

N A T O C O N F I D E N T I A LBRIEFING NOTESSECRETARY GENERAL'S VISIT TO POLANDI. Programme

At the invitation of the Polish Government, the Secretary General visited Warsaw and Gdansk from 13th-16th September. Foreign Minister Skubiszewski acted as his host. The Secretary General also called on President Jaruzelski, Prime Minister Mazowiecki and the Defence Minister, Vice-Admiral Kolodziejczyk. He gave an address before the members of the Sejm which was televised in its entirety. The Secretary General gave a well-attended press conference, jointly with Minister Skubiszewski. He also met with NATO Ambassadors who were briefed about his visit. In Gdansk, the Secretary General met with the Solidarity leader, Lech Walesa, local authorities and a broad spectrum of the Solidarity leadership. The Secretary General's visit was facilitated by the Belgian Government which provided military aircraft for the trip to Warsaw, and the UK Authorities, whose Embassy gave generous support during the Secretary General's stay.

II. Circumstances of Visit

The Secretary General's visit coincided with a critical moment in the configuration of the Polish leadership. The next few days may lead to a decision on the ousting of President Jaruzelski and new elections. The prospect of this campaign sharpens the controversy between the two vying factions of the reform wing and the split of Solidarity. The domestic tension resulting from these events is heightened by the critical phase of the drastic reform policy which in turn is aggravated by the economic effects of the Gulf crisis. At the same time, however, the Polish leadership feels relief about the final settlement of the border issue and can now clarify more readily its views on European security and Poland's position in a new Europe. The overall atmosphere was one of openness and often enthusiastic welcome. None of the interlocutors failed to characterise the Secretary General's visit as historic. Apart from nuances (President Jaruzelski on the one hand, Walesa on the other), there was a large cohesiveness of views, especially as regards Poland's security requirements. This briefing does therefore not dwell on individual talks but on the issues raised.

III. Poland's Security Requirements

The thinking of the leadership about European security, future structures and possible future risks is in flux. However, some main traits already emerge. Revealing a great deal of continuity in Polish security thinking, the Polish leaders now see the ambivalence of Poland's geostrategic situation between two huge neighbours restored. While the old structures crumble, they search for a new security identity and strategic shelter in

N A T O C O N F I D E N T I A L

a perceived vacuum. The more co-operative orientations in Europe and the receding prospect of any military conflict give them optimism, although there is considerable apprehension about the re-emergence of old conflicts in the region under circumstances of political and economic instability and about the uncertainty and possibly chaotic nature of events in the Soviet Union. There may also be a latent phobia regarding Germany but this has hardly pierced in conversation. The Polish leadership looks for a new more political security concept where close and balanced political ties with East and West, linkage with existing structures in the West and the enhancement of the CSCE contribute to greater European stability. Satisfaction was voiced with the development of Polish/Soviet relations which were approaching a situation of normalcy on the basis of equality. In devising a new, intensive network of political ties, the interlocutors stressed the overriding importance of ties with Germany, but also generally with the West and the EEC. In stressing the newly won sovereignty and independence and linking up with the West, the Poles were markedly concerned that all of these moves need to be reassuring to the Soviet Union, avoiding unnecessary irritation. Any notion of neutrality was shunned as Utopian. Instead, an active, co-operative policy needed to be pursued with the accent placed on intense contacts including among the Central European countries themselves, more arms control and confidence-building. The Polish interlocutors groped for a concept of collective security and Poland's place in it but were rather in favour of a multi-dimensional approach where a residual WTO, CSCE and NATO would have to play respective roles in a complex set-up. Institutional thinking, however, was less pronounced than it would seem in Hungary or Czechoslovakia.

IV. Evaluation of NATO

All Polish leaders took a positive, almost glowing view of NATO. The London Declaration was frequently cited as an excellent basis for Poland's own ties with the Alliance. A strong Alliance was of fundamental importance for European security, including for the security and the stability of the Central and Eastern European region and the presence of North American troops in Europe was essential. All leaders expressly identified with NATO's goals. Walesa especially pleaded with the Alliance to maintain its strength and to provide the durable underpinning for future security. Many of the interlocutors stressed that NATO should consider Europa as a whole security area. Residual anxieties about NATO's military posture among the military interlocutors dissipated quickly during discussion.

V. Future of the WTO

The Polish position on the future of the WTO is extremely sceptical. The Pact was now in a phase of dismantling with the logic of its demise unfolding. The military integration

had ceased for all practical purposes. On the other hand, the interlocutors indicated that they did not wish to contribute to widening the structural vacuum in the region. Residual political functions could be maintained and might even be useful. This somewhat more lenient position the Poles seem to be taking in the ongoing transformation of the WTO (comparing e.g. to Hungary) also seemed to be linked to their views on how the Soviet Union needed to be managed. The Polish Government foresees that a transformed WTO might have purely consultative functions in three settings: political, arms control and military. The military consultative group which might result would look after residual issues of armament co-operation among the members and especially with the Soviet Union.

