

February 29, 1980

**Report on the Meeting of the Foreign Secretaries of
the Socialist Countries in Moscow, 26 February 1980**

Citation:

"Report on the Meeting of the Foreign Secretaries of the Socialist Countries in Moscow, 26 February 1980", February 29, 1980, Wilson Center Digital Archive, National Archives of Hungary (MOL), M-KS 288 f. 11/4396.o.e. Translated for CWIHP by Attila Kolontari and Zsafia Zelnik. <https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/112495>

Summary:

This document explains the views of the cooperating Socialist countries relating to Afghanistan. The USSR perceived the US attempt to line up NATO support against the Soviets as an aggressive action, designed to counter Soviet influence. The Soviets, by contrast, viewed their involvement in Afghanistan as increasing their sphere of influence around the Warsaw-pact countries, making such actions defense, rather than offensive. The USSR's leadership states that it should increase its ties to NATO countries to counteract the foreign policy of the US.

Original Language:

Hungarian

Contents:

Translation - English

TOP SECRET!

Written in two copies

Budapest, 29 February 1980.

HUNGARIAN SOCIALIST WORKERS' PARTY

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

FOREIGN DEPARTMENT

INFORMATIVE REPORT

to the Political Committee

The foreign secretaries of the central committees of the parties of the closely cooperating socialist countries - the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, the German Democratic republic - held a conciliatory meeting in Moscow on 26 February concerning the topical international questions.

Representing the CPSU Central Committee, Comrade Boris Ponomarev emphasized that in the present international situation it was extremely important to make detailed analyses and to draw the consequences. For this the contents of Comrade Leonid Brezhnev's declaration of 16 January and his pre-election speech of 22 February provided a good basis. The CPSU thinks that recently the process of easing has suffered serious losses. The basic causes can be defined as the aggressive endeavors of the USA, the arms race provoked by it and the intensification of attacks against socialism. In the foreign political steps of the USA, a role is played by fight concerning presidential elections and the internal political and economic problems of the United States. More and more obvious are the intentions to make the NATO member states line up to support the American politics and to increase the influence of the United States in the world.

The dangers threatening human peace are great, but we must see that Carter's "new" policy has not had the expected result. The United States could not turn Afghanistan into a base of operations for American imperialism, and it is of principal importance that the USA did not consider it possible to announce military confrontation. This is due to the substantial defensive force of the SU and the socialist community. It means that we should develop our economic and military ability in the future too and improve our armed forces within the framework of the Warsaw Treaty.

The Western-European allies of the USA, with a few exceptions, are unwilling to follow Carter's policy unconditionally. The intentions to block the Soviet Union's economy were thwarted, in this the United States was not followed by Europe, moreover by Latin-America either. Carter is aware that the formation of an anti-Soviet front is impossible without the active participation of Western Europe. The European capitalist countries are interested in staying away from Carter. Some countries are definite, others are more moderate in demonstrating their faithfulness to the Atlantic Alliance, and in reality the unity of the NATO is much smaller than seen in the propaganda.

France's opposition to the United States is becoming stronger and stronger. The behavior of the Federal Republic of Germany is of key importance. The government of the FRG played a decisive role in passing the NATO resolution concerning medium-range missiles, and they express their solidarity with the Carter administration. At the same time, the West-German government declares its commitment to the policy of easing. This is strongly emphasized by Schmidt too, in his message sent recently to Comrade Brezhnev. It is also worth mentioning that, at the session of the leaders of the German Social-democratic Party held in chambers, Schmidt explained that the presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan served a defensive purpose. The chancellor expressed his disapproval with the refusal to ratify

the SALT II, and with the fact that Carter subordinated the USA's interests more and more to his own purposes. The chancellor defined it explicitly that his country would not participate in the economic sanctions against the Soviet Union, it would not sacrifice its Eastern policy and endeavored to prevent the American president from making other mistakes. But the Americans exercise great influence on Schmidt, who shows less resistance than expected probably because he has to take into consideration the political requirements concerning the autumn elections.

The Soviet leadership pays great attention to the points of view of the communist, social-democratic parties and the non-aligned countries. The majority of the sister-parties represents the right position even in the strained international situation, the evolution process started in the leadership of the French CP is especially important. At the same time, we have to sum up the negative phenomena too. The wrong position of the Italian and Spanish communist parties is especially worrying. The Vienna meeting of February of the parties of the Socialist International showed that the social-democracy does not intend to sacrifice easing on the altar of the adventurist politics of the USA.

The USA puts great emphasis on using the events in Afghanistan to increase her influence on the movement of non-alignment and in the Muslim world. The political and economic interests of the developing countries and of existing socialism still coincide but a complicated situation has evolved. Cuba's position has become particularly complicated, the Cuban comrades should receive support to alleviate their situation. We must contribute to the neutralization of the resolutions of the Islamabad conference, and we should prevent the creation of the alliance of hostile Muslim states on the Southern borders on the Soviet Union.

Comrade Ponomaryov gave a brief summary of the events in Afghanistan. He said Taraki and Amin had requested the Soviet Union 14 times since March 1979 to give military help. At the definite request of Amin the number of Soviet military experts and counselors was increased in the middle of December. Obeying the express demanded by the members of the revolutionary council and the government, Amin himself requested 4 times in December the strengthening of the Soviet troops stationed there. On the basis of all this it is obvious that the soviet troops are stationed in Afghanistan complying with the norms of international law. There is no question of occupying the country, the Afghan authorities act independently. The task of the Soviet troops is to ensure the territorial sanctity in close cooperation with the Afghan authorities. The contents of Comrade Brezhnev's pre-election speech confirms that the Soviet Union is ready to withdraw its troops as soon as the United States and Afghanistan's neighbors guarantee non-interference in the country's internal affairs.

