

Mikhail Gorbachev receives Willy Brandt

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, had a meeting in the Kremlin on April 5 with Willy Brandt, Chairman of the Socialist International, Honorary Chairman of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, who was accompanied by Egon Bahr, member of the Presidium of the Board of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, Jan Pronk, Deputy Chairman of the Labour Party of the Netherlands, and Willy Brandt's assistant Klaus Lindenberg.

"After our first meeting three years ago the events in the world, in Europe, in relations between the USSR and the FRG developed in the main along the direction which we spoke about at the time as a desirable and possible one. This means we were realists," Mikhail Gorbachev said. "A role was also played by the dialogue between representatives of the CPSU, the Socialist International and the Social Democratic Party of Germany that was conducted in various forms but actually without interruption."

Mikhail Gorbachev spoke about the substantial role played by Willy Brandt and Egon Bahr in the positive development of Soviet-West German relations and the formation of the contemporary European process.

Among the major questions raised by Willy Brandt priority was given to the international importance of perestroika in the USSR. He said the whole world was interested in its course and prospects.

Mikhail Gorbachev said how the slogan "more socialism, more democracy" came into being, how it is being filled with concrete content in policy, economy, social relations and the spiritual sphere. He spoke about the analysis of the situation on the basis of which the Party had arrived at the conclusion about the necessity of profound changes. He noted the importance of the theoretical work necessary for bringing out the potential of socialism and which required renunciation of dogmatism, stereotypes and customary approaches to the evaluation of the past and the cognition of the present state of Soviet society.

"We are not looking for answers to secure perestroika outside the framework of socialism," Gorbachev pointed out. "It does not mean a change of the ideological banner. We are convinced that the socialist system contains inexhaustible potentialities for the sound development of the economy and public relations

and the establishment of lofty standards of morality, justice and spirituality."

"We have lost quite a lot from what Vladimir Ilyich Lenin's approach to building socialism contained. We are reviving his great designs now, but with due account for new conditions and possibilities. Otherwise, this would be just another version of dogmatism.

"Perestroika does not mean that we are closing in within our own framework. Lenin's demand that socialism be built while absorbing all accomplishments of universal human science and culture has become ever more topical.

"We widely open doors for the study of the world around us, for mastering the best accomplishments of other nations."

Gorbachev dwelt on the reasons why the reforms of the 1950s and 1960s did not work, even though many of their elements were correct, substantial and attractive.

The main reason was the absence of policy that would have included people.

That is why we have placed chief emphasis on democratisation of society, on involving people in all processes: economic, political and ideological. The working people are the chief protagonists of the perestroika drive. Its irreversibility depends precisely on their attitudes and on their performance.

Socialist ideals

Perestroika has swept the entire nation. The Party's policy encompassed all sections of society, spread to all spheres of its life.

These are no longer islands of renewal. All of our society has moved forward. And like a spaceship on blast-off, our society is experiencing heavy overload.

Discussions and acute clashes of opinions are inevitable and, in principle, useful. They are a symptom of activeness, involvement and profound and sincere interest of the people in the developments in their country.

This is a manifestation of the concern about the fate of perestroika, of socialism. People are accumulating the culture of ideological, political dialogue and the ability to handle affairs in a new way. The Party and society are learning to work in conditions of democracy.

People's support for Party policy is making itself felt to an increasing extent. There is more convincing evidence that the people are attached to socialism, to socialist ideals and values, that they are deeply concerned about the future of Soviet society.

"There is also confusion in some minds. Some are panicking. There are people who think everything is collapsing. Just as at the beginning of this century 'matter vanished' in the perceptions of some people as a result of new discoveries in physics, now it seems to some that 'socialism is vanishing'. But in reality it is ridding itself of everything that had deformed it in the past and is demonstrating tremendous dynamism, the wealth of its social and humanistic content.

"Our biggest difficulty today is the restructuring of mentality. I would say that this is the pivot of perestroika. In these conditions the main thing for the Party is to conduct matters in the country with a sense of responsibility, calmly,

confidently and consistently and to press for the fulfilment of the adopted decisions. I do not think that we were wise in everything or that we adopted all the proper decisions. It may be that we have also erred in something. But we are open to self-adjustment as we gain experience of perestroika. And herein lies one of the tasks of the forthcoming 19th Party Conference. At it we will evaluate what was done during the three years and impart impulses along all the directions of perestroika, especially in what concerns society's political system.

"We say perestroika is a revolution because a qualitative breakthrough is taking place. By means of perestroika society will acquire new quality both in its basis and in its superstructure."

At Willy Brandt's request Mikhail Gorbachev told him how the Party and government were now solving problems of combining the long-term tasks of perestroika with current concrete problems of raising living standards.

The question of the variety of tendencies in the perception of perestroika in the West was raised. Along with the tremendous growth of interest in and even of sympathy and support for the processes developing in the USSR and to a certain extent also as a result of this negative tendencies are mounting as well. Certain circles have become afraid that socialism is displaying dynamism, that the Soviet Union's foreign policy, based on new thinking, is eroding the "enemy image", that the things on which the anti-Soviet policy has been based for so many years are falling apart, Mikhail Gorbachev said. This tendency is fraught with danger to the processes of improvement of international relations and to the cause of disarmament. Using the openness of our society certain quarters are beginning to speculate on the natural difficulties of perestroika. They are trying to interfere in our internal affairs, to exacerbate problems from the outside and engaging in provocations. At present this is particularly visible in connection with the events around Nagorno Karabakh, Mikhail Gorbachev said further.

"Various radio stations, including official ones, have joined in the subversive activity. Especially active among them is Deutsche Welle. It would be absurd to suppose that such attempts could push us away from the course of perestroika. We will handle problems that have accumulated, including on the nationalities issue, within the framework of the democratic process we have firmly chosen."

In discussing international questions, Gorbachev and Brandt stated good knowledge of each other's positions.

They expressed the common view that the striving to improve the international situation on principles of peaceful coexistence and de-ideologisation of inter-state relations was growing in strength around the world.

"In working out our course based on new thinking," Gorbachev observed, "we combine traditions going back to Lenin's times with the account of the present-day realities, views and sentiments of world public opinion, ideas and initiatives advanced by our socialist friends, communist parties, and proposals reflected in such documents as reports by the commissions of Palme, Brandt and Brundtland, in documents of the Non-Aligned Movement."

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Eduard Shevardnadze's interview with *Rabotnichesko Delo*

Eduard Shevardnadze, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee and Foreign Minister of the USSR, granted the following interview to the newspaper Rabotnichesko Delo when in Sofia during a recent session of the Foreign Ministers' Committee of the Warsaw Treaty countries:

RABOTNICHESKO DELO: Afghan-Pakistani talks are under way in Geneva on a political settlement regarding Afghanistan. What is the situation at the talks? What can be expected from them? But before answering these questions, could you say first a few words perhaps about the Geneva documents and the commitments to be made under them by the sides involved in the settlement?

