

The issue of the Laotian government of national unity will probably be resolved in tough negotiations during the international conference that will be attended by representatives of the national democratic forces of the Pathet Lao, Souvanna Phouma's government, and the elements that participated in the rebellion.

Even if the conference fails to reach an agreement on an acceptable composition for the government of national unity, the situation will not be bad, as the patriotic forces of Laos will be allowed to consolidate their position in the territories that they hold until the ceasefire. It will be a good situation for the next stage of the struggle for a truly independent and democratic Laos.

The socialist countries, which have proposed a realistic way of dealing with the problem of Laos, based on securing peace, independence and neutrality, must naturally do all they can to unmask all attempts by imperialist circles to meddle in Laotian affairs through the SEATO military bloc, as well as the muscle-flexing tactics employed by the United States.

We believe that it is in the interests of the socialist camp to remain alert and prevent the military conflict in Laos from spreading. At the same time, we believe it is expedient to decisively support the struggle of progressive patriotic forces in Laos in future.

The fraternal cooperation of the socialist countries in dealing with the current international problems in Asia is an important factor in the efforts to consolidate peace in the region.

Comrades, we all agree that the continuing occupation by U.S. armed forces of the Chinese island of Taiwan, which the Americans regard as an important link in their chain of strategic bases poised against the People's Republic of China and the entire socialist camp, is one of the most dangerous manifestations of the aggressive imperialist policy in the Far East.

The strength of the socialist countries is the most reliable rein on the aggressive military circles of the U.S., as convincingly proven in the autumn of 1958, when the Soviet Union, true to its alliance commitments, warned the U.S. government that an attack against the People's Republic of China would be regarded as an attack against the Soviet Union, with all its consequences. The American imperialists were forced to take into account that the Soviet Union and all the socialist countries fully support the policy of fraternal China insofar as the issue of Taiwan is concerned.

We will strive even harder to restore the lawful rights of the People's Republic of China in the UN, as well as the right of the People's Republic of Mongolia to assume its place in the United Nations. In this respect, the joint and concerted actions of the socialist countries have already resulted in a visible change of the distribution of power in the United Nations, and the time is not far away when the United States will suffer a major defeat. This will be a great political victory for the entire socialist camp.

The division of Korea and the occupation of South Korea by U.S. troops continue to be a major source of tension in the Far East. We deeply sympathize with the natural and rightful desire of the Korean people for reunification of their country, and decisively support the efforts of the government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to restore the national unity of Korea.

The Soviet government has already declared that we fully support the proposal of our Korean friends to create a confederation of North Korea and South Korea, as well as other proposals from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that open the way toward a rapprochement between the two states on the Korean Peninsula.

The socialist countries will continue to provide active support to the fraternal nation of Korea in its struggle for the departure of U.S. troops and a peaceful reunification of Korea.

I would like to say a few words on Japan. It is developing at a fast pace and is one of the leaders of the capitalist world in this respect. The socialist countries should care about how Japan is going to develop. It is a well-known fact that the United States intends to use Japan as a tool of its aggressive policy in the Far East. On the other hand, a movement for the country's neutrality continues to grow in Japan.

If we don't succeed in breaking up the Japanese-American military alliance, possibilities still exist for us to reduce its value to the United States; more specifically, we will try, step by step, to bring Japan over to neutrality. In our opinion, finding a solution to this issue will help develop trade, economic, cultural and other relations with those circles in Japan that are interested in maintaining good relations with us and also reveal the reactionary, unpopular policy of the Japanese government.

Allow me now to dwell briefly on some African issues. The attention of the whole world is now focused on this continent. On the one hand, it is a center of anti-colonial revolutions, which have taken place under international and local circumstances that have not previously been experienced in other parts of the world.

On the other hand, the imperialist powers are trying to oppose the revolutions, to implement their old plans and maintain their positions in the new circumstances, supported by the United States, the pillar of colonial policy and piracy in our times.

Africa has great strategic importance, both in military and political terms. The movement toward national liberation that has developed there has exposed the flanks of capitalist Western Europe.

Some of the imperialist military bases in Africa have already been closed, while the continued existence of others is doubtful. The increased strength and activism of the independent African states are having an ever-growing impact upon the international situation.

