

**February 16, 1968**

**Transcript of Discussions between Comrade Paul  
Niculescu-Mizil and Comrade Boris N. Ponomarev,  
Secretary of the CC of the CPSU**

**Citation:**

"Transcript of Discussions between Comrade Paul Niculescu-Mizil and Comrade Boris N. Ponomarev, Secretary of the CC of the CPSU", February 16, 1968, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Arhivele Naționale ale României (National Archives of Romania), CC al PCR, Relații Externe, 31/1968, p. 15 [16]. Contributed and translated by Radoslav Yordanov. <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/301062>

**Summary:**

The Romanian Communist Party representatives expressed concerns about the upcoming world conference of communist and workers' parties. They worried about limited participation from key parties, including Cuba, potential divisions over controversial issues, and the impact of criticism and condemnation. To address these concerns, they proposed a more cautious approach, focusing on common ground and avoiding divisive topics. They suggested limiting the Budapest consultative meeting to an exchange of views and postponing binding decisions to a later date. The document also highlights concerns about Cuban interference in the internal affairs of other communist parties. This document summary was generated by an artificial intelligence language model and was reviewed by a Wilson Center staff member.

**Credits:**

This document was made possible with support from Blavatnik Family Foundation

**Original Language:**

Romanian

**Contents:**

Translation - English

Transcript

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transcripts

of the discussions between comrade Paul Niculescu-Mizil, member of the Executive Committee, of the Permanent Presidium, secretary of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party and comrade Boris N. Ponomarev, secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union

- February 16, 1968 —

Comrade [Co.] Lalea Mihai, secretary of the CC of the PCR [Partidul Comunist Român, Romanian Communist Party] participated in the reception from the Romanian side. .

V. Basov, the ambassador of the Soviet Union in Bucharest, participated as well.

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil:

You probably didn't have time to rest?

Co. Boris Ponomarev:

Yesterday evening we had the opportunity to rest because we waited a long time until the airport opened in Budapest. But, everything is in order.

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil:

We would like to express our satisfaction that we have the opportunity to have this exchange of views and we believe that it will contribute to an even better knowledge of our views on the issues of the Budapest consultative meeting and will at the same time be useful and for the smooth development of the preparatory work for the world conference.

Co. Boris Ponomarev:

We thank you for your invitation to our Central Committee to send a representative to hold an exchange of views in connection with the world conference. I also send you greetings from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

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As we understand, it is about clarifying the issues related to the convening of the meeting ; to show how we see the issues, to listen to your position, and in general, to discuss openly on all issues.

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil: I agree. Very good.

So how do we begin? You talk, we talk? We don't care. How do you think?

Co. Boris Ponomarev:

As you wish. I can start and lay out the position of the Central Committee of the CPSU, or you can start too. It doesn't have to be a strict protocol.

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil:

Then we are happy to hear from you.

Co. Boris Ponomarev: Good.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union starts from the fact that two circumstances, two causes pose the problem of the representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties meeting and discussing.

The main reason is that we are dealing with an intensification of imperialist actions, primarily by American imperialism and also by the Federal Republic of Germany. At the moment, the escalation of the war in Vietnam has intensified, there has been the

aggression of Israel, which is now being increasingly aided by the United States of America against the Arab states, we are dealing with a reactionary coup d'état here, near you, in Greece, there are permanent provocations against Cuba. Since the provocation against Korea by the sending of the spy ship "Pueblo", the political and propaganda organizations in the United States of America have been conducting a huge campaign against the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

All this proves that the cohesion of the socialist countries, of the communist and workers' parties, of all those who strive for cohesion in the fight against the aggressive actions of imperialism, is necessary.

A second cause is that there is a non-cohesion in the communist movement, and there is also a theoretical foundation, if

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we may put it that way, that there should be no cohesion, but, on the contrary, schism.

At present it is important for us to discuss the issue of activating the struggle for the unity of the communist movement and the struggle for peace.

Here, these would be the basic reasons, the fundamental purposes for which we consider the consultative meeting in Budapest necessary.

Within three years, after the October 1964 plenary session, nothing was said in our press about the conference, about the questionable issues.

The Central Committee of our party has done everything possible to improve relations with the Chinese Communist Party, but all our efforts not only ran into a wall from the Chinese leadership, but the more we tried to take steps for the healing of relations, the more the Chinese campaign against us intensified. Under these conditions, at the beginning of 1966 it became clear that we would not be able to sit at a common table with the Chinese and discuss the problems.

Many fraternal parties put before us the problem that we must meet. During these years, many decisions and resolutions of the fraternal party congresses were adopted, including at the Congress of the French Communist Party, in which they spoke in favor of convening the conference, and they addressed us with the proposal to convene the conference. You probably remember that the 1957 Declaration of the Communist and Workers' Parties provides for the task, the right of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to call a new conference. This proposal was made by the Chinese delegation, led by Mao Zedong.

The Central Committee of our party weighed all these circumstances, studied the existing situation very thoroughly, and came to the conclusion that the fraternal parties must express their opinion, whether or not it is necessary to hold a world conference.

This is how the year 1967 passed. During this time, this problem was raised at the congresses of the fraternal parties. And at the congress of our party, in his speech

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Comrade Brezhnev, in charge of the Political Bureau, presented the proposal that a meeting of the communist and labor parties would be useful. In a word, our Central Committee believes that we must speak out for the convening of the -international conference, but at the same time, it believes that it is not only our party that must speak out, make proposals for the convening of the conference.

Both at the 1960 conference and at our party congresses, the Central Committee of the CPSU showed that there are no "leading" parties and "led" parties, that is, are there no "leader" parties and "subordinate" parties. We are guided by this both in principle and in practical activity. But, since the question of the need for conference

was raised, then did our Central Committee think what should be done, what should be undertaken? Then the idea arose to call a consultative meeting, so that all the parties could consult on this matter, so that each party, based on equal rights, could express its opinion on the question of the necessity of convening the conference, when it should be held, what agenda to have, what issues to be discussed, where to be held, etc. According to our deep conviction, this is the only democratic method.

The Political Bureau of our Central Committee has given a lot of thought as to whether our party alone should decide to convene this meeting, since formally, officially, the CPSU has this right. However, we considered that it is better to hold a consultative meeting where each fraternal party can express its opinion and act according to the conclusion that will be reached.

We start from the fact that all communist and labor parties are interested in strengthening cohesion, based on Marxist-Leninist principles and proletarian internationalism, are interested in activating us all in the response we must give to imperialism. Here, then, is how we understand the problem of the conference and consultative meeting.

What principle exists in relation to the invitation to this meeting?

In our opinion, the only principle in relation to the invitation to the conference would be to start from the last

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conference, from what was decided then. It is known that 81 parties were represented at the 1960 conference. However, in the time that has passed since then, several other new parties have appeared; we also thought about the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY), but no communist party, neither our party nor any other party could have taken the opportunity to invite the League of Communists of Yugoslavia to this conference without consulting the parties, especially since it is known that a number of parties, such as the Cuban Party, Korean and even the Japanese party lately have come out very harshly against the LCY, they have come out against its participation in the conference.

Our Central Committee believes that the League of Communists of Yugoslavia should be invited, but who can make this invitation? This can only be done by the representatives of the parties participating in the consultative meeting. We are convinced that at this meeting the issue of inviting the LCY and other parties that did not participate in the 1960 conference must be raised from the beginning. In any case, our delegation will speak for the invitation of these parties.

We believe that this is fair in all respects. There, at the consultative meeting, discussing the problems regarding the convening of the conference, -my problems that would be discussed, the method of preparation, etc., will be established.

Our Central Committee believes that the preparation of the conference, the way it is carried out and the elaboration of the documents must be done on the basis of Marxist-Leninist principles: collective decision-making, on the basis of equal rights.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union starts from the fact that all fraternal parties must show interest in the cohesion of our forces, in analyzing the contemporary international situation and without elaborating on finding those common points of view in the question of the response we must give to imperialism and in general in our fight.

