

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Imre Hollai

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Recipients:
1) Comrade Várkonyi
2) C. János Nagy
3) C. Roska
4) C. Garai
5) C. Esztergályos
6) C. Szűcs
7) C. Domokos
8) C. József Tóth
9) own copy

Memorandum

Subject: Comrade Gromyko's meeting with the deputy foreign minister of the socialist countries

On 31 August 1983, Andrei A. Gromyko, the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, received the deputy foreign ministers of the socialist countries, who had been in Moscow for a consultation about the 38th General Assembly of the United Nations.

In response to a prior Soviet invitation, I briefly summed up and evaluated the consultation at the start of the meeting.

In his assessment, Comrade Gromyko declared that the consultation in preparation for the General Assembly had been useful and necessary. The agenda of the General Assembly provides a faithful cross-section of the current problems in international affairs. In this situation it was especially important that the socialist countries stand united, since the enemy is strong and wields a great influence. By closing ranks, we could overcome our problems and solve our tasks more easily. It is important that the socialist countries preserve good relations and show strong unity in their approach to fundamental questions such as war and peace.

Our joint task in relation to the nonaligned countries is to make sure that they – de facto, at least - support our proposals designed to preserve peace. We must continue our work in explaining our position and getting our message through to them. In this regard, one of our main

arguments is that the preservation of peace is in everybody's interest. The work of the nonaligned countries has begun to bear fruits, with the positive results within their movement multiplying.

One possible method in dealing with the Western-bloc states and the countries politically "associated," if not formally affiliated, with the bloc could be to be doing nothing more than criticizing them. This could be achieved by using the mass media; also, we would not have to travel to New York for this, as such an activity could be carried out from our respective capitals. The other method could be to explain our position and to criticize these countries. One of the important issues in this area is the problem of nuclear weapons in Europe. We know and we appreciate the point that the position put forward by the various Western-European countries is not merely the "carbon-copy" of the other's. There are such politicians in the West, who are aware of the justness of the socialist countries' position and who also appreciate the difference between war and peace. These factors can be discovered at the level of the political leaders; not necessarily within the governments, nevertheless they do exist. We must not work in a vacuum, and we must ensure that through our actions we prevent the creation of such a vacuum. Our best option is to encourage the

Soviet delegates to make contact with the representatives of the Western states and to explain their position. If they insist on seeing things through a pair of dark glasses, then the situation will only get worse.

It is a fundamentally important point that our politics serves the interests not only of the peoples but also of the states. Do the people of the United States really want war? Of course, they don't!

This is the honest opinion of the Soviet leaders, and our belief is that the leaders of the socialist countries share this opinion. We must do everything in our power to demonstrate that a nuclear war would have catastrophic consequences for everyone. We must move heaven and earth to get the countries' support for our various proposals, such as the ones about reversal of the arms race and the reduction of the tensions. We believe that this should constitute the mainstream of our policies in the General Assembly.

We consider the possibility of casting some of our proposals in concrete forms. We have already had one concrete initiative: the prevention of the weaponisation of space. It is the aim of the United States to extend the arms race to space: for the purposes of the US, the world has become too confining. Judging from what we have learned at the conference, it appears that the leadership of the other socialist countries concurs in this view.

Finally, Comrade Gromyko has asked the leaders of the delegations to convey his warm greetings and best wishes to all his colleagues, the foreign ministers of the socialist countries.

Budapest, 2 September 1983

[Translated by Ervin Dunay, Central European University, Budapest]

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