SHEVARDNADZE: It is indeed essential first to make it clear what the "Geneva documents" are all about. To put it in a nutshell, they are drafts of several agreements worked out in the course of a diplomatic process launched on the initiative of the UN Secretary-General and pursued through his personal envoy since June 1982.

Let me stress that we are talking about negotiations between two governments — those of Afghanistan and Pakistan. The draft document on the relationship says that "the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan have embarked on talks" and set forth the principles of international law, which should underlie a political settlement of the situation regarding Afghanistan.

These include:

— The commitment not to interfere in affairs which are within the domestic competence of any state, in keeping with the UN Charter,

— The principle of the sovereign equality of states.

It also lists the documents constituting "integral parts of the political settlement".

There are three such documents.

The first is a bilateral agreement between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the principles of their relationship, in particular non-interference and the renunciation of intervention.

The second is a declaration (or declarations) on the international guarantees of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America.

The third is a bilateral agreement between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the voluntary return of refugees.

It is these documents as well as the one of the relationship that form the so-called Geneva package. Attached is a memorandum on understanding which covers the technical matter of creating and using a mechanism to verify the sides' abidance by their commitments.

All the agreements between Afghanistan and Pakistan have the nature of classical international agreements, in which the sides act as equal, sovereign entities and all the obligations are based on reciprocity.

The format of a newspaper interview, alas, does not allow for the possibility of citing all the obligations. But I shall quote some of them. The sides have made the mutual commitments:

— "To respect the sovereignty and inalienable right of the other side to freely determine its own political, economic, cultural and social system and develop its international relations . . .".

— "To refrain from direct or indirect assistance, encouragement or support to insurgent or secessionist activities against the other side".

— "To refrain from concluding any agreements or understandings with other states, which would be directed at intervention or interference in the internal and external affairs of the other side".

I would like to call attention to the fact that all these drafts were hammered out before the current round of the Afghan-Pakistani talks in Geneva. It only remained to fill in the blank spot in the document on the relationship by entering a time-frame for the withdrawal of Soviet troops that would be acceptable to all sides. And that was done in the very beginning of the round. Nine months were accepted as the time-frame.

There remained, however, one outstanding issue — the mention in one of the general clauses of "internationally recognised borders". The understanding before the current round was — and there were serious grounds for it — that a compromise would be found on that formula.

The Pakistani side has now made it the stumbling block.

RABOTNICHESKO DELO: What is the problem?

SHEVARDNADZE: The actual borderline between Afghanistan and Pakistan coincides with the "Durand Line" arbitrarily drawn by British colonisers late last century. The line passes through an area inhabited by Pashtoons.

In any country the frontier is a sensitive emotional issue. It bears on the very pivot of statehood — the nation's territorial integrity and sovereignty. And, of course, it is not the issue that could be resolved in passing by including three words in a document which has nothing to do with fixing the borderline.

I believe that no Afghan government can agree to it since that would be betraying the national interests of the country in general and the Pashtoons in particular.

As far as we know, no one among the leaders of the "alliance of the seven" based in Pakistan supports the Pakistani position on the border. At any rate, not a word to the opposite effect has ever been heard by anyone from the leaders of the "alliance". Those doubting that can go for explanations to the leaders of the Afghan opposition and ask their opinion on this score.

Islamabad's attempts to take advantage of what appears to it a favourable concurrence of circumstances and solve a problem that has remained a bone of contention for many years are untenable and, in the context of an Afghan settlement, also immoral.

Let me add that Afghanistan holds a constructive position on the issue of a border settlement with Pakistan. It does not rule out separate diplomatic talks on this contentious issue.

As far as we know, the Afghan side was prepared to agree to a compromise wording in the Geneva agreements, which would use the term "the existing borderline". This is, to our view, a very constructive approach.

RABOTNICHESKO DELO: Uncertainty has arisen lately over whether the United States will act as a guarantor of the Afghan-Pakistani agreements. Can you clarify the issue?

SHEVARDNADZE: Let me say first what a guarantor is in an Afghan-Pakistani settlement. It is a country which:

— Supports an Afghan-Pakistani diplomatic settlement.

— Is willing to facilitate the attainment of the goals of the settlement on the basis of respect for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-aligned status of Afghanistan and Pakistan,

— Commits itself to refraining without fail from interference and intervention in any form in the domestic affairs of Afghanistan and Pakistan and to honouring the obligations specified in the bilateral agreement between these countries on the principles of their relationship, in particular non-interference and the renunciation of intervention.

The rules here are the same for both the Soviet Union and the United States.

It is known, however, that the US Government has declared that it will continue to give aid to Afghan opposition forces. In practice this means that the United States will demand from Pakistan that it should keep passing American weapons on to anti-government Afghan groups as there simply is no other way how the Americans can provide this aid. In other words, they are out to make Pakistan violate its commitments under the Geneva Agreements. The United States in this way is both meddling in the home affairs of Pakistan, by foisting a definite line of conduct on it, and acting in a way that is far from supportive of an Afghan-Pakistani settlement.

It is, frankly speaking, inconceivable to hold this posture and remain a guarantor. It appears that the United States in its time agreed to be a guarantor without believing that Soviet troops would ever leave Afghanistan or even perhaps being reluctant to see that.

RABOTNICHESKO DELO: US Administration officials seek to justify their position by speaking of the need for "symmetry" in arms supplies by the Soviet Union and the United States and propose a moratorium on such shipments.

SHEVARDNADZE: We were very surprised when the US Secretary of State proposed that "moratorium". Diplomats with greater experience than mine cannot remember the United States ever speaking positively of a moratorium. Whatever was at issue, the word itself invariably caused an allergy in them.

For us, however, "moratorium" is a good word. So why is our attitude to a moratorium negative in this case?

The matter is not even that the suggested moratorium is lop-sided and unfair. For the United States is for the Afghan opposition, even if the major, but not the only supplier of arms. The Government of the Republic of Afghanistan, by contrast, can receive the weapons it needs for self-defence from a substantially narrower circle of countries.

And we reject this idea not at all for any formal considerations. For nowhere, not in a single agreed document, is there any mention of

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Memorandum on non-deployment of weapons in space

THE USSR delegation at the Conference on Disarmament has introduced a memorandum entitled "On Establishing an International System to Verify Non-Deployment of Any Kind of Weapons in Outer Space". Here follows the text of the document.

The delegation of the USSR shares the concern being expressed by representatives of many countries participating in the Conference on Disarmament over the possibility of the arms race spreading over to outer space.