Consequently, we believe it is strategically and politically very expedient to strengthen and expand the contacts with African countries that we have managed to establish; in particular, it is necessary to develop cooperative economic relations, which serve as the basis for these contacts.

I am referring mainly to broad cooperation with the United Arab Republic, Guinea, Ghana, Mali, the expansion of relations with Morocco and Tunisia, and our support for fighting Algeria.

However, the situation in Africa is complicated and often full of inconsistencies.

Nevertheless, the socialist countries as a whole have removed all the barriers created by the imperialists and colonialists and have established broad relations with many African states, helping them to strengthen their independence. We must continue to develop and strengthen our joint efforts in this respect, strive for the speediest possible implementation of the Declaration on Granting Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, adopted at the 15th Meeting of the UN General Assembly.

However, the liberation struggle of the African nations is taking place in very difficult conditions. The colonial powers are exploiting every opportunity to contain the process of the African nations' liberation from colonial oppression and to retain their political and economic positions in Africa. Nevertheless, the international situation is now more favorable for the struggle than it used to be in the case of Asian nations.

The existence of the mighty socialist camp and a large group of independent Asian and African states makes the liberation struggle of Africans fairly easier. At the same time,

however, the overall backwardness of Africa and the utter lack of experience in organized struggle over the long term, which many Asian nations had, is also affecting developments in Africa.

Under these circumstances, colonialism is forced to retreat, but it takes a lot of fighting; moreover, the colonial powers count on economic weakness and disputes among ethnic groups, regions and states in Africa to help them retain black Africa within their sphere of influence.

It was under these circumstances that the well-known events in and around the Congo took place.

They can be characterized as a collective intervention by colonizers under the flag of the UN.

The tragedy in the Congo has served as a good, though difficult, lesson for the nations of Africa, Asia and Latin America, for nations all over the world fighting against imperialism. The socialist countries, through their policy of revealing the imperialist aggression in the Congo and their support for the Congolese people's struggle for national liberation, have achieved considerable successes in unmasking the nature of colonialism and imperialism in the eyes of broad, popular masses all around the world.

We must continue to implement our policy on the Congo with an eye to other issues related to the African nations' struggle for liberation.

The struggle in the Congo is by no means over; indeed, it is likely to start in earnest now. Since Tshombe, Kalonji, Kasavubu, Mobutu and other puppets have openly oriented themselves toward Belgium and other colonial powers in seeking support, it goes without saying that their positions are lost, while the patriotic forces face good future prospects.

The Congolese liberation movement has not yet overcome its serious internal problems.

For the time being, the colonialists have succeeded in dividing the Congolese tribes against each other and in bribing some elements of the intelligentsia and the army. The masses of farmers, who constitute the overwhelming majority of Congo's population, have not yet risen up in the liberation struggle.

The situation is also complicated by the fact that Gizenga's government controls the landlocked regions of the country, and the colonial states, using threats and pressure,

have managed to maintain the blockade on these regions by Sudan and the Central African Republic.

Having exploited disputes among the African states, along with their naïve and blind faith in the United Nations, the imperialist powers have thwarted the formation of a strong anti-colonial front with respect to the Congo. Now, faith in the United Nations has been increasingly undermined, and our request to Hammarskjöld that he fire and reorganize the UN executive apparatus will gain increasing international support.

Those who really believe that the UN organization is of some use must insist that the United Nations should work for the equal benefit of all groups and nations, and not serve the most rabid imperialists and colonialists, as it is doing now.

We will consistently and patiently exert every effort to make the United Nations and its apparatus really serve the purpose of international détente. This will only be possible if all groups of states have equal representation in the highest UN bodies.

The colonial regime in Africa cannot be saved. It faces inevitable destruction in the next few years.

The socialist countries now face broad prospects for the establishment and development of close relations with the young African states and their leaders and thus for influencing their policy. We should make the best possible use of these opportunities.

You know that the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, Comrade [Leonid] Brezhnev, has recently visited Morocco, Guinea and Ghana. I would like to share with you the most important conclusions we have reached as a result of this trip, as they may be useful for other socialist countries as well. The political results of Comrade Brezhnev's visit are quite interesting, also because it was the first visit by a leading socialist statesman to this region of Africa.

