

President Reagan arrives in Moscow

THE Soviet capital welcomed the President of the United States Ronald Reagan with traditional Moscow hospitality. His official visit to the Soviet Union has begun.

This is the first visit to the USSR by the 40th President of the United States and it ends a fourteen-year interval in official visits by American heads of state to Moscow.

As in their time the meetings in Geneva, Reykjavik and Washington, the present one also is at the centre of attention of the world. Everybody hopes that Moscow of late May and early June 1988, a wonderful time of Russian summer, will become yet another milestone distancing us from mistrust and confrontation and bringing us closer to mutual understanding and co-operation, to a nuclear-free and a just world.

Two pm Moscow time. The Guard of Honour is lined up on the tarmac of Vnukovo Airport. The stars and stripes and the red Soviet flag flutter on tall masts.

A banner on the airport building reads in Russian and English "Welcome, Mr President".

The welcoming party warmly greets the President of the United States. The first handshakes after the President and Nancy Reagan

step down on the tarmac. They are greeted by Andrei Gromyko, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and his wife, Eduard Shevardnadze, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Anatoli Dobrynin, Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and Yuri Dubinin, the USSR Ambassador to the United States. The US President is being accompanied by Secretary of State George Shultz and other American officials.

Nancy Reagan is presented with a big bouquet of red roses.

Andrei Gromyko and Ronald Reagan walk to the Guard of Honour representing the three services of the Soviet Armed Forces.

Near the banner of the Armed Forces of the USSR the Commander of the Guard of Honour presents the Guard of Honour to the President of the United States.

The national anthems of the two countries are played by a military band.

Andrei Gromyko and Ronald Reagan bow to the banner of the Armed Forces of the USSR and then inspect the Guard of Honour.

Then Soviet officials are introduced to the President.

Among them are Jan Vagris, Vice President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, Yuri Khristoradnov, Chairman of the Soviet of the Union of the USSR Supreme Soviet, Vladimir Kamentsev and Boris Tolstykh, deputy chairmen of the USSR Council of Ministers, Tengis Menteshashvili, Secretary of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, Yuri Volmer, Vasili Zakharov, Konstantin Katushev and Nikolai Kotlyar, Ministers of the USSR, Valeri Saikin, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Moscow City Soviet, and Alexander Bessmertnykh, Deputy Foreign Minister of the USSR.

The President greets the diplomatic staff of the US Embassy in the USSR, headed by Ambassador Jack Matlock.

Reagan and his wife are greeted with little flags bearing national colours by representatives of the capital's working people.

The welcoming ceremony in the airport ends with a march-past by the Guard of Honour.

The motorcade, escorted by motorcycle outriders, heads for the city. There are hundreds of state flags of the United States and the Soviet Union and welcoming streamers along the route. □

(Moscow, May 29.)

Mikhail Gorbachev's speech at welcoming ceremony

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, gave the following speech at a welcoming ceremony in the Kremlin for US President Ronald Reagan and his wife:

Esteemed Mr Ronald Reagan, President of the United States of America,

Esteemed Mrs Nancy Reagan,

On behalf of the people and Government of the Soviet Union, I extend to you my sincere greetings on the occasion of your visit. Welcome.

It is now almost six months since our meeting in Washington, which has gone down in history as a major milestone in Soviet-American and in international relations.

Now, on this return trip, you, Mr President, have traversed the great distance that lies between our two capitals to continue our political dialogue. This is a fact we duly appreciate.

As this is our fourth meeting, we can already make some meaningful assessments. As we see it, long-held dislikes have been weakened, habitual stereotypes stemming from "enemy images" have been shaken loose.

The human features of the other nation are now more clearly visible. This in itself is important. For at the turn of the two millenniums history has objectively bound our two countries by a common responsibility for the destinies of mankind.

The peoples of the world, and in the first place the Soviet and the American people, welcome the emerging positive changes in our relationship and hope that your visit and talks here will be productive, providing a fresh impetus in all areas of dialogue and interaction between our two great nations.

You and I are conscious of our two peoples' longing for mutual understanding, co-operation and a safe and stable world. This makes it incumbent upon us to discuss constructively the main aspects of disarmament, the set of issues related to 50 per cent cuts in strategic offensive arms, while preserving the 1972 ABM Treaty, problems of eliminating chemical weapons, reductions in armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe, cessation of nuclear testing.

