgarians would maintain that the conditions are not available at the moment.

I request the Politburo to approve of the measures that have been taken all the more because these things emerged for us in a way that it was out of the question even to request a postponement.

This is the position of principle that I could propose to the Politburo and the Central Committee too. Thus, they should establish that in the present situation, when it is obvious that the West Germans do not comply with anything they had promised at that time – namely, that they want to improve relations, they do not want to establish relations as a sting against Moscow, they do not want to confront the socialist countries with one

another -, moreover, what they had done was quite the contrary. They do have an intention to break our unity by this. There is a new situation now, and in it is quite conceivable, politically acceptable and right to say that for the time being we have to stop here and continue to fight for this or that goal – it is written down what these things are - on a political, diplomatic level, and political pressure must be put on them in order to achieve these goals.

The third thing: this standpoint must be enforced as mandatory in diplomatic actions, in our general political activities and in our public appearances alike. I mention diplomatic actions because there has been some promise made that in a few weeks' time we will respond. Or they will come forward with something, or if they don't, we still have to respond. Of course, it is inconceivable that we say to the West Germans: it is superfluous, because in Warsaw a protocol was accepted. In general I believe that the whole issue of the protocol should not be pursued any longer. We have to talk about the negotiations and the agreed standpoints where it is necessary – for instance at the Council of Ministers – but nothing else should be done with it. What shall we tell the West Germans? We have to fight using the standard diplomatic procedures and say: we are studying the issue, we will continue to do so, and if we have anything to say, we will say it. And perhaps unofficially we might tell them that what they are doing now is not what they have promised before, and we will not assist them in their endeavor.

Then one can raise the legitimate question whether all those present should talk about political things somewhere. One asks himself the question: is it possible to not talk about it? Or if we do talk about it, how should we do it?

We need a standpoint of principle here as well. There is a new situation now, they have the intention to divide us, to isolate the GDR, to wring out an odd victory, and we will not assist them in it. There is no hitch in this part of the thing. There is indeed a situation here that they want to abuse and try to divide us.

In summary, in my view it was a necessary step, a necessary protocol which includes some elements of a compromise on our part, and it is after all better than having split into two or three groups there. It would be impossible!

Comrade ISTVÁN SZIRMAI:

After all this I have little to say. In my opinion the Politburo should approve the procedure we have followed. I have voted for it too. This is one thing we have to take a stand on.

The other thing is the standpoint concerning the protocol, or the issue itself. Perhaps it should also be established that it was the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party that took measures in this issue in a very correct way observing internationalist standards. As soon as the issue had been raised we suggested convening a meeting, but unfortunately the parties were not quick in responding to it. However, what happened now in Warsaw was overhasty, thoughtless, nervously done, I believe, and it was a direct result of it that we had to sign this protocol there.

As far as the essence of the thing is concerned I am also convinced that in the coming weeks – after seeing that the FRG established diplomatic relations with Romania, and they tried to celebrate it as a great victory, also trying to divide the socialist countries – it would not be right to establish diplomatic relations with the

FRG. I fully agree with what was published in the theoretical paper of the Italian Communist Party, *Rinascita*, addressed to the German comrades.

This protocol completely excludes the possibility of establishing diplomatic relations with the FRG any time in the future, because the conditions specified in it are not likely to change. If it can be accepted that the meeting of foreign ministers of the member states of the Warsaw Treaty in Warsaw was a bit hasty, then perhaps it can also be accepted that the HSWP does not consider the issue expired and request further consultations on higher levels. And I could accept what comrade Kádár put like we should fight for better conditions. And it would have been better if the text of the protocol had been formulated by saying that it cannot be accomplished now for such and such a reason, but that we should fight for creating better conditions for it. This would have been acceptable.

