

Mikhail Gorbachev's New Year address to the Soviet people

Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, on December 31, 1986 made a New Year television address to the Soviet people. The address says:

Dear Comrades and Friends,

We have met on different occasions in the outgoing year. We have exchanged views on domestic and international affairs, both good and disquieting ones. Tonight's meeting is a festive one. In a few minutes' time the Kremlin chimes will herald the birth of the new year of 1987, the year of the 70th anniversary of the Great October Revolution.

At such moments it is quite natural to wish to glance back at the outgoing year and to peer into the future. The past year is the year of the 27th CPSU Congress, which will take a special place in the history of the Soviet State. The Congress elevated theoretical thought to a new height, elaborated the strategy of accelerating the country's socio-economic development, laid the beginning to a comprehensive renewal of our society.

The past year has been a year of purposeful quest, a year of hard work. The transformations which only recently were intentions and plans are increasingly acquiring realistic outlines and are being implemented in the people's deeds.

The past year became a year of mounting struggle for peace. The people of the world are now more profoundly aware of the danger of a war catastrophe, of the need for improving international relations, ending nuclear tests and attaining disarmament and peace accords.

The CPSU Central Committee notes with satisfaction and gratitude the Soviet people's invariable support for the Communist Party's policy. This is the support of the working class, collective farm peasantry, people's intelligentsia, all nations and nationalities, men and women, veterans and young people. This is support by deeds, work, and struggle for our ideals.

Overcoming phenomena of stagnation, we have moved forward in effect in every section of the economy. A substantial increase in national income has been attained. It will exceed four per cent. There is a tendency towards a more vigorous solution of social problems. Over ten million Soviet people are welcoming in the New Year in new apartments. Public education, public health and cultural establishments are being built on a broader scale. These are certainly only the

first steps, the first results of utilising the huge possibilities that we have at our disposal.

In the New Year we are to attain bigger results in the economy, carry out on a broad scale the switching of enterprises to new methods of economic management, and radically improve the quality of output. We are to cope with no less important and complicated tasks also in other areas of Soviet society's life. We know full well—nobody will do anything for us, nobody will resolve our tasks and our problems. We have to do everything ourselves. And this means that every one of us must work harder, much harder. This is the only way of ensuring acceleration and marking the 70th anniversary of the Great October Revolution with major labour accomplishments.

We have embarked on the path of profound changes. This is our common choice. The forces of stagnation and complacency are still making themselves felt, some people still hope that everything will return to the old beaten track. But this will not stop the advance of Soviet society along the road of transformation. We should be firm and consistent. We cannot afford to slacken our endeavours. Initiative and responsibility, criticism and openness, democracy and discipline—this is our political and moral stand, the effective instruments of developing the socialist system.

The Soviet people rightfully take pride in the fact that they were the first to embark upon the path of socialist transformations. Socialism has elevated our homeland to the heights of social, economic and cultural progress. It has emancipated the working people, given them extensive rights and freedoms. The world socialist system is exerting a favourable impact on the development of the whole of mankind. And the revolution, comrades, is continuing. It is continuing above all in our deeds. The revolutionary spirit of the restructuring which has begun stems directly from the Great October Revolution. Socialism can and must give the working people even more, if we boldly advance along the road of innovation, along the road bequeathed by Lenin—the road of promoting the historic creativity of the popular masses, led by the Party of Communists.

The world is celebrating the New Year. Every nation has its customs, its ritual of ushering it in. But all people have one thing in common: on

New Year's night they wish themselves, their relatives, their nations happiness and peaceful life. But good wishes alone are now not enough. Good deeds are also needed. Never before has the Earth, our home, been subjected to such danger. There are too many stockpiled weapons in it. These stockpiles should not be allowed to grow further. A catastrophe should not be allowed to happen.

The situation of nuclear confrontation calls for new approaches in international politics. The Soviet Union has put forward large-scale peace initiatives to improve the international climate. We invested our proposals in Reykjavik with a maximum of good will. That was the time when mankind sort of cast a glance beyond the horizon and saw the outlines of a non-nuclear world. Unfortunately, the response of many Western politicians to Reykjavik has shown how strong yet are the stereotypes of the old, conservative thinking, how far is the policy of some governments from the real aspirations of the peoples.

We are sincerely extending a hand of friendship and co-operation to all who favour immediate negotiations on the complete ending of nuclear tests, who favour reduction and full destruction of nuclear weapons, and development of international relations on the principles of equality and universal security. Our door remains open to negotiations. But it should also be clear to all that our peaceability has nothing in common with weakness. The peaceful labour of the Soviet people is reliably protected. The mighty Armed Forces of the USSR, equipped with everything necessary, are standing guard over the gains of socialism.

Meeting the New Year, we send our heartfelt congratulations and good wishes to the peoples of the socialist countries, to all fighters for peace and social progress, to all peoples in the world!

Dear Comrades, on behalf of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and the Government of the USSR, I wholeheartedly wish you a happy New Year!

May it be light and festive in your homes, in your families, in your hearts!

I wish you health, peace and wellbeing, great successes in labour and military service, in studies and creativity!

A happy New Year, dear friends! □

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Pravda on the outgoing year

DISCUSSING in retrospect the events of the outgoing year, *Pravda* says in its leader on December 31 that fears for the future of peace have not gone away in 1986 but that people nevertheless have better hopes today. Those hopes have been inspired and strengthened primarily by the new, fundamentally important peace initiatives put forward by the USSR and other socialist countries.

"Way back at the start of 1986, the Soviet Union formulated a clear programme for the stage-by-stage deliverance of the world from

nuclear weapons by the end of the current century. That programme won the support of all sensible people in the world. The Soviet State not only called for a new mode of political thinking but is translating that thinking into concrete decisions and actions. This was illustrated especially graphically by the Reykjavik meeting, at which the Soviet side did everything possible to reach accords which could change the light to green on the road to a nuclear-free world. It was only through the fault of the Washington Administration, which was feeling the military-

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Mikhail Gorbachev answers American journalist's questions

HERE follows the full text of Mikhail Gorbachev's answers to questions put by US journalist Joseph Kingsbury-Smith on December 31, 1986.

QUESTION: What would you like to tell the American people on the occasion of the New Year 1987?

ANSWER: I would like, first of all, to say that Soviet people want to live in peace with the Americans and do not feel any hostility to them. On behalf of the leadership of the USSR I could add that when working out our policy on matters of war and peace we are as honest with the American people as with our own people.

Our age—that of nuclear weapons and high speeds, and of growing economic and political interdependence—rules out the security of one to the detriment or at the expense of the security of another. I shall repeat once again: only together can we perish or survive. Security nowadays is conceivable only as mutual or, to be more exact, as universal.

So, whether we like one another or not, it is essential to learn to coexist, to live in peace on this tiny and very fragile planet.

QUESTION: Are you in favour of continuing the Geneva talks between Soviet and US representatives in 1987 with a view to achieving progress in matters pertaining to limiting and reducing arms?

ANSWER: Yes, we are. We are for talks which would get out of the state of being fruitless and inert and would acquire real dynamism or, in a

word, become real talks on reducing nuclear arms and on preventing an arms race in outer space.

We pressed for this in Reykjavik and we shall press for it still more vigorously in 1987. I am convinced that a radical turn in the talks would meet the vital interests of the American people as well.

At the same time the US Administration's stand on this issue disappoints us deeply. Following the Reykjavik summit, the American delegation in Geneva even moved backwards.

Although the USSR has not conducted nuclear explosions for a year and a half, the United States continued tests and declined to negotiate a full ban on them, and this despite the fact that the USA undertook to conduct such negotiations under two treaties, those dated 1963 and 1974. The defiant act of the abandonment of the important Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT-2) by the White House was added to that in November. Deliberately and pointedly wrecking old treaties does not help the conduct of successful talks on new agreements. This is a serious problem which deserves the closest attention.

I reaffirm once again: we are for agreements on the most radical reduction in arms, both nuclear and conventional. Now the ball is in Washington's court.

QUESTION: Provided the two sides show mutual flexibility, do you envision a possibility of reaching a compromise agreement during the next two years on anti-missile defence matters, if there is an accord on non-deployment of a space-based strategic defence system within a mutually agreed-upon period of time?

ANSWER: Under all conditions, nothing should

be done which would erode or undermine the ABM Treaty. That would deprive us of any hopes for a reduction in nuclear arsenals and would upset strategic stability.

We are for the ABM Treaty of unlimited duration signed in 1972 to be maintained and maintained indefinitely. Article 15 of the Treaty envisages only one cause for denouncing it: extraordinary events jeopardising the supreme interests of a party to the Treaty. It depends only on the two of us, the Soviet Union and the United States, for such extraordinary events never to occur.

We regret that the US Administration adheres to a different line, which allows for a possibility of the US abandoning the ABM Treaty if it deems this advantageous to itself during the implementation of the SDI programme.

The Soviet Union is not just for the preservation of the ABM Treaty but is for consolidating it. This is precisely what would be promoted by an accord with the USA on defining the limits on allowed laboratory research in the ABM field, as is being suggested by the Soviet side.

This Treaty is important in itself but it is doubly important because without this Treaty it is impossible to reach agreements on cuts in strategic nuclear arms.

So, on this issue, too, things depend not on us but on Washington. People in Washington should finally decide in utter clarity what they want: a runaway arms race or reduction and elimination of weapons? No one will do this for the American Government or instead of it. A good deal depends on this choice, including for the peace and well-being of the American people. We wish peace and well-being to them, just as of course to all other peoples. □

Mikhail Gorbachev's message to Swedish peace campaigners

ON December 29 representatives of the Embassy of the USSR in Sweden met Ambassador Inga Tursson, a prominent Swedish public and political figure and former leader of Sweden's delegation at the Geneva-based UN Committee for Disarmament, and handed over to her a reply from Mikhail Gorbachev to the participants in the "Great Peace Journey".

This large-scale anti-war action was initiated by the women's organisations of the Swedish peace movement.

Inga Tursson chairs the board of the "Great Peace Journey".

The purpose of the peace journey was to attract the attention of the heads of state and government of various countries in all continents of the world to the need to take steps aimed at introducing a complete ban on the production, deployment and use of all types of weapons of mass destruction, first of all nuclear arms, at settling all international conflicts by peaceful means, and at using resources in the interests of progress and solving the urgent problems of mankind.