Regarding the documents of the conference, we believe that such extensive documents, as were elaborated at the conference of 1960, should not be adopted; they should, however, express the opinion of the international communist movement. Our Central Committee believes that

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all 81 parties that participated in the world conference in 1960 should be invited, although some of them, in the course of several years, have spoken out and are

speaking out against the conference, such as the Chinese Communist Party, the Labor Party of Albania.

We are deeply convinced that communists must gather around the same tables and discuss openly, without heated polemics that would only benefit imperialism. We must wait for one, two, three days, as necessary, and discuss, but we must not openly, in front of the whole world, accuse one party or another of revisionism, especially since there is no basis; this lack of cohesion would only benefit imperialism.

I would not like to go into details, but I think that it is clear for every communist that when imperialism sees that there is a lack of cohesion in the ranks of communist parties, socialist countries, it wants to use this for its purposes.

That is why, according to our deep conviction, the conditions are currently ripe for a meeting of the communist and labor parties. But such problems: how to convene the meeting, what agenda to have, all these things must be resolved by the consultative meeting.

We say that if we had to talk about the essential issue of the conference, about its agenda and goals, there would be only one issue, namely: the fight against imperialism, the defense of the interests of the working class, the cause of peace and security of the peoples, the defense of national independence, the interests of socialism. Of course, this can be formulated more briefly, but the essence of it is to discuss the problem of the struggle against imperialism in our common interest, in the interest of the communist movement.

A complicated problem arises: who should convene the meeting, how should the document be prepared? We are deeply convinced that the problem can be solved collectively. Of course, there are some complicated problems in this process, but these difficulties cannot be overcome. That would be the best way.

We assume that, after the Budapest meeting on February 26, a second consultative meeting may take place; now, however, it is difficult to define the way of

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preparing the conference; it depends on the decision of the consultative meeting, on whether it will decide to create a preparatory editorial commission. Here, then, is how we understand the problems related to the consultative meeting and the conference.

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil:

I thank you for your presentation and I would like to say how we see this issue of the Budapest consultative meeting and the world conference.

I must tell you that I am in a slightly relieved situation because on this issue there were discussions in Moscow between comrades Ceaușescu and Brezhnev in December 1967. Therefore, some things, because they were said there, I do not need to repeat.

Besides this, on February 14, we had the plenary of the Central Committee where we discussed this issue at length and we already have a formally constituted position.

At the outset I would like to say that we are of the opinion that international conferences are necessary. We are in favor of the development of bilateral relations and we have broad and good relations with many communist and workers' parties, both in socialist and non-socialist countries, but at the same time we are aware that in the interests of the unity of the communist movement and in the interests of the struggle against imperialism, multilateral meetings, conferences, are also necessary and useful. So there is no cause for misunderstanding between us.

Of course, we take great care to subordinate these meetings to the goal, that is, we do not see the meeting as an end in itself, but a method. I repeat, we do not see in the conference an end in itself, a conference for the sake of conference, but a method to reach the goal that we, the communists, are pursuing.

We agree with you that the goal we must pursue in terms of a conference of the communist parties is to intensify the struggle against imperialism, to carry out a common struggle against imperialism, to strengthen the unity of the communist and

labor movement. Therefore, we are in favor of conference insofar as it serves these purposes. And we are determined to participate in the preparation of a conference in this spirit with all the communist and

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labor parties, with the CPSU, with the parties from the other socialist countries, with all the parties; we are ready to take an active part so that this constitution leads to the strengthening of our common struggle, to the strengthening of the unity of the communist and workers' movement.

I do not wish to discuss here the way in which the meeting in Budapest was convened. This was discussed in Moscow. In our opinion, this is not the main issue, but the main thing is to see what to do in the future. However, I want to say that in connection with the convening of this meeting, it was normal and useful to the cause of a better understanding between our fraternal parties, that the consultative meeting itself was the subject of a prior consultation between the parties. Our party was not consulted beforehand, nor was it informed beforehand.

You referred here to the documents of the 1957 conference. I do not want to discuss these documents, but only to emphasize that any joint action between the communist parties must be the subject of prior consultations with the parties that ask to participate in this conference.

But these things are a thing of the past, now we are concretely facing the consultative meeting in Budapest.

Why did we want to have this exchange of views with you and why did we have a broad exchange of views with an extremely large number of parties in connection with this consultative meeting? Because we wanted to see together what needs to be done next, what needs to be done in Budapest and what needs to be done next for a conference that will lead to positive results in our movement.

This is the subject of our concerns in the consultations we have undertaken and are now undertaking with you and will undertake with other parties in the future; I want to focus on this issue in particular.

I must tell you, Comrade Ponomarev, that we are extremely concerned about the fact that there will not be a series of communist and labor parties at this meeting in Budapest.

I agree with you that numerous parties have spoken out for conference, but we must see - and we see this -

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that there are parties that do not come to Budapest.

Of course we are not in a position to say precisely who does not come to Budapest, but there are others in a few days, we will meet there and see.

What concerns us, Comrade Ponomarev?

Of course, first of all the Chinese and the Albanians are not coming; I agree that the Chinese and the Albanians are not willing to come to an international meeting at the moment, but it is not only a question of the Chinese and the Albanians.

The Vietnamese Party is not coming to this meeting; we understand very well why the Vietnamese are not coming, as I am sure you and other parties do.

The Korean comrades have not yet said that they are coming, I don't know if they will come, but from the discussions we had in Pyongyang - you were there after us - I understood that they are not coming.

Co. Boris Ponomarev:

On your part in Korea was Co. Apostol.

I will tell you about this problem later.

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil:

The Cuban comrades are not coming; the Yugoslavs were not invited and I do not know if their invitation will lead to their coming to the conference. We have different opinions about inviting or not inviting the Yugoslavs to Budapest, but that is not important. The fact is that these parties are not coming. And then, we will have a discussion about the fight against imperialism to which the Vietnamese - who are waging a war with arms in hand against the imperialists - are not involved; the Koreans and the Cubans, on whom the provocations you spoke about, are not. Among the countries of the socialist world system, almost half will not be at this meeting. There will not be a number of important parties in the capitalist world, such as the Japanese party and other parties. And then, what will be the picture of the participating forces?

In our opinion this picture will be a picture that will not show the unity of our forces. Also, the Koreans said something that we need to think about very seriously; from Asian countries there will be an extremely small number of communist parties. Basically, the main communist parties in Asia will be absent.

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In Africa, in many countries there are no communist parties; so, Africa will be poorly represented at the conference.

We do not want to underestimate the role played by the countries of Europe and Latin America, but it is clear that Asia and Africa have a big role in the fight against imperialism, because there are extremely sharp foci of confrontation with imperialism.

And then, in these circumstances - we are not saying that the meeting should not be held - if you had asked us beforehand, perhaps we would have said that we should not hold it in February; but if it was called for this date, then all well and good. But we are concerned: what should we do so that we don't show up at an international conference with the same picture. In other words, what do we have to do to really create the conditions for the real forces fighting against imperialism to take part in a conference.

Comrade Ponomarev, I want you to understand us very well. We do not condition the holding of a world conference on the presence of all parties, because - and I agree with you in this regard - there will be parties that will not come. However, we must act, create such conditions so that there is no such situation when a large part of the socialist world system, a large part of the parties fighting against imperialism do not come to this meeting.

I want to tell you in addition, that in our opinion, even some parties that come to the meeting in Budapest, are not definitely decided to come to an international conference. The fact that parties come as "observers" to a consultative meeting, however, shows that within these parties, like others, there are still reservations about the conference.