Comrade REZSŐ NYERS:

In my view the original standpoint of the Politburo was right, the instruction that was given to comrade Péter was right, and our agreement given in the course of progress to sign the protocol was also right. However, the outcome of it does not comply with our standpoint, and it follows from it that we cannot recognize it as right. Still, in the interest of unity, we should acknowledge the resolutions of this Warsaw conference and we should stick with it in its essentials. However, it is an undeniable fact that this meeting not only declared unity by its resolutions, but at the same time the lack of it as well. For if the whole process is completed and several of us recognize the FRG, then it would mean a unified position, but now the process was broken in the middle of it, and as long as it stays like this, it will mean a lack of unity.

Enlarging further on this idea, which was also raised by comrade Szirmai, I also believe that we acted in a correct way, and we must continue to do so in the future, and it does matter how we acknowledge this decision. I think we should inform the governments of the sister parties, either verbally or in some written form, that we acknowledge it and will stick with it in its essentials, but we cannot agree with the justification and the consequences of it, and we suggest that it should be further discussed, and we do see a possibility of establishing diplomatic relations in a political situation that is favorable for all the socialist countries. So let us express our minority opinion in some sense, or the intention to maintain our own opinion.

I also agree with what comrade Kádár said: we should not use this resolution as a pretext in our talks with the FRG, but we should continue to negotiate in accordance with the line we have followed so far.

Comrade JENŐ FOCK:

I can only repeat what comrade Nyers said, for I am also concerned with the situation: there is great trouble with our unity if it has to be created in a protocol, and to me this "unity" is nothing but the proof of disagreement. With the exception of the GDR and Poland the others virtually took up a unified position in this issue, and it was what our Politburo adopted. The Soviet comrades also had this position. And since every tiny little thing – like e.g. when *Népszabadság* publishes something on some issue of production that is different from what one can read in *Neues Deutschland* – is reacted upon rather nervously, the Poles unfortunately adopted this attitude and the Soviet comrades sided with them in order to prevent any kind of trouble.

I still hold the same view that I had two weeks ago. I don't know of anything that would justify this protocol. This is a Hallstein doctrine turned upside down, and if that was a political blunder, this one can easily

become one as well. We do not need 10 years for it, a few months are enough, and then even those will realize it who were forcing it. I acknowledge that now there was a chance only for an agreement, but we should act more sharply against this wording so that a resolution like this could not be made. And we can also have our own arguments. What is written here as our position is strange, and our public will have a hard time understanding it. And it cannot be reduced to anything like how we should conduct our propaganda. We have some practice in it, and we did not negotiate before the public in a way which would have suggested that in a matter of 3 or 6 months we would establish diplomatic relations. They must have heard something like it in [Radio] Free Europe. What we need to think about is that it is totally against our right political principles not to want to establish diplomatic relations with the FRG. Our standpoint – which is by the way included in the document – is that even in case of a war diplomatic relations are not always broken.

I endorse what comrade Szirmai said: Let us tell them that we do not think the protocol is acceptable. The fact itself that this time is not suitable to establish diplomatic relations is all right, but as reasons we should propose something, which, while maintaining our principles, is based on our realist political course of action. Let us not endorse something that is not right in principle, let us propose further negotiations.

Comrade SÁNDOR GÁSPÁR:

What the Politburo has done so far is right; nothing else could have been done. If we had done something else, we would have brought about a very delicate situation. We cannot philosophize too much about this any more, except in one aspect: what should be done in the future. In my view the problem with the protocol is that it restricts the whole thing to one issue, it does not examine the things that have to be done later with respect to the FRG. This is what should be investigated further. Economic discussions are also being conducted, and we do not know how far we can go. The conditions specified here are not conditions. Under such conditions we will never establish diplomatic relations with the FRG.

So my proposal is that the issue must be dealt with in the future, but not only from the aspect of establishing diplomatic relations but also from the point of view of our general policy towards the FRG.

