

Speech at the first Preparatory Meeting of the "World Forum of Youth and Students for Peace, Detente and Disarmament".

By Elmar Brok, DEMYC-President

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May I begin by voicing our thanks to the national committee of Finnish Youth Organisations (FNT) on behalf of the DEMYC for the invitation to this preparatory meeting for a "World Forum of Youth and Students for Peace, Detente and Disarmament".

The destructive power of modern sophisticated weapons and the immense dangers to mankind inherent in the nuclear, biological and chemical arsenals represent a challenge to the young generation in particular to work for peace and freedom, for human rights and disarmament.

The immense sums of money spent every year on new weapons would suffice to overcome poverty and hunger throughout the world. That is a fact which every state in the East and West and most states in the Third World must face up to, and must do so in a spirit of true self-criticism. But here, too, we must differentiate. The Federal Republic of Germany, for example, provides for too little development aid. But what she does provide is much more than all that of the member states of the Warsaw Pact put together: their great "contribution" lies in the export of troops, weapons, military aid and military advisers.

One decisive factor in the safeguarding of world peace is the holding of a North-South-dialogue designed to achieve a world economic order inspired by the wish to achieve a decisive improvement in the position of the poor countries by adhering to the principles of social justice, free trade and hard work.

The industrial states of East and West alike must not egoistically withhold their help. The same applies to the raw-material producing nations. These three groups of countries must work together. The Soviet policy in Asia and Africa of attaining dominance over the raw-material producing states and thus

endangering the West is nothing short of neo-colonialist power politics carried out on the backs of the poor nations. This fact cannot be concealed - however sweet and seductive the music of the propaganda experts!

The Soviet aggression against Afghanistan, which does not lose its character of a breach of international law by mouthing the imperialist formula of "proletarian internationalism", cannot fail to prevent detente and disarmament - two of the most important things needed for building a peaceful and equitable world. With the help of her friend in East Germany and Cuba, the USSR has already either directly or indirectly taken over power in Yemen, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Angola so that these nations have virtually forfeited their sovereignty. Anti-racialism - which I see as one of the priority tasks in southern Africa and in other parts of the world - together with Socialism constitute mere alibis for Soviet power politics in their bid to dominate the raw-material producing regions and trade routes and to gain new military bases. Things have reached such a stage that the Soviet Union waged war against her ally Somalia when she saw a chance of winning influence in a more interesting country, namely Ethiopia.

Furthermore, the continuous efforts undertaken by the USSR to torpedo a peaceful solution in the Near East are designed to strengthen her influence and interests there at the expense of the nations concerned and of world peace.

The Soviet backing of the Vietnamese policy of occupying Laos and Cambodia also falls under this heading. Indeed, there is not a single hostile clash anywhere in the world which does not directly involve the communist bloc in Indochina, the communists are now fighting each other: Vietnam against Cambodia and China against Vietnam. Millions of people are being hounded to death by communist overlords in Hanoi and Phnom Penh. When it comes to genocide, Pol Pot and Heng Samrin are every bit as efficient as the Vietnamese.

In the past, many states in the West were guilty of grave wrongs committed through the wars in Europe and during the phase of colonialism. Today's danger of war and today's colonialism mostly stems from Moscow and her allies.

For me as a German, it was particularly depressing to experience how Germans - this time from East Germany - again attacked Czechoslovakia only a few decades after Hitler and how German troops and a Gestapo-like security service have now set about subduing the people of African states.

Perhaps I may be excused for speaking so bluntly. But after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, now is the time to call a spade a spade. Conferences such as ours should shed light on the situation, not cover it with a smoke-screen. That will help to promote peace on the basis of independence and freedom for the nations. DEMYC is not prepared to lull our consciences to sleep with concluding documents full of fine-sounding phrases - and then just sit back and wait for the next act of aggression. We have drawn the appropriate conclusions from the analysis made by Stefan Kisielewski in 1976, an analysis which later sadly proved to be so accurate. Kisielewski wrote: "Whilst the objectives and consistency of Soviet expansion appear perfectly clear to the people of the East, they are mostly overlooked by political journalists in the West where such matters are, as a rule, played down or made light of and given a low priority".