Therefore, we agree with you that this meeting should have a consultative nature. We agree with you that this is a possibility for the parties to discuss among themselves about the conference, about its opportunity, and we are convinced that the majority will be in favor of a conference. Let's discuss how this conference should take place. But, in our opinion, it is particularly important that this consultative meeting — bearing in mind the situation we talked about and other considerations that I will tell you about — should really be a consultative meeting, that is, be an exchange of views between parties on

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conference issues. What do we mean by this? We want to say that the meeting in Budapest must be an opportunity for the communist and labor parties that will come,

to present how they see a conference of the communist and labor parties. There you will say your opinion, we will say our opinion; we have an established point of view that we will say. The French comrades will come and they will also say their opinion, because they too have a point of view established by the plenary, etc.; everyone will come and say their point of view. We believe that it is of fundamental importance that after all points of view are presented - certainly, with the desire to achieve a common consensus, with a constructive desire to reach certain common conclusions - the consultative meeting in Budapest does not make decisions. That is, after we have had this exchange of views, as long as necessary, patiently and in a comradely spirit, to give the possibility to the central committees of the parties to examine what was said in Budapest, to make their judgments on everything that it was said, to make appropriate decisions and after that, after a few months, either in the summer or in the fall - we don't have a clear point of view on this, but we don't think that this term is the essential issue - let's meet again, as you said, at a second consultative meeting and continue the process of preparing the conference.

Why are we of this opinion, Comrade Ponomarev? First of all, because we believe that this would correspond better to the democratic principles of relations between our parties. We will thus give each party, each central committee the opportunity to examine all the points of view that have been presented in Budapest and then express their opinion.

Let's take into account the fact that in a series of parties - from the exchange we made we found this - the issue of conference is an object of concern.

If we proceed in this way, we will give all participating parties the opportunity to judge, we will remove a series of reservations that exist in some parties; the people will have the full feeling that they decide on these affairs.

Secondly, we think that after this consultative meeting in Budapest, we should continue our efforts so

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that other parties that were not present in Budapest come to the conference of the communist and labor parties. Currently, there is a delegation of the Communist Party of Japan with us. You have been to them too. They told us: we are not coming to Budapest, but we do not exclude the possibility of coming to the world conference; we'll see how things go.

In our opinion, if we proceed in this way, that is, if we only exchange opinions and do not take decisions, but give the possibility to discuss further with these parties, we will create conditions for their participation. If, on the contrary, we take certain decisions, then they can very easily say to us: you have decided everything, you have not asked us, be healthy, we are not coming. The Cubans have said this only because they have not been consulted about the Budapest meeting, where there is only intended to be an exchange of views; all the more will they say so when things are settled.

That is why we consider it of fundamental importance for the good preparation of the world conference that this consultative meeting in Budapest is limited to an exchange of views only.

Sure, what will be said? What is the argument that is made in relation to this matter? It can be said: good, but this means postponing the date for the conference.

It seems to us that it is preferable to postpone the conference for a few more months and to gain extra time to create all the conditions so that both the parties that come to Budapest and those that do not participate in the world conference.

On the issues on the agenda of the meeting: in our opinion, the character of the world conference should be discussed first of all at this consultative meeting. I agree with what you said, that as far as the nature of the conference is concerned - this includes the issue of daily life - things should be limited to the problems of the struggle against imperialism. I mean, at the moment we are not yet in a position to address all problems of the international communist and labor movement.



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I would like to add something appropriate in relation to this issue since some issues were raised in the contacts I had with a number of parties.

What do we mean by the struggle against imperialism and what measures does it include? Will we or will we not be able in the current situation, when there are a number of acute problems in the labor movement, to solve them in a spirit that will lead to the improvement of the conditions of those things?

I talked with the Polish comrades; I want to say that we had an extremely positive meeting, as we had an exchange of views in a comradely and constructive spirit.

Co. Boris Ponomarev:

When was this?

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil:

When I was in Warsaw.

I want to say this not to question the position of the Polish comrades, but to show our position.

The Polish comrades, both in an article and in discussions, told us that we should discuss the tendencies that exist regarding the establishment of parties within other communist parties, something that exists in the communist and labor movement.

I want to tell you honestly that if we come to an international conference to raise such issues, we will not be able to reach a solution to the issue, nor will we conduct these discussions in a spirit of unity.

Another issue that, the Polish comrades said, must be discussed at this conference, is what does internationalism mean, and let's debate the nationalist tendencies that exist in a number of communist and workers' parties.

I do not deny the existence of ideological problems in our movement, but if we want to put such problems on the agenda of the meeting, then we will not be able to carry it out in the spirit of unity. I have given these examples only out of a desire to make it clear that we believe that the problems must really be confined to the problems of the struggle against imperialism, to the problems where we can reach a consensus, a unanimous point of view; let us not discuss problems which, by their very questioning, will be the occasion for sharpening divergences.

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So, the concrete issue of conference should be the subject of a broad exchange of views between the parties participating in the Budapest meeting.

We will speak - and we think it is good - for a character of the conference that limits the problems to extremely precise issues. We agree - as we have said in a public statement, as we have told other comrades and we are telling you too - that these problems are related to the struggle against imperialism. We agree that the fight against imperialism is the fundamental issue on the agenda, as you also said.

In relation to the conference document, an exchange of views must also take place at this meeting in Budapest. We agree that this document is not a program document of the 1960 type; and I understand from what you have said that you also have the same point of view in this matter.

We are of the opinion that there must be a document on the issue of the struggle against imperialism, which includes the issues on which we agree.

In connection with this, we would like to add something. We would like - at least we are going with this wish - that when we arrive at such a document, the tendency would be to include in the document only those conclusions with which we all agree. In our opinion, it would be of real use to the movement ours that, by elaborating a document, we arrive at formulations that agree and that are shared by all parties.

Of course, there can be different opinions, different assessments in one issue or another. We all have the experience of life and know that such situations exist. Let's try to find the problems that are common to all, let's try to find a common language to present ourselves united in this problem. And if there will be problems on which we do not reach a common agreement, let's leave them, let's wait, let's not be in a hurry to register them immediately.

Also, we attach great importance to issues related to criticizing or condemning any fraternal party.

In general, in our movement the conclusion was reached - and many parties say - that this conference is not done to condemn any party. This is a positive thing.

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Co. Boris Ponomarev

Comrade Brezhnev in his speeches openly stated this regarding our party.

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil:

We know this, but we want to tell you all our concerns, because that is why we are discussing; understand our point of view and find a common possibility of understanding these issues.

We shared this opinion with everyone we met; this issue concerns many parties; in the discussions we had, I encountered these things.

However, it is said: we agree not to criticize the internal activity of the parties; but there will be parties who will criticize the external activity of the Chinese Communist Party, because this party interferes in the affairs of other parties, and we cannot stop them from referring to this.

I would like to tell you our concern about this: we think that it would not be good to adopt such a position. We do not say that there is no interference in the internal affairs of other parties. We have spoken many times categorically against it, and we have spoken that every party should—defend its independence against any interference.

But the question for us is: what will happen if the Chinese Communist Party is criticized at the consultative meeting of communist parties in Budapest?

Of course, there will be other parties that will set the example for other communist parties, of interference in internal affairs; there are parties from Latin American countries that told us about the interference in their internal affairs by the Cuban Communist Party. Then, if the Chinese Communist Party is to be criticized, must we agree to criticize the Cuban Communist Party as well?! There are parties - you know very well and I want to discuss extremely openly - such as the Communist Party in Cuba, which has certain claims to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Co. Boris Ponomarev

They presented them to me.

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil :

We welcome, among other things, the results obtained

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in Tokyo. But what do I mean, Comrade Ponomarev? If at this meeting each party will come to bring the problems it has with another party, real problems that I do not deny, then this meeting will not constitute a step towards creating a positive climate in the communist movement.

Therefore, we are of the opinion that we propose not to criticize or condemn any

party at this conference. I encountered this at a number of parties, even at the parties in whose affairs the Chinese comrades interfere. They told us: we have these problems with the Chinese, but we will not raise them at this meeting, we will solve them, we will fight for their solution. And we believe that this is a fair attitude.