Comrade DEZSŐ NEMES:

I agree with the comments made so far. It is my opinion too that the steps that have already been taken must be approved. In fact only one argument could have been acceptable as a reason for postponement. For we were guided in our endeavors to establish diplomatic relations in order to promote the normalization of the European situation, but if the FRG uses the establishment of diplomatic relations with some socialist countries against the other allied socialist countries, then we will not assist them in such an endeavor. In fact, we should present this as a reason to e.g. the neutral countries which otherwise will not understand our position. The representatives of the GDR say they acted the way they did because of the internal political atmosphere. Of course they should know the atmosphere there better, I however don't believe that this is the way to improve bad sentiments.

There is an element in their attitude that offends the countries. They express a suspicion as if we would want to assist the FRG in isolating the GDR. Nurturing a suspicion like that against us is offensive, and we have to do something about it. So I agree that we should state our reservations.

It occurred to me too that it would perhaps be desirable if comrade Kállai wrote a letter to those who have signed it. In this letter we could state that we would stick with it, but in our opinion tactically it was not right, and we have to find a way whereby we could make a profit out of it.

Comrade BÉLA BISZKU:

Actually we got into a very bad and difficult situation when it was put on the agenda. I agree that the Politburo should approve the step and the fact that we do not establish diplomatic relations now. At the same time I fully endorse the proposal that we should maintain the possibility of consulting with the three countries involved – Poland, the GDR and the Soviet Union – and we should tell them: this procedure was utterly unusual and wrong. The thing is that we offered the chance of consultation in a very delicate and important political issue, and then they virtually put pressure on us by taking up such a standpoint. This is an instance of distrust. And we have to tell them we did not mean a consultation like this. And how did the whole thing start? Originally the idea was Berlin, and when it looked like it had come to nothing because of the Romanians, the Soviet Union took action, and Warsaw was picked. Then the foreign ministers were taken by surprise with this text! We have to tell them that this was not the right way to do it, it does not comply with international norms and the relations between sister parties. It seems now that those who give priority to our common cause will have to suffer disadvantages with respect to those who subordinate our common interest to their own national interests.

As to what course of action we should take? It is better to talk. We should not act thoughtlessly.

Comrade ZOLTÁN KOMÓCSIN:

I agree with what has been said so far, and with the proposals too, with the qualification that it is worth looking into how we could make it concrete.

I would like to return to a few things concerning this whole issue. The first thing is that based on different kinds of information the Polish and the GDR comrades start out from the assumption that by asserting this position and sticking with it we could make the West German government accept it in a matter of one or two years. If it is not this government then it will be another one that will accept it. This is where the whole problem starts. In my view it is not feasible and it may cause damage to our common cause.

By the way, comrade Péter said that when he was received by comrade Rapacki upon his arrival, comrade Rapacki – to comrade Péter's surprise – said: they will not get isolated by signing this protocol. So there was some implicit accusation in it, as if we would want to isolate them, and it was also some pressure put on us by the host. Actually, the whole thing shows that they perceived the things rather late, and unfortunately drew the wrong conclusions, and then they were behind with their steps. They saw the light when we started consulting, and I believe it was the same with the Soviet comrades too. There was a delay here, and as a result there was a panic, which then culminated in an open dispute, and we are inclined to believe now that the whole thing was not meant for the Romanians, but for us, for the Czechs and the Bulgarians, and then they topped it with this rigid thing. In my opinion it will be proved in a very short time that it is not right to impose such conditions in the case of diplomatic relations. They will also realize it.

Starting out from this we will have to continue with our general direction in our work – both in our diplomatic and in our propaganda work -, bearing in mind of course that we cannot establish diplomatic relations now. But we must not – and this is not a question here – close the door before the West Germans.

We have not pledged to do anything else. Now we should use the basic tactics of delaying the negotiations, we should raise the issues which would justify such a delay – and there are many like that -, and we could also mention that they have committed a breach of promise. I believe that if we can accomplish this task successfully in our diplomatic work, and we give ample significance to it in our propaganda – which should be based on what was said at the [party] congress -, then we can reduce the enormous political and propagandistic danger of this situation. And we have every chance to do so in every direction.