During the "Great Peace Journey", which began in Stockholm in May 1985 and had three stages, the peace campaigners requested the

heads of state and government of many countries of all continents to express their points of view on these matters, and in most cases received replies to the requests.

Mikhail Gorbachev's reply to the participants in the "Great Peace Journey" says:

"Your intention to find out the readiness of the governments of all UN member nations to promote the cause of peace and people's security is an important and useful undertaking.

"Mankind has approached the line when the task of removing the nuclear danger, curtailing the arms race and laying down the foundations of universal security has become utterly urgent.

"The elimination of all types of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear ones; a reduction in military activity everywhere; settlement of arising conflicts by peaceful means; the use of the latest advances in science and technology for the benefit of all the peoples in the world and the guarantee of the right of every people to manage their own resources in the name of meeting man's basic needs. All these are important elements in the building of a safe world.

"The Soviet Union proves in words and deeds its profound interest in the solution of all these urgent problems and for the sake of this is ready to co-operate with all countries, political and social forces.

"By giving priority to values common to the

whole of mankind, you reaffirm the vital power of the new thinking and new approach to the realities of the nuclear-missile age. It is possible to avert the nuclear threat and guarantee mankind's survival only through the common efforts of the entire international community."

Inga Tursson told a TASS correspondent that she regarded the Soviet leader's reply as "a convincing illustration of the support for the goals of our peace journey.

"The peoples of all countries have the absolute right to ask the governments what they are doing for the observance of the UN Charter. In this lay one of the principal aims of the 'Great Peace Journey'. This is why it is highly gratifying that Mikhail Gorbachev responded to our questions. It is very positive that the Soviet political leadership strives to abide by the UN Charter and by the goals proclaimed in it." Inga Tursson stressed. □

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industrial complex breathing down its neck, that an historic chance was missed."

"Reykjavik, however, is not merely a reminder of missed opportunities. The vantage point of Reykjavik offers a view of prospects for accords capable of averting the war threat from the world as a whole. And the USSR is working perseveringly and will continue to work for such prospects." □

Mikhail Gorbachev speaks at meeting at CPSU Central Committee

A MEETING with the heads of the national ministries and departments, devoted to the results of work in 1986 and the tasks facing the country in the second year of the five-year plan period, took place at the CPSU Central Committee on December 24.

Opening the meeting, Mikhail Gorbachev said that one could not fail to see positive change in the country at the end of the first year of the five year period. There is every indication that the basic targets of the national economic development plan will be met.

Quite a few problems remain, however. Social issues have not yet merited the proper attention in a number of industries and regions. Ministries often concentrate attention primarily on production and have none to spare for social problems. Mikhail Gorbachev stressed that production and the national economy as a whole could not be advanced without an energetic social policy.

Not all ministries have yet become the true headquarters of scientific and technological progress. Improvements in the technical standards of output in some industries are too slow. State quality inspectorates are being established now. They are called upon to improve matters but there is still much work ahead, Mikhail Gorbachev said.

The forthcoming year of 1987 has a number of specific characteristics of principle, he continued. It is the year of the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, the decisive year of the five-year period, in which levers of self-financing and full-scale cost-accounting will go into effect in a number of industries and at many plants and amalgamations. The construction industry, light industry, agri-industry, services and retail trade will be converted to new principles of operation. Measures to improve external economic relations will begin to be implemented.

Good headway is to be made in the economy in the reconstruction and modernisation of production, in research, design and development

work and in the large-scale application of the new mechanisms of control and management, Mikhail Gorbachev said.

Speakers at the meeting noted that the industries were now setting aside more than 10 per cent of capital investment in production development for the construction of housing, childcare centres and for the solution of other social problems—yet progress in that field was nevertheless too slow. Emphasis was laid on the need to introduce direct-labour construction methods more energetically.

Summing up the discussion, Mikhail Gorbachev said that the process of reorganisation in society was constantly gaining momentum. It is being energetically supported by the entire people.

Participants in the meeting included Nikolai Ryzhkov, member of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee and Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, and Lev Zaikov and Yegor Ligachev, members of the Political Bureau and Secretaries of the CPSU Central Committee. □

MEETINGS OF THE POLITICAL BUREAU

AT its meeting on December 25 the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee approved the results of the talks between Mikhail Gorbachev and Najib, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan.

It was noted that the atmosphere and the content of the talks confirms the durable good-neighbourly relations that have taken shape between the two countries in history and their allegiance to the principles of equality and mutual respect. Satisfaction was expressed at the fruitful development of friendly and mutually beneficial co-operation between the USSR and the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

It was reiterated that in compliance with the course charted by the 27th CPSU Congress the USSR will continue to do everything that depends on it to ensure the development of Soviet-Afghan relations in the future, in the interests of the peoples of both countries and in the interests of the security of all countries in the region.

The Political Bureau emphasised that the sympathies and support of the Soviet people are and will always be on the side of the Afghan people, who are courageously resisting attempts by international imperialism and regional reactionary forces to deprive them of their right to build life at their own discretion.

Full support was expressed for the Afghan leadership's efforts to pursue a policy of national reconciliation, to build a sovereign, independent and non-aligned Afghanistan.

A political settlement of the situation around the DRA on the basis of the termination and guaranteed non-resumption of outside interference should be achieved as quickly as possible. This will accordingly speed up the return home of the limited contingent of Soviet troops staying in that country at the request of its government.

The Political Bureau heard a report by Yegor Ligachev on the participation of a CPSU delegation in the work of the 6th Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam, and on meetings and conversations with Nguyen Van Linh, General Secretary of the CPV Central Committee and other Vietnamese leaders.

With due regard for the results of the 6th CPV Congress and the conversations held in Hanoi, Soviet ministries and agencies have been instructed to work out jointly with the relevant Vietnamese organisations concrete measures for further improving economic, scientific and technical co-operation between the USSR and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and steadily increasing its effectiveness.

The Political Bureau analysed questions connected with the creation and activities in the USSR of joint enterprises and amalgamations in which Soviet and foreign organisations and firms are to participate.

It was pointed out during the discussion of that question that the creation of the above-mentioned amalgamations is a component part of the measures for improving the foreign economic performance of the USSR and deepening international co-operation, that were being taken in accordance with decisions of the 27th CPSU Congress. The Political Bureau approved the organisational, economic and legal foundations for further developing the joint production activities of Soviet enterprises and their partners from socialist as well as from capitalist and developing countries.

The Political Bureau heard Mikhail Solomentsev's account of his trip to Alma Ata, and his meetings and talks with Party and government officials, staff of industrial plants and offices and students of higher educational establishments. It was noted that the Party organisations, the Communists and the working people of Kazakhstan are actively supporting the resolutions of the recent plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan and are working hard to accelerate the socio-economic development of the republic and improve living and working conditions. Party and Komsomol members and other working people strongly denounce at meetings the recent manifestations of nationalism in Alma Ata and demand punishment for those who incited them. Authorities are investigating the instigators of the disorders, hooligans and parasitic elements.

The Political Bureau discussed some other issues of economic and social policies and the foreign policy activities of the Party and the state.

AT its meeting on January 6 the Political Bureau discussed and approved a programme of measures to implement the proposals made at the working meeting in Moscow of the leaders of the communist and workers' parties of CMEA member countries.

Having studied the results of Nikolai Ryzhkov's talks with the Chairman of Hungary's Council of Ministers, Gyorgi Lazar, the Political Bureau noted that the successful solution of the tasks of accelerating the social and economic development of the Soviet Union and the Hungarian People's Republic should be facilitated by raising the effectiveness of Soviet-Hungarian co-operation, by imparting modern qualities to it on the basis of more profound specialisation and more extensive use of new progressive forms of co-production, scientific and technical co-operation.

The Political Bureau studied proposals connected with carrying out the reorganisation of higher and secondary specialised education worked out in accordance with the guidelines of the 27th CPSU Congress.

The documents that were discussed outline measures to substantially raise the standard of training specialists with a higher education and using them in the national economy. In this connection it is intended to change radically the process of instruction and education and switch to training specialists with a broad general knowledge on the basis of mastering fundamental scientific and professional knowledge and vigorous co-operation with relevant enterprises, amalgamations and organisations. It is intended to create a new organisational and economic mechanism of interaction between the higher school and branches of the national economy based on the specialised training and retraining of personnel under contract and partially financed by industry.

Also discussed at the meeting of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee were some other questions of economic development, ideological work and foreign policy activity directed at easing international tension and promoting equal co-operation and mutually advantageous relations with all countries. □

Nikolai Ryzhkov's speech in Helsinki

Nikolai Ryzhkov, member of the CPSU Central Committee and Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, who is now on an official visit to Finland, made a speech on January 6 at a dinner held in his honour by the President of Finland, Mauno Koivisto. He said:

FIRST of all I should like to express sincere gratitude for the welcome and hospitality accorded to us in the capital of our northern neighbour, the Republic of Finland. We regard this as a manifestation of respect for the Soviet Union and its people on the part of the leadership and public of Finland.

In our fast-moving age, in the complicated international situation, contacts and close ties between states, and especially between neighbours, have become more than ever before a primary political need. To lay down guidelines for co-operation, bring out common approaches to the key problems of the time, to compare plans for practical actions in order to solve them—all this is especially important at a time when Europe and the entire world have found themselves at a crucial historical crossroads, when every state is required to formulate its position on the vitally important global issue of preserving and strengthening peace.

It is with this thought in mind that we began today our visit to friendly Finland, after gratefully accepting an invitation from its President and government. A visit which is a continuation of the good and time-tested practice of a dialogue between the leaderships of the two states, a practice which was given a great impetus by the Moscow meeting between General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Mikhail Gorbachev and President Mauno Koivisto in September 1985.

What we regard as a salient feature of the new Soviet-Finnish meeting is the fact that it ushers in, as it were, a year of jubilee events of great historical and political significance for our countries.

Good-neighbourly relations between the USSR and the Republic of Finland were started by the decree, signed by Vladimir Ilyich Lenin on December 31, 1917, on the recognition of the independence of Finland as a state, a decree embodying a living connection between the Great October Socialist Revolution and the birth of an independent Finnish state.

