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Rezső Nyers's Typed Notes to Miklós Németh on Gorbachev's Briefing on the Malta Summit on 4 December

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"Rezső Nyers's Typed Notes to Miklós Németh on Gorbachev's Briefing on the Malta Summit on 4 December", December 6, 1989, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Hungarian National Archive (Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltára) Hungarian National Archive–State Archive, MNL OL: Files of Miklós Németh, Chairman of the Council of Ministers (MT), XIX-A-2-at. 2. d. Obtained by Béla Révész; transcribed by Renáta Marosi; translated and edited by Barnabás Vajda and Laura Deal.
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Summary:

An official report by Nyers about the Malta Summit prepared for Prime Minister Miklós Németh.

Original Language:

Hungarian

Contents:

Translation - English

At the unofficial conference of the Warsaw Treaty [country leaders] on December 4 [1989], participants from the Soviet side were Mikhail Gorbachev, Secretary General of the CPSU, USSR; Eduard Shevardnadze, Minister of Foreign Affairs; Nikolai [Ivanovich] Ryzhkov, Prime Minister; and [Alexsander Nikolaevich] Yakovlev, Chief Adviser to Gorbachev. Hungary was represented by Prime Minister Miklós Németh, Minister of State Rezső Nyers, and Ferenc Somogyi, Under Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

At the opening of the conference Gorbachev said: the course of the changes must be foreseen, thus the [socialist] countries should give each other real information. There should be a conference organized between the socialist countries to help the exchange of views. After this, he touched upon his negotiations in Italy, and said: with his [Italian] counterparts they agreed that there should be another Helsinki agreement. On his meeting with the Pope he said: “In relation to the world situation, the Pope’s theses are similar to ours, the Holy Father supports the perestroika, and does not support destabilization. We invited the Pope to Moscow.”

Talking about the meeting in Malta he said that the initiative came from President [George] Bush who wanted to justify that on the side of the USA there is a demand for upholding the continuous relations. He [Gorbachev] considered it important to stress that the atmosphere of the talks was calm, good, and without accusations. Bush’s tone, in contrast to [Ronald] Reagan’s [style], was not patronizing. On the European situation, Gorbachev expressed that after the second World War peace became consolidated in the region [of Europe] but it had a big price: the arms race. Gorbachev drew a conclusion that the confrontational-style policy suffered a defeat in Europe, and blamed Bush for certain circles in the USA that still assert that same Cold War policy should be continued. According to Gorbachev, “we forced Bush to express his opinion; we asked him some questions. He should tell us what he wants: Does he want to destroy the USSR? Does he want United States of Europe?” Bush replied that he conceives of the unification of Europe on the basis of Western values. Unlike him, Gorbachev argued for the model of the European House, [and] the peaceful coexistence of the two systems. Gorbachev said that at the end both of them declared support for the Helsinki process.

According to the information of the Soviet Secretary General, on Malta he stood up firmly for the existence of two German states; Bush also agreed with the inviolability of [state] borders, adding that German sentiments have to be considered, but nothing should be forced. Gorbachev explained to Bush that he is against the confederative solution. In his opinion, Chancellor [Helmut] Kohl has thrown the question of German unification to public opinion just as an election trick. Gorbachev proposed to Bush that the two German states should set up a contractual relationship, and the military blocks should be abolished.

Gorbachev said that Bush recommended to him the appearance of private ownership in the USSR, but he is against it. In his opinion the main point is that the workers should have adequate [economic] independence.

Beyond that, the Soviet Secretary General informed those present about the military limitation [talks], about the situation in Central America and the Middle East, about the regional conflicts, and about the negotiations over some ecological issues.

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[Written by] Rezső Nyers, President [of the Hungarian Socialist Party]