In connection with practical problems and tasks, Comrade Ponomaryov emphasized that the Soviet Union definitely disapproved of all American attempts aimed at breaking up the unity of the socialist community. At the same time, she endeavors to maintain relations with the USA according to the words and spirit of the agreements in effect. Reacting to the anti-Soviet steps of the American administration, the Soviet Union suspends the trips of cultural groups, the organization of exhibitions and decreases tourism. At the same time, it maintains connections with some American firms in the sphere of publishing, the protection of copyright, radio and television. If the Americans sabotage the service provided to the planes of the Aeroflot in the future too, the Soviet Union will stop the transportation by Soviet vehicles of the supplies of American representations on the territory of the Soviet Union.

The economic and trade relations between the two countries have always taken place on the basis of mutual advantages. It seems reasonable to further maintain normal business relations, but on the other hand, to show that the socialist countries act on the basis of a harmonized policy.

The Soviet Union endeavors to constructively renew or continue the talks concerning disarmament. The Soviet party is willing to start talks concerning medium-range missiles, independently of the ratification of SALT II and outside the framework of SALT III, demanding to modify or at least, suspend the NATO decision of 12 December and its execution.

In the present situation, the Warsaw Treaty's initiative to summon an all-European conference to deal with the questions of military easing and disarmament is particularly important. It is reasonable to continue the consultations preparing the Madrid meeting, but meanwhile we have to make clear the intentions of the capitalist countries, what character they want to give to the conference.

It was important and timely to cancel the planned political contacts at high level with the United States and the FRG. The Soviet Union's further behavior with the latter depends on whether the West-German government will take concrete steps to contribute to easing. It is beyond doubt that the communist community cannot be interested in the defeat of the present coalition government. Taking this as a starting point, according to the plans, Chancellor Schmidt's visit to Soviet Union will take place in spring.

It seems right and reasonable to develop political relations further with France and the other member states of the NATO in order to prevent the Carter politics from prevailing.

By boycotting the Moscow Olympics, Carter wants to diminish the prestige of socialism. His endeavors have been thwarted so far, but the situation is still very complicated. The Soviet Union will hold the Olympic Games and we must achieve that the sportsmen of as many countries as possible took part in it.

In the present international situation, it is of particular importance to consolidate economic and scientific-technical cooperation between the countries of the socialist community. We must make efforts to specialize production and develop cooperation to reduce our economic dependence on the capitalist world. The competent Soviet organs should study the possibilities of accelerating the process and of elaborating our agreed activity in the capitalist world market.

We should increase the cooperation between European communist parties. For this, a good opportunity is the joint French-Polish initiative to hold a conference in Paris in April of the representatives of the communist parties of the continent on the reduction of military tension and the promotion of the issue of disarmament. Although e.g. the Italian and Spanish parties categorically object to participating in the conference, it is reasonable to organize the event and look for other opportunities to convince those who disagree.

The CPSU keeps up the conversation and relations with the socialist and social-democratic parties. It considers necessary to make relations more active with the Finnish, West-German, Belgian and other parties in order to solve tense international problems. To beat off the American government's cold war endeavors, all forces supporting peace and the progressive international public opinion should be mobilized.

The representatives of the other sister parties contributing to the meeting unanimously underlined the necessity of the more frequent harmonization of the positions and ideas concerning tasks between the closely cooperating socialist countries under the circumstances of the deterioration of the international situation. They also thoroughly analyzed the causes of international tensions and their position coincided with the Soviet evaluation.

In his speech, Comrade Dimitry Stanishev put a great emphasis on the Bulgarian evaluation concerning the political situation in the countries of the Balkans. He sharply criticized the Yugoslav foreign political endeavors. He underlined the importance of activating our existing relations in order to influence the Western-European political circles in a favorable way.

During the presentation of the Polish point of view, Comrade Andrzej Werblan dealt with the behavior of the governments of France and the FRG emphatically. He stressed that we should approach the individual countries of Western Europe differently. We should treat flexibly the existing political, cultural and other relations and we should strive to make new contacts.

Comrade Vasil Bilak pointed at the extreme danger of American foreign and internal politics, the traditions of anti-imperialist endeavors of socialist countries and the fact that we should make use of the conflicts between the Western states. He stated that we should set up the conditions for the self-sufficiency of socialist countries concerning food and other products.

Comrade Herman Axen presented in detail the evaluation of the Party of Socialist Unity of Germany concerning the West-German situation and political endeavors. He underlined the danger of the hegemonic and revenge-seeking endeavors of the right wing in the FRG. This is why it is our interest to support the present coalition of government, we should contribute to the prevention of Strauss from coming to power.

Comrade András Gyenes analyzed the international situation, pointed at the importance of the offensive peace policy of socialist countries. He presented the point of view of the HSWP concerning the capitalist countries, first of all, the maintenance of political, economic, cultural and technical-scientific relations with the Western-European countries. He underlined the importance of the consolidation of our relations with the communist parties of socialist countries and the social-democratic parties.

After the meeting of secretaries, with the chairmanship of Comrade O. B. Rahmanyin, a meeting took place at the level of deputy heads of department. At this meeting, the Soviet side emphasized among other things that greater attention should be paid to influencing the Yugoslav foreign politics in a positive direction. According to the CPSU, no "political earthquakes" are expected even after Tito. Surely, the collective system of government will prevail, which has been created by now.

The Soviet side considers it necessary to make further efforts to hold the Paris communist conference successfully in order to make our activity concerning the non-aligned countries more active. They also suggested that the closely cooperating socialist countries should start the elaboration and harmonization of their ideas and recommendations concerning the questions of the contents of the May session of the Political Deliberative Body of the Warsaw Treaty.

The report was prepared by Approved of by
Gyula Horn András Gyenes