Of course, it can be said that we cannot stop the parties from raising these issues. I agree with this. But we can influence in this regard constructively, comradely.

In the contacts we had, we told this to everyone.

Then, we will state this position at the consultative meeting in Budapest, in the sense that we want a conference not to criticize or condemn any party, that this will only be an element of preparing good conditions for the world conference of communist parties and workers

Also, we would like to tell you very honestly that we do not think it is good to create, neither at the consultative meeting in Budapest, nor at the world conference of the communist and workers' parties, certain bodies that would ascribe any role to themselves, either consultatively, in relation to the communist and labor parties. There are no official proposals in this sense, but such news circulated. You can tell us not to be fooled by rumors. But, unfortunately, it also happens that some things we don't hear from our parties, but from somewhere else, and they are true. As I remember, on November 8th I read in the "France Presse " that there would be a meeting in Budapest of the communist and labor parties; I learned this from the communist party newspapers only on November 25th.

We believe that such a body cannot be created. It shouldn't.

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Finally, we believe that in all the preparation activity, both for the meeting in Budapest and in the period after the meeting, the possibility of full participation of all parties in the preparation of the conference must be ensured, as you also said, in a collective form, in a democratic form, even if this is more difficult, even if it involves more hassle. These are the problems related to the way we see this meeting.

To this, I would like to add that when we say that no decisions should be taken at this consultative meeting, we believe that the date of the meeting should not be set either.

In our opinion, setting the date of the meeting would not bode well for the completion of the preparations. If we set a date, it will push us to hasten our preparations, it will inevitably push us to pass over certain things that must be done with patience, with care.

Comrade Ponomarev, we do not consider the issue of date as a fundamental issue. If we come to the conclusion in Budapest that we have to have a Budapest conference, if we come to the conclusion that this conference has to be done in the spirit that I have spoken to you about, if we come to the conclusion that we will continue to make efforts to bring other parties that are not present to this conference, and after that we will carry out concrete work to further develop the consultations, if we have a second consultative meeting, this whole period, in our opinion, will be an active period, a period of political struggle to create favorable conditions for a conference. And this will not be a bad place for our movement, but, on the contrary, it will be good, it will mark a clear tendency to achieve a conference and a clear tendency for this conference to be organized in the spirit of respecting party sovereignty, in the spirit of respecting equality their rights, in the spirit of taking into account the views of all communist and labor parties.

Finally, we also discussed the question of the participation of other forces besides the communist and labor parties in the conference, that is, the question of the participation of national liberation movements, of other anti-imperialist forces.

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We must tell you that we do not rule out such a possibility, and even see certain advantages in it. Suppose the objective of the meeting is the struggle against imperialism. In that case, participation in such a debate of movements that are fighting against imperialism with arms in their hands, of national liberation fronts, and national liberation movements where there are no communist parties can only help unite the forces fighting against imperialism.

Then, this would bring to the conference a number of countries, even a number of continents, which, as I said, will not be sufficiently represented.

This would in turn stimulate the participation of some parties from socialist countries that are currently not in a position to come to the conference.

Therefore, it seems to me that we should have an exchange of views, and the possibility of doing so would not be excluded.

I would like to finish the exposition of these thoughts of ours by telling you with all clarity that such a course that we are thinking about and that we would like to propose in the discussions that we will have, is, according to our deep conviction, a course which will be favorable to the preparation of a conference, a course that will create - despite the great difficulties that exist in the workers' movement - a more constructive climate and will necessarily lead to the strengthening of the unity of the communist and workers' parties and to joint action to fight against imperialism.

Here is what we wanted to tell you about our way of thinking about the issues of the conference.

Co. Boris Ponomarev:

Thank you for stating your position.

Can we take a little break?

After the break

Co. Boris Ponomarev:

Comrades Niculescu-Mizil, comrade Dalea, comrades, thank you for the detailed exposition of your position. It helps us better understand your points of view;

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indeed, all communist parties have the same goal - to intensify the fight against imperialism and to do everything for the cohesion of the communist movement, of course, based on the principles of Marxism-Leninism.

We tell you that the consultative meeting and conference must also be held for this purpose and, as far as we are concerned, our Central Committee is making and will make efforts in this direction in the future.

Presenting your points of view, which are the same as ours, understanding the issues as we do, you presented a series of issues regarding how it is better to prepare the conference, how to carry out the work of the consultative meeting, what decisions to make be adopted; but you have brought many arguments which, in essence, make it difficult to hold the conference itself.

First, the fact that not all parties will participate. You said that it is clear that the Chinese, and the Albanians will not participate, but that there are other parties, such as Vietnam, Korea, Cuba, Japan, Yugoslavia, etc., which will not participate.

Afterward, you yourself said that Japan might participate in the conference. We believe, indeed, that their participation in the conference is not excluded. So, a large party from the capitalist world and Asian countries is added.

At the same time, it cannot be said that there will only be small communist parties in Asia. In any case, it will be the Communist Party of India, a party that operates in a large country with a large population. Currently, this party has over 200 thousand members. Also participating are the Communist Party of Ceylon, the Communist Party of Mongolia and several other Asian communist parties.

As for the Vietnamese, indeed, you said it right, their position is understandable. But

as far as I know, the Vietnamese comrades will not, in principle, rule against the conference in any case, they have not yet said so, and we consider that there is every reason to believe that they will not rule against the conference, either in principle or concretely.

The Korean comrades, from where we came these days, told us directly that the Chinese leadership is currently waging an unprecedented campaign in the communist movement, to split, to undermine

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the leadership of the Communist Party of Korea. In the newspapers in China, there are direct calls for the overthrow of Kim Il Sung, and, in fact, there are no party-line relations between Korea and China.

Lately, as Comrade Kim Il Sung told us, the Chinese are creating a new communist party in Korea from among the Koreans who fled to China. There are several hundred thousand resident Koreans in China. It is unbelievable, but it is a fact.

If the Korean comrades participate in the consultative meeting and the conference, the Chinese may bring state-line relations to the point of rupture, and this will cause great hardship to Korea.

I asked Comrade Kim Il Sung if they are in principle in favor of the conference. He said yes. Then he added: we have discussed this issue many times in the Political Bureau and we believe that, in principle, the communist meetings must be held; so, in principle, we are for for the conference. For these reasons, regarding China, we cannot participate in the consultative meeting, but we will not pronounce against it. He said: we will not curse neither the consultative meeting, nor the conference, nor those who will participate.

I told him that the consultative meeting is the beginning of the activity in order to convene the conference; after that, a new consultative meeting can be held, a second one; no one assumes that the meeting will be convened in 2-3 months, in any case, our Central Committee is not thinking about it, but it is a period of almost a year; therefore you will have full opportunity to discuss this matter once more and take into account the whole domestic and international situation,

Kim Il Sung told us: yes, we will consider all circumstances; I also participated in the 1957 and 1960 conferences.

So, in our opinion, there is every possibility that the Korean comrades will attend the meeting.

As for the Cubans, you know their position. Unfortunately, they adopted a position of principle that sounds like this: the Cuban party will not participate in the congresses of

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communist parties in other countries, in collective meetings. We consider that the adoption of such a principled decision is harmful to them. In this way they isolate themselves from the communist movement, because, as we know, the communist movement also includes the community of socialist countries. No matter when the consultative meeting will be held, in February, in May, or the conference in December, the position of the Cuban comrades will not change, they will not participate.

You said that if these parties do not participate, then it means that the whole world will see that there is disunity in the communist movement.

Secondly, you say that those parties that fight against imperialism will not

participate. I must tell you, and you know this quite well, that the whole world knows what the situation is, because what the Chinese leadership, led by Mao Zedong, is doing is the subject of discussions and hundreds of articles in the bourgeois press; the whole world knows this.