Following Lenin's behests, the Soviet Union invariably proceeds from the need to strengthen in every way mutual trust with Finland. It is on this basis that a turn, an irreversible one, was made by joint efforts in relations between our countries in the post-war period. The 1948 Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Assistance, which has been retaining its political importance and viability for almost four decades now and which was prolonged to the beginning of next century, has become a concentrated expression of trust between the two countries.

Our frontier with Finland is today a frontier of peace and good-neighbourliness and we have mutual understanding on a wide range of international problems, to say nothing of questions of our bilateral relations. All this rests on a sound foundation, that of trust in each other's policy. Our talks today with President Mauno Koivisto confirmed that the leadership of Finland understands well Soviet foreign policy, just as we understand the policy of Finland. And if there is something we do not fully understand we quickly find a way to clarify a problem. There is no need to say how important this is in interstate relations.

I will say directly: the Soviet leadership, our people, have great trust in the foreign policy line of the Finnish leadership and see that it is directed at continuing the policy of friendship

with our country, ensuring the stability of the principled course, to the formulation and consolidation of which your outstanding predecessor Urho Kekkonen made such a great contribution. This time-tested foreign policy of Finland enjoys well-deserved prestige in the world arena.

For their part the people of Finland can be confident that relations with friendly Finland will remain one of the priority directions of the Soviet State's European policy.

I must also say that in Soviet-Finnish relations mutual trust is not a prerogative of the leaderships of the two countries. A consistent observance by the two sides of the principles of equality, respect for sovereignty, non-interference, a considerate attitude to each other's concerns and interests and broadening of human contacts have all resulted in the fact that confidence has begun to determine today, in growing measure, the attitude of our peoples to each other. In the final count, this is the main thing.

The solid foundation of mutual confidence also determines the prospects of Soviet-Finnish relations. Our present and future successes in economic co-operation and in the search for new forms of co-operation are inseparable from it. Shortly before our visit Soviet organisations and Finnish firms started a new line of co-operation by beginning work on designing a number of joint enterprises. And we set great store by the fact that in this matter we have appropriate mutual understanding with the Government of Finland and personally the Prime Minister, Mr Kalevi Sorsa.

No doubt it would be hard to imagine without growing mutual trust the level of contacts we have reached in the cultural and other fields, contacts of great importance for bringing our two peoples closer together. Also developing on this basis is our political dialogue in the interests of peace, detente and disarmament.

Soviet-Finnish relations convincingly demonstrate the advantages and prospects of the policy of peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems.

It must be noted that the Soviet Union and Finland are not just following a path once beaten. Our countries, actively and constantly developing and enriching political, economic, scientific, technical and cultural ties and humanitarian contacts between them, are widening the framework of the policy of peaceful coexistence, lending it a new quality and setting an example in carrying out accords recorded in the Helsinki Final Act. Now, too, we are looking for new forms of co-operation, forms most promising in view of the requirements of the present stage of the scientific and technical revolution.

We are not of course going to absolutise the model of Soviet-Finnish relations. But one cannot fail to see that the principles underlying our co-operation and its successes assume special significance today when attempts are made in certain countries to call in question the very possibility of peaceful, equitable relations between states, to toughen the line for confrontation and for undermining international confidence.

The past year was full of big events in world politics and keen struggle between political forces of opposite trends.

Peace and detente, disarmament and development and assertion of new principles in the mentality and life of the world community have been and remain the keystones of Soviet foreign policy. The concept of creating a nuclear-

free world, put forward in a statement by Mikhail Gorbachev on January 15, 1986, opened a new chapter in the struggle for the survival of mankind. During the year that followed, the philosophy of new political thinking, as expressed in that statement, began to materialise in international relations, in practical politics. One example of this is the Delhi Declaration signed by the leaders of the USSR and India in November last year.

The concept of an all-embracing international security system, advanced by the 27th Congress of the CPSU, aims to block all channels for the rise of tensions in international relations and to ensure favourable conditions for the peaceful co-operation of all peoples. Supported by the majority of UN member states, this concept now lives and works.

The Soviet-American meeting in Reykjavik undoubtedly became a new historical landmark in the struggle against the nuclear and space threat. Although some people in the West would like very much to pretend that there was no Reykjavik, no accords reached there, it is clear that there can be no return to the old situation in the world. It is only from the heights marked by the historic meeting that the key problem of disarmament can now be tackled.

Among the notable landmarks of the past year was the successful conclusion of the Stockholm Conference. It convincingly demonstrated the viability of the all-European process started here in Helsinki. Now it is important that the Vienna meeting further speed up this process and push it ahead in all directions.

The Soviet Union believes that it is necessary to go over, without wasting time, to considering questions of disarmament in the continent, including reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments from the Atlantic to the Urals, as was suggested by the states of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation.

Large-scale economic and ecological problems are awaiting their solution, and here we note with satisfaction Finland's activity in this field. Closer and broader co-operation in the humanitarian field should also serve to strengthen moral guarantees of preserving peace. Our proposal for holding in Moscow a representative conference on the entire package of humanitarian problems is oriented precisely towards such co-operation.

Peace and security in Europe, and elsewhere in the world, are indivisible and interconnected. Therefore the Soviet Union comes out for the preservation of stability in the north of Europe and supports Finland's proposals for establishing a nuclear-free zone in the region and for carrying out far-reaching confidence-building measures there and on the adjoining seas. The Soviet Union not only supports but, as is known, takes concrete steps in this direction.

Soviet-Finnish co-operation has always been and remains clearly oriented towards peace and detente. Our countries share a high sense of responsibility and a common desire to work for achieving these aims. And this is a promising basis by relying on which we shall actively work further.

To the further consolidation of friendship, confidence and co-operation between the Soviet Union and Finland!

To the health of the President of the Republic of Finland, Mauno Koivisto, and Mrs Tellervo Koivisto!

We wish prosperity to the friendly people of Finland in conditions of stable peace and progress! □

Nikolai Ryzhkov replies to questions from TASS correspondent

Here follow the replies given by Nikolai Ryzhkov to questions put by a TASS correspondent on January 5:

QUESTION: In June 1986 you sent a letter to the UN Secretary-General on the issue of promoting international co-operation in preventing an arms race in outer space and in the peaceful exploration of space. The letter set forth a three-phase programme for joint practical action by states in studying and using outer space for peaceful purposes, which provided, in particular, for setting up a world space organisation. What is the significance of this programme and what direct contribution will the Soviet Union be prepared to make to its realisation?

ANSWER: Our programme is a call for co-operation, which is addressed to all countries without exception. Underlying it is the deep conviction that developing large-scale international co-operation in the peaceful exploration of outer space is a constructive alternative to the ominous plans of extending the arms race to outer space. The salient features of our programme include its far-reaching goals, solid material nature and division in phases to be implemented by concrete deadlines, in other words, its realisability.

The programme aims to pool the efforts of as many countries as possible to advance the peaceful exploration of outer space. This should be done on a fair and equal basis, taking account of the present level of development of space technology and prospects in this field, as well as of the real needs of the countries involved in this co-operation.

It is this approach that marks the proposal, made by Mikhail Gorbachev in his address to the Parliament of India, for establishing, with the help of the leading space powers, an international centre to perform joint research and develop space technology at the request of developing countries, which would be complete with a school to train specialists from these countries, including cosmonauts, and space launch facilities. We expect this proposal to be carefully studied by all interested countries. Its realisation can be a landmark in laying the foundations of 'Star Peace'.

We attach much significance to the idea, put forward by the USSR in the United Nations, of founding a world space organisation. This would help elevate international co-operation in the peaceful exploration of outer space to a qualitatively new, higher level, having in mind the implementation, under the aegis of this organisation, of major international projects in various fields of space science and applied cosmonautics.

Our country intends to take a most active part in fulfilling all phases of the suggested programme. In this connection I would like to draw special attention to the Soviet Union's declared readiness to exchange its achievements in outer space with all countries and to launch peaceful spacecraft of other countries and international organisations with the help of

Soviet carrier rockets on mutually acceptable terms.

QUESTION: What technical systems does the Soviet Union plan to use for such launches?

ANSWER: The Soviet Union has carriers of several types and so we can orbit most different spacecraft. Experts single out rockets of the Proton class as the most promising in this respect. They have been extensively used in the USSR and proved themselves to be most reliable and versatile. The Protons have quite a service record, including for example the launches of *Venera*-, *Mars*- and *Vega*-type interplanetary probes, communications satellites in the Ekran, Raduga and Gorizont series, and the new Soviet orbiting station *Mir*.

We can also use other kinds of rockets for lift-off purposes, in particular the triple-stage *Soyuz* or the small single-stage *Vertikal* which is fitted with a return equipment container. These carriers have also acquitted themselves well in our space programme.

Another possibility includes mounting foreign instruments on Soviet satellites and space stations. The space station *Mir* offers broad possibilities in this field. The new Soviet station, as is known, has six docking ports. This means that it will soon be possible to link it up with up to five orbital modules, each weighing up to 21 tonnes. These will become a kind of specialised research laboratory or production shop in orbit.

QUESTION: It is meant in this case that the Soviet Union will launch foreign spacecraft on commercial terms. In this connection it has been alleged abroad that the Soviet Union is seeking to take advantage of the known difficulties which have arisen in the space programmes of Western countries to further its own selfish ends, that is, simply speaking, to profit by these difficulties. It has even been asserted that the Soviet Union intends to use the launches of foreign spacecraft as a cover for prying into the secrets of Western technology and that a satellite brought into the USSR from abroad would generally cease to belong to its builders. What can you say on this score?

ANSWER: It is against our principles to cash in on others' errors and setbacks. Our proposal for launches of foreign spacecraft by Soviet carriers has been prompted by a desire to advance space exploration and make efficient use for these purposes of Soviet rockets and other space technology, which have repeatedly demonstrated their high standards and dependability.

As it enters the international market of space technology and services the Soviet Union, of course, cannot but reckon with the laws of this market. It is only natural that we expect to make some gains. At the same time we shall be seeking to make the launch terms mutually advantageous, both to us and to the clients. When orbiting spacecraft for developing countries, the Soviet Union is prepared to grant them substantial discounts. Soviet financial organisations can also insure the payload.