I have also been thinking whether we made any mistakes in the course of the preparations – not in the Politburo but elsewhere. I believe that I, and partly comrade Péter, could not correctly perceive and evaluate the information available at the time of the preparations. If we had evaluated it differently, we could perhaps have talked with Lahr in a different way. For we – or at least I myself – kept in mind that sure, now there was a situation, but it was beyond doubt that the endeavor to establish diplomatic relations was right. I could not conclude from those negotiations – including the one with comrade Gromyko – that the idea to establish diplomatic relations was not right. I brought it up how the West Germans were working. As an answer to it they said: it is the emphasis that contains a distinctly new element. Although comrade Gromyko stressed that their Politburo had not taken up a position yet, but the speech did include this element. Of course, if the issue had been settled differently, that interpretation could be justified too [on the basis of Gromyko's comment]. This is how it is, unfortunately, and it is impossible to work like this. What comrade Kliszko told comrade Puja did include that it was not timely, but he said maybe in two years we could get the West Germans to surrender. However, what Kiliancyk brought as an official response contained that the Polish People's Republic could negotiate under such conditions. It did say that they understood that other sister parties were in a different situation and negotiate under different conditions.

I am telling you all this because I agree with comrade Fock: in the final analysis there is more at stake here than the policy with the West Germans. What is really at stake here is how our unity looks like, and its reinforcement. It has now happened, and no doubt we on our part have contributed to our unity by this compromise, or acceptance, or gesture. At the same time the whole concrete situation shows that there are more deep-seated problems here with our unity.

Finally, there is a thing closely related to it that, in my opinion, in an international perspective the most delicate thing for us, politically and propagandistically, will be the danger that they will immediately conclude from this delaying tactics that the Hungarians are very faithful allies and satellites, because they had wanted to establish diplomatic relations but they were not allowed to do so. But we can accept it, because that is what we have always been, faithful allies. And if we conduct a good policy and take good diplomatic steps, this can also be reduced, and we can – as far as our possibilities allow for it – contribute to creating a better situation for all of us.

Comrade FRIGYES PUJA:

Actually, I want to return only to one single question. In my view it would not be a good thing to reflect on it in writing for several reasons. First, comrade Péter was present there and accepted it, second, he was given instruction from here saying that the essence could be accepted, third, it would rather be desirable to raise it at a higher level meeting. There is a possibility of such a meeting now, on February 24. Comrade Gomulka also made a proposal that he would stop over on his way through. We have to make use of such opportunities. A letter may go through several hands, and it would not be a good idea to foster any opinion, which hold that there is no unity.

Comrade JÁNOS PÉTER:

I want to add to this thing that it was not a real consultation in the true sense of the word, as it was described here by the members of the Politburo. Practically speaking we did not discuss anything there, and there was nothing going on with the Romanians either. Each of us delivered a speech. The draft of this protocol was not even on the agenda of the meeting, there was no mention of it in the series of speeches. Three ministers expressed the opinion that we should have a text like this accepted, that is, have it accepted by the other three foreign ministers. Comrade Gromyko was noticeably worried about the possibility that we might not accept this draft.

I want to emphasize that it was not a consultation in the true sense of the word, because I would like to support the proposal that we should leave it open and maintain the possibility to continue the consultation, and it really would be the best if we did it on higher level meetings.

Comrades Gomułka and Rapacki indicated that comrade Gomułka would like to stop over in Budapest on his way home from Bulgaria in April and meet with comrade Kádár. But they also said comrade Gomułka was ready to meet with comrade Kádár at any other time and place.

However, as far as the Czechs are concerned, I have the impression that they will also propose further consultations. They accepted the text, but they want to go on with the consultations on higher levels.

Comrade JÁNOS KÁDÁR:

This note of comrade Gomułka should be recorded by the comrades who are in charge of foreign affairs.

As for the protocol, my opinion is that the Poles and the East Germans had not thought it over carefully. There was some nervousness and haste, frankly, I had a feeling that the aim was to try to prevent us from falling into the enemy's trap. I believe now that they think we don't know what we are doing, and they want to prevent that. Let us not draw sweeping conclusions.