Also, the position of the Albanian comrades is not a secret and, in any case, it cannot be an obstacle for those who are in favor of the conference, for those who speak for cohesion.

I must tell you that during the discussions with the Cuban comrades they said directly: they believe that the main obstacle to the cohesion of the communist movement is the schismatic, high-power chauvinist position of Mao Zedong's group. This is their exact wording which their delegation repeated three to four times. And this, indeed, is so, because under these conditions there will be no unity.

Of course, we still believe that all parties must participate and, among other things, it must be said that we propose that the consultative meeting in Budapest appeal to all parties to participate in the conference, including the Chinese, Albanians, LCY, Cubans, Koreans, all parties. So, this will once again give all parties the opportunity to actually participate in the conference; and maybe more parties will participate in the second consultative meeting.

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Let me say something about the parties that are fighting against imperialism and will not participate.

I believe that all of us socialist countries are waging the fight against imperialism; perhaps this is the main front of the struggle against imperialism; building communism in the Soviet Union, and perfecting the socialist construction in the other socialist countries, a huge blow is given to imperialism. In the course of the day-to-day struggle, we do this in different directions. In the reports about the international situation - and at the party congress - a leading place was occupied by the international problem and, first of all, the fight against imperialism.

You know that against the Soviet Union, against the Communist Party of the Soviet Union are directed the arrows of the entire anti-communist campaign; the subversive actions are directed directly against us. Espionage is intensifying. You have now seen that the Korean comrades have detained the spy ship "Pueblo". You remember that a few years ago a plane flew over our territory doing aerial espionage; we shot down this plane and gave a decisive response. This espionage activity is going on in all directions. You know very well what help we give to the Vietnamese; it is really a huge help. Every hour, every day for all these years, a whole stream of armaments, artillery, tanks, planes, fuel, and clothing flows into Vietnam. The Vietnamese have also, more than once, spoken openly about the importance of the aid they receive from the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. Now a special type of weaponry has been sent to the Vietnamese to help them in their fight.

So, the communist parties fighting against imperialism will indeed be represented at the conference. I told you that other socialist countries and other communist parties, each in their own field, are waging this struggle.

After that, practically, what can be done? We understand the position of the Vietnamese and the Koreans. Indeed, it is not the same as the position of the Cuban comrades; there is another situation. Nothing prevents Cubans from participating in  
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communist party congresses or meetings; here it is only a matter of a certain conception. What does this consultative meeting actually mean? It is an assembly of the representatives of the communist and workers' parties at which they discuss the holding of the world conference, what its agenda should be, when it should be held.

Everyone must listen to each other, the arguments for or against, and reach a mutually agreed upon decision. And the imperialists are constantly holding meetings. The NATO Council and other interstate bodies hold meetings. The Socialist International also holds congresses and meetings permanently. Then, how can the communists not meet? I have told you that all fraternal parties have been waiting for a long time and, therefore, this issue has to be decided.

Therefore, our arguments consist of attracting as many parties as possible to participate in the conference and to pronounce definitely in favor of it.

You said that a decision should not be adopted, a meeting date should not be established, this, that, etc. should not be done. This essentially means against the advice.

We bring arguments in favor of a conference and believe that work must be done in its favor.

The whole world - the communist movement, the liberation movement, the capitalists, the secessionists - knows that we have met on the question of the conference, and if the consultative meeting in Budapest simply ends without adopting any decision, if we adopt nothing and disperse, we cannot guarantee that tomorrow the whole bourgeois press, the whole right-wing social-democratic press, the Chinese leadership, will not talk about it. The Chinese will say: we are against the conference and, look, without us they can't do anything. And the bourgeois press will say: they are communists so divided that they cannot even agree on convening a conference. In our deep conviction, this will demonstrate precisely the lack of cohesion of the communist movement. But we want to demonstrate, to act in the direction of cohesion. And since you are also talking about the need to activate the fight against imperialism, about cohesion, logic says that a mutually agreed decision must be adopted regarding the conference.

You say that there should be no haste. It is fair;

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but for so long we are not in a hurry, because for three years we have not spoken at all about the conference. All year 1967 we talked about the conference and almost another year can be devoted to its preparation. But this must be said; and then it will be clear to the communist parties and to our enemies. That's why we say that a certain resolution must be adopted that would in principle record the necessity of holding the communist conference.

Let me now tell you about whether a conference of the Communist parties or a wider conference is necessary.

You know well that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Union have close contacts with the anti-imperialist movements, with the countries that have freed themselves from colonialism and are actually fighting against imperialism. These are: United Arab Republic [UAR], Syria, Algeria, Guinea; there was also Ghana, but now it has withdrawn; in any case, that is where the fighting is going on, as you know. We also have contacts with the parties in these countries. That is why it cannot be considered that if we hold a conference only with the communist parties and not with all the anti-imperialist forces, we would be against cohesion with these forces.

First of all, we have to examine - as they say - our problems at home first, to discuss openly. I tell you, later we can talk, in our opinion, about other parties and ideological issues; however, these issues must be discussed between the communist parties.

Secondly, it is hard to firmly say that the Socialist Union of the UAR or the one in Syria - that is, the anti-imperialist movement, the Liberation Front from Algeria, will come to such a conference together with the communists. I can almost certainly tell you that the National Liberation Front of Algeria will not participate. You may know, during the 23rd Congress we invited, among others, the Algerian Communists and the Algerian National Liberation Front [NLF]. The leader of the NLF [FNE] delegation told us that if the Algerian communists will also be at the congress, they will leave. We said: if they want to leave, let them leave, but we cannot expel the Algerian communists; and they left. At first, they made a lot of noise. Currently, their situation

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is approximately the same. Another question is, what will be the attitude towards the Algerian communists; but they participated in the two conferences - in 1957 and 1960, and we have no right not to invite them. So, the National Liberation Front of Algeria will not participate both for reasons related to the Algerian communists, as well as regarding the relations with the communists. The Baathists in Syria will also not participate. You know that the Communist Party of Syria has existed for more than 40 years, while the Baath Party did not even exist. There was a party delegation led by the foreign minister of Syria, who spoke at the 5th anniversary; from the assignment of our leadership, we had discussions with them for four days. We also discussed the aid provided...

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil:

When it comes to help, the discussion always goes easily with the Arabs.

Co. Boris Ponomarev:

And the same with other national liberation movements; they asked us to build a dam on the Euphrates, etc.

When I said that all forces must be united, considering the communists, they said: No; there is only the Baath party; in socialist countries, you have only one party. I told them that in GDR too there are several parties, that in Bulgaria there is also the Agrarian Union party, but they did not want to hear a single word about the unity of the democratic forces, and their relations with the communists are cold.

When Israel's aggression against Syria took place, the trade unions, in which the Communists have strong positions, proposed the creation of a people's army of volunteers. The Baath Party was against it, because they did not want to give arms to the communists, to the working class. Therefore, it is highly doubtful that they will participate in the conference.

Things are better with the Arab Socialist Union, but it is hard to say if they will come. This is the situation. Mali, Guinea, maybe they will come, maybe not.

What can be done?

We are for the cohesion of the anti-imperialist forces.

A broad anti-imperialist anti-imperialist congress

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may be convened after the communist parties' meeting. So, it will not be a conference of communists plus anti-imperialist forces, but it will be a congress of all anti-imperialist forces. We are completely for this congress; this enables us to meet with all of them more successfully than if we tried to win them over to our communist convention. Here's our take on the matter.

Now in connection with the character of the discussion and the very posing of the problems.

As I said at the beginning, our Central Committee is for discussing the problem of the struggle against imperialism. That is why this issue must be at the center of all activity.

The document to be adopted when the conference will take place, should refer to this struggle and not to the internal processes of the communist movement. That's how we understand it.