During the 1987 session of the Conference on Disarmament, the delegation of the Soviet Union suggested starting to form a system of international verification of non-deployment of any kind of weapons in outer space, without waiting for the conclusion of an appropriate agreement on space. The principal aim of such a system would be to determine that objects being launched into space and orbited there are not weapons or are not provided with any types of weapons.

In the opinion of the Soviet Union, an international space inspectorate could be the centre-piece of such a verification system. The states parties to the agreement would grant such an inspectorate the right of access for inspection purposes to any objects intended for launching and orbiting in outer space.

This document concretises the Soviet Union's proposal concerning an international space inspectorate. The Soviet Union proceeds from the assumption that, depending on the specificity of concrete agreements on preventing an arms race, a verification system, a structure of the international space inspectorate and forms of its functioning may be developed and specified in the process of negotiations.

I. Goals and definitions

1. The principal goal of establishing an international space inspectorate is to take measures to verify that any objects being launched into and orbited in outer space by the states parties to the agreement are not weapons and are not provided with any type of weapons.

2. An on-site inspection directly before the launch is the most simple and effective way to make it certain that objects being launched into and orbited in outer space are not weapons and are not provided with any type of weapon.

3. In order to ensure complete ban on space arms, verification measures with the aid of the international space inspectorate should include as follows:

A/ the provision of information in advance to representatives of the international space inspectorate by the inspection accepting state about each forthcoming launch, including a date and time of the launch, type of booster rocket, orbit parameters, and general data on the space object to be launched;

B/ permanent presence of inspector groups at all sites for the launching of space objects to verify all such objects irrespective of launch vehicles;

C/ inspection is to begin . . . days prior to the mounting of the objects atop a booster rocket or other launch vehicle;

D/ the carrying out of inspections at agreed-upon depots, industrial enterprises, in laboratories and test centres;

E/ verification of unannounced launchings from undeclared launch sites through snap on-site inspections.

4. Any craft intended for launching into and orbiting in outer space is regarded as a space object.

5. Systems and devices, based on any physical principles which from the very outset were created or converted to hit targets in outer space, in the Earth's atmosphere or on its surface (the list of such systems and devices shall be coordinated during talks) are regarded as weapons banned from being launched into outer space.

6. Ballistic missiles, the launchings of which are not connected with carrying any objects into the orbit of a satellite of the Earth or into the path of flight to other celestial bodies, are not subject to verification by the international space inspectorate.

II. Structure and financing

1. A council consisting of representatives of all states parties to the agreement is the leading body which directs the work of the international space inspectorate. The council gathers for its regular annual sessions as well as for special sessions which may be called by the inspector-general at a request of a majority of states parties to the agreement.

2. An international space inspectorate, headed by an inspector-general elected by the council for a term of five years, is the council's executive body.

3. The international space inspectorate is based on an inspectors' corps which is manned by specialists from the states parties to the agreement with the observance of the principle of fair geographical representation.

4. The international space inspectorate has permanent inspector groups consisting of . . . people at the following cosmodromes of the states parties to the agreement (the list of these shall be coordinated during negotiations).

5. Snap inspection groups are formed from among members of the inspector corps and additional specialists assigned if necessary by the states parties to the agreement.

6. The activities of the international space inspectorate shall be financed resultant of annual proportional payments by the member states (this shall be coordinated during negotiations).

III. Permanent inspector groups

1. Permanent inspector groups are appointed by the inspector-general from among candidacies nominated by the parties on the basis of the principle of fair geographical representation and shall consist of not more than . . . members upon preliminary coordination with the accepting state.

2. The heads of permanent inspector groups are appointed by inspector-general from among candidacies nominated by the parties upon preliminary coordination with the accepting states.

3. Each permanent inspector group will consist of representatives of the party which regularly launches space objects and on the territory of which an appropriate inspector group functions.

4. The leaders and members of permanent inspector groups will be granted the privileges and immunities which are enjoyed by diplomatic representatives in accordance with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

5. The inspection-accepting state will render maximum assistance to the permanent inspector group in the performance of the functions assigned to it.

6. Permanent inspector groups shall be accommodated at cosmodromes.

7. The permanent inspector group, in agreement with the accepting state, will bring and use instruments, materials and equipment (a list of these shall be decided upon during negotiations) necessary for the discharge of the functions entrusted to it.

8. The activities of permanent inspector groups will be financed from the budget of the international space inspectorate.

IV. Procedure for the work of international space inspectorate

1. The inspection-accepting state shall refer written notifications and general programmes for supervision of each forthcoming launch of space object to the international space inspectorate . . . days before the launch simultaneously sending a copy of notification to an appropriate permanent inspector group.

2. A notification about the forthcoming launch shall give the following information: place, date and time of launch, type of booster rocket, orbit parameters, and general data on the space object to be launched (the amount of necessary data will be decided upon during negotiations).

3. Replies to notifications shall be sent by the international space inspectorate to the accepting state not later than . . . days after the receipt of notification about the forthcoming launch and shall be accompanied with the instructions to an appropriate permanent inspector group to carry out an inspection.

4. Together with the notification, the accepting state shall submit a general programme for supervision, including the following information:

A date, time, and place for inspectors' access to space object;

a planned duration of the observation programme;

languages to be used in oral and/or written translations;

other necessary information;

terms for the provision of supervision means which will be given to the observers by the accepting state.

5. For inspectors to be able to determine with sufficient confidence that a space object is not a weapon and is not equipped with weapons, the accepting state shall do as follows during the inspection in accordance with the supervision programme:

Provide inspectors with necessary instruments, materials and equipment, a list of which shall be decided upon during negotiations.

Inspectors may also use their own instruments, materials and equipment which shall be subject to verification and approval on the part of the accepting state.

During the observation programme to provide inspectors with necessary information directly connected with the performance of functions by the inspectors:

to provide inspectors with transportation means for movement in the area of the launch site;

to allow inspectors to visit the places where space objects are mounted atop the booster rocket and the launch sites;

to give an opportunity to the inspectors to maintain timely communication with the international space inspectorate (the accepting state is not obliged to bear expenses for the use of communications means by the inspectors);

to provide inspectors with appropriate meals and housing at a place fit for the implementation of the supervision and if necessary with medical aid.

V. Verification of unannounced launchings

1. The state party to the agreement has a right to request the international space inspectorate to render assistance in clarifying any situation which may be reckoned unclear in view of suspicion about an unannounced launch of space object. With a view to clarifying the situation the international space inspectorate may demand all necessary information from specially assigned observatories (a list of which shall be stipulated during negotiations).

2. The state party to the agreement has a right to ask the international space inspectorate to get explanation from any party about a situation which may be reckoned unclear in view of suspicion about an unannounced launch of a space object. The requesting state provides the international space inspectorate with all information on the strength of which there arose suspicion about an unannounced launch of space object.