The world is also looking to us, Mr President, for responsible judgements on other complex issues of today such as the settlement of regional conflicts, improving international economic relations, promoting development, overcoming backwardness, poverty and mass diseases, and humanitarian problems.

And of course we shall discuss bilateral relations.

Our previous meetings have shown that constructive Soviet-US relations are possible. The Treaty on Intermediate- and Shorter-Range Missiles is the most impressive symbol of that.

But even more complex and important tasks lie ahead.

And so, Mr President, you and I still have a lot of work to do and it is good when there's a lot of work to be done and people need that work. We are ready to do our utmost in these coming days in Moscow.

Mr President, you and Mrs Reagan are here on your first visit to the Soviet Union, a country which you have so often mentioned in your public statements. Aware of your interest in Russian proverbs, let me add another one to your collection: "It is better to see once than to hear a hundred times".

Let me assure you that you can look forward to hospitality, warmth and goodwill. You will have many meetings with Soviet people.

They have a centuries-old history behind them, they love their land and take pride in their accomplishments.

They resent things that are presently standing in their way and they are heatedly discussing how their country can best progress. They are full of plans for the future.

Being ardent patriots, Soviet people are open to friendship and co-operation with all nations. They harbour sincere respect for the American people and want good relations with your country.

Here, within the walls of the ancient Kremlin, where one feels the touch of history, people are moved to reflect over the diversity and greatness of human civilisation.

So may this give greater historical depth to the Soviet-American talks to be held here, infusing them with a sense of mankind's shared destinies. Once again, I bid you welcome. □

IN THIS ISSUE

Mikhail Gorbachev's speech at welcoming ceremony	p. 189
Mikhail Gorbachev's speech at Kremlin dinner in honour of US President	p. 190
Central Committee Theses for the 19th All-Union Party Conference	p. 193

Mikhail Gorbachev's speech at Kremlin dinner in honour of US President

Here follows the full speech delivered by Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, at a Kremlin dinner for US President Ronald Reagan:

Esteemed Mr President,
Esteemed Mrs Reagan,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Comrades,

I greet you in the Moscow Kremlin, which has witnessed landmark events in the history of this country over these past five centuries.

It is here that decisions have been taken of crucial importance to the nation's destiny. Everything around us calls for a sense of responsibility before the times and contemporaries, before the present and the future.

And it is here that we would like to stress the significance of the truth we have awoken to, namely that it is no longer possible to settle state-to-state disputes by force of arms. We have been led to this conclusion by the understanding of realities in the present-day world.

I like the notion "realism" and I like it having been used by you, Mr President, ever more often of late.

A normal, let alone stable, Soviet-American relationship, which has so much influence on the world political climate, is inconceivable without realism.

It is thanks to realism that, in spite of all the disagreements, we have been able to arrive at a very simple, but historic conclusion, namely that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. Other conclusions have followed from it with inexorable logic.

In particular, the one that we do not need weapons which cannot be used without killing ourselves — and the rest of humanity as well, for that matter. I believe this understanding has made the pivotal lines of Reykjavik.

Our Warsaw Treaty allies hold this position firmly as well. And this leaves us with solid support in all efforts related to nuclear disarmament. Our allies have given the Soviet leadership a clear-cut mandate to press for decisively limiting and reducing nuclear weapons in talks with the United States.

I can see from my meetings with the leaders of the socialist states and authoritative representatives of other countries that ending military confrontation and the race in both nuclear and conventional weapons is a common desire.

It must be added that the realistic approach is clearing a path in all directions, in all continents. It is precisely the idea of a political solution of present-day problems that is gaining influence. The striving of diverse political and social forces towards dialogue, towards exchanges, towards better knowledge of one another, and towards mutual understanding is broadening.

If that is so, if such is the will of the peoples, care should be taken so that the stocks of the ferment of realistic policy augment, rather than diminish.

For that, it is necessary to understand one another better, to take into account specific features of the countries' life and historic conditions of their formation, the choice made by their peoples.

I recall you once saying, Mr President, that "the only way to resolve differences is to understand them." How very true.

I will only add that the striving to eliminate differences should not provide for the elimination of diversity. The diversity of the

world is a mighty source of mutual enrichment, both intellectual and material.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Comrades,

The word "perestroika" is not out of place even within these ancient walls. The renewal of society, humanisation of life and elevation of ideals have always and everywhere been in the interests of the people and of each individual.