Of course, this can be discussed, but we are in order to speak for the cohesion of the communist movement, to emphasize in a positive way the importance of this cohesion, in a positive way to talk about our work, about our teaching which is confirmed of life etc. In this issue, under this aspect, a wall can be erected between the fight against imperialism and the ideological fight.



It is our firm belief that the direction, the goal of the conference is the fight against imperialism and the issue of the cohesion of the communist movement.

You said right, and in the speeches of the leaders of the various parties, including in the speech of Comrade Brezhnev at the congress of our party, as you remember, and at other congresses of fraternal parties, it was said that a meeting should neither excommunicate nor condemn someone from the communist movement.

But what you have shown, what should not be done regarding the Chinese leadership, I will tell you frankly, that it creates such a privileged situation for them: this should not be taken away by anyone, that we should understand that no one speaks ...

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Co. Niculescu-Mizil:

I propose that we make such an understanding: not to speak against the Chinese but against any other communist party. I mean, I gave the Chinese Communist Party as an example because in the discussions I had with my comrades about this example it was made clear to us; but we are not in principle to defend the Chinese Communist Party or any other party, no matter who it is, but we are in principle of the opinion that no party should be condemned or criticized at this conference. This is our principled position. If I gave an example of the Chinese Communist Party, I did it only to be understood. But you know very well that when the Chinese wanted to curse the Soviet Union here - when Zhou Enlai was here - we, based on the same principle, said; no, we don't agree.

I mean, I would ask you to understand that what I said does not refer to the Chinese, but to a principle according to which we believe that the conference should be held.

If we go to this conference to make it a forum for criticizing one party or another, our conviction is that this conference will not have the echo in our communist movement that we want it to have. That's what I meant, not that the Chinese Communist Party must be put in a privileged situation.

Co. Boris Ponomarev:

And we are of the opinion that no party should be condemned and criticized, and even more so, this should not be written in any document.

I don't know if anyone can guarantee that any delegation of any communist party will not say: what to do, some are creating so-called new communist parties. I don't know if the Japanese Communist Party will talk about the Budapest plant, but I think they don't know. Three days ago in Beijing Zhou Enlai received a delegation of the Socialist Party. A few years ago the Chinese swore to us that we had relations with the Japanese Socialist Party, that this meant friendship with the Japanese socialists; in any case, such slanders were directed at us. But now they are courting the Japanese socialists, they have strong commercial ties, they give aid to their branches.

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In any case, there is now a delegation of the Socialist Party of Japan in Beijing who was received by Zhou Enlai, who told them: you, the Socialist Party, are the real defenders of the interests of the Japanese working class, and not the Communist Party of Japan; You are fighting the Japanese monopolists and American imperialists and not the Japanese Communist Party; it is no coincidence that the Japanese reaction killed the president of the Japanese Socialist Party and not Nosaka.

This is a monstrous thing. This was published in "Akahata" three days ago.

That is why I say that it is possible for some parties to raise such issues. But our position, as we told you at the beginning, is not to excommunicate and not to

condemn any party.

Now with regard to the decisions of the plenary of your Central Committee, you have referred to this: do you not think that your delegation will be put in a difficult situation vis-a-vis other delegations? All the delegations go to discuss the matter of the conference. You already have a decision: not to adopt a decision regarding the meeting. This will, of course, make it difficult to agree on positions; such an "imperative directive", as they say, will create difficulties. The other delegations go to discuss the issues related to the conference and this is the collective method of discussion. After listening to the opinion of the majority, the delegation of a party, contacting its leadership, can express their opinion, in the sense that the meeting must be held, when, etc., but if the delegations are already going with an imperative directive, then they simply cannot take into account the opinions of the other parties. It seems to us that there are all the prerequisites to democratically discuss between the fraternal parties the issues of a conference. Among other things, the consultative meeting in Budapest will take place. As I told you, in our opinion, this meeting must address to all parties a call to participate in the conference. It is even possible to record that a second consultative meeting will take place; that is, this opens up possibilities for all parties to participate in the second consultative meeting with a view to meeting.

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You said that the representative of the Communist Party of Japan indicated that the possibility of participating in the actual meeting is not excluded. They told us the same thing. So, there is a possibility for this party, like the other communist parties, to participate in the meeting. And honestly speaking, everything imaginable was done for the democratic preparation of the meeting; all these issues to be discussed at the consultative meeting.

In principle, we are in favor of the conference and we are in favor of it not being postponed until the "Greek calends", because then it means that you are not really in favor of the conference.

We consider that the time has come for a confluence, precisely on this basis; as I said, I do not want to repeat - for the fight against imperialism, for cohesion, without condemning other parties, let us take a decisive step for cohesion.

This will be very useful and will represent a real support for Vietnam, because, among other things, we are thinking of adopting a document in support of Vietnam.

Vietnamese comrades always attach great importance to the support received from fraternal parties.

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil:

We agree.

Co. Boris Ponomarev:

Maybe even in Budapest...

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil:

Maybe we ask the Vietnamese too.

Co. Boris Ponomarev:

We did not ask them in this matter because we are not the hosts in Budapest, but the Vietnamese comrades always considered this as a help.

The permanent representative of the Liberation Front of South Vietnam has been in Moscow for four years. He has an office and, on the assignment of his leadership, he came and asked to be received by Comrade Brezhnev. He said: Currently things are going well, thank you very much for the new types of weaponry that are already in use. These guys are helping us destroy American airfields. He spoke animatedly about it. He then added: We convey deep thanks from the

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fighters of the Southern Liberation Army and would like the relief campaign to be intensified.

Currently, in the Soviet Union, there is a campaign through rallies; international democratic organizations also adopt decisions, although in this matter not only decisions are needed, but also actions. We have no doubt that a document in support of Vietnam will be well received. This will also be a real help to the main forces waging the struggle against imperialism.

Therefore, it seems to us that all the considerations that we have presented to you from the task of our leadership, fully respond to the great historical goal - the intensification of the activity against imperialism and the strengthening of the cohesion of the communist movement. The methods that are envisaged are democratic and collective and they really favor holding the consultative meeting in the most partisan and most democratic way.

I would like to say two more words regarding the "rumors", as you called them, about the creation of a center.

I believe that these rumors are not only untrue, but they are also lies. I do not know where they could have started from, because we have had contacts with many, many parties and nobody has raised such issues with us. Nor have we raised these issues. You probably had some editorial committee in mind.

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil:

Comrade Ponomarev, you also know about this. It was published in the bourgeois press.

Co. Boris Ponomarev:

In any case, we firmly tell you that we have no intentions and there are no grounds for this.

I tell you once again that I have not heard from any party such a proposal to create something, even with a consultative character .

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil:

Comrade Ponomarev, it seems to me that there are many common things in our way of thinking.

Jokingly speaking, there are only minor matters which, if we were to eliminate them, we would see nothing to prevent the achievement of a

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common point of view on all matters.

It seems to me that as far as the conference is concerned, both parties are for it to take place.

We are in favor of a conference and I don't think that in our position we lack the arguments to say that a conference is needed; we don't need any more arguments. We want a consensus along the lines of unity, which does not condemn any party, in which as many parties as possible can participate. We say that all the parties should participate in the conference, but we say once again, if it is not possible for all of them to participate, let as many as possible.

Co. Boris Ponomarev:

That's exactly what we say.

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil:

We want a conference that is limited to the problems of the struggle against imperialism.

We agree that the document to be adopted at this conference should be a document limited to the tasks of the struggle against imperialism.

You say here that you have not heard of any proposal to create any governing body in our movement in one form or another, that is, something corresponding to a center in the movement, and that you do not support such a point of view.

So, according to our opinion, there is an extremely wide front of thoughts, tendencies,

intentions where we think it is no longer necessary to discuss, since in all these matters we do not have another point of view.

I would like to share my opinion on a few things that I think are worth dwelling on.