First and foremost, I would like to say quite clearly that there are vast opportunities to strengthen our influence over the policies of Guinea and Ghana and also to some extent Morocco. The governments of these countries are willing to develop broad relations with us, albeit for different reasons.

The governments and peoples of Guinea, Ghana and Morocco share a positive attitude toward the socialist states' actions, whose goal is the ultimate destruction of the colonial system and the strengthening of international peace. The leaders of Guinea and Ghana

trust the Soviet Union and the other socialist states. The foreign policy orientation of Guinea and Ghana objectively helps these countries in developing closer relations with the socialist countries. In this regard, their internal problems and difficulties are also pushing them toward us. We must not relent in our efforts to steer the policy of Morocco and similar states against imperialism and colonialism.

Let's take, for example, Guinea, which has a very progressive attitude toward many international issues. Guinea is now experiencing fairly serious economic difficulties. There is a lack of food, consumer products, and industrial equipment. The government's economic actions have not yet made themselves fully felt. Sekou Touré and other leaders are seriously concerned about the possibility of plots and even conspiracies by the imperialist states, which undoubtedly have their agencies in Guinea.

They are aware that any strengthening of the existing government is possible only if the economic difficulties abate. This is why Guinea's leaders vitally depend upon, and are interested in, broad assistance and support from the socialist countries.

It must be admitted that many commitments made by our countries to provide economic assistance to Guinea have not yet been fulfilled. Moreover, Guinea's government has presented many new requirements. We have studied them very carefully and have decided to accommodate them to the extent our own capabilities permit us.

The reason I have dwelt on the situation in Guinea for so long is that, in our opinion, meeting the requirements of that country is an urgent matter. The situation in Ghana and Morocco is relatively better. However, there is no doubt that they, too, will not be able to withstand the colonialists' economic pressure without our help.

With this in mind, the Soviet government has decided to accelerate the fulfillment of its commitments arising from agreements with Ghana and Morocco and to adopt additional measures to expand economic and cultural relations with these countries.

If all of us help Guinea, Ghana and other countries that also tend toward the position of the socialist camp in many respects, such as Mali, we can expect a great deal in Africa in terms of the political and economic strengthening of these countries and increased influence for the socialist countries.

Our influence on the movement for national liberation in Africa will thus grow considerably, and the liberation of other African countries from economic and political dependence will be accelerated. We will be able to achieve all these goals if we use the

available opportunities for providing assistance to the young African nations in a more focused and efficient manner. In this respect, it would undoubtedly be a good thing to improve the coordination of the basic activities of the socialist countries in providing economic, technical, and cultural assistance to Guinea and other leading African states. We believe that the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance could play a major role here.

Comrades! The recent meeting of the communist and workers' parties has once again underlined the importance of the socialist countries' unity and cohesion for our common work. Strengthening the socialist camp means, first and foremost, strengthening the unity of the communist and workers' parties holding power in the socialist countries. The unity of our countries depends on this.

If we are united, no obstacle will be too high for us; nobody and nothing will prevent us from unswervingly following the path of socialism and communism.

In the history of humankind, there have never been any parties capable of achieving the degree of unity now demonstrated by the communist and workers' parties of our countries, which have succeeded in uniting more than a billion people in the powerful socialist camp. Our unity derives from our common Marxist-Leninist worldview, the most progressive doctrine of our times. Also uniting us are our common objectives, common interests, and our social and economic system.

All communist and workers' parties, as they build a new way of life in their respective countries, are following the immutable principles of Marxism-Leninism and the common laws of socialist development, which all of us share. That having been said, it must be noted that there will always be national differences and cultural and economic specifics. This is inevitable.

However, these differences do not preclude a unity of views regarding the principles common to all of us and regarding the laws we all observe in building socialism and communism. This is positive proof of the vitality of the teachings of Marxism-Leninism and the global communist movement.

I think that all of you will agree that the foreign policy of the socialist countries, which workers all over the world view with hope, must always be uncompromising and united. We must bear in mind that any crack in our unity, no matter how small, will be exploited by our enemies against the interests of the socialist camp and may be detrimental to the peace and security of nations.