The following procedures shall be used in such an event:

A/ the international space inspectorate refers the request for clarification to an appropriate state party to the agreement within 24 hours of its receipt;

B/ the requesting state gives explanation to the international space inspectorate within . . . days from the time of the receipt of the request. The international space inspectorate refers explanation to the requesting state within 24 hours from the moment of its receipt;

C/ if the requesting state considers the explanation insufficient, it may request the international space inspectorate to decide on a snap on-site inspection at the place of launch and at the area of the fall of the separable components of the booster rocket and spacecraft.

3. The international space inspectorate informs the states parties to the agreement of

any request for explanation of a situation which may be reckoned unclear in view of suspicions about an unannounced launch of space object.

VI. Snap inspections in view of suspicion about unannounced launch of space object

1. The international space inspectorate takes decision on a snap inspection to clarify the situation which may be reckoned unclear in view of suspicions about an unannounced launch of space objects on the strength of a request by the party which considers the received explanations insufficient.

2. A snap inspection shall be carried out by a snap inspection group composed on the basis of the principle of fair geographical representation from among members of the inspector corps of the international space inspectorate and the permanent inspector group in a given country.

The state party to the agreement, requesting a snap inspection may nominate not more than two of its representatives who will be included in the group as observers and will enjoy all the privileges and immunities on a par with the other members of the group.

3. Within 24 hours of the adoption of the decision to carry out a snap inspection, the international space inspectorate sends a request to the appropriate state party to the agreement. In the request for a snap inspection the international space inspectorate will inform the inspection-accepting state as follows:

Reasons for the request;

location of the designated area determined by geographic coordinates;

preferable points of entry by a snap inspection group;

the place in the given area where inspection will begin;

whether the inspection will be carried out from land, air or in both ways simultaneously;

in case of inspection from the air, what flying vehicles will be used;

whether the snap inspection group will use its own ground transportation means or the means of the inspection-accepting state;

information necessary for the issue of diplomatic visas to inspectors entering the accepting state.

5. The state receiving the request of the international space inspectorate for a snap inspection is obliged to enable the snap inspection group to carry out such inspection without delay.

6. A reply to the request for a snap inspection shall be given within 24 hours of its receipt.

7. A snap inspection group shall consist of not more than . . . members. The inspection will end not later than . . . days following the arrival of the snap inspection group at the designated area.

8. During the stay of the inspectors on the territory of the accepting country in connection with the snap inspection, the inspectors shall enjoy the privileges and immunities in accordance with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

9. The accepting state shall provide the group with appropriate meals and housing at a place enabling the inspectors to perform their functions and if necessary with medical aid.

10. The snap inspection group shall use its own maps, instruments, materials and equipment.

11. The snap inspection group shall have access to appropriate communications means of the accepting state, including those ensuring the possibility of permanent contact between inspector group members in a flying vehicle and in the ground transportation vehicle being used during the inspection. □

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV RECEIVES WILLY BRANDT

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Brandt informed Gorbachev about the Socialist International's considerations related to issues of security and disarmament. Noting that the positions of the Socialist International were close to those of the Soviet Union on a number of essential issues, he expressed satisfaction with co-operation between the CPSU and various bodies of the Socialist International, for instance, its Advisory Council on Disarmament, headed by Kalevi Sorsa.

The sides exchanged views on the possibility of a Soviet-American agreement on strategic offensive arms.

Gorbachev said that such prospects were realistic. "We can state that questions connected with the drafting of the treaty have been elaborated to a great degree.

"Mutually acceptable compromise can be found on issues yet to be resolved.

"We see the situation developing in the United States with regard to the treaty. We do not dramatise it. On our part, we will continue doing everything possible so that such a treaty be prepared and concluded."

Replying to a question from Egon Bahr, Mikhail Gorbachev evaluated the situation concerning the conclusion of a convention on the prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons. There is a slow-down although on our part we have done much to achieve results already in the nearest future. Mikhail Gorbachev said. He again supported the efforts by the Social Democratic Party of Germany, the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia to create a zone free of chemical weapons in the centre of Europe. He added that this step, important as it is itself, could accelerate advance to the ultimate aim — the total prohibition of chemical weapons.

On the question of the reduction of conventional armaments and armed forces in Europe the interlocutors confirmed their positions about the need to eliminate there tactical nuclear arms in conditions of a balance of conventional armaments, but on a lower level excluding offensive actions.

The idea of a European round table was discussed in detail. The discussion revealed dissimilar approaches to the form of such a multilateral dialogue. But since the aim is one and the same — to draw into the process of preparing a draft of the "common European home", a maximum not only of government but also of other political and public forces, it was agreed to go deeper into this idea in the future.

The theme of integration was also raised. Mikhail Gorbachev drew attention to the danger of the militaristic component in this progress which in its economic, ecological, cultural and other aspects is of an objective nature and should be taken into account by all Europeans. It is important, as Willy Brandt stressed, that the integration processes should not damage detente and the cause of disarmament, that economic integration in the west of Europe should lead not to its self-isolation but to greater openness in the direction of eastern Europe.

The "European home", Mikhail Gorbachev said, should be built on the principle of respect for the choice made by each European people. No differences can and should impede the development of understanding and diverse co-operation between Europeans — from the Atlantic to the Urals. "We spoke about this recently with Alessandro Natta. Now we are speaking with you and we hope that all together we will be able to facilitate advance, the deepening and development of the all-European dialogue," Mikhail Gorbachev said.

Special attention was given to the problems of "disarmament for development" and North-South relations. Jan Pronk described how that subject was being handled by the Socialist International. Gorbachev stressed the importance of the overall problem of the developing countries. After the threat of nuclear war, this harboured the greatest danger to the future of civilisation. "It is high time that palliative solutions of all kind give way to the internationalisation of this problem. It is time that the West analyse all that from the position of reason, with due account for the imperatives of the times, otherwise, consequences may be extremely hard for all."

He voiced readiness for constructive co-operation both in what concerns the theoretical elaboration of the problem, and in the search for political approaches to its solution.

In conclusion the sides expressed satisfaction with the open, substantive conversation which, the ideological differences remaining, made it possible to advance in the understanding of the shared responsibility for the destinies of Europe and the world.

"The level of our relations is now such," Gorbachev observed, "that it enables us to co-operate fruitfully on problems that can hardly be resolved without the active and constructive participation of the CPSU and the Socialist International, without other democratic and left-wing forces in Europe."

The meeting was attended by Anatoli Dobrynin, Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, members of the CPSU Central Committee Vadim Zagladin and Anatoli Chernyayev. □

Warsaw Treaty Foreign Ministers' Communiqué

A REGULAR meeting of the Foreign Ministers' Committee of the Warsaw Treaty member states was held in Sofia on March 29 and 30, 1988.