As to the claims about our dependence on foreign technology which are being made in a bid to justify the "embargo" on technology exports to the USSR, I can say with confidence that those willing ill to this country clearly engage in wishful thinking in this respect. The world has been able to see on more than one occasion that Soviet scientists and designers can develop, and do develop, the most advanced equipment which is at least on a par with the best foreign systems.

As I have already said, we shall, when launching foreign spacecraft, sign commercial contracts on the basis of mutual trust. I can declare officially that Soviet State agencies will give clients the necessary guarantees of safety for their spacecraft throughout their stay in the territory of the USSR—from the moment they cross the border till boost-off. We are prepared to exempt equipment intended for a space launch from inspection by customs and permit its passage across the territory of the USSR to the cosmodrome in a sealed container, if this is more convenient for the client. Foreign specialists will be able to escort their spacecraft and watch it being transported and installed on a carrier rocket. It goes without saying that representatives of the client will be allowed into the cosmodrome concerned. In short, we proceed from the conviction that the client, who has signed a contract with us for the launch of his equipment by a Soviet carrier rocket, should suffer neither financially nor from the standpoint of keeping his technological and other secrets.

In conclusion I would like to stress once again that we stand for co-operation that would be open and accessible to all, be free from any discrimination and bring palpable benefits to peoples. We stand for this co-operation to pave the way for mankind into the third millennium of peace and for the landmarks on this path to be represented by major joint projects connected with the peaceful uses of outer space and by outstanding discoveries made thanks to joint efforts by all countries. □

Soviet military leaders for peace

SOVIET veteran military leaders, who made a substantial contribution to the victory over Nazi Germany, are perfectly aware of the risks of a military conflict in the nuclear space age, said speakers at the founding meeting of a new public group, Soviet Retired Generals and Admirals for Peace and Disarmament, which took place in Moscow on December 25.

Many retired senior officers have joined the peace movement in different countries. A group of former NATO generals and admirals called Generals for Peace and Disarmament have been making anti-war efforts in Western Europe since 1981. Co-operation was started between them and some retired military leaders of the Warsaw Treaty countries, including the USSR, and

several meetings have been held in Vienna.

Seeking to increase their practical contribution to the security of the peoples, a group of Soviet generals and admirals decided to unite organisationally. On so doing, they expressed the desire to strengthen contacts with associations of retired officers in other countries. The new public group intends to work towards the goals and tasks of the Soviet peace movement.

The group has approved a programme of activities for the next two years. Soviet military leaders will take part in national and international campaigns for averting nuclear war, preventing the militarisation of space and developing an all-embracing system of international security. □

SOVIET GOVERNMENT STATEMENT

ALMOST eighteen months have passed since the Soviet Union, desirous of contributing towards an end to the dangerous rivalry in building up the nuclear arms arsenals and setting a good example for the other nuclear powers, decided to halt unilaterally all nuclear explosions and called upon the US to join in that action.

Although the Soviet Union was making serious sacrifices in terms of its own security by extending its moratorium on nuclear explosions again and again, that unilateral measure has played an exceptionally important role in international affairs. It has given practical substance to the question of ending nuclear testing and to other issues of terminating the nuclear arms race. The moratorium has shown in practice that it is possible to take steps effectively to raise barriers in the way of the nuclear arms race.

It is deeply regrettable that the current US Administration has never given a positive response to the Soviet Union's appeal for joining its peace initiative. Totally ignoring the demands of the world community made in resolutions of the UN General Assembly, the calls of the Non-Aligned Movement, the proposals of the leaders of the 'Delhi Six' and the views of parliaments and the world public, the United States is stubbornly going ahead with its nuclear weapon test programmes.

The United States has been trying to camouflage its unwillingness to halt nuclear testing with "arguments" of every sort, such as the impossibility of effectively verifying that measure. It is perfectly clear, however, that it is a far-fetched pretext. The Soviet Union is ready for any most strict measure of verification in that field, and this has been pointed out on more than one occasion at the highest level. Such verification would have been fully ensured both by national technical means and by international procedures, including on-site inspections. The

Soviet Union has voiced its readiness to use the assistance offered by the 'Delhi Six' countries in verifying compliance with a nuclear test ban. It has also offered the United States to consider establishing a supra-national verification system on the international level.

The US reaction to all those constructive steps by the Soviet Union graphically shows that the real stumbling block is not verification. The true reason for the US refusal to join the Soviet moratorium—and Washington can no longer conceal it—is that the US is openly banking on gaining military superiority over the Soviet Union and other socialist countries through developing basically new types and systems of weaponry. Not only new nuclear warheads but also space-strike weapons and nuclear-pumped X-ray lasers under the SDI programme are being developed in the course of the nuclear tests conducted by the United States. Work is being done to produce weapons of a basically new type that would be capable of hitting targets in outer space and on Earth.

Naturally, if anyone would like to develop ever more sophisticated nuclear weapons and go ahead with 'Star Wars' programmes, thus extending the arms race to new areas, he has no use for the moratorium. It is the unwillingness to renounce plans to achieve military superiority through outer space that explains the consistently negative attitude of the US Administration towards the Soviet Union's proposals of full-scale talks to ban nuclear testing for all time.

There is still no sign of US readiness to follow the Soviet example and halt nuclear testing. Moreover, the American nuclear testing programme continues to go ahead at the same high pace. The United States has carried out 20 officially announced and unannounced nuclear weapon tests while the Soviet moratorium has been in effect and while the Soviet test sites have been quiet.

At a time when the United States stubbornly continues to fulfil its nuclear test programme to develop new nuclear weapons and build them up,

the Soviet Union cannot show unilateral restraint indefinitely. If this situation is continued, grave damage can be caused to the security of the USSR and its allies.

Having thoroughly and comprehensively examined this matter, the Soviet leadership considers it necessary to state the following.

First. The Soviet Union proposes anew that full-scale talks on a total nuclear test ban can be started immediately. It is prepared to hold such talks in any composition and at any forum, naturally with the participation of the United States. Questions of verification should be resolved at these talks in a way ensuring dependable compliance with an eventual accord. As talks on a total nuclear test ban go on, the Soviet Union would be prepared to seek agreement on the stage-by-stage accomplishment of that task with a view to ratification of the 1974 and 1976 Soviet-American treaties and the introduction of interim limits on the number and yield of nuclear explosions.

Second. The USSR is prepared to continue to respect its moratorium. Yet it will resume nuclear testing after the first nuclear explosion carried out by the US next year.

Third. If the US stops nuclear testing, the USSR will be prepared to halt its testing programme on a reciprocal basis on any day of any month.

The Soviet Union's decision to terminate its moratorium after the first US nuclear explosion next year is a forced measure, dictated exclusively by security interests. The USSR remains a convinced advocate of a total nuclear test ban as the most important priority measure on the road to the main goal, that of containing the nuclear arms race and of the eventual total abolition of nuclear weapons. As before, the USSR will be working energetically to accomplish that goal. It is convinced that its position on this matter will be properly understood and supported by all the peace forces in the world. □

Moscow, December 18, TASS

Press conference at Soviet Embassy in Washington

THE Soviet Union consistently stands for a complete termination of all nuclear tests as a very important first and effective step towards achieving the main goal—curbing the race in nuclear arms and ensuring their subsequent complete elimination.

This principled stand was confirmed at a press conference held in the Embassy of the USSR in Washington on December 19.

"The Soviet Union's unilateral moratorium on all nuclear explosions, introduced in August of 1985, has been repeatedly extended and has now been in force for almost a year and a half," said Yuri Dubinin, Ambassador of the USSR to the US. "The introduction of the moratorium was not an easy step for us. There is a serious stake involved here in terms of the security of the Soviet Union and its allies."

"In our view, the moratorium was and is one of the most effective practical measures contributing to the stopping of a dangerous competition in the build up of nuclear arsenals, and a good example to other nuclear powers

inviting them to act in the same direction. We have repeatedly called upon the United States to join us in this action," he added.

"It is well known what the United States response was. Nuclear explosions continue in Nevada, while the Soviet test ranges remain silent. During the moratorium the United States conducted 24 nuclear tests. In other words, the United States continues to modernise its nuclear weapons.

"The US tried to justify its unwillingness to discontinue nuclear testing by arguing, in particular, that it is impossible to verify this measure effectively. This is a fictional pretext. The Soviet Union is ready for the strictest measures of verification in this field. And this has been repeatedly stated at the highest level," Yuri Dubinin emphasised.

"In an effort to optimally preserve an atmosphere favourable to achieving a complete ban on nuclear weapon tests the Soviet Union again proposes that full-scale negotiations be started immediately on a complete ban on nuclear tests," Yuri Dubinin specially emphasised.

"The Soviet Union is prepared to conduct such negotiations with any parties and at any forum,

naturally with the participation of the United States. The USSR is willing to further adhere to its moratorium. However, it will have to resume nuclear testing following the first US nuclear explosion next year. Should the US discontinue nuclear testing, the USSR will be ready and willing any day or month to stop the carrying out of its programme of such tests on a mutual basis.

"I would like to emphasise that the Soviet Union intends to go on working toward an early achievement of a complete ban on all nuclear tests," the Ambassador of the USSR said. □

Nuclear test ban appeal

THE Soviet Committee for European Security and Co-operation has called upon various social and political forces, organisations and individuals in Western Europe, the US and Canada to step up their efforts for an end to nuclear testing. The Committee drew the attention of their partners to the fact that in the present situation the peace forces of Europe and the world as a whole could take broad and efficient measures to block another nuclear explosion planned by the US. If that goal were accomplished, the document says, the resumption of Soviet nuclear testing would be out of the question. □

Eduard Shevardnadze's speech in Kabul

"THE Soviet leadership, including Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, personally, have sent us here to convey to you the Soviet Union's sincere desire to give every kind of assistance to the policy of national reconciliation," Eduard Shevardnadze, member of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee and Foreign Minister of the USSR, said in a speech in Kabul on January 6.

He was speaking at a reception given by Najib, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA).

"We hail the principles of national reconciliation as outlined by Comrade Najib in his report to a plenum of the PDPA Central Committee.

"The ceasefire proposal has been a noble and prescient gesture.

"And we hope that it will be supported by all opposing forces in Afghanistan.

"A ceasefire is an indispensable prerequisite condition for the rumble of guns to give way to the voice of reason and for the warring sides to get together at a common threshold of accord and be able to discuss the peaceful future of their country without interference," Eduard Shevardnadze said.

