

January 21, 1966

Memorandum by Polish Minister Adam Rapacki

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Summary:

In response to Brezhnev's request for input, Rapacki outlines proposals to improve the Warsaw Treaty in both military organization and operation, and political affairs, including reform of the Political Consultative Committee.

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AN URGENT NOTE

Exclusively to the person concerned

-/ Majchrzak[1]

Addressees:

Comr. Gomułka
Comr. Szyr
Comr. Cyrankiewicz
Comr. Waniełka
Comr. Gierek
Comr. Jagielski
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Comr. Jaroszewicz
Comr. Kliszko
Comr. Jaszczuk
Comr. Loga-Sowiński
Comr. Jarosiński
Comr. Ochab
Comr. Starewicz
Comr. Rapacki
Comr. Tejchma
Comr. Spsychalski
Comr. Wicha
Comr. Strzelecki
Comr. Czesak

In connection with a letter of Comrade Brezhnev to Comrade Gomułka dealing with the provision of a better elasticity and efficiency for the Warsaw Pact organization, I am hereby presenting some remarks and conclusions:

I. The Warsaw Pact organization comprises two sets of questions that require separate treatment:

1) Improvement of operating instruments in the military area, which relates to the proposal of holding a meeting of defense ministers. Improvement in coordination is required particularly in this area, where the chief responsibility rests overwhelmingly upon the Soviet Union.

2) Coordination in the area of political activities of the Pact, which requires a steady consultative effort, an exchange of views in order to reach common grounds not only on major issues, but often also on current policy matters.

II. We appraise the USSR's initiative positively. It meets the basic need to define and improve the organization of the Warsaw Pact. So far the Warsaw Pact organization has not been precisely defined, its forms of work were volatile and dependent on

extemporaneous initiatives, mostly by the USSR. This situation has created loopholes in the coordination of policies and actions of Pact members with regard to the Pact itself, as well as in relations among its members. It also did not ensure the proper system of consultations, which would enable to take into consideration the positions of all member states. This condition was shaped at a time when the Warsaw Pact Treaty was concluded and when its forms of operation were just emerging. It does not meet its current needs.

III. The Soviet initiative to improve the instruments of the Pact's operation is coming at the right time, when a greater need to strengthen the unity of actions of the member states is emerging. In the present circumstances elaboration of a common political line of the Pact, which would take into account positions of all interested parties calls for systematic and frequent consultations and contacts.

IV. The Warsaw Pact Treaty has created an Political Consultative Committee for consultations among member states and for consideration of questions arising from the Pact's operation. According to the Pact's provisions each state is to be represented in the Consultative Committee by a government's member or another especially appointed representative. The Committee may set up such auxiliary bodies as are deemed necessary. In practice, however, that Committee has been transformed into summit meetings, called up sporadically, generally not properly prepared, which adopt spectacular resolutions (declarations, communiqués).

In fact, this is inconsistent with either the consultative tasks of the Committee, or with its originally intended composition (Government members), or with its name (to whom a gathering of top party and government leaders is to be advisory?). In such circumstances meetings of the Political Consultative Committee cannot be held with proper frequency, as meetings of the Party and Government leaders from their very nature are held when there are very important matters to be considered or decided upon (just to remind-a resolution of the Committee from January 1956 was calling for meetings of the Committee at least twice a year, not counting extraordinary meetings).

Thus, as the Committee has transferred itself into a Council, there is no body which would ensure the opportunity for systematic and frequent consultations among member countries, despite the fact that they were suggesting such need.

V. To improve and rationalize the operation of the Pact consistent with the existing needs it would be proper to specify the decision-making organs, as well as consultative and advisory bodies.

1. This objective could be achieved by setting up a Pact's Council, which would take over functions heretofore exercised by the Political Consultative Committee. The Council would be holding meetings at a summit level; it would decide on key issues, with the rule of unanimity. It would be hearing and approving reports of the Unified Command. It would be meeting whenever needed.

2. The Political Consultative Committee should be restored to its original character provided for in the Pact. It could thus become an elastic forum for consultations of foreign ministers. In some cases, when needed, with the participation of defense ministers. In particular cases the ministers might delegate their deputies. This Committee would become a consultative and advisory body, preparing positions for the governments, or the Council. The Committee should be meeting at least 2-3 times a year. In this way consultations which it is now difficult to hold or which are held only as a result of arduous procedures, would obtain an institutional character.

3. A Permanent Secretariat of the Pact should be set up at a proper level and with a

proper composition. It is necessary to properly prepare meetings of the Council and the Political Consultative Committee, to ensure regular liaison among member countries during the inter-session periods, for providing continuity of coordination and information on matters related to the decisions adopted, or the ones that should be submitted for discussion. The shortcomings resulting from the lack of such body have been felt frequently. To be sure, according to the Resolution adopted by the Political Consultative Committee in 1956 (Prague), a United Secretariat of the Committee, composed of a General Secretary and his deputies, one from each country, has been set up. This Secretariat, according to the Resolution, is functioning only during the meetings of the Political Consultative Committee. In practice, deputy minister of foreign affairs of the USSR served as Secretary General. His activity as a Secretary General was limited to organizational functions and only during the sessions of the Political Consultative Committee. During the inter-session periods neither the Secretary General nor the Secretariat are in practice performing any functions. The fact that up to now the Secretary General was not disconnected from state functions in his own country was in some situations causing even political difficulties (e.g. in case of inviting Albania to the meeting of the Political Consultative Committee in Warsaw in January 1964, Poland took over functions which should have normally belonged to the Secretary General). To satisfy the needs mentioned earlier in pt. 3, the institution of the Secretary General and the Permanent Secretariat should be organized and set to be able to:

- a) provide a steady organizational link among member countries during the inter-session periods;
- b) perform functions connected with the preparation and servicing of meetings of the Council and the Political Consultative Committee;
- c) provide current information to the member states on the implementation of adopted resolutions and decisions, as well as on matters calling for consideration. Circulate documents relating to the activities of the Pact;
- d) submit to the member governments motions regarding consultations, convening meetings of the Consultative Committee and in exceptional cases also the Council;
- e) submit proposals for consultations on working levels regarding matters of lesser importance (e.g. preparations for U.N. sessions, the Disarmament Conference in Geneva, etc.);
- f) organize an exchange of information among foreign ministries of the member states regarding the assessment of political situation, in the area of analytical and research work carried out by the foreign ministries of member states.

The position of the Secretary General should be situated in such a way that he would be able to stay in touch with member governments at the highest levels (prime ministers, foreign ministers) and obtain the necessary information. He should not be combining this function with any other state function in his own country. He should be nominated by a resolution of the Council for a period of 2-3 years. The headquarters of the Permanent Secretariat should be in Moscow. The Permanent Secretariat should be staffed by representatives from all members states, including the country of the Secretary General. They would be cooperating and fulfilling the role of liaison officers between the Secretariat and member governments (foreign ministries) and the Secretary General. Such representatives could be responsible employees of member countries' embassies. The Permanent Secretariat should also have its own small, but indispensable and qualified staff.

VI. In our opinion the new measures in the area of organizational improvement of the

Pact should be made public (published). It would emphasize the political vitality of the of the Warsaw Pact.

On the other hand, similar measures undertaken in the military area should be published at the proper time and in the proper form, so as not to be exploited by NATO states, interested in counteracting the current process of NATO's disintegration, but quite the contrary, they should evoke a desired effect in a given political situation.

/-/ A. RAPACKI

[1] Mr. Ryszard Majchrzak, at the time Director of Minister Rapacki's Secretariat.