In this respect, I would like to briefly comment on the actions of our Albanian comrades, who have recently chosen not to follow the coordinated foreign policy line of the socialist countries. We are very disappointed that the Albanian comrades do not properly understand the situation, the meetings in Moscow notwithstanding, and have been pursuing a policy that one cannot help but call regrettable.

For example, it is difficult to understand why the Albanian government does not provide active support to the specific proposals of the socialist countries regarding intra-Balkan cooperation and the creation of a nuclear-free zone in the Balkans and the Adriatic. As a matter of fact, it even acts as a stumbling block preventing their implementation.

The present state of Soviet-Albanian relations is probably known to all the fraternal parties. We had sincerely hoped that relations would dramatically improve after the Moscow meeting of the communist and workers' parties and the adoption of the Joint Statement. However, time has shown that our hopes were false. The situation is particularly hard for the naval base at Vlorë, which was established at the request of the Albanian government and on the basis of the Warsaw Treaty to ensure our collective security.

As a matter of fact, the deterioration in our relations had occurred even before the meeting in Moscow took place, despite the Albanian leaders' official statements that they have been normal. If the Albanian leaders consider our present relations normal, then our respective perceptions of normality must be different.

The naval base at Vlorë cannot now effectively fulfill the missions for which it was designated. In fact, having been paralyzed, it is not combat-ready. Thus, a conclusion presents itself – namely, that it does not make any sense, given the circumstances, to maintain the base. The Vlorë base has merely become a source of friction, contributing to the further deterioration of our relations with Albania. Moreover, we presently do not have any guarantees against provocations. Our military personnel can feel it all the time. There may be unforeseeable incidents that we do not want to happen and for which no genuine communist, no honorable man, can wish.

This was why we raised the issue of normalizing the situation at the base with our Albanian comrades. It seems that normality can be guaranteed only under one condition: If the Albanian comrades believe that the presence of our sailors and navy is necessary for the defense of the Warsaw Treaty and especially Albania, then they must agree that Soviet sailors alone should use and operate the base. Such a solution would eliminate the

source of friction that has resulted in a deterioration of our relations, would provide the prerequisites for normal operation and command at the naval base, and make it fully prepared to fulfill the mission that it has been assigned. There must be a single line of command in Vlorë, subordinated directly to the Supreme Commander of the Warsaw Treaty forces, without any interference by Albanian military authorities.

If the Albanian comrades do not want this solution and disagree with it, they are entitled to their opinion. We will not pressure them. We do not need the base any more than does any other member of the Warsaw Treaty, including Albania.

In his speech, Comrade Balluku stated that Albania was besieged by capitalist countries and might be attacked. It would seem that if the Albanian leaders indeed perceived the situation in this way, they should draw the appropriate conclusions. Albania should be interested in maintaining the base's combat readiness. However, it is obvious that their assertions that the base must be retained are mere words and have not been supported by actions. Thus, we have a base in Albania now, but we are not sure, under the present circumstances, whether it will be able to fulfill its assigned mission. I must repeat once again that we cannot put up with this situation.

At the present meeting, the Albanian Minister of Defense Beqir Balluku spoke at length about Soviet-Albanian friendship and expressed the Albanian government's appreciation and gratitude for the unselfish assistance of the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, we are also aware of other statements by Albanian leaders, including Comrade Balluku himself, which cannot be regarded as manifestations of friendly feelings and gratitude to our country, the Soviet government and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Let us look, for example, at the speech of Pilo Peristeri, a Candidate Member of the Politburo of the Albanian Workers' Party, at a party meeting of the military units stationed in Vlorë and Pasha Liman on February 26:

“Some communist parties, especially the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and its Central Committee, have taken a stand against us. The [CPSU] Central Committee has instructed other parties – the Bulgarian, the Polish, the Czechoslovak and others – to take a stand against us as well. Zhivkov, Gomułka and Novotný do not know anything about Marxism, but are standing against us and supporting Khrushchev's every word ...”