Afghanistan marks an end to all that. We want detente, but not a detente confined to Europe or one which allows the Soviet Union time and space to forcibly consolidate her position in other parts of the world, thus making the West liable to political, military and economic blackmail.

Nor do we want a detente which consolidates the Soviet 3-to-1 supremacy in conventional offensive weapons and their absolute dominance in medium-range nuclear weapons such as the SS 20 and the Backfire bomber once that equilibrium has been attained in strategic weapons.

By the same token, it does not enhance the credibility of the Soviet Union if she replies to the Western attempt to achieve parity in medium-range weapons by rejecting disarmament talks in this sector. Soviet credibility also suffers from the fact that her ostensible offer to disarm - a disarmament, moreover, which does not call in question her superiority in the conventional sector - results in a withdrawal of troops from East Germany and their deployment towards Afghanistan.

If detente policy is understood as the attempt to limit conflicts between states and particularly between East and West because of the threat to peace or to remove their causes and encourage peaceful international relations, then there is indeed no alternative to such a policy. Any government which failed to do its very best in this field would indeed be guilty of gross irresponsibility.

But such a detente policy presupposed good will on the part of all concerned. The Eastern concept of "peaceful coexistence" has long since nourished our doubts about the good will of the Eastern super power. Although Soviet policy aims at avoiding a nuclear war, it does not set out to settle the causes of conflicts. It permits such cooperation as benefits the USSR, but also calls for the stirring up of conflicts if they serve to widen her own influence and can be kept below the threshold of triggering a general war.

A Russian scholar, Michael S. Woslenski, defines detente policy, as seen through the eyes of Moscow-type marxism-leninism. "From the standpoint of the communist world movement, international detente does not militate against a continuation of class warfare; on the contrary, successful outcome of such a struggle. Peaceful coexistence a specific form of the class struggle. It sets out the possibilities of an expansive super-power policy subject to the conditions of the atomic age.

I cannot help feeling that the USSR bases her foreign policy on Carl von Clausewitz's slogan: "A conqueror always loves peace ... he would like to move into our territory without encountering any resistance."

These facts of political life must not be overlooked in a planned "world forum". The aim must not be to vote meaningless compromises. We must attach due importance to research on the military, ideological, social and economic causes of war. Such an exchange of views among all the participating organisations will improve the opportunities for their work for peace.

All the preparatory meetings and the forum itself must be open to all interested youth organisations and in particular

to these from areas of tension. And they must all operate in accordance with the principle of consensus, i. e. no participating association may be outvoted. If the world forum is to function properly, the total of 1.000 participants must not be exceeded.

DEMYC proposed the summer of 1981 as a suitable date so as to ensure that appropriate preparations are possible without any undue haste.

We bear great responsibility, particularly at European level. That is why a European Youth Conference should be held in the winter of 1980/81 at the beginning of the follow-up conference to the CSCE conference in Madrid. The agenda for this youth conference should be certain questions of specific interest to young people such as youth exchanges, all European youth schemes, human rights and the realization of other points in the Final Act of the Helsinki Agreement. However, the conference ought also to discuss the military aspects of detente in preparation for the world forum, i.e. topics such as disarmament and arms control, true parity on the basis of universally accepted terms at the MBFR negotiations in Vienna, and the agreement on collective ceilings and confidence-building measures for the whole of Europe pursuant to the french proposal.

Ladies and gentlemen, may I conclude by thanking you for your kind attention. I feel sure that you will appreciate the reasons for this blunt speaking. A positive result is only feasible if we express our views about all problems in complete frankness.

DEMYC is willing to furnish a constructive contribution along these lines.