

**Consultation of the Deputy Foreign
Ministers held on 19/20 March in Warsaw
Embassy Stockholm**

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The deputy foreign ministers of the Warsaw Treaty countries held a consultation about the northern European countries on 19-20 March in Warsaw. Deputy foreign minister János Nagy represented Hungary at this consultation.

Judging by their comments made during this meeting, the deputy foreign ministers were in complete agreement on the following:

- The northern countries may become increasingly important partners for the socialist countries in their fight to promote the positive tendencies in international politics.
- Developing bilateral relationships necessitates a diverse range of activities in the fields of politics, economy, as well as culture. The northern countries show a willingness to cooperate in this regard. It must be noted that these countries take the UN and the work its member institutions carry out very seriously, because it guarantees their presence in the international arena and increases their international standing. Therefore, besides developing bilateral relations, the cooperation must also be strengthened within the international organizations.
- The importance of developing the economic and trade relations was emphasized in the comments of all delegations, especially the Soviet Union's. The northern countries must be convinced that it is to their economic advantage to develop their relations with the socialist countries.
- It became apparent in each of the speeches that the socialist countries have the most advanced relationship with Finland, and all pay the most attention to Finland. From the point of view of priorities and the intensity of relationships with the socialist countries, the northern countries rank as follows: Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland.

During the consultations the need was apparent for a closer cooperation among the socialist countries in their relationship to the northern countries. The deputy foreign ministers also agreed in further enhancing the operative cooperation, as well as ascertaining the continuous exchange of opinions among their embassies in the Northern countries. With this latter opinion the deputy foreign minister of Romania participating at this consultation did not agree.

The individual countries' deputy foreign ministers discussed the following issues during their contributions to the discussion:

A) The Soviet Union had always given high priority to the northern region. This partly results from the fact that these countries lie on its borders, with two of them the Soviet Union shares continental borders. Besides, it is in the best interest of the Soviet Union that the Northern region become free of nuclear weapons, which - being a nuclear power - it is ready to guarantee, if the other nuclear powers would do the same. In the same time, the NATO is apparently endeavoring to ensure that the realization of the Kekkonen Plan should also mean that the northern regions of the Soviet Union (Murmansk and the surrounding region) should also be declared a nuclear free area. This is, of course, unacceptable.

The case of Spitzbergen is closely related to this group of issues. Norway – encouraged

by NATO – endeavors to revise the valid international settlement of 1920, and does everything in its power to contest the rights of the Soviet Union. It is of political, but most importantly of military and strategic importance that the free shipping on the Baltic Sea and the free use of the straits must be guaranteed; this is also of direct importance to the People's Republic of Poland and the GDR.

In relation to Finland Comrade Zemskov emphasized that some right-wing political circles in Finland wanted to use the slogan of active neutrality in order to increase the distance between Finland and the Soviet Union and the other Socialist countries. Because of this the above issue must be treated with caution during the political intercourses with Finland, and the active peace politics must be emphasized.

B) The People's Republic of Poland also gives high priority to its political and economic relationship with the northern region. These are due mainly to economic considerations, which they define in making the northern countries interested in participating in projects to develop the infrastructure. For example: the building of the North-South highway (Baltic Sea, Tatra Mountains, Lake Balaton, Adriatic Sea), and the Duna [...] Channel. Comrade Czyrek – obviously taking into consideration the possible resistance of the GDR, as these two concepts would mean going round the GDR – called all these mere speculations, the immediate reality of which were very little, yet they were suitable to be dealt with by the proper committees of the Comecom.

C) In his speech the Deputy Foreign Minister of the GDR strongly emphasized the fact that the political presence and activity of the Socialist countries could counteract the Western endeavors, especially the more and more intense activity of the FRG. Although the possibilities for maneuvering have improved lately for the GDR, it still has to face various difficulties, such as in the case of the Finnish government, which is still not ready to sign the consuls' agreement which would mean the recognition of GDR citizenship. They also think that the problem of the Baltic Sea is very important and, in addition to the questions already mentioned, they lay great emphasis on the issues of environmental protection and fishing.

In evaluating the given political situation, they believe that the willingness to cooperate in disarmament issues has been increasing among the northern countries, in harmony with the suggestions made by the Soviet Union. From this aspect he considers Finland and Sweden to be especially suitable partners. They concluded that it might be a good idea to regularly inform these countries about the disarmament negotiations in Vienna in order to fortify the mutual relations and more effectively influence the countries in question. In the future plans of the GDR the development of economic relations also plays an important role; they suggest the mutual investigation of how these countries can be made interested in a possible engagement in a multifaceted cooperation plan. In the same time they suggest that the socialist countries should make more efforts to appear as a group in the markets of the northern countries.

D) The Romanian deputy foreign minister spoke for only a few minutes and confined his attention to enlisting the facts of the relationship between Romania and the northern countries. He did not mention the topic of harmonization and coordination among the socialist countries in any form; he did not react to those suggestions and needs which were worded in the previous contributions. He has accepted the draft of the communiqué to be released after the meeting.

E) Comrade János Nagy thanked the Polish comrades for proposing the consultation. He pointed out that the discussion had been useful and expressed his wish that similar

consultations among the member states of the Warsaw Treaty should be held more regularly in the future.

He informed those present about our relations to the northern countries. He suggested that we should continue considering the Northern countries as important partners even after the European security meeting; such partner countries, which, through bilateral relations, offer us the best possibility among the western capitalist countries to put into practice the decisions in the documents of the security meeting in a way which is the closest to the interpretation of the socialist countries. He also suggested that the exchange of information about the northern countries should become more intense also in the foreign trade committee of the Comecon.

The consultation shows that we must pay more attention to the development of our relationship with the countries in the northern region and also to the reinforcement of the socialist positions.

I will ask the Comrade Ambassador to prepare by November this year an evaluating summary about our relationships on the bases of the regulations of the Political Committee and the Council of Ministers, in which the Comrade Ambassador should enlist his suggestions for modifications and amendments.

I will also ask the Comrade Ambassador to see to it that the exchange of information among the friendly embassies become more intense. I will ask the Comrade Ambassador to report about the discussions and the mutually agreed activity plan.

I would also like to inform the Comrade Ambassador about our plan to examine the possibility of making our relations more active with the northern countries in the UN and in its member institutions, and we shall prepare a set of recommendations about the possibilities to support the Soviet point of view regarding Spitzbergen, the agreement related to which we have also endorsed.

Budapest, 14 April 1975
(Egon Forgács)
Head of Department

[Translated by Ervin Dunay, Central European University]

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