"As far as we, your long-standing and loyal friends, are concerned, you may rest assured that there is hardly anybody else in the world having a stronger wish than we do for success with national reconciliation in Afghanistan.

"This is because this success will mean peace in a country which is our neighbour, and hence peace for us too.

"It will also mean an early return to their homeland by the Soviet troops, by all our lads who are being awaited back home so eagerly, anxiously and hopefully by their mothers, fathers, wives, brides and workmates.

"When enemies set a neighbour's house afire, when he calls for help, one responds to the call immediately. This is what the Soviet Union has done, by meeting a request from the Afghan leadership.

"And as friends today find ways and means of putting the fire out on their own, we give them every kind of support in their intent and, for our part, activate negotiating efforts, be it in Geneva, Islamabad or New York, in all mediatory activities of the UN Secretary-General's personal envoy," the Soviet Foreign Minister said.

"The New Year is remarkable in that it carries a new idea which generates new hope.

"It can demolish the walls of enmity, fill up the ditches of distrust and build the bridges of understanding.

"The programme formulated by Comrade Najib in his New-Year speech is nothing other

than a practical example of a new political philosophy, of a new mode of political thinking, which go beyond the class, tribal and religious considerations to procure and preserve the supreme value of life—peace—for the people," Eduard Shevardnadze said.

"National reconciliation and a political settlement meet the interests of not only the Afghan people. They are definitely beneficial for its neighbours.

"We are convinced that the countries neighbouring on Afghanistan are interested in peace and accord arriving on Afghan soil.

"People do not choose their neighbours, but it is by their own choice that they become enemies. It is imperative that yesterday's foes choose to be good neighbours.

"Afghanistan is extending a conciliatory hand also to its neighbours. They will do wisely if they do not push it away," the Soviet Foreign Minister said.

"He who really wishes well to Afghanistan should give real help to a political settlement. It is feasible and closer than ever before," he added.

"The New Year can and should mark the start of new relations between Afghanistan and all its neighbours and of its growing stronger as a sovereign, independent country pursuing a policy of neutrality and non-alignment," Eduard Shevardnadze said. □

Pravda on Afghanistan

THE popular system of government in Democratic Afghanistan took an important step towards achieving peace and calm on Afghan soil when the country's Revolutionary Council proclaimed the start of talks with the opposing side on national reconciliation, the Soviet newspaper *Pravda* said on January 6.

Pravda said every condition was being created for the commencement of the negotiations. From January 15 the country's armed forces, it explained, would cease fire, suspend combat operations against the counter-revolutionaries, and limit themselves to guarding the borders and strategic facilities.

If the ceasefire was observed by the other side, it could be extended beyond the announced six-month term, the paper added in a comment datelined Kabul from Vadim Okulov.

"The started process of national reconciliation", he said, "will (given guaranteed non-interference from outside in the affairs of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and its non-resumption in the future) create favourable conditions for an early return of the limited contingent of Soviet troops to their homeland. Their withdrawal was begun recently with the return of six regiments to the USSR."

"The important step taken by the revolutionary system of government on the initiative of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan has been dictated by concern for the interests of a people who have grown tired of war.

"This step has been received with understanding in Afghanistan and elsewhere. The people see that the call for reconciliation is a manifestation of the strength of the popular system of government rather than its weakness, as the enemies are endeavouring to present it.

"Nonetheless, the process of reconciliation will be neither smooth nor easy. Counter-revolutionary extremists will definitely go all out to frustrate it.

"But the ideas of peace and constructive endeavour inspiring the true patriots have the solid backing of the Afghan people. The future belongs to them," *Pravda* said. □

TASS STATEMENT ON CHAD

Here follows the full text of a TASS statement issued on December 27:

The situation in Chad has become seriously aggravated in recent days. The developments in that African country which has been for a long time torn asunder by internecine strife are again taking a menacing turn.

It is noteworthy that imperialist powers, in the first place the United States, instead of promoting the earliest normalisation of the situation in Chad, prefer to add fuel to the fire.

According to incoming information, large batches of US arms arrive in N'djamena while French planes deliver military equipment to the zone of combat operations.

The interference increases with every passing day although imperialist powers in words

advocate restoration of peace and stability in Chad.

Certain US quarters do not conceal a desire to set up a military-political staging area for pressure on Libya from the south.

It is clear that such actions are threatening to result in the Chadian conflict's developing into a large seat of international tension.

The Soviet Union invariably comes out in favour of a peaceful settlement of the conflict by the Chadians themselves without interference from the outside, and supports the efforts of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) aimed at achieving national reconciliation in that country.

An end should be put to the imperialist interference in Chad and to attempts at putting pressure on independent African countries. □

Meeting at CPSU Central Committee on Soviet-Vietnamese relations

PROMINENT Soviet Party and state figures who participated in a meeting at the CPSU Central Committee on January 5 pointed out the successful development in recent years of the entire range of Soviet-Vietnamese relations, based on the principles of Marxism-Leninism and socialist internationalism, and sealed by the Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation between the Soviet Union and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV).

They considered matters aimed at further refining co-operation between the USSR and the SRV and at raising it effectiveness.

Matters pertaining to trade-economic and scientific-technical co-operation between the Soviet Union and Vietnam were thoroughly analysed.

It was pointed out that considerable successes had been achieved in this sphere and certain experience gained. At the same time the

increased scope of co-operation and the new stage in the two countries' development call for creative re-assessment of what had been done and for an innovative approach to the solution of urgent problems.

During the consideration of the course of implementation of the long-term programme for the development of economic, scientific and technical co-operation between the two countries, it was recognised advisable to introduce new advanced forms of co-operation more actively, use production coordination and specialisation on a wider scale and establish direct contacts between industrial enterprises and scientific institutions of the Soviet Union and Vietnam.

The meeting was addressed by Yegor Ligachev, member of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee and Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. □

Najib's speech in Kabul at Commission for National Reconciliation

A MEETING of the Supreme Extraordinary Commission for National Reconciliation was held in Kabul on January 3. It was attended by representatives of broad sections of the public, the clergy and intelligentsia. A speech was made by Najib, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan.

"On behalf of the PDPA Central Committee, the Revolutionary Council and the Government of our country," he said, "I have the honour of calling upon all of you today to commence talks on national reconciliation. We propose a ceasefire, we propose a truce, we propose peace.

"We are beginning a historic process of national reconciliation. Its principles are simple and understandable to all. The PDPA Central Committee, the Revolutionary Council and the DRA Government solemnly proclaim that starting with January 15 of this year the entire armed forces and militarised formations shall unilaterally cease fire for six months. All military and civilian authorities are being instructed to display restraint, not to give in to provocations, and firmly ensure the ceasefire and the implementation of the ceasefire at local level. And it is only in case of extreme necessity, in the event of an obvious and direct attack by the opposing side that our armed forces shall return fire.

"As we begin the process of national reconciliation we view it as a process of national revival within the framework of which such current and long-term tasks are to be solved as renunciation of armed struggle and bloodshed when solving questions of the present and future of Afghanistan; just representation in the

political structure and economic life; guarantee of non-persecution for previous political activity, nation-wide amnesty; preservation and furtherance of historical, national and cultural traditions."

"The holy religion of Islam is the religion of Afghanistan and this will be formalised in article 2 of the new constitution," Najib said. "People's power will strive to create a government of national unity with the participation of broad political forces right up to and including imparting a coalition nature to it. The speediest attainment of a political settlement around the DRA on the basis of the ending and guaranteed non-resumption of outside interference. All this would accordingly speed up the return home of the limited contingent of Soviet troops which is staying in Afghanistan at the request of the DRA Government. The concrete proposals on the mechanism of reconciliation are contained in the declaration 'On National Reconciliation in Afghanistan'."

"We seek reconciliation with all upright patriots of Afghanistan irrespective of former political views, wrongs and hostility," Najib stressed. "We seek reconciliation with political parties, groups and factions. We are prepared to welcome back to the homeland all those who could not join us before. We seek reconciliation with all armed formations inside the country. We seek reconciliation with those of our opponents who are serving terms in prisons. In a few days they will open their gates and hundreds of people, who have sincerely undertaken not to commit evil, will see the sun of freedom. We call on all Afghans living in foreign lands for reconciliation and to return home.

"We do not exclude from the process of national reconciliation the Islamic organisations and other political groupings, the leaders

of armed formations operating abroad. The extremist circles reject any talks and any steps towards reconciliation with us, and insist on a continuation of armed resistance. This is not new and we know about this. Using the sacred banner of the Prophet as a cover these people are betraying our traditional holy creed, helping international terrorist organisations. These people brazenly lie to Afghans when drawing them into the jihad. No, this is not a jihad against enemies of Islam but an unjust war against our creed, against the homeland, the tribes and the native land."

The speech by the General Secretary of the PDPA Central Committee was followed by a free exchange of views on the problem of national reconciliation. The speakers approved of the course of stopping the bloodshed and restoring peaceful life in the country.

The Declaration of the Revolutionary Council 'On National Reconciliation in Afghanistan' was read out and approved at the meeting.

The participants in the meeting adopted messages explaining the policy of national reconciliation and addressed them to the Prime Minister of India Rajiv Gandhi, the President of Iran Sayed Ali Khamenei, Imam Khomeini, the fraternal Iranian people, the 5th conference of heads of state and government of member countries of the Islamic Conference Organisation, the leadership of the People's Republic of China, the great Chinese people, the United Nations Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, the peoples and governments of the United Nations member countries, the Prime Minister of Zimbabwe and President of the Non-Aligned Movement Robert Mugabe, the leaders of the member countries of the Non-Aligned Movement, the leadership of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and the fraternal Pakistani people. □

DECLARATION ON NATIONAL RECONCILIATION IN AFGHANISTAN

A MEETING of the Revolutionary Council of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan was held in Kabul on January 3. It discussed and approved a declaration on national reconciliation in Afghanistan.

Starting on January 15 of this year, the document says, the relevant bodies of the DRA are ordered: to cease all fire, suspend combat operations; bring the troops back to the points of their permanent deployment and switch to peacetime routines; stop artillery and air strikes at the enemy if it does not pose a danger to the peaceful population; the armed forces are to limit themselves to protecting the state border, state and military installations, and the fulfilment of other purely defensive and economic tasks.

