

Handwritten in Russian at the top of page: "Hecatombs of victims"

MEETING OF THE POLITICAL CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE FORMED IN
ACCORDANCE WITH THE WARSAW TREATY

Prague, January 1956

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STATEMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
OF THE POLISH PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC

Comrade JÓZEF CYRANKIEWICZ

27 January 1956

Today, we have gathered in the capital of fraternal Czechoslovakia in order to discuss issues related to our signing of the Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Warsaw on May 14, 1955.

Poland fully supports the stance at which it has arrived as a result of the threat of the resurrection of the neo-Hitlerite *Wehrmacht* and its inclusion in a system of military alliances. This system threatens peace and creates a military bloc that divides the nations of Europe and poses a threat to all peoples – not excluding the Western countries – to unleash the aggressive forces of German militarism, a threat familiar to us.

Should we remind you of the hardships that befell the nations of Europe in recent years – hardships for which German militarism is to blame? Only eleven years have passed since when, at the cost of great efforts paid for by hecatombs of victims, the nations of East and West united in the grand alliance against Hitler and crushed the hydra of Hitlerism.

Given that West Germany is arming and that there is a continuous flood of revanchists threats, one of our main goals must be the further strengthening of the forces among the German people that long for peace and are ready to defend it. These forces are represented first and foremost by the German Democratic Republic, whose prestige is constantly growing. The GDR is implementing a program of peaceful cooperation with all European states. Our goodneighborly relations with the German people are based in particular on the conviction expressed in the joint statement by Poland and the GDR commemorating the fifth anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Zgorzelec: "Friendly relations between both nations are of paramount importance for peace and security in Europe, and the attitude toward the common border along the Oder-Neisse Line that connects both nations serves as a criterion for one's attitude toward the cause of peace and security."

Currently, the National People's Army of the German Democratic Republic is joining the armed forces of the Warsaw Treaty.

It is the first German army in history connected to the rich revolutionary traditions of the German working class and the genuinely peace-loving and democratic forces in Germany. The Warsaw Treaty serves as a warning to those who are trying or will try to employ a policy of force against us.

At the same time, the countries that have signed the Treaty are consistent supporters of the policy of peaceful coexistence of states with different political and economic systems. The most powerful country among the participants in our Treaty - the Soviet Union - is the leading force in the struggle to implement the principles of peaceful coexistence in the international arena. The role of the Soviet Union in the elimination of the centers of war in Korea and Indochina is known to everybody. The USSR is the most consistent fighter for the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction, for arms control and limitations, for the revival of contacts between the East and the West, and for collective security and peace throughout the entire world.

By signing the Warsaw Treaty we have once again expressed our readiness to "participate in all international actions that are aimed at ensuring international peace and security in the spirit of sincere cooperation."

We are countering the attempts to codify the division of Europe that has been imposed upon it by the creators of the North Atlantic bloc and the Western European alliance. During the period that has elapsed since we signed the Warsaw Treaty, a number of important problems have been settled at the initiative of the forces for peace. The Big Four Summit Meeting in Geneva belongs to those exceptionally significant events with the prospect for ensuring peace. The impact of the conference of the Asian and African countries in Bandung, the powerful development of the People's Republic of China, the honorable role of India in international politics, the growing resistance of African and Asian countries to the policies of the military blocs - the impact of this is becoming an increasingly important factor that contributes to the strengthening of peace. All of this has evoked a profound response within the broadest circles of public opinion and has shaped the consciousness of nations, has strengthened their wills in the struggle for peace, and has inevitably impacted the correlation of forces in the world.

The attempts to isolate our countries have failed. It would suffice to point at the reception of the Soviet leadership during its recent visit to India, Burma, and Afghanistan. We have no doubt about the significance of these events. Millions of denizens of Asia have spoken decisively in favor of the policy of peaceful coexistence, peace and security, as opposed to military opportunism, a policy of atomic and hydrogen-bomb threats, which - one should not forget - cuts both ways.

Poland - alongside the USSR and the other Warsaw Treaty member-countries - has facilitated the strengthening of the countries of the peace camp, the lessening of tensions, and peaceful cooperation among nations to the full extent of its capabilities.

We have striven consistently to find a common language with everyone who seeks to base their policy and relations with us on the principles of equality and friendship among nations, despite differences in sociopolitical systems.

Our cooperation with the fraternal People's Republic of China continues to develop; it is based on profound friendship and a commonality of goals. We are also expanding and developing our relations with other Asian nations – first and foremost, with the great nation of India. They are reinforced by the five principles of peaceful coexistence, which comprise one of the main elements of our foreign policy. The readiness to bring these principles to life found confirmation in the statements made by Indian Prime Minister [Jawaharlal] Nehru and Burmese Prime Minister U Nu during their visits to Poland.

Poland, which remembers its own experience of fighting for freedom and national independence, has profound sympathy for the aspirations of nations fighting to destroy the chains of colonialism and dependency. That is why we oppose any kind of military blocs or aggressive pacts, such as the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization and the Baghdad Pact, which create and formalize the dependency of the countries in these regions and contradict the interests of peace. These pacts represent weapons of the forces that would like to hamper the lessening of international tension. They are trying to aggravate international relations, to continue implementation of a policy “from the position of force,” and to eliminate the accomplishments of the Big Four Summit Meeting in Geneva.

Despite resistance and the growing antiwar sentiment in the broadest circles of public opinion, the pressures aimed at promoting cold war policies have increased. The attempt to intervene in the internal affairs of countries building socialism is one manifestation of this trend. This is the true meaning of the conceited and simultaneously grotesque statements about the so-called liberation of Eastern European countries. German militarism, which is so familiar to the Polish people and the whole of Europe, has joined the ranks of such liberators. Whose naiveté is Mr. Dulles¹ counting on?

We stand steadfastly and consistently for collective security, disarmament and the unification of Germany as a peace-loving and democratic state. A passionate longing for peace and freedom and an irreconcilable hatred toward colonialism and aggression are growing among the nations of all continents -- Europe, Asia, Africa and America. The development of such forces, as well as the strength and granite-like solidarity of the countries of the world, including the socialist countries, will guarantee the failure of all annexationist plans and ensure our common security.

We remain irrevocably of the opinion that there is no better guarantee of peace and security than the creation of a pan-European security system encompassing all European countries. Striving to reach this goal, we have stretched our hands out in friendship to all the

¹ US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles.

nations of Western Europe – above all, to France – whose fates have been intertwined with ours so frequently.

We are prepared to contribute to all forms of cooperation that could successfully reinforce European security.

While the implementation of the principles of collective security remains the foundation of our policy, in our current situation, we must discuss other methods to facilitate a rapprochement between nations and to create an environment for the peaceful settlement of controversial issues. We should focus our attention today on the discussion of such means. A normalization of relations between individual European countries will definitely serve this purpose, along with the ongoing struggle to achieve the task of reducing weapons and, in accordance with the USSR's proposals, to establish a zone of arms limitation and control encompassing both parts of Germany on the basis of an agreement between the states concerned. We are steadfast supporters of the broadest development of peaceful cooperation. We shall spare no effort to ensure that the concept of peaceful coexistence, which is supported by the decisive will of all nations, will prevail.

[Translation by Julia La Villa Nossova]