The meeting was attended by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Bulgaria Petar Mladenov, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Hungarian People's Republic Peter Varkonyi, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic Oskar Fischer, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Polish People's Republic Marian Orzechowski, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Romania Ioan Totu, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics Eduard Shevardnadze and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic Bohuslav Chnoupek.

1. The meeting discussed a broad spectrum of international, first of all European problems, priority tasks in further developing and consolidating positive tendencies in the international situation. Having noted that the situation in Europe and in the world on the whole remains quite complex and contradictory, the ministers stressed the pressing need of further advancing the process of disarmament, the creation of a nuclear-free non-violent world. It is important that all states should refrain from any actions capable of impeding this process. A situation in which disarmament along one direction would be simultaneously accompanied by an intensification of the arms race along other directions should be prevented.

The meeting adopted an address to the NATO Member States, to all participating countries in the conference on security and co-operation in Europe.

2. The participants in the meeting declared for the speediest conclusion of the process of ratification of the treaty on the elimination of intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles concluded between the USSR and the United States which, as is generally acknowledged, is of historic importance.

They regard the INF Treaty as only the first step which should be followed by new agreements directed at reducing strategic offensive arms, preventing an arms race in outer space, attaining a general and complete ban on nuclear tests, the elimination of nuclear, chemical and other types of weapons of mass destruction, reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe, reduction of military spending and the solution of other questions of security and disarmament.

The ministers expressed the conviction that the conclusion of an agreement between the USSR and the United States on the reduction by half of their strategic offensive arms in conditions of observance of the ABM Treaty in the form in which it was signed in 1972 and non-withdrawal from it within an agreed-upon period of time would be a cardinal measure in the field of disarmament. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of USSR Eduard Shevardnadze informed the ministers about the course of the Soviet-American talks in Geneva on nuclear and space arms, and on other contacts with US representatives on this matter. The stand taken by the Soviet side was fully supported.

The participants in the meeting stressed that intentions to "compensate" in any way whatsoever the nuclear weapons eliminated under the INF Treaty should be renounced.

The withdrawal by the Soviet Union of the Soviet SS-22 missiles from the GDR and Czechoslovakia on agreement with the latter

already before the entry into force of the INF Treaty is regarded by the countries represented at the meeting as a display of good will in the process of nuclear disarmament.

3. The ministers conducted a detailed exchange of views on questions of disarmament, strengthening security and trust and developing mutually advantageous co-operation in Europe, and expressed the readiness of their countries to expand their constructive dialogue with other countries in pursuance of these aims.

The participants in the meeting stressed that inviolability of the post-war borders on the continent, respect for the present territorial-political realities, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states and strict observance of generally recognised principles and norms of international law constitute a condition of preserving lasting peace and security in Europe. As in the past, any attempts to put these realities, their immutability in doubt will be most resolutely repulsed. They also noted that the activity of revanchist forces and the encouragement of revanchism anywhere run counter to the interests of detente and security, the treaties and agreements concluded in the 1970s and the Helsinki Final Act.

4. The participants in the meeting expressed the firm intention of their countries to press for substantial reductions of armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals and the speediest commencement of relevant talks. In order to reduce the danger of surprise attack special attention should be given to the reduction of those types of armaments which form the backbone of the offensive might of armed forces, including tactical nuclear weapons. The historically formed asymmetries and imbalances in the field of conventional armaments in Europe would be removed on the basis of reciprocity by way of reductions by the side which turned out to be ahead in this or that type of armaments. This would accord with the principles of equality and equal security of the sides, the interests of all European countries. All steps would be taken on the basis of an exchange of the necessary data in conditions of an effective regimen of control and verification.

The subject of the talks would be armed forces and conventional armaments and military hardware, including of dual designation without their nuclear component. As to the nuclear component of the dual designation systems, it would become the subject of separate talks. Such talks should not be delayed for long. The Warsaw Treaty member states are prepared as before to conduct them simultaneously with talks on conventional armaments and confirm their proclaimed goal—the total liquidation of tactical nuclear arms in Europe.

5. The participants in the meeting analysed the results of the work done at the Vienna meeting and noted that this forum has fully approached the responsible stage of adopting political decisions which would ensure a further strengthening of security and co-operation in Europe.

The Warsaw Treaty member states expressed resolve to press for the Vienna meeting to conclude with the adoption of such accords which on the basis of all the principles and provisions of the Helsinki Final Act would raise the CSCE process in all fields to a qualitatively new level, enhance the dynamism of real disarmament on the continent, make it possible to adopt even more substantial and effective measures to strengthen confidence and security, and serve as powerful stimuli for deepening economic and

scientific-technical co-operation, interaction in the field of culture and along all other humanitarian aspects, and creating a climate of mutual understanding and respect.

The countries represented at the meeting come out for an intensification of work at the Vienna meeting along all directions. On their part they are prepared to facilitate in every way the undelayed drafting of it of a substantive and balanced concluding document.

The proposal to conclude the Vienna meeting at the level of the ministers of foreign affairs of CSCE participating countries was confirmed. This would give the ministers an opportunity to exchange views on questions of further deepening the CSCE process and give a start to talks at forums on confidence- and security-building measures and also on the reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe.

The creation of an indivisible Europe of peace and co-operation, an "all-European home" in which there would be a firmly established atmosphere of goodneighbourliness and trust would serve the interests of all European peoples.

The ministers confirmed the positions of their countries on the need to overcome Europe's division into opposing military blocs and declare again for the simultaneous dissolution of the North Atlantic alliance and the Warsaw Treaty and as the first step for the elimination of their military organisations.

6. The ministers noted that the advances in the field of nuclear disarmament create more favourable conditions for the adoption of measures at the regional level in Europe directed at lessening military confrontation, strengthening trust and security. In this connection they confirmed the big importance of implementing the proposals made by their countries jointly or individually.

The states represented at the meeting voiced full support for and stressed their readiness to facilitate the implementation of:

— The proposals of the People's Republic of Bulgaria and the Socialist Republic of Romania to create in the Balkans a zone free of nuclear and chemical weapons, to develop relations of goodneighbourliness and co-operation between this region's countries;

— The proposals of the German Democratic Republic and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic to create a nuclear-free corridor and a zone free of chemical weapons in Central Europe;

— The plan of the Polish People's Republic to reduce armaments and increase trust in Central Europe which would be of much importance for lessening the danger of surprise attack, for developing the process of disarmament and strengthening trust on the continent;

— The new package of initiatives of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic on creating along the line of contact between the two alliances a zone of trust, co-operation and goodneighbourly relations directed at further developing the CSCE process.