You said that we bring a series of arguments that make it difficult to participate in the conference. I think you can't look at it that way; at least that's not how we look at the problem.

In connection with the participation in the consultative meeting in Budapest, we found a fact, namely, that a number of parties do not come, neither from the socialist countries nor from the capitalist countries.

At the same time, however, we note - and you agree - that there is a possibility that some of these parties, which do not participate in the consultative meeting, will come to the conference.

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Co. Boris Ponomarev:

And we will enjoy this.

Co. Paul Miculescu-Mizil:

And we will be happy.

In my opinion, we should not underestimate the fact that not all parties will come to the meeting in Budapest. Of course, everyone knows that in our movement there are a number of problems, there are a number of shortcomings, but now we gather, we sit at the same table, and from this table not only the Chinese will be missing, not only the Albanians, there will be a few more missing parties from socialist countries, from capitalist countries; and this is a fact which will confirm the existence of this state of lack of unity; but in my opinion it will further confirm our inability to unite.

What do we propose? We do not propose to give up on the conference, to postpone it until the "Greek calends", because we did not propose this, but we propose that now, at the consultative meeting in Budapest, we do not create such conditions that would prevent the participation of these parties in the future; on the contrary, let us create conditions which will make it easier for them to participate, let us create such conditions which will not put these parties in the position of having taken decisions, of having accomplished something, because if we decide everything at this Budapest meeting, then, to be extremely frank and honest, it will be very difficult for any of the parties which did not participate to accept decisions already taken by others.

Then we have to admit, if we want to analyze things in depth, that there are serious reservations in a number of parties. If we dispel these reservations by clearly stating what are the principled positions regarding the goals and objectives of this conference, this will only be for the benefit of the conference.

That is why we believe that what we will do in Budapest is a matter of great responsibility.

Regarding the parties that do not participate. You referred to them here. You have repeatedly referred to the Chinese Communist Party. I would like to tell you very frankly: you know very well that on a number of issues we differ

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from the Communist Party of China, for example, on the causes of the situation in the inter-national communist and labor movement. I do not want to go into details, since this is not the purpose of our meeting and this is not our concern in relation to the

conference of the communist and workers' parties.

Regarding the other parties. I am of the opinion that the position that these parties will take in relation to the conference of the communist and labor parties depends to a great extent on the position that the parties will take and on how the consultative meeting in Budapest will take place.

I agree with what you said about Vietnamese, Koreans.

In our opinion, we do not exclude, although we realize the difficulties that exist, that if in Budapest and later we formulate positions that will come not in the spirit of sharpening and aggravating the dispute in the labor movement, but on the contrary, then the situation in relation to Vietnamese and Korean participation in the meeting will be somewhat different.

Regarding Cuba, I am not as pessimistic as you are. We now had a delegation in Cuba. Comrade Bodnaraş has not yet returned from there.

Co. Boris Ponomarev:

I presented their decision.

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil:

This decision is not irreversible, so to speak. People evolve, and positions evolve. But this also depends on the extent to which we help it to evolve.

At one point we had a matter with the Cuban comrades that we did not understand in any way: suddenly, without any reason, they withdrew all the students from Romania; today there was a phone call and the next day they put them on the plane and didn't send them to Cuba. From the point of view of the norms of relations, this was incomprehensible, because they did not even say: we are withdrawing students for this reason. We did not make a drama out of this and those who changed their position were not us, but the Cuban comrades. I don't think that with regard to Cuba, (p. 33)

we should not harbor hopes and worries that under the conditions of normal, principled relations, the opinion of the Cuban comrades in relation to the conference cannot change.

Co. Boris Ponomarev:

Let's hope and I have the conviction that we all need to act in the sense of attracting them.

Co. AV, Basov:

I was in Cuba for two years and I saw how difficult it is to get along with fellow Cubans.

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil:

It's hard to understand, but what can we do, these are them.

This is where all our concern starts, Comrade Ponomarev, and maybe this is where the differences between us begin.

You say: you are going to Budapest with a position; doesn't this mean an imperative, a directive?

I don't think that any party goes to Budapest without a point of view. We have already seen the resolutions of several plenary sessions of the Central Committees - the resolution of the French, of others, which include the position that each will present and support in Budapest.

Secondly, we are going to Budapest really for an exchange of views. We are going to Budapest with the desire to achieve a general consensus.

What are we asking for, Comrade Ponomarev? That after this consultative meeting in Budapest, the Central Committee of our party, the central committees of all parties can take note of the points of view that were expressed there, and only after that let us meet again. Moreover, you accept a second consultative meeting and this is extremely positive. The central committees to judge and pronounce on the issues of

moving forward in the preparation of the conference.

You say: ok, but if we don't make any kind of decision, in front of the whole world we will say that we met and didn't understand each other. We do not say this. We say to speak for a conference and not against a conference. We say that this should be stated publicly because we are of the opinion that the points of view from the conference should be stated publicly.

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We are of the opinion to establish that the issue to be discussed at the conference will be the fight against imperialism. And then, why not tell them publicly?

Co. Boris Ponomarev:

Let me clarify. Do you think that at the consultative meeting in Budapest it is possible to decide on a conference?

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil:

What do we say? We say that we are for a conference, and we can say this; that we had an exchange of views about the problems of counseling; that the central committees will take cognizance of this exchange of views; that in a few months a new consultative meeting will be held.

What we are asking is not to fix the date of the conference, but to state our position: that we want as many parties as possible to participate. Let's not set the drafting committee, the preparatory committee, now; let's leave this for the period to come, after the central committees have given their opinion on the substance of things, that is, after the central committees have given their opinion on the concrete issues on the agenda, on the agenda of the meeting.

This, in our opinion, would be likely to convince the parties, as you say, to participate in the conference, to attract as many parties as possible to participate.

That is why we say not to make decisions, but to exchange opinions, to affirm our common consensus and in no case to establish the date or conditions of the preparation of the meeting.

I would also like to say a few things about the issue of condemning or not condemning other parties. I said it before, but I want to emphasize, that each party has the right to say what it wants; at the consultative meeting in Budapest, however, we will agree on the nature of the conference: we will have an exchange of views on the issue of the document that the conference is to adopt; we will have an exchange of views on the issue that we will not condemn or criticize any party. Why not say that the Romanians, Soviets, Hungarians, French, Italians, Hungarians, French, Italians and others with whom we discussed at this meeting,

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we have no intention to discuss or condemn any party?

First of all, we have an example of when we achieved this; I mean the Karlovy Vary

conference. I don't want to talk about the whole conference now, but I want to take one element. Before the conference, some people expressed the view that anyone who doesn't participate in Karlovy Vary excluded themselves from the labor movement. Due to the preparatory work for the conference, these points of view were not put to Karlovy Vary, but, on the contrary, it was said that it is the right of each party to participate or not to participate, that participation or non-participation in a conference should not affect the relations between the parties.

Why not say this in Budapest too? If we say these things, they will be elements to strengthen the position of participation in the conference.

Comrade Ponomarev, I want you to understand me well. Do we need to say this? In our opinion, it is, because in our labor movement there are other points of view that are not favorable to the creation of a favorable atmosphere for conference.

Here, for example, I read in a newspaper where it was said that "the attitude towards an international conference is the touchstone of proletarian internationalism". I cannot agree with such a point of view. But not only that. I believe that the affirmation of such a point of view is not likely to favor the participation of those parties that currently have reservations about this conference.

Apart from this, who gives someone the right to determine which party is internationalist and which is not? If we go along this line, of dividing the parties into internationalists and non-internationalists, we will only have unity.

Therefore, I believe that this issue is of great importance for creating the conditions for the widest possible participation in the conference.

In connection with the participation of anti-imperialist forces. I listened very carefully to the arguments you brought and we agree that the problem is not simple. We agree that there are problems that need to be solved. But all the same, a whole series of arguments can be made that speak in favor of

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participation in national liberation movements. Here, for example, we are talking about Vietnam again. Why not state our desire to convene the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam?