Another thing: How should we view this protocol in a legal sense? This is not a protocol of the foreign ministers of the member states of the Warsaw Treaty, but one accepted by six comrades. It is a minor thing, but I understand that it was not even signed officially, they just put their initials on it. So it is not an official document of the Warsaw Treaty.

I suggest that the Politburo should acknowledge with approval those instruction that were given to comrade Péter concerning the meeting, and it should also approve that comrade Péter, in the interest of unity, accepted this protocol.

But the resolution should contain an item in which the Politburo establishes that the adopted protocol and its wording do not correspond to the requirements of our fight. Then we could go on like this: the Politburo agrees that in the current situation it is right that other socialist countries do not establish diplomatic relations with the FRG, but the countries of the Warsaw Treaty must conduct powerful and synchronized fighting in order to change this situation, fighting for our demand, and then the five demands must be listed. The fighting must be conducted by means of regular consultations, necessary meetings and coordinated steps.

The essence of the standpoint of the Politburo must be communicated to the central committees of the parties concerned.

Then we could say: in view of the fact that it is not an official document of the Warsaw Treaty, and it would mean a great danger if this protocol were to leak out somehow, the protocol as such should not be dealt with at all in our next steps. I think it is admissible that we should talk about the current exchange of ideas, the situation, rather than about the protocol. We should do the same at the Council of Ministers.

As a designated person to present the case, comrade Komócsin should be commissioned to inform the Central Committee about the situation, based on the standpoint we adopted here, and then this position can serve as the basis for our future work: both in our diplomatic measures and in our political fight. By the diplomatic level I mean the FRG, but not only the FRG because we have to represent it elsewhere too.

I now return to the question why I suggest that the central committees of the sister parties – of course, only those who have the protocol – should be informed about the essence of our position. We have been criticized by the sister parties before, and the criticism was not well founded. Thinking about the matter, I believe it is useful, because there is an unavoidable moment, and opportunity now when we have to do it. Some comrades are saying now that verbal information would be better. But what sort of verbal information and when should we do it? If everything goes fine, we will talk with the Soviet comrades in two weeks, in one and a half months with comrade Gomulka, then even later with the others. How would it look if we started talking about it in five months?

I have also been thinking as to what we could do as far as the form of communication is concerned. I suggest that we should not make the whole thing bigger than it is. I find it quite conceivable that comrade Péter should write a letter to his colleagues saying: I have the obligation to inform you that I have reported to the Politburo of the HSWP on the agreement between us, and they have acknowledged it with the following qualifications? But because I know where the letter will be taken, it would still be better if comrade Komócsin wrote to our partners. There are five such letters. We can write such a letter! And if we send a messenger to every place, and if the letters are delivered by their own hands and translated only into Russian, we can guarantee full confidentiality.

We can write in the letter that the Politburo listened to the report and approved it with the following qualifications: the text does not correspond to the interests of our common fight, and it leads to misunderstanding. We endorse the view that other socialist countries should not establish diplomatic relations with the FRG now, but we have to fight for a better situation, for better conditions so that these conditions and demands be accepted by the West German governments. So we have to put pressure on the West German government. This is merely a letter of five lines in which we could write at the end: considering the importance of this matter I have the obligation to communicate it to you. And we could also write: it is necessary that in the near future these six interested countries should hold a meeting again, that is, those which signed the protocol, they should conduct confidential negotiations in the near future.

I propose an extremely short letter. We have to say we do not consider the text appropriate from the point of view of our further fighting. We agree to state that this situation is disadvantageous to us, so we have to fight for better conditions, placing in the foreground the well-known and fair demands. Then we could talk about

the need to coordinate our efforts and propose that the six foreign ministers should meet again to continue with the discussion of the matter.

Date as above

Taken by:
Margit Fehér

[Translation by Andreas Bocz]