Or:

“At the Fourth Congress of the Albanian Workers’ Party, Khrushchev briefed the Head of the Delegation of the Greek Communist Party to take a stand against us. However, Mehmet Shehu proved to be strong and banished the Greek delegate from the congress.”

How can one comment on things like this, comrades? It’s just a lunatic raving.

Allow me to tell you a real story. On March 22, five Soviet women, wives of Soviet officers, namely Pimanova, Livdina, Kosovskaia, Dunaievskiaia, Krashennikova – boarded an Albanian city bus to Vlorë. An Albanian policeman standing nearby allowed them on the bus and, when all the seats had been taken, demanded passports only from the Soviet women. Four of them did not have them, whereupon he said something in Albanian, which prompted a lot of laughter from the Albanians sitting in the bus. Then, he pointedly asked the ladies to leave the bus. When he spoke to them, he said that Soviet women were not allowed to travel without passports.

On the next day, Vlorë’s Police Chief told Soviet Captain First Rank Povod that there was a new order from the Albanian Interior Ministry concerning document checks for all passengers because “there are many spies and revisionists operating in the country”.

This story and many similar ones demonstrate the situation that Soviet citizens must face in Albania.

Can we maintain our base in Albania, considering that Soviet citizens have been humiliated, ridiculed, vilified, insulted, called spies and subjected to organized provocations there? If we ignored these actions and did not protect the honor of Soviet officers and their wives, if we allowed them to be ridiculed, what kind of respect could the Central Committee of our party expect from Soviet officers and communists?

Consequently, the one and only condition for normalization and for the elimination of events such as those that have just been described is acceptance of the proposal described in Marshal Grechko’s letter: There must be a single line of command at the base and all ships must be staffed by Soviet sailors.

There have also been many insulting statements by Albanian leaders addressed to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and its leaders. For example, we have been informed about Albanian leaders saying that Khrushchev is this or that, that he did not fight during the war, that he incites leaders of other parties against the Albanians, etc.

I will not talk about who has fought, where and how much. I can only remind everyone that I have been a communist and fought in the ranks of the Red Army against enemies of the working class and the Soviet Union at a time when some Albanian leaders were officers, bore officers' shoulder boards and insignia in the army of King Zog, and served him with their bodies and souls.

We have not meddled in the affairs of other parties, and we do not have any intention of doing so; however, as communists we cannot look aside when Albania's leaders, who claim to be Leninists following the teachings of Marxism-Leninism, are persecuting Liri Belishova, a member of the Albanian Politburo. She is a distinguished member of the Albanian Workers' Party. She fought against fascism, was tortured by the Nazis, and fought valiantly against enemies in the ranks of the guerrilla fighters, and lost an eye in the process. She was selected as a leader, and she enjoyed the full trust of her party. And then, all of the sudden, she found herself in prison; all she had allegedly done was speak out against a further deterioration in the friendly relations with the Soviet Union. She was then declared an enemy of the party and the Albanian people. This means that the Albanian leaders view the Soviet Union as an enemy.

Or look at what has happened to a senior Albanian Communist, Comrade Koço Tashko. There's definitely no other Communist like him among the Albanian leaders or in the Albanian Workers' Party. He was a Communist at the time when some of the present Albanian leaders were running around in diapers. Now this outstanding man has been expelled from the party and allegedly even imprisoned, because he, just like Comrade Liri Belishova, declared that he considered and would consider the Soviet Union a friendly and fraternal country, with which relations should be expanded and enhanced in every possible way, that the Soviet Union was a true and unselfish friend and brother of the Albanian people. It was for these honorable words that Comrade Koço Tashko has been labeled an enemy of the party and the people.

I fully agree with Comrade Gomułka's words, who recalled that Beria had used similar methods. He, too, fabricated rumors about all kinds of conspiracies, blacklisted innocent people as enemies, and sent the most honorable people dedicated to the cause of the revolution and the working class to the gallows.

The Soviet delegation supports the proposal asking the Albanian comrades to present hard evidence regarding the attack they claim has been mounted or planned against Albania. When asked about the alleged attack or conspiracy, some Albanian comrades have replied that they themselves had heard about it for the first time in the Comrade Enver Hoxha's address to the Fourth Congress of the Albanian Workers' Party.