In a number of countries in Africa, there are movements that fight with arms in hand against imperialism. I met Amilcar Cabral not long ago...

Co. Boris Ponomarev:

We know.

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil :

... I think you will agree that there is not much difference between him and a communist leader. And I can give you other such examples.

Of course, we are all fighting against imperialism. I do not want to discuss this in any way.

Co. Boris Ponomarev:

Amilcar Cabrai was also in the Soviet Union. They regularly receive weapons from us.

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil :

There are similar situations in other countries as well. There are no communist parties in these countries. So these countries will not be represented.

Also, there are a number of socialist parties that have extremely advanced positions. Of course, we can't force everyone to come; only those who want will come and, of course, those who believe that they can contribute to the fight against imperialism, who have a consistent position in the fight against imperialism.

But the fact that there will be difficulties in Algeria or Syria cannot be an argument to give up the idea of discussing together with these forces the problem of the struggle against imperialism.

Comrade Ponomarev, many such movements participated in the Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Co. Boris Ponomarev:

They were invited as guests.

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil:

They also came to us, to the congresses of other

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communist parties. This fact shows the interest of these movements for socialism. All the more this interest is increased when it comes to a concrete action, a concrete idea of the fight against imperialism.

And then, will we hold a meeting in which we will discuss the issue of the struggle against imperialism only by us communists, and after that we will hold another meeting in which we will discuss the same thing, except that other forces besides the communists will come? And this idea can withstand a number of criticisms.

We do not have a crystallized point of view regarding the concrete form of participation of these forces. But it seems to me that within the exchange of views we should find a form of participation in the consultative meeting in Budapest and these movements.

I would like to return to the issue of Asia's presence at the conference. Please excuse me if my exposition is not neat enough. Of course, I agree that there will be communist parties from India, Ceylon, Mongolia. I do not underestimate the role of the Communist Party of India, nor of the parties in other countries. Mongolia is a socialist country. But from afar it can be seen that these parties do not represent Asia. I mean, I mean it's obvious that it's not the core forces in Asia; China, Japan...

Co. Boris Ponomarev:

You yourself said that Japan might participate.

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil:

Then I would like to tell you that for us the issue of parallel parties in countries like India has arisen. In our opinion, the most just thing would be to encourage the tendencies of unity in these countries; the Communist Party led by Dange was invited; but the party led by Namboodiripad got a large number of votes; he formed two governments, he participates in another government, the internal reaction is pretty damned with him.

Therefore, in relation to this, it seems to us that the fairest position would be to invite both parties to a meeting. This is how we think about this matter.

In connection with the parties in Vietnam and Korea, with the other parties that fight against imperialism with guns in hand. We agree with you that all the socialist countries

[...]

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[...] the news about the meetings that took place; that is, to publish what will be considered necessary. And after that, to publish the communique of the consultative meeting that will be approved, that is, to publish the things on which we agreed. After that, it is possible to publish the speeches of the various parties, if they so wish. But first, we have to agree. Then the whole communist movement, the national liberation movement will be justly oriented; it will be seen that the communists have agreed on one thing and then the bourgeois press will no longer be able to slander. After that,



the words can be published. We are not against it. But not at first. This is how we see it and we believe that this is useful for all parties.

By law, we, you, can publish our position, but I speak for the communist parties in the capitalist countries. They will be attacked by the bourgeois press who will say: the communists have not understood each other. And before we, those who will participate in the consultative meeting, say our opinion definitively, the bourgeois press will slander everything.

I repeat, of course, these issues must be discussed on the first day of the consultative meeting and we must understand each other; how it will be useful for all, so we will decide.

A few words about parallel parties in India.

This, too, will be decided at the consultative meeting in Budapest. No one can decide now. It has to be seen what is the situation in India.

I want to say a few words about what you said earlier: that our task is to help restore their unity.

Three years ago, from the assignment of our leadership, I talked for several hours with Comrade Namboodiripad. He was then the General Secretary of the Communist Party of India and was complaining about Dange and that things were not going as they should. I told him: Comrade Namboodiripad, you are the general secretary. The general secretary is the number one figure in any party. Take the problem in hand, call the party congress, promote the line you consider necessary. He said he is not going to Delhi. He is from Kerala, close to Ceylon, but very far from Delhi, about a few thousand km away. That was his opinion. And after that the parallel party was created.

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When we went to the congress in Bombay - I led our delegation - we thought: if the parallel party wants to meet with us, although we were at the congress of the main party, how should we proceed? And we decided to meet if they want. I also told this to the leadership of the Communist Party of India, They said: welcome, you can meet. There were some indications that they wanted to meet with us, but in the end they did not come. This was their job.

Dange was with us and we had discussions with him for two days. I told him that regarding the elections, the two parties should join their efforts. He agreed. In some regions the parallel party agreed to unite, but only where they would receive help; not in the others.

Sundaraya became seriously ill. Eight years ago he was treated with us, we treated him well, he had an ulcer. After that he got sick again. We were given to understand that he was in a serious condition; I agreed and he came to us for treatment. For two years while he was in the hospital, I didn't touch him, that is, I didn't have any kind of discussions with him, I didn't process him, before he left he started reading. During this time, the cultural revolution was taking place in China. He grabbed his head, but said nothing more.

He asked to be admitted to the Central Committee where he said to be recognized as the only Communist Party in India. We could not do this. He asked to be given the Chinese materials that had been collected over the past half year. Mr. you know that in these materials it was about the establishment of capitalism here, that we are the accomplices of the Americans, that we sold China, the national liberation movement. And he asked us: how do you publish these materials? I told him: of course not. But can you see if capitalism has been established in the Soviet Union, if we have entered into friendship with American imperialism, or if we are helping the Vietnamese in their struggle?

He said: it is not fair. And he left. It was inactive for half a year, after which it began to tilt back to its old position.

As far as we know, in this parallel party there is a new faction, in the Madras district, which even declared

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Namboodiripad a "black", non-communist element.

Comrade Peleşe, who went to the Congress of the Communist Party of India, received the indication that if the representative of the parallel party wants to meet him, to meet him. Tomorrow I believe our delegation from India returns; we don't know if they got along or not. So this issue will probably be decided at the consultative meeting. In any case, the problem must be raised on the first day. In fact, the Hungarian party told us that they are thinking about inviting other parties as well. But the matter must be discussed and a decision adopted on behalf of all.

Allow me to express my satisfaction for what you said: that at the consultative meeting we must decide on the convening of the conference, on an agenda for the conference. I repeat. Our Central Committee - you know our position - has decided to discuss the problems at the meetings — the consultative meeting in Budapest exactly in this sense.

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil:

Agreed.

In our opinion, the discussions we had are useful. We would be extremely satisfied if at the consultative meeting in Budapest, the course of things would follow such a direction as to allow a good preparation for the future conference of the communist and labor parties.

In this spirit, which I presented to you, which we discussed at our plenary, we will act in Budapest.

Of course, we know what the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has to say, and we would be extremely glad if the position and participation of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union would be such that the Budapest meeting and the whole subsequent course of the consultations would lead to a meeting in which as many Communist parties as possible would participate and which would serve to restore a climate of confidence and unity in our movement.

Co. Boris Ponomarev:

We are just speaking out for the creation of such a climate, defending, of course, the principled Marxist-Leninist positions of our party.

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Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil:

Very well.

Then, having finished, I would propose, if Comrade Ponomarev agrees, that we dine together this evening.

Tov. Boris Ponomarev: I agree.

Co. Paul Niculescu-Mizil:

Comrade Ceauşescu expressed his desire to meet you. If you agree, tomorrow morning at 8, we could organize this meeting. After that, if you want, visit Bucharest.

Co. Boris Ponomarev:

With pleasure.

Thank you for receiving me comrade Ceauşescu and for your proposals, in general.

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