

5 APRIL 1962

RFE RESEARCH AND EVALUATION DEPARTMENT

Background Report

Polish Unit

W.K.

THE CAREER TO DATE OF THE RAPACKI PLAN

Before leaving Geneva for Warsaw recently, Adam Rapacki the Polish Foreign Affairs Minister, again presented to the 17-Nation Disarmament Conference his Plan, modified by a new provision under which, in addition to Poland, Czechoslovakia and the two Germanies, other nations may join the proposed nuclear-free zone in Europe. In this connection, the following outline of the history of the Plan may serve as a useful reference source.

Presentation of
the Plan -
2 October 1957

The so-called Rapacki Plan was originally submitted by Poland's Foreign Minister at the UN General Assembly session held on 2 October 1957; acting as a spokesman for the Polish Government, Rapacki formulated the proposal: should both the German states agree to the introduction of the ban on the production and storage of nuclear weapons on their territories, Poland would simultaneously introduce an identical ban on her territory.

It is to be stressed that in that statement, Rapacki made no reference to Czechoslovakia; this was done by the head of the Czechoslovak delegation (Foreign Minister Vaclav David), who, speaking after Rapacki, supported his proposal, declaring that Czechoslovakia would join the agreement, extending the ban over her territory, too.

Memo to the
West's Big
Three -
9 December 1957

This statement by Rapacki was followed, a few weeks later, by a diplomatic move; on 9 December 1957, a Polish memorandum containing the Rapacki proposal, was handed by its author to the American, British and French ambassadors.

Gromyko-Rapacki
Statement on Con-
trol - 1 Februa-
ry 1958

A joint statement by Andrei Gromyko and Rapacki made in Moscow on 1 February 1958, supported the Rapacki Plan and contained a new point that the Polish Government was prepared, in

agreement with other interested governments, to take part in examining and putting into effect an efficacious control system over the area covered by the Plan; an identical assurance by the Soviet Government was added to the statement.

Air and ground
Control extended
on NATO and
Warsaw Pact
Powers -
17 February 1958

This again, was followed a fortnight later (on 14 February 1958) by diplomatic action: Rapacki received the Soviet, American, British, French, Czechoslovak and East German ambassadors, and the chargés d'affaires of Belgium, Denmark and Canada; the purpose of those calls was revealed by Polish propaganda media only a few days later, on 17 February 1958: a memorandum on a modified Rapacki Plan was handed to the diplomats received by the Polish Foreign Minister; it was also revealed that the Polish Government, availing itself of the good services of the Swedish Government, asked it to convey the memorandum to the German Federal Republic; the modification of the Plan consisted in including the NATO and Warsaw Pact powers in the control system, which now comprised "air and ground control". The full text of the memorandum was published in "Trybuna Ludu" of 18 February 1958.

Two-stage program
of denucleariza-
tion -
4 November 1958

At the end of the year, Rapacki again modified his Plan. A revised proposal for a phased creation of a denuclearized zone throughout Central Europe was made public on 4 November 1958 by him. The new Rapacki Plan called for a two-stage program, in which: 1) current nuclear stockpiles and bases would be frozen and production of nuclear weapons banned in Poland, Czechoslovakia, East and West Germany, and 2) existing nuclear stockpiles and weapons would be eliminated as a part of a general disarmament agreement for the four-nation area.

Making in the Sejm, on 16 February 1960, a major statement on Poland's foreign policy, Rapacki referred to his plan of 1957; he believed that "the Polish proposal played a positive role, becoming a nucleus of considerable and manifold forces" ("szerokie i roznorodne sily").

Gomulka supports
the Plan at UN -
30 September 1960

Delivering his speech at the Fifteenth General Assembly session of the UN (on 30 September 1960), Wladyslaw Gomulka concluded it by stressing that "the Polish Government still considers topical the problem of the creation of a nuclear-free zone in Central Europe".

Decrease of tension as main
purpose stressed
- 9 March 1961

During his visit to Austria in March 1961, Rapacki again reverted to the topicality of his plan. Speaking on 9 March 1961 at Palfy Palace in Vienna, the Polish Foreign Minister stressed that: 1) his Plan did not aim at a change in the military balance between the two camps; 2) the Plan's real aim consisted in contributing to the decrease of tension at the border between the two camps; and 3) should the Plan be subjected to a popular referendum in West Germany, the majority of voters would agree with all other nations in the area".

Inclusion of
other nations -
28 March 1962

At the Disarmament Conference which is now being held in Geneva, the Polish Delegation submitted (on March 28) a memorandum concerning "the creation of a denuclearized and limited armament zone in Europe". The memorandum basically follows the lines of the former proposals of the Rapacki Plan, adding that 1) the denuclearized zone "ought to include the Polish People's Republic, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, the German Democratic Republic and the German Federal Republic. The agreement concerning the zone is open: other European states ought to have a possibility to accede to this agreement". The memorandum also includes 2) provisions for a plan for the limitation of conventional armaments of the states included in the zone.

End