The ministers welcomed the joint proposal made in Hungary, Finland and Italy containing a call on non-nuclear states to step up efforts in the interests of advancing the cause of disarmament in Europe.

7. The ministers hold that the efforts directed at strengthening stability in Europe should be supplemented by resolute measures to reduce military activity in seas and oceans adjoining the continent. They confirmed support for the

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Warsaw Treaty Foreign Ministers' Address to NATO

Here follows the full text of the address to NATO member countries and all participating countries in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe adopted at the meeting of the Foreign Ministers' Committee of Warsaw Treaty member states that ended in Sofia on March 30:

The signing of the treaty between the USSR and the United States on the elimination of their intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles was an event of historic importance in international life, a victory of realistic policy. Its attainment was facilitated by the actions of many states, as well as of anti-war movements and the peace forces on all continents. The treaty confirms the possibility of nuclear disarmament, the creation of a nuclear-weapons-free and non-violent world.

The treaty is only a beginning. The main thing today, while preserving and utilising everything of a positive nature that had helped to conclude it, is to consistently intensify the efforts of all and of every state with the aim of imparting a continuous and irreversible nature to the process of disarmament, concluding new agreements directed at a further reduction of the stockpiled arsenals of weapons and leading to the establishment of the military equilibrium on an ever lower level, to eliminating the danger of war on the European continent and in the whole world.

Opening up before Europe is a real possibility of ensuring firm security by way of substantially reducing armed forces and conventional armaments, eliminating on both sides the potential for carrying out a surprise attack and fully ridding the continent of nuclear and all other types of weapons of mass annihilation.

Proceeding from this, the Warsaw Treaty member states find it necessary for the efforts of all countries to be concentrated on the solution of the following priority tasks:

— The entry into force of the treaty between the USSR and the United States on the elimination of their intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles and its implementation.

— The conclusion in the first half of 1988 of a treaty between the USSR and the United States on a 50 per cent reduction of strategic offensive arms and an agreement on strict observance of the ABM treaty in the form in which it was signed in 1972, and on non-withdrawal from this treaty in the course of an agreed-upon period of time.

— The general and complete prohibition of nuclear weapon tests and speeding up advance to this aim by working out at the Soviet-American talks on the prohibition of nuclear tests an accord on additional measures of verification in the interests of the speedy ratification of the 1974 and

1976 treaties between the USSR and the United States and reaching an agreement on further lessening the yield and number of nuclear explosions.

— The conclusion in 1988 of work on a convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons and eliminating their stockpiles. It should provide for reliable verification and control procedures, including mandatory challenge inspections without right of refusal. The holding in the near future of a multilateral exchange of relevant data in connection with the drafting of the convention would facilitate greater openness and the creation of an atmosphere of trust.

— The speediest completion at the consultations of 23 within the framework of the Vienna meeting of CSCE participating countries of work to reach agreement on the mandate of the talks on the reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals and the opening of these talks already in 1988. These aims would be facilitated by effecting in the nearest future an exchange of data on the armed forces and conventional armaments of Warsaw Treaty and NATO member countries in Europe. Coming out for a substantial reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments with a corresponding reduction of military expenditures, the Warsaw Treaty member states are prepared in the course of these talks to identify and eliminate on a mutual basis the existing asymmetries and imbalances both on the scale of Europe and on the scale of individual regions.

— The commencement of separate talks on the reduction of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe, including nuclear components of dual designation systems, and a subsequent elimination of such weapons.

— The holding by representatives of Warsaw Treaty and NATO states of a comparison of military doctrines with due account for their military-technical aspects with the aim of imparting a strictly defensive directedness to the military doctrines and concepts of both military alliances and their members.

— The development and expansion at the conference on confidence- and security-building measures and disarmament in Europe of the confidence-building measures adopted at the first stage of its work parallel with the development of a new generation of confidence- and security-building measures, including the restriction of the number and scale of military exercises and spreading the confidence-building measures to air force and naval activity.

— The creation of zones free of nuclear and chemical weapons in the Balkans, in the centre and the north of Europe, reduction of armaments and increasing trust in central Europe, the creation of a nuclear-free corridor and a zone of trust and decreased level of armaments along the line of contact of the Warsaw Treaty and NATO, the commencement of the process of limiting military activity and lowering of the level of military confrontation in the north and south of Europe, the turning of the Mediterranean Sea into a zone of peace and co-operation.

The commencement of talks with the participation of major naval powers, especially nuclear states, as well as other interested states on the limitation and prohibition of naval activity in agreed-upon areas, limitation and reduction of naval armaments, application of confidence-building measures to seas and oceans with the aims of ensuring safety and freedom of sea shipping.

— The announcement of a moratorium of one or two years on the growth of the military

spending of Warsaw Treaty and NATO states with a view to their further effective reduction.

— Invigoration of the practical and purposeful work at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament with the purpose of adopting effective measures leading to a general and complete prohibition of nuclear weapon tests, nuclear disarmament and the prevention of an arms race in outer space so that the bilateral and multilateral talks on these problems would mutually supplement one another and pursue a single aim.

Greater openness and predictability in the military field, exchange of the necessary information and the creation of a strict and effective system of monitoring and verifying compliance by the sides with the obligations assumed by them would be of special importance for the attainment and successful implementation of accords in all these fields.

The solution of these tasks will facilitate a further improvement of the situation in Europe, lead to a serious lessening of the danger of war, to a strengthening of trust and the development of multi-faceted co-operation on the continent.

The ministers of foreign affairs of Warsaw Treaty member states confirm the proposals of their states on the removal of military bases and withdrawal of foreign troops from the territory of other countries and note that the implementation of these proposals would be a substantial contribution to the strengthening of stability and security in Europe and in the world.

Conviction is growing in the world that nuclear war should never be unleashed and that there can be no victors in it, that it is necessary to avert any war, nuclear or conventional, that the creation of a secure world requires a display of new thinking, a new approach to questions of war and peace and presupposes the total elimination of nuclear arms, a renunciation of the concepts of "nuclear deterrence", the policy of force and threat of force in inter-state relations.

The armaments eliminated in the process of disarmament and reductions should not be replaced by others, obstacles should be created in the way of any new directions of the arms race. A realisation of the ideas of "compensation", of perfecting and creating new weapons, be it nuclear, chemical or conventional, would run counter to the fundamental interests of the peoples of Europe striving to rid the continent of the armaments that have been stockpiled there.