Why do we assign so much importance to this issue? It is obvious that the statement regarding a conspiracy statement served internal objectives; its purpose was to mislead the Albanian people. However, statements like this are not just an internal affair of Albania; as a matter of fact, if Yugoslavia, Greece and the United States indeed had attacked Albania, our states, in accordance with the Warsaw Treaty, would have been obliged to come to its assistance. Consequently, statements like this provoke war hysteria between the two blocs. This is something with which we do not want to be associated. We are prepared to face the imperialists at any time, but we are against fabrications and the unleashing of war hysteria. This is not our policy; it is a policy of unleashing the miseries of war. We are Communists and we implement the Leninist and Communist policy of peaceful coexistence.

One cannot help but be amazed when watching the actions of the Albanian leaders, who continually proclaim themselves to be proud people. What kind of pride are we talking about? The Albanian leaders, disrespecting the Soviet government, the Central Committee of the CPSU, and, ultimately, the Soviet people, slander us on every occasion, while they stretch their hand out for assistance and demanding as much as possible from us.

Where's your pride, Albanian leaders? You do not have any, you just talk about it. When talking to each other or to the Albanian people or the Albanian Workers' Party, they sling mud at us, while telling us that they're friends of the Soviet Union and that the Soviet Union must help them.

This is something we cannot put up with. We do not spare anything for our great common cause, for our friends. We are prepared to share everything, even the last bit, with our brothers. However, we will not share anything with those who insult us as enemies in front of their own people; we do not have any obligation to do that.

Comrades, all this is very sad, but these are inescapable facts. The fraternal communist and workers' parties should know them.

What are we going to do now? We must not be carried away by our feelings, we must always be led by common sense, sound judgment, and the interests of our great common cause.

This having been said, we are open to discussing anything, provided the Albanian comrades understand how deeply wrong they are, understand their erroneous ways and show their wish to stop all this, to normalize relations with us and all the fraternal

countries. If they are true Communists and do this, we are prepared to be accommodating.

Comrades! We must overcome phenomena like this. Our unity and ideological cohesion must be continuously supported by concerted practical actions on the international front.

In this respect, it seems advisable to give a thought to whether we have really been using all the opportunities to do what needs to be done in order to improve the coordination of our foreign policy. We have all the necessary means to act effectively in pursuing the agreed line, both at the level of the Warsaw Treaty and at the level of the entire socialist camp, as well as at the regional or national level, by remaining focused on our common objective, the strengthening of the peaceful coexistence of the two systems. In this regard, there is also a need for coordinated action in the field of economic relations, of international economic issues.

It is a well-known fact that the imperialists have been taking steps to strengthen their ranks within the framework of the North Atlantic alliance, which focuses not only on military and political issues, but also on economic policies.

They are now building up an economic affiliate of NATO, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, which they regard both as a tool to strengthen their fragile economies and as a weapon in the economic competition with us.

They are placing their hopes in this agency's role in the implementation of their policy toward underdeveloped countries. They are doing all they can to weaken our influence in the Asian, African and Latin American countries, to stem the growth of the national liberation movement.

We must closely watch the changes in the imperialists' tactics in dealing with these countries and jointly take concerted steps to counter them.

There is no need to be afraid of broader economic relations with the imperialist states. We can also make use of loans provided by capitalists, but these should not weaken the relations among the countries of the socialist camp.

Our noble goal is to strengthen the unity, cooperation and mutual assistance of the socialist states, as these are the main sources of strength and invincibility for each one of them and for the socialist camp as a whole.

Comrades! Marshal's Grechko's speech has presented proposals for further improvements in the combat readiness of the armed forces of Warsaw Treaty member states. It is a major upgrade of our armed forces, including their armament and equipment as well as their organizational structure.

The Soviet government, just like the other participants in our meetings, supports these proposals. They are fully justified, given the war preparations that the Western countries have been making for quite some time, and especially recently.

There is no need to dwell on this issue, as we all know how far our opponents – the largest imperialist states united in military blocs – have advanced toward a new world war.

This situation requires even more active efforts from the Warsaw Treaty countries, so that we can guarantee the defense of the socialist camp and deal a crushing blow to any aggressor, if necessary. We need to deter potential aggressors from planning any attacks against our countries.

