

T o a s t

by

Mr. GYÖRGY LÁZÁR
Chairman of the Council of
Ministers

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Madame Prime Minister,

It is my pleasant duty to welcome you and the members of your party on behalf of the Government of the Hungarian People's Republic and on my own behalf. I am glad that you have accepted our invitation and have come to visit us.

In your person we are welcoming a British Prime Minister in Hungary for the first time. This is an important event which is followed with attention by public opinion both here and beyond our borders. I believe this is understandable. This visit is of great significance because—in addition to many other things—it serves as an example that even in tense periods of the international situation a dialogue is possible between countries professing different views, having different social systems and belonging to different alliances.

Madame Prime Minister,

Just as our public opinion, I myself have also been looking forward to our talks. Recalling our discussions today I can speak of them with satisfaction in that they have provided a good opportunity to have a better knowledge of each other's

views and they have strengthened our mutual intention to do more in the future for the development of our bilateral relations. It has also become apparent that although the social systems of our countries are different, we belong to different alliance systems and the positions of our Governments differ on several international issues, the items expressing common interests can nevertheless be found which make cooperation possible in the search for a way out from the international crisis threatening world peace.

In the history of the relations between our two countries, which go back to the distant past, there have been gloomy periods but also, there are ones which we recall with pleasure. Our present relations—and this is a good thing—are normalized. We have no unresolved problems. We, on our part, have an interest in not only retaining but also in going beyond the level already achieved. We hope that these efforts will be reciprocated.

We attach particularly great importance to the expansion of commercial, economic and financial relations based on mutual advantages. We believe that even in the present difficult world economic situation there is a possibility to do this if we pay sufficient attention to eliminate the obstacles hindering development and if we better utilize existing opportunities. This is what we are striving for, because we do not consider it a natural state of affairs that today our economic relations with the the United Kingdom should lag behind what we

have already achieved with other Western European countries.

Of course, when I speak of the intention to develop our cooperation I am not thinking only of the economic field. We welcome and consider the deepening of technical-scientific cooperation between our countries useful and we also see possibilities for the development of cultural and human relations.

Madame Prime Minister,

By now it is a historical fact that it was the unfolding of détente which gave a new impetus to the development of East-West—including Hungarian-British—relations. Even in the present tense international situation we hold that there is no acceptable alternative to détente. We have differing views concerning the reasons for the increase of tension. Steps aimed at upsetting the balance of military power, among them the decision to deploy American missiles in Europe and the start of the deployment, aggravate political and military tensions on our continent and further burden East-West relations. Such a situation has arisen in which the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Treaty are compelled to take countermeasures. We hold that more weapons do not give more security, the military balance of power should be guaranteed at the lowest possible level of armaments.

Our Government, as a dedicated proponent of peace, continues to hold that questions of dispute, including the problems of nuclear armaments can and have to be resolved by political means through negotiations.

We are deeply convinced that the well-known proposals of the Soviet Union and the proposals of the member States of the Warsaw Treaty, worked out with the active participation of the Hungarian People's Republic and submitted at various forums, provide a good basis for negotiations. These are fair and flexible proposals, ones, which take into account the security interests of the other side, too. But for progress there is a need for serious commitment and for reasonable compromises to be manifested in deeds, because that is the only way how the basis and conditions can be created for agreements adhering to the principles of equality and equal security and for Europe to return to the road of détente.

It is in the interest of all peoples to avoid a nuclear catastrophe. We have to do everything, we have to use every forum, the Stockholm Conference among them to facilitate the process of improvement, to enhance the decrease of distrust and the retainment of the Helsinki process. I can assure you, Madame Prime Minister, that the Hungarian Government is trying to facilitate the attainment of these goals in every way it can. The paramount aspiration of our foreign policy is the protection of peace, the continuation of the process

of European security and cooperation. It is in that spirit that we intend to foster the relations between Hungary and the United Kingdom.

*Madame Prime Minister,
Dear British Guests,*

Although you are spending only a short time in our country I do hope that you will return home with favourable impressions and with the conviction that the Hungarian nation is filled with a genuine desire for peace and with respect and esteem for other peoples.

It is in the spirit of these thoughts, Madame Prime Minister, that I raise my glass to your health and to the health of all our British guests, to the development of the relations between our countries and peoples, to peace.