The Warsaw Treaty member states urge the NATO countries and all European states to avail themselves of the historic chance and by joint effort to continue the advance along the roads of disarmament, strengthening security and co-operation in all fields. For their part they will do everything depending on them for this. □

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV

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At the CPSU Central Committee Political Bureau

AT its meeting on March 31 the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee heard a report on Mikhail Gorbachev's meeting with the General Secretary of the Italian Communist Party Alessandro Natta. Satisfaction was expressed with the fruitful progress of dialogue between the two parties, the deepening and enrichment of its content. The CPSU considers it important further to develop relations with communist parties and also all left-wing forces in Europe so as to impart a new impulse to the all-European dialogue in the name of ensuring peace, security and mutually advantageous co-operation within the framework of the entire continent.

Eduard Shevardnadze reported on his conversations with President Ronald Reagan of the United States and his talks with Secretary of State George Shultz in Washington on March 21-23. The contacts with the American leadership were an important stage in developing the political dialogue between the two countries

which is being conducted on key problems of international security, questions of settling acute regional conflicts, problems of humanitarian co-operation and bilateral relations. In the centre of the questions under discussion is the preparation of the treaty on the 50 per cent reduction of strategic offensive arms in conditions of observance of the ABM Treaty in the form in which it was signed in 1972.

The Political Bureau confirmed the Soviet side's firm intention to continue to work intensively for the speediest drafting of a set of documents on strategic offensive arms — ABM — so that they would be possibly prepared for signing during the Soviet-American summit on May 29-June 2. Of course, this requires a similar effort by the American side.

Note was taken of the actual departure by the American side, which surfaced during the talks in Washington, from its earlier stated readiness to take part in a political settlement of the situation around Afghanistan on the basis of the Geneva accords. Variants of our further steps in this question were studied with due consideration of this.

The Political Bureau discussed the results of the regular meeting in Sofia of the Foreign Ministers' Committee of the Warsaw Treaty member states. It endorsed the accords that were

reached on further efforts by the allied states to stop the arms race, prevent it from spreading to outer space, impart an irrevocable and ongoing nature to the commenced process of disarmament and to deepen the positive tendencies in the development of the international situation.

It approved the results of the talks conducted by Nikolai Slyunkov, Yuri Maslyukov and Vladimir Kamentsev with member of the Political Bureau and Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam Do Muoi, who was on a working visit to the Soviet Union. Measures were outlined to further increase the effectiveness of Soviet-Vietnamese economic co-operation.

The meeting studied the results of the Fourth National Congress of Collective Farmers.

The Political Bureau approved the government's proposals to improve the management of the country's building materials industry. It has been found expedient to transform the union-republican Ministry of Building Materials of the USSR into an all-union ministry.

The question of accelerating the development of co-operative housing construction was studied at the meeting.

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USSR's proposals to radically scale down military confrontation in the north of Europe and in the Arctic as a whole, to turn that region into a zone of peace and co-operation and to hold for these purposes the necessary talks, consultations and meetings between interested states.

The need to turn the Mediterranean into a zone of stable peace, security and co-operation was stressed. The participants in the meeting positively evaluated the proposals directed at this goal and came out for a consistent and full implementation of the sections of the Helsinki Final Act and the Madrid concluding document concerning security and co-operation in the Mediterranean. The ministers welcomed the USSR's continued readiness to withdraw from the Mediterranean, on a mutual basis with the United States, its naval fleet, including ships with nuclear arms on board, as well as its new initiatives directed at limiting the potential of the naval forces in the Mediterranean, working out confidence-building measures as applied to this region and ensuring safety of shipping lanes.

8. The states represented at the meeting positively assess the results of the meeting of the foreign ministers of Balkan states as a contribution to lessening tension and creating an atmosphere of goodneighbourliness and mutual understanding on the Balkans. They confirm the readiness expressed at that meeting to continue and deepen the bilateral and multilateral dialogue at all levels, including the summit one, with the aims of strengthening peace, mutual understanding, security and co-operation in the region.

9. The participants in the meeting attach special importance to the third special session of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament — the most representative world forum in this field — and proceed from the premise that its work will confirm the concept of security through disarmament and other provisions formulated in the concluding document of the first special session on disarmament. They expect that on the basis of a detailed analysis of the key aspects of the arms

race and disarmament talks the forthcoming special session will outline the main directions of disarmament and strengthening security, give a positive impulse to all the relevant bilateral and multilateral talks, adopt a decision on perfecting the mechanisms of negotiations and consultations in this field, first of all on increasing the effectiveness of the conference on disarmament in Geneva. The ministers expressed the view that the season's concluding document should be as substantive and concrete as possible.

10. The ministers positively evaluated the document adopted at the 42nd session of the United Nations General Assembly on the creation of a comprehensive system of international security and peace which creates a basis for developing and deepening the international dialogue in this field. They declared for continued consultations with all interested states on various aspects of forming this system and stressed the special importance of solving for these purposes concrete military-political, economic, ecological and humanitarian questions.

11. The states represented at the meeting confirmed the need for all countries strictly to respect the principles of national independence and sovereignty, non-use of force and threat of force, inviolability of borders and territorial integrity, peaceful settlement of disputes, non-interference in internal affairs, equality and other principles and aims of the United Nations Charter, the Helsinki Final Act and other norms of international relations.

12. The participants in the meeting exchanged views on the seats of tension and conflicts existing in the world. They stressed the need of their speediest political settlement and confirmed the resolve of their states actively to facilitate this.

The ministers confirmed the position of their countries on the question of attaining a just and comprehensive settlement and ensuring lasting peace in the Middle East. They consider it extremely necessary to hold with this aim an international conference under the aegis of the United Nations Organisation with the equal

participation of all interested sides, including the PLO and permanent members of the Security Council and declare for speeding up its preparation utilising among others also the possibilities of the United Nations Security Council. The ministers condemned the actions of the Israeli authorities in the West Bank of the Jordan and the Gaza Strip.

The ministers expressed serious concern in connection with the present escalation of the Iran-Iraq conflict. They declared in favour of building up international efforts for the purpose of the speediest implementation of resolution 598 of the United Nations Security Council. They noted the important role of the United Nations Organisation and its Secretary General in the settlement of this conflict.

Views were exchanged in connection with the Afghan-Pakistani talks in Geneva. Support was expressed for the course of attaining national reconciliation in Afghanistan, for the speediest political settlement of the situation on the basis of terminating all interference in that country's internal affairs, and respect for its independence and sovereignty. The ministers came out for the speediest conclusion of the Afghan-Pakistani talks, the signing of documents constituting the political settlement of the situation around Afghanistan which make it possible to commence the withdrawal of Soviet troops. It was noted that the solution of internal Afghan problems is a matter for the Afghans alone.

The ministers declared for a just political settlement of the Cyprus problem on the basis of respect for the independence, unity, territorial integrity and policy of non-alignment of the republic of Cyprus.

13. The participants in the meeting discussed questions of the co-operation of the allied countries in the field of foreign policy, the state of the interaction of these countries in the world arena and stated their intent to further deepen and develop it.