Consequently, the armed forces of the Warsaw Treaty must be equipped, armed, and organized in a way that will ensure their continuing superiority in combat readiness over NATO and the other military pacts of the imperialist states.

Much has already been done in this respect. However, we must keep moving forward. We must reinforce the armies of the Warsaw Treaty, equip them with missiles; modern, fast aircraft and tanks, and take the other steps Comrade Grechko enumerated here on behalf of the Unified Command.

It is very important to have effective air defense systems which, if equipped with enough surface-to-air missiles, interceptors and well-placed radar sites, could offer more reliable protection not only to combat troops, but also to major industrial facilities and the administrative and political centers of our countries. Naturally, we must be realistic – a new world war, should the imperialists provoke it, would be a strategic nuclear war. However, there are still not enough assets to defend against missiles.

As our enemies do not yet have enough missiles, they focus on their frontal aviation and strategic bombers. This is why we must have assets to counter them – air defense artillery, surface-to-air missiles, fighters and interceptors.

The preparations made by the Unified Command and national planning agencies show that the implementation of this program requires substantial quantities of new weapons and military equipment.

Consequently, the question arises of how to organize – taking into account the capabilities of each Warsaw Treaty member-state – the production of the new weapons with which our armies should be equipped as comprehensively as possible.

The Soviet Union, it is known, has already started producing missiles and other sophisticated weapons whose manufacture requires diverse and adequate facilities and broad cooperation between different industries.

Obviously, it is the Soviet Union's continuing duty is to conduct research and development in the field of modern weapon systems in order to be able to supply the armies of our fraternal countries with state-of-the-art weapons.

These development efforts are very costly; prototypes of new weapons are extremely expensive, as is the operation and maintenance of scientific and research institutes and design bureaus.

With regard to other arms and weapons, such as airplanes, tanks and APCs,<sup>1</sup> it is obvious that their production should be shared more equitably among the Warsaw Treaty member states. Comrade Khrushchev mentioned this in his speech, and I believe the proposals he presented are acceptable.

It is clear to all of us that organizing the production of a broad portfolio of sophisticated military equipment inevitably brings serious difficulties. Under the circumstances, however, each of us must make some economic sacrifices to achieve this. We must do it. Moreover, we have to fulfill the tasks in a very short span of time, as the international situation does not permit us to hesitate.

Perhaps there will be people who will accuse us communists of being inconsistent, saying: "You criticize the 'muscle-flexing' policy of the imperialists, and, at the same time, you are trying to increase your strength as well." To such people we must explain the fundamental difference between the imperialists and us in a patient and comprehensible manner.

The nations of all countries must know that the socialist countries are improving their defensive capabilities not for aggression, subjugation, or the imposition of their rule upon

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other peoples, which is what the imperialists do, or for rekindling the cold war and inflating arms production, which is what the imperialists try to accomplish, but instead for the achievement of exactly the opposite objectives.

We must be strong - not for the sake of war, but in order to eliminate the threat of war, to force the imperialists to accept the principle of peaceful coexistence, and to make them accept a disarmament treaty. We seek general and complete disarmament, and we are prepared to do it at any time.

We fervently strive for peace, for a socialist society, which does not need any arms race. We trust in our future, in our victory over capitalism in a peaceful contest. We must do this in a way that the popular masses in all countries can clearly understand and realize, in a way that will make the terms “socialism” and “peace” inseparable. This will be our greatest hope, our strongest political weapon in the struggle with imperialism.

This is why our second task – the tough and incessant struggle for peace and peaceful coexistence – is no less important than the overall strengthening of our defensive capabilities.

Averting the threat of a strategic nuclear war, laying the groundwork for an ever stronger global socialist system and constructing a communist society – these are the great goals of the active peace policy of the socialist countries. We must exploit every opportunity to achieve fair and reasonable solutions to international problems based on agreements. This is also a struggle, and a very effective one.

There’s no doubt that the strengthened unity and cooperation of our countries will bring about new and even greater achievements in our struggle for our noble goals of strengthening peace and communism.

Thank you for your attention.

*[Translation by Jiří Mareš]*