On our side the armistice will continue till July 15, 1987 on condition that it is joined by the opposite side, the declaration says further. If the armistice is observed by both sides it can be extended.

In response to our peaceful steps we expect an end to firing, with any type of weapon, on towns, settlements, enterprises, military units and air transport, an end to delivery to and deployment on the territory of the DRA of weapons and ammunition, to the mining of roads and to acts of terror and subversion.

Our proposals, the declaration stresses, come from the bottom of our hearts. We are ready for

mutual understanding, talks, compromises and even concessions. But let no one take our self-restraint for a sign of weakness.

The declaration further defines the powers and composition of the local extraordinary commissions for national reconciliation. It says that the highest body is the Supreme Extraordinary Commission for National Reconciliation in Afghanistan. The Commissions consist of leaders of the National Fatherland Front, the elders of tribes, clergymen and, in separate instances, leaders of armed formations.

When national reconciliation is attained and a settlement, county, district or province is declared a "zone of peace", the declaration says, the Revolutionary Council and Government of the DRA will ensure the population of these zones with concrete state benefits, and in particular will grant them the right to democratic organisation of local bodies of power and administration. The leaders of bandit groups arriving for talks are guaranteed safety and a safe return.

On stopping active struggle against people's power, the population of districts, counties and settlements may travel freely throughout the entire territory of the DRA with the aim of visiting relatives, performing religious rituals or if they want to learn the truth about the aims and tasks of the April Revolution. Those who wish can go to the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), the

Revolutionary Council, the Council of Ministers, to all Party, state and public bodies, and they will be warmly welcomed everywhere.

As a sign of its sincere striving for national peace and accord the Revolutionary Council of the DRA has issued a special decree announcing the release from prison of those persons who undertake not to perpetrate hostile actions against the revolutionary people.

The Revolutionary Council of the DRA officially confirms that all citizens of Afghanistan who have happened to find themselves in the camp of its enemies or who have left the country as a result of deceit but become conscious of their patriotic duty and laid down their arms will be forgiven by the homeland. The people have granted them full amnesty. They will be treated with consideration and compassion.

The Revolutionary Council of the DRA solemnly declares: the religion of Islam is the religion of Afghanistan and this will be formalised in article 2 of the new constitution. The people's power will strive for the creation of a government of national unity, up to and including the imparting of a coalition character to it by attracting broad political forces. The people's power will facilitate the creation of favourable conditions for the return home of units of the limited contingent of Soviet troops, provided that non-interference in the DRA's internal affairs from outside and its non-resumption in the future is guaranteed. □

Mikhail Solomentsev and Gennadi Kolbin in Alma Ata

MIKHAIL SOLOMENTSEV, member of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee and Chairman of the Party Control Committee under the CPSU Central Committee, and Gennadi Kolbin, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan, had a series of meetings with the people of Alma Ata on December 20. Mikhail Solomentsev was paying a visit to the capital of Kazakhstan.

They visited the central collective farm market where they familiarised themselves with the way trading was organised and with the range of goods; they talked to salesmen, rural workers and members of fruit and vegetable growing co-operatives selling surplus produce, and to the shoppers. They touched on a wide range of issues aimed at consolidating ties between the city and the countryside, enhancing the common contribution to implementing the Food Programme and meeting the growing requirements of the working people.

Mikhail Solomentsev and Gennadi Kolbin

then visited a shopping centre.

During their visits to Kazakh State University and to the Kazakh State Polytechnical Institute, Mikhail Solomentsev and Gennadi Kolbin had meetings with members of the faculties and with students. During the conversations they spoke of the need for gearing better the training of future specialists to the demands of production and to the acceleration of scientific and technological progress.

They emphasised the great significance of a concrete and comprehensive approach to matters of ideological and moral education and upbringing in the traditions of internationalism, of the consolidation of contacts with higher educational establishments in the fraternal republics and of enhancing the vigour and developing the initiative of Party, trade union and Komsomol organisations of the institutions of higher learning.

On December 21 the Council of Ministers of Kazakhstan held a meeting to examine the measures to complete successfully a programme for the development of the Republic in the first year of the current five-year plan and the preparations for the work planned next year.

Mikhail Solomentsev and Gennadi Kolbin attended the meeting.

Prime attention during the discussion was paid to ways of overcoming shortcomings in Kazakhstan's social and economic development. The need to satisfy public demand for consumer goods more fully and improve the performance of the trading industry and services was specially emphasised.

Sharp criticism was levelled at instances of complacency, irresponsibility and other negative manifestations.

Later in the day Mikhail Solomentsev and Gennadi Kolbin visited the Kazakh Agricultural Institute. They familiarised themselves with the way the teaching process is organised there, as well as with the Institute's facilities, and met its teaching staff and students. During the meeting stress was laid on the importance of substantial improvements in the process of instruction and upbringing and in the standard of training agricultural specialists, of internationalist, ideological, moral and labour education, and of suiting student training as closely as possible to the tasks of re-organising work, developing agriculture and related industries and fulfilling the Food Programme.

PRAVDA

On the 80th anniversary of Brezhnev's birth

THE newspaper *Pravda* carried on December 19 an editorial article on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the birth of Leonid Brezhnev (1906-1982).

Recalling Leonid Brezhnev's biography, the newspaper says that he was born into a worker's family in the Ukrainian city of Dneprodzerzhinsk. In common with many young people of his age, he went to work at a mill when young. After graduating from an agricultural secondary school, Leonid Brezhnev worked in the countryside. Then he returned to work at a mill, and studied at a metallurgical engineering institute. He then served in the army. In 1931 Leonid Brezhnev joined the Party.

The war against fascism was the most serious and grim trial in the destiny of the generation of Soviet people to which Leonid Brezhnev belonged, *Pravda* says. From July 1941 till the very end of the war he was among the ranks of the army in the field, took part in the battles of Novorosiisk, Rostov-on-Don, Kerch, in the Ukraine, in the battles for the liberation of the peoples of Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary, and was among the participants in the victory parade in Moscow's Red Square in 1945.

In the post-war years, Leonid Brezhnev was among those who re-built big industrial and power plants in the Ukraine. He headed the Party committees of the Zaporozhye and Dnepropetrovsk regions, and then of Moldavia. In the 1950's he worked as the Second and then the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan. Later, as Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, he took part in organising and preparing the first space flights. From 1964 and to his last day Leonid Brezhnev headed the CPSU Central Committee.

Implementing the decisions of the 23rd-26th Party Congresses held over that period, the

newspaper says, "the Soviet people made tangible advances in the economy, in culture and in the social fields. Due to the labour effort of the Soviet people a military strategic parity was ensured, which considerably limited the ability of imperialism to unleash a nuclear war. Steps were taken to improve inter-state relations and a start was made for the policy of detente. The Conference on European Security and Co-operation held in Helsinki in 1975, the proposal on whose convocation was advanced by the Soviet Union, has been a major milestone in the history of the fight for peace, against the nuclear threat. In other words, in that period the USSR's material and other potentialities considerably grew, and the potential of socialism increased", the newspaper stresses.

"Yet during the last years of Leonid Brezhnev's life and activities, a biased assessment of the achievements became widespread," the article says. "Despite the fact that the economic situation had changed, the whole acuteness and urgency of reorganisation of the management of the economy and of transferring the economy to intensive methods of development, and an active application in the economy of the achievements of scientific-technical progress were not realised. The search for ways for advancement was hampered in many ways by customary patterns and formulas which did not mirror the new realities. A gap manifested itself between word and deed. There was a lack of purposefulness and determination in practical activities.

As a result, the economic growth rates slowed down noticeably in the 1970s and in the early 1980s. A source of great concern for the Party and the people were negative processes in the distributive relations. Many negative phenomena of a social and ethical-moral order cropped up as a result of the situation which emerged in the economy," the article says.

"All this was in a considerable measure a

consequence of the serious shortcomings in the activities of the Party and government bodies. Sentiments of complacency, the anything-goes approach and an aptitude to embellish the real state of things became widespread. Exactingness in selecting and placing personnel and their responsibility for the cause entrusted to them were reduced", *Pravda* says.

"At the same time," the article goes on to note, "lack of consistent democratism, of broad openness, of criticism and self-criticism, of effective control prevented a timely exposure of the negative phenomena and a resolute struggle against what hampered Soviet society's progress. These processes were also mirrored in the ideological and propaganda work, where a formal attitude struck root and departure from life became its characteristic feature.

"The realisation of the need for a change for the better, for vigorous practical actions was maturing among the Party and the people," *Pravda* says. "Steps towards strengthening discipline, order and organisational standards were made after the November 1982 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee. By the spring of 1985, the Party had profoundly analysed the situation in society. The April 1985 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee put forward the strategy of accelerating the country's socio-economic development, the strategy of a sharp turn, of renovation and revolutionary readjustment in all areas of social life. That line was comprehensively outlined and developed at the 27th Congress of the CPSU," the newspaper stresses.

"The Party is deeply convinced of the correctness of the policy outlined by it, which enjoys the support of the Soviet people. An earnest of its successful implementation is persevering work, the unity of the Party and the people, and vigorous, concerted actions by all the working people," *Pravda* emphasises in conclusion. □

Soviet Mission on UN General Assembly results

THE 41st session of the UN General Assembly showed a growing understanding on the part of the international community of the need for urgent specific actions by states to guarantee the survival of mankind in the nuclear space-age, says a statement published on January 5 by the USSR Permanent Mission to the UN on the results of the session.

Its character qualitatively changed after the Reykjavik summit which highlighted both the chance to create a nuclear-free world and obstacles in its way, the statement went on.

The Reykjavik summit, the conference of the

heads of state and government of the non-aligned countries in Harare and the Soviet-Indian talks in New Delhi imparted a powerful impetus to the hopes of the overwhelming majority of UN member states for establishing a new mode of political thinking in international relations, oriented on tackling security problems through political means.

These hopes found their expression in a concentrated form during the discussion of the joint proposal by the socialist states, including the USSR, on establishing an all-embracing system of international peace and security, the statement points out. A resolution adopted on the initiative of the socialist states and with the active participation of many other countries sets out the framework for a direct and multilateral

dialogue on the most effective ways of guaranteeing security for all and in all spheres.

Over 100 countries voted for a search for a new and fresh approach to guaranteeing security.