The meeting passed in an atmosphere of friendship and mutual understanding. The next meeting will be held in Budapest. □

EDUARD SHEVARDNADZE'S INTERVIEW WITH *RABOTNICHESKO DELO*

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any "symmetry" or "moratorium" on arms supplies. These "arguments" were thought up at the last moment when just one step remained to the signature of the Geneva agreements.

The moratorium is unacceptable to us also because it means interference in our relations with a sovereign state, a UN member, which has diplomatic relations with the United States as well. The Soviet Union supplies arms to Afghanistan under intergovernmental treaties and intergovernmental agreements. We have maintained such relations with Afghanistan since 1921.

The United States is now inviting us to break these treaties and agreements and stop honouring our commitments under them. This is a wholly illegitimate position. It is illegitimate also in the sense that it is aimed at legally formalising the idea that there allegedly is no difference between the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan, which represents its country in the United Nations and other international organisations, and the leaders of the "alliance of the seven".

Legalising their status as something more than a group engaging in armed struggle against a lawful government is one of the goals of both the proposed moratorium and the statements on symmetry in arms supplies. We cannot, of course, support this goal.

The Soviet Union will remain faithful to its word and to its commitments under the treaties and agreements it has with the Republic of Afghanistan.

RABOTNICHESKO DELO: Doesn't it follow from the US stand that the United States can refrain from signing the declaration on international guarantees?

SHEVARDNADZE: The United States is indeed, as far as we can see, linking its participation in the guarantees with the acceptance of the far from symmetrical moratorium it has proposed. Well, it is to decide itself whether it will share in the guarantees or not. It would certainly be better if it becomes a guarantor. But it is quite possible, in our opinion, to conclude the Geneva process without the US guarantees as well, the more so as geographically the region is not connected with the United States in any way. In this case the settlement scheme could look as follows: the bilateral agreements will be

signed by Afghanistan and Pakistan, while the document on the relationship signed by Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Soviet Union since this document speaks of the withdrawal of Soviet troops.

RABOTNICHESKO DELO: Is there the theoretical possibility of the Afghan problem being settled and the Soviet troops returned home without the signature of the Geneva documents? What will be the basis for the troop withdrawal in such a case?

SHEVARDNADZE: We would, of course, like to see the Geneva talks end in success. You know that both the Afghan and the Soviet sides have been doing everything depending on them to make this certain and have been following a flexible and constructive line. That the Geneva talks have now reached a point just a step away from the signature of the documents is to a significant extent due to the efforts of Afghanistan and the USSR. And we would like to see the agreements signed. Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, said this clearly in his statement on Afghanistan ahead of this round of the Afghan-Pakistani talks. But there are also other sides taking part in the Geneva negotiations. And not everything depends solely on us and the Afghan Government. This is why one cannot but take into account the possibility that the talks may not lead to the accords expected from them.

If this happens, we shall not see this outcome as something unexpected: we have taken into account and analysed such a possibility as well. Our political decision on the troop withdrawal remains unchanged. But we shall be acting then not on the basis of multilateral agreements, which the Geneva documents effectively are, but on the basis of a separate agreement which we shall work out in this case with Afghanistan. We shall be acting in a way convenient for the Government of Afghanistan and ourselves. But let me say it once more: we wish success to the Geneva negotiations and do justice to the efforts made by the personal envoy of the UN Secretary-General.

We still hope that the Pakistani leadership will thoroughly consider its national interests before saying the final "no". Pakistan and Afghanistan are neighbours and will remain ones for ages. Can the Pakistanis be indifferent to what their further relations with Afghanistan will

be? Now they have the historic chance to lay solid groundwork for a future peaceful and good-neighbourly relationship. A state, a nation cannot live by the present day alone. One would like to hope that the Pakistani leadership will think of its country's tomorrow as well.

I believe that success to the Geneva talks is wished by everybody really caring for the fate of the Afghan people and really interested in peace and calm in Afghanistan.

RABOTNICHESKO DELO: Could you speak of your impression from the Sofia meeting of the Foreign Ministers' Committee of the Warsaw Treaty countries?

SHEVARDNADZE: Without being afraid to appear too emotional, let me say that this meeting in Sofia has been particularly gladdening and inspiring to us, first of all with its working atmosphere and intellectual content. My colleagues and friends in their statements have presented a broad panorama of fruitful foreign policy ideas that form the capital of our community. And each of these ideas is working and thus, naturally, adding to the international prestige of the alliance and to its positive influence on world affairs.

Let me mention, by way of an example, the initiative of our Bulgarian friends, which provides for creating a zone free from nuclear weapons in the Balkans. By having actively worked to organise a meeting of the foreign ministers of the Balkan countries, Bulgaria has taken the initiative appreciably close to its practical realisation.

If we add to this the faultless organisation of the Sofia meeting and the exceptional hospitality accorded to us, the picture of what has been achieved in Sofia will be complete.

My meeting with Comrade Todor Zhivkov and with the Bulgarian leadership has been extremely useful for me. On instructions from Mikhail Gorbachev I briefed them on the Soviet-American talks and the progress of the restructuring drive in my country. Comrade Zhivkov shared with me his valuable ideas and thoughts on the Bulgarian experience of building socialism.

Availing myself of this opportunity, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude and wish happiness, peace and further triumphs to all Bulgarian people — our brothers. □

(Sofia, March 30)

(continued from previous page)

The Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee approved the measures worked out by the Council of Ministers of the USSR to develop the social sphere in the Moscow region in 1988-1995.

The Political Bureau approved the status of political bodies within the system of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs and outlined measures connected with the creation of a single organisational structure of these bodies and the perfection of their work.

Some other questions of implementing the economic and social policy formulated by the 27th CPSU Congress were also studied. □

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USSR-US JOINT ECOLOGICAL STUDIES

A Soviet-American meeting that came to an end in the Georgian city of Batumi on April 1 has taken a decision to conduct in July-October 1988 a joint expedition to study the ecological situation in the Bering Sea and in the Central Pacific.

Experts from the two countries will carry out the project in two stages. First, they will study the ecological situation in the Bering Sea and then move on to the tropical region of the Pacific Ocean.

Yuri Kazakov, Executive Secretary of the mixed Soviet-American Commission for Environmental Protection, said that two joint expeditions had already been conducted in this field.

"But they were limited to the Bering Sea. Their results helped describe the regime of the functioning of the Bering Sea and give a possible forecast of its ecological situation."

In the recent meeting, the experts worked out a programme for long-term Soviet-American studies in the Bering Sea to assess and predict its natural capacity with regard to pollutants.

"The data to be obtained will form the basis for working out criteria for regulating man's influence on the ecological system," Kazakov pointed out. □

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