VI. CFE and Sufficiency Rules

In this context, the Secretary General was given a reading of the recent Bratislava meeting on the division, among WTO countries, of CFE disarmament quotas. That meeting had been unsuccessful. All Central and Eastern European countries had adamantly opposed the Soviet quest for a higher sufficiency rule percentage, be it 40% or even lower. The Polish interlocutors indicated that any sufficiency percentage going essentially above 30% for the Soviets would heighten the dependence for defence on the Soviets and this was totally unacceptable. The talks will be continued, with all non-Soviet WTO partners advocating 30% \pm 2%, i.e. the Soviets could have some more equipment in one weapons category, if they would accept less in another.

VII. CSCE Summit Prospects

On the whole, the interlocutors had a balanced view of the potential of the future CSCE. While they pinned high hopes on it and wanted security policy functions transferred to the new CSCE institutions - with special emphasis on the Conflict Prevention Centre - they seemed to have no difficulty with the Allied view that NATO and the CSCE could only be complementary, with NATO continuing to provide the underlying stability. Their view of the relationship between the CSCE and NATO was thus more congenial to ours than the current Czech position. Only President Jaruzelski indicated his preference for a view which would see the military alliances merge in a larger collective CSCE framework. The Secretary General's party learned that Prime Minister Mazowiecki had recently instructed that the Government should vie for Warsaw as the seat of the Conflict Prevention Centre secretariat.

VIII. Joint Declaration

Consistently, the Polish side expressed concerns about the Joint Declaration, as suggested in the London Declaration. They saw the danger that this might degenerate into an

Alliance-to-Alliance document that would reconsolidate the WTO. However, they allowed themselves to be reassured by firm statements from the Secretary General's side that NATO was adamant about a country-to-country approach and that the Allies' ideas about the contents were compatible with Polish views.

IX. Economic Developments

Several interlocutors, but especially Prime Minister Mazowiecki, voiced grave concerns about the effect of the Gulf crisis on the Polish reform process and stressed the dramatic need for Poland's reform to succeed. Behind the quest for intensive economic ties with the West and an associate status with the EEC there was the fundamental requirement to give the Polish population an economic perspective which would lead to an early achievement of living standards comparable to those of the West. A resurgence of some past conflicts and dire consequences for the political reforms might ensue if the wide wealth differentials could not be swiftly overcome. Mazowiecki feared that this was not fully appreciated in the West. Walesa, with impatience and characteristic temperament, echoed this view. He pleaded for Western bankers and investors to come to Poland now, predicting that the confidence which their involvement would create, would initiate a chain reaction of positive economic developments.

X. Defence Structure and Soviet Withdrawal

The Defence Minister explained in detail the reorientations of the Polish military (with a tendency towards radically lower troop levels, defensive orientations in the framework of the new military doctrine, even deployment throughout the territory and a total relinquishing of WTO ties. The Secretary General was also informed about the new timetable under which the Polish Government wishes the Soviet troops to withdraw fully before the end of 1991. The talks on this had been initiated and were to finish this year. The link between Soviet troop presence in Germany and in Poland is thus broken, but the Poles expect difficulties from the several years of transitting back of Soviet troops from Germany. The costs of this relocation would be high for the Polish side and assistance for this might be required.

XI. Concrete Results

The Secretary General invited Prime Minister Mazowiecki to address the NATO Council pointing to the London Declaration. The Prime Minister accepted. The Defence Minister also accepted an invitation that would hold for him and senior military personnel. During discussions at the Foreign Ministry a broad range of possibilities for co-operation was discussed, some of them in a tentative manner, displaying the interest of the Polish

N A T O C O N F I D E N T I A L

-5-

side to embark on comprehensive and close co-operation with NATO. Great store is set by the diplomatic liaison arrangements. The Poles also envisage multiple exchanges and visits on the official level. They would welcome an increase in NATO's information activities and seek closer press ties. Agreement in principle was reached on the organisation of conferences by NATO, with high-level and broad Polish and Central European participation. One of these conferences in the Polish view should address mutual security perceptions, another one might deal with problems of industrial conversion from the military to civilian production. Visits of NATO personnel and a possible invitation of the Political Committee were raised. There was great interest in NATO's Democratic Institutions Fellowships.

N A T O C O N F I D E N T I A L

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