Despite the opposition of the USA and some other delegations, the session concentrated on problems of peace, disarmament and security. Its most important decisions include the General Assembly's support for the Soviet moratorium on nuclear explosions, and a call on the USA and all other countries to join the moratorium and stop nuclear tests immediately. The UN spoke out firmly against shifting the arms race to space, above all against placing nuclear weapons into space. The Soviet Union voted for virtually all resolutions on disarmament and security. The USA voted against most of them. □

Yuri Kashlev on first stage of Vienna meeting

"THE exchange of views held at the all-European meeting in Vienna has demonstrated opposite approaches to the discussion of the course of implementation of the provisions of the Helsinki and Madrid accords," a press conference held in Moscow on December 23 was told by Yuri Kashlev, head of the USSR Foreign Ministry's Department for Humanitarian and Cultural Relations. Yuri Kashlev heads the Soviet delegation at Vienna.

"Some delegates," he said, "were sincerely trying to hold discussions on an equal footing. They briefed the others on what is being done in their countries to implement the Helsinki and Madrid accords, expressed constructive proposals and made critical remarks when necessary. Others struck the posture of prosecutors and spoke only about the affairs of other peoples, passing over in silence their own affairs, and were trying to warp the whole process of the Conference on European Security and Co-

operation.

"Some delegations concentrated on malicious attacks against other countries, trying in every way possible to slander their policy and practices.

"As the discussion of the military-political issues has shown, the dividing line in the approaches of the participating countries to the problems of security in Europe and the realisation of their commitments under the Final Act runs between those who, acting in the spirit of new thinking, wish to settle international problems and strengthen universal security, and those who, acting from force of inertia, are clinging tenaciously to confrontation, trying to frustrate the positive changes in the world. Figuratively speaking, this dividing line runs not between political blocs, but between political thinking.

"One of these tendencies was personified by the Soviet Union and the socialist countries. Among its milestones were: the programme for the elimination by the end of this century of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, which was advanced by Mikhail Gorbachev in his statement of January 15, 1986, the USSR's

bold and cardinal proposals at Reykjavik; the unilateral termination of nuclear tests by the Soviet Union, and others.

"Another approach found its expression in the adoption by the USA of the 'Star Wars' programme and the drawing of other countries into it, in the frustration of the agreements which began to take shape at Reykjavik and the course for the total scrapping of its outcome, in the continuing nuclear weapons tests, in the abandonment of the SALT-2 Treaty containing the weapons race, and in the attempt to torpedo the fundamentals of the ABM Treaty, that is, in undermining practically all the key instruments for maintaining strategic stability in the world.

"On issues related to trade-economic and scientific-technical ties, to environmental protection, discussions were more or less business-like, and interest in those issues was displayed by most of the delegations.

"Questions pertaining to human rights and co-operation in the humanitarian field occupied a great and important place in the discussions on the implementation of the Helsinki and Madrid accords. Deplorably, the discussion of those issues was in a larger measure in the character of confrontation than on any other acute problems. The lead in that policy of confrontation was taken by the delegations of the USA, Canada and Britain.

"Representatives of the USA, the country which perpetrated over the period between Madrid and Vienna crying acts of direct aggression against Libya, Grenada and Nicaragua, which trampled underfoot the Helsinki declaration, the country disregarding the decisions of the international court, systematically perpetrating crude and massive violations of human rights and basic freedoms on its own territory, were not ashamed to pose as prosecuting attorneys. The destructive policy of the US delegation and those who aligned with it was characterised by duplicity and double standards," the spokesman for the USSR Foreign Ministry said.

"It is necessary to look thoroughly and in a business-like manner into the whole complex of humanitarian issues in order to speed up progress in that field," he said. "That is precisely why the Soviet delegation tabled a proposal that a conference be held in Moscow of the countries participating in the Conference on European Security and Co-operation on problems of humanitarian co-operation. A comprehensive examination of humanitarian issues directed at achieving practical results, and their discussion in the context of human rights would undoubtedly contribute to the attainment of the common goal. We hope that this proposal will be a subject of an objective examination at the Vienna meeting." □

USSR Foreign Ministry briefing

GENNADI GERASIMOV, chief of the USSR Foreign Ministry's Information Department, told a briefing in Moscow on December 30 that there was to be no exchange of television addresses by the leaders of the USSR and the USA at the New Year.

"The United States turned to us with a proposal for an exchange of New Year television addresses by the leaders of our countries as was the case last New Year," he said. "An exchange of television addresses is the content of the moment which these addresses mirror. To our regret, the departure of the US Administration from the accords reached at Reykjavik, its abandonment of the quantitative limitations under the SALT-2 Treaty and the refusal of the USA to join in the Soviet moratorium on nuclear blasts all give no grounds for an optimistic note.

"We believe that an exchange of television addresses is a good thing. But why instil in people illusions that everything is in order? Despite good statements from the US side, including the statement to the effect that in 1986 we have allegedly drawn closer on many issues, we nevertheless see no reason for an optimistic tone,

which will naturally come about if such an exchange of television addresses takes place.

"We say: let us again make efforts to remedy the situation so that we should have grounds for optimism."

The Foreign Ministry spokesman recalled that December 30 was the 512th day of the Soviet moratorium on nuclear tests. December 31 would be the 513th day. The count could be continued for generations to come, if the US followed the example of the Soviet Union.

The outgoing year, he stressed, had been proclaimed the International Year of Peace by decision of the UN General Assembly. "We proceed from the assumption that peace is the most valuable thing, the benefit of humanity. These are our priorities, and we sought to do our utmost for 1986 to 'become the beginning of a decade of peace, so that humanity enter the 21st century in conditions of peace, trust and co-operation,' as the resolution of the UN General Assembly put it.

"Unfortunately, our initiatives have not been supported by the West so far. It is moving in the opposite direction—in the direction of a further whipping up of the arms race, both in space and on Earth.

"However, the struggle for peace is going on, and we have not become dejected." □

Anniversary of Mikhail Gorbachev's statement of January 15, 1986

THE FUTURE OF THE MORATORIUM

By Yuri Gvozdev, *Novosti* political analyst

THE Soviet moratorium on nuclear explosions is soon to expire. It has lasted for almost eighteen months. But starting from January 1, 1987, its future will depend on the action of the US. If it fails to halt its explosions (a total of 24 has been detonated during the moratorium announced by Moscow), the USSR will be forced to break the silence at its nuclear testing ranges. The unique chance would be missed. To judge from what is being said by officials in Washington, the US still sticks to the same old negative stand. A further pause by the Soviet Union would jeopardise its security in this situation.

Stubborn refusal to join in the Soviet nuclear moratorium is another alarming sign of the far from peaceable strivings of official Washington. Soon after it came to office, the Reagan Administration requested that the Pentagon draw up guidelines for 1984-88. These guidelines said, among other things, that the new nuclear strategy calls on the American Armed Forces to be able to eliminate the entire Soviet (and Soviet-related) military and political system. As the *New York Times* said in this connection, the document recommended the armed forces to draw up plans to defeat the USSR in any conflict—from a revolt to a nuclear war. The book called *The Button*, written by former director of the Union

of Concerned Scientists Daniel Ford and based on verifiable facts, concludes that the US is more and more inclined towards the first-strike strategy. Is this another version of Hitler's attack on the USSR out of preventive considerations? Is this another variant of the treacherous Barbarossa Plan? At least, the logic in both cases is very similar.

The above-mentioned programme is also linked with a steady stockpiling of nuclear ammunition in the US—two thousand units annually. Speaking in October 1986 in Osaka, Japan, at a seminar on the problems of international life of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, former US Defence Secretary Robert McNamara noted, among other things, that the unlimited development of new weapons and their deployment would lead not only to increased numbers of such weapons, but also to the greater probability of their use at critical moments, or, in other words, to greater crisis instability. And likewise in the course of regional conflicts which, besides, are being artificially squeezed by the present administration into the framework of East-West confrontation. Add to this the aggressive "neoglobalism" typical of the present administration, its inclination to deceive and deliberately distort facts, and its disregard for generally accepted norms of legality and morals.

The US refusal to join in the Soviet moratorium is closely connected with America's course aimed at achieving military superiority over the USSR. The Pentagon wants to continue its tests in order to develop new weapon systems, including those for 'Star Wars'. The concern of

humanity found expression in the Delhi Declaration signed by Mikhail Gorbachev and Rajiv Gandhi. "The expansion of nuclear arsenals," says the document, "and the development of space weapons undermine the universally accepted conviction that a nuclear war should never be unleashed and can never be won." This is also a warning to all those who in varying degrees take part in SDI and other risky ventures, putting immediate commercial benefits and opportunist calculations above the survival of mankind. Those who persistently shut their eyes to the genuine culprits of today's dangerous situation and continue to harp on the "equal responsibility of the two superpowers" for the arms race, are doing a doubtful service to the defence of peace. To my mind, the Soviet moratorium alone, not to mention the many other initiatives from Moscow, should have put an end to such judgements.

The Soviet moratorium is expiring. The US did not support it. But the moratorium has been a powerful impulse to the global anti-nuclear movement. I think it also contributed in no small measure to the formation of a nuclear-free zone in the southern Pacific. World public opinion, more than ever before, has been able to see, through the dense smokescreen of propaganda campaigns, who is in deeds and not in words seeking disarmament and a nuclear-free world. As before, the USSR and its allies intend to work energetically to these ends. The USSR is convinced that its position on this issue will meet with due understanding and ever-growing support on the part of the peace-loving forces of our planet. □

WHAT CHOICE IN 1987?

By Valentin Falin, *Chairman of the Board of Novosti Press Agency*

EVERYONE should now recognise the axiomatic fact that security can only be universal, or reciprocal if Soviet-US relations are taken, and that genuine equal security is guaranteed not by the highest, but by the lowest possible level of strategic balance provided all systems and types of weapons of mass destruction are eliminated. Hence the ensuring of peace and security is no longer a military task. It is increasingly becoming a political task.

The Soviet position at Reykjavik was determined by the philosophy of a secure world in the nuclear-and-space age. At this meeting the USSR tried to persuade the US Administration of the need to match words with deeds. There was progress at Reykjavik until President Reagan began to make all sorts of reservations, trying to fit US power politics into a non-violent world and to cover a non-nuclear world with a space ABM system which passes officially as anti-nuclear, until he made his ultimate goals suspect by dodging a nuclear test ban, although he said he was for the destruction of all nuclear weapons in the next ten years. Indeed, the world cannot remain just a little bit nuclear. Neither can one try to militarise space just for the hell of it without deceiving others. Such games are very dangerous.

It was after Reykjavik that the US leaders showed why they had wrecked this historic chance in the development of civilisation—the US is not ready to place law above power, to become equal with all states, to abandon its neoglobalist and messianic concepts, to take the world community as it is. Ronald Reagan openly said that his administration will continue pursuing power politics, that it will not deviate from the concepts of "deterrence" which, as is clear from US Government papers, are nothing else but a policy of deliberate and gradual pressure with reliance on the concentration of a superior military might.

Guided by this theory, the US does not accept peaceful coexistence and mutually advantageous co-operation. A world without weapons and violence seems to them extremely dangerous. They feel much better with an axe or a heavy

stick. Everything else—references to the "perfidy of the Russians", alleged violations of treaties by the USSR, or the "threats" to which US interests are exposed in Central America, the Middle and Near East and the rest of the world are just words which reflect the irritation of US imperialism. It cannot reconcile itself to the fact that although it has never been so strong, the sphere in which it could use its strength is dwindling with every passing year.

What next? One can repeat that never before has mankind had better opportunities to improve its living standards, and never before has it been threatened so much as now. Its choice depends on the ability of the West to tailor its mentality to reality. Herein lies the key to the solution of the bulk of the problems which the world community is facing today. Herein lies the answer to the overriding question—will real disarmament in the interests of all become a *fait accompli*? □

A YEAR OF CLARITY

By Vladimir Simonov, *Novosti* political analyst

THE year 1986 has been the International Year of Peace. So decided the United Nations Organisation, which passed no fewer than four resolutions on that score.

The year of peace . . . if you tell this to the soldiers of Iraq and Iran. If you shout these words in the streets of Tripoli and Benghazi—where more widows, orphans and cripples appeared after the American bombing raids. If you whisper

Soviet foreign policy: year of peace offensive

THOUGH politicians will assess differently the outcome of the past year, one thing is indisputable—it was active and full of important events.

What kind of year did it become for the world? With what results did Soviet foreign policy come to its finale? Senior CPSU Central Committee official Nikolai Shishlin answers these and other questions from the Novosti Press Agency.

Assessing the foreign-policy results of 1986, it has regrettably to be stated that arms stockpiles have not shrunk during this year. Coolness marks Soviet-American relations, which largely influence the general state of international ties. The number of so-called regional conflicts also has not been reduced, and they remain sufficiently hot.

Does this mean that 1986, proclaimed by the UN the International Year of Peace, has proved unsuccessful precisely in terms of the strengthening of peace? I don't think so. Looking back on the events of 1986, we easily discover that the significant developments we witnessed undoubtedly remain a plus in international politics. This applies primarily to the major, bold and large-scale initiatives which the USSR put forward during this turbulent, tense and dramatic year.

I mean first of all the Soviet proposals made on January 15, 1986, and containing a step-by-step plan for eliminating nuclear arms by the year 2000. Moreover, as the summit meeting in Reykjavik and the opportunities that emerged in the course of it showed later, the 15-year Soviet plan could also be realised in a shorter time—ten years, if after Reykjavik the United States had

not set out in an entirely opposite direction from the accords that were about to be reached in the Icelandic capital.

Speaking of the year's pluses, the Warsaw Treaty member states' proposals on deep European force and conventional arms cuts should also be mentioned. There has been no response to them from the NATO countries. But this does not mean that these proposals are no longer valid—they remain on the agenda of world politics.

Of course, a plus for 1986 was the unilateral Soviet moratorium on nuclear tests. And though the United States has carried out 24 nuclear explosions in the meantime, their thunder has not drowned the urgent ring of this issue. Cessation of nuclear tests continues to be needed as a first step towards nuclear disarmament. Not partial but truly complete.

The Soviet Government declared on December 18, 1986: "The USSR is willing to adhere to its moratorium in future as well. But it will resume nuclear testing right after the first US nuclear explosion in the incoming year." In fact, this is yet another good-will offer to the United States. The USSR remains a convinced supporter of total cessation of all nuclear tests and will be energetically working for this goal.

Certainly, when we think of what 1986 is passing on to 1987, we must speak about Reykjavik. Though the United States is now doing everything to bury whatever of positive value was there, the demonstrated possibility alone of reaching large historic agreements will not be forgotten. It exists, it is already a reality of world politics and undoubtedly the problems discussed in Reykjavik will continue to be

more as human beings than as communists and capitalists, Christians and Israelites, workers and bankers. In an age when 50,000 nuclear weapons are ticking away, waiting for a button to be pressed, for a key to be turned, Romain Rolland's *Community Among all Living People* is becoming superior to any distinctions.

It is by becoming aware of that fact that the new way of thinking begins.

I saw this thinking in action when Mikhail Gorbachev and Rajiv Gandhi signed in the Presidential Palace in Delhi the Declaration on a Nuclear-Weapons-Free and Non-Violent World. Many points of the Soviet peace programme were supported there by the leader of the Non-Aligned Movement. It was another major contribution to the International Year of Peace.

A day earlier, when the Soviet leader was planting a tree at the place where Mahatma Gandhi was cremated, one Indian photographer exclaimed:

"Mr Gorbachev, when will you be planting such a tree in America?"

Paradoxically enough, the International Year of Peace was not a suitable time for such a ceremony. Wouldn't the sapling be uprooted by the exhaust of a nuclear bomber taking off? The 131st, the one that broke through the ceiling set by the SALT-2 Treaty. Wouldn't the tree be dried up by nuclear explosions in Nevada, where the Americans are building an x-ray laser for a space ABM system? Would the delicate plant bear the stifling atmosphere of the scandal around the financing of the Nicaraguan contras from the proceeds of the secret sale of arms to Iran?

The International Year of Peace, sad as it is to admit, was not only a year of struggle for peace. It was also a year of peace destruction. Who did what? To understand that it is enough to look back at the past 12 months.

In this sense the year 1986 would be better called a year of clarity. □

present in both Soviet-American and world relations as a whole in 1987.

Therefore, though the autumn and winter of 1986 are marked by an appreciable cooling off in international affairs, I must note that this cooling off mostly affects Soviet-American ties. Yet the world is not limited to them; international relations are much wider. And I think that 1986's packed agenda of international politics, the work on it and the struggle that went on for the realisation of ideas aimed at a radical improvement in the world political climate have set the stage for 1987 to become a year of struggle not only to create conditions for a turn for the better but also to effect the turn itself.

QUESTION: Such a concept as "new political thinking" has entered political terminology in the outgoing year . . .

ANSWER: To a certain extent, 1986 did become a year when new political thinking demonstrably emerged—a way of thinking that calls primarily for a realisation of human unity, a realisation of the fact that we live in a conflicting, but an interdependent and integral world when it is necessary to establish peaceful coexistence as the universal principle in international relations. The new political thinking also requires that states' relations should be free from ideological biases and that every state should realise the simple truth that either we shall learn to live together in peace, or mankind will perish. New political thinking finds reflection in the actions and behaviour of the Soviet Union throughout 1986.

I think that the new approach to international relations is most fully expressed in the Delhi Declaration on principles for a nuclear weapon-free and non-violent world, signed in November by the leaders of the Soviet Union and India. The call issued in Delhi by the two states' leaders for a world free from violence and hatred, fear and suspicion represents the quintessence of new political thinking. The truth that nuclear war would signify the end of mankind and that it is unthinkable is the first premise. Actions must then follow that seek to clear nuclear arsenals, end the nuclear arms race and promote truly business-like, wide, peaceful co-operation of states belonging to different social systems.

In this connection I would like to touch upon the question of the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI). The Soviet Union is saying "no" to this programme of President Reagan. But at the same time the Soviet Union is saying "yes" to combined efforts at the peaceful utilisation of space for the benefit of all mankind. Therefore, when we speak of new political thinking, we mean not only a negation of previous thinking, but also the truly constructive programmes and opportunities that are opening up before mankind.

QUESTION: What could you say at this time about the main thrust of Soviet foreign policy in 1987?

ANSWER: So far as the direction of Soviet foreign policy is concerned, it is absolutely clear—the USSR subordinates all its efforts to the task of consolidating peace and radically improving international relations. It is striving for co-operation with different political forces, with the international public at large, believing that the great historical battle for stronger peace and for a nuclear weapons-free planet can only be won if all nations and peoples, the whole of mankind, take part in it. Peace is the first premise for the solution of each nation's development tasks. And in the New Year, Soviet people wish all nations of the world just one thing: that happiness, success, joy will more often enter their homes and that our common house—the planet Earth—will be peaceful. □

Interview taken by Andrei Chernoshchek.

(Continued from previous page)

these loud-sounding words into the ear of the crematorium attendant who committed to the flames the bodies of 24 victims of Sikh terrorism in Punjab.

You will not be understood.

The International Year of Peace brought neither peace nor a lull to our planet which continues to be riven by enmity and which has become used to the whine of bullets. Properly speaking no particular hopes were entertained even in the high-rise building on the East River. The UN Secretary-General noted in his report: although 1986 will not become a year of peace all over the world, it must become a year of struggle for peace, a year of serious thinking about the nature of peace and measures to maintain it.

How did the USSR and the USA, two great powers, keep the security and tranquillity of mankind this past year? If some arbitrator from above, concerned to sum up the year, were to ask that question from the heavens, the Soviet Union would have something to reply.

After opening 1986 with an impressive programme for cleansing the planet of nuclear arms by the beginning of the second millennium, Moscow used practically every hour to convince the peoples that this programme is not utopian. It is a workable reality. For five hundred days the USSR with its unilateral moratorium has expected a reply from its American partner. For six months the proposals of the Warsaw Treaty countries for a reduction of conventional arms from the Atlantic to the Urals have been on the table of international politics. Lastly, there is the Soviet package at the meeting in Reykjavik with its utmost concessions and a passionate plea for reciprocity which made many really believe that nuclear disarmament is possible. It is here, at one's fingertips.

It is perhaps thanks to these practical and feasible ideas that thinking people in 1986 felt