When this happens, especially in a great country, it is important to understand the essence of what it lives through. Precisely this desire we now observe abroad with regard to the Soviet Union. And we regard this as a good sign. Because we really want to be understood correctly. This is important for civilised international relations as well.

It is practical for all who want to have business with us to know how the Soviet people view themselves.

We view ourselves as being ever more convinced of the correctness of the socialist choice, and we don't think of our country's development outside socialism, on other fundamental principles.

Our programme calls for greater democracy and openness, for greater social justice in the conditions of prosperity and lofty spirit.

Our aim is to give maximum freedom for people, for the individual, for society.

In international terms, we see ourselves as part of an integral civilisation where everyone has social and political choice and the right to a worthy and equal place in the community of nations.

In the issues of peace and progress, we proceed from the priority of universally shared values and regard preserving peace as the overriding priority.

This is why we are for forging a comprehensive system of international security as a condition for mankind's survival.

This explains our desire to revive and enhance the role of the United Nations on the basis of the original goals inscribed by the USSR and the US and by their allies into the charter of that organisation.

Its very name — the United Nations — is symbolic: nations united in their resolve to prevent any further tragedies of war, to remove war from international relations, and to affirm fair principles in its place to protect the dignified life of any nation, big or small, strong or weak, poor or rich.

We are keen to broaden contacts among people in every form, to increase the flow of information and improve its quality, and to promote ties in science, culture, education and sport, in any form of human activity.

But this must be done without interference in domestic affairs, without lecturing others and foisting one's own views and habits on them, without making family and personal problems a pretext for confrontation among states.

In short, the times put forward a wide-ranging programme in the humanitarian field. The peoples should understand one another better, know the truth about one another, and shed prejudice.

As far as we know, most Americans, just like us, are eager to get rid of the demon of nuclear war. But they are increasingly concerned, just like us and like all the people on Earth, about the danger of ecological catastrophe. This threat, too, can only be warded off by common effort.

The truly global problem of the economic state

of the world — in the north and south and in the west and east of this planet — is getting ever higher on the order of the day.

The economic foundation of civilisation will crumble if the squandering of funds and resources on the purposes of war and destruction is not stopped.

If the problem of indebtedness is not settled, and world finances stabilised,

If the world market fails to become a truly world one by involving on an equitable basis all states and peoples.

This is the range with which we approach our international ties, including, naturally, with the United States, as well.

We are driven by the understanding of the realities and imperatives of the nuclear and space age, the age with the sweeping waves of technological revolution, when the human race is all-powerful and mortal at the same time.

It is precisely this understanding that brought fourth new thinking thanks to which the conceptual and practical breakthrough has become possible also in our mutual relations.

Mr President, the current meeting, in summing up a fundamentally important period in Soviet-American relations, is called upon to consolidate what has been achieved and create a fresh impetus for the future.

Never before have nuclear missiles been destroyed. Now we have an unprecedented treaty. And our countries will have to perform for the first time an overture of nuclear disarmament. The performance should be flawless.

The Soviet Union and the United States act as guarantors of the Afghan political settlement. This is also a precedent of immense significance. The guarantor nations are in for a crucial period, and we hope that both will pass through it with honour. The entire world is watching how we both will act in this situation.

Elaborating an agreement on cutting by 50 per cent the strategic offensive weapons in conditions of the observance of the ABM Treaty remains our principal cause.

In our today's conversation, we paid much attention to the discussion of the entire range of these problems — which was justified.

Mr President,

There are expectations that the Moscow meeting will open up new vistas in Soviet-American dialogue, in Soviet-American relations, and benefit our peoples and the entire world.

For that, one should spare neither strength nor goodwill.

For co-operation between the Soviet Union and the United States of America, for their better mutual knowledge and understanding.

I wish health and happiness to Mr President, Mrs Nancy Reagan and all our esteemed guests. □

(Moscow, May 30)

Concern for Human Rights: Real and False. Facts and comments

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Available from Soviet Booklets (SN),

3 Rosary Gardens, London, SW7 4NW.

Mikhail Gorbachev's speech at Spaso House

Here follows the full text of the speech made by Mikhail Gorbachev at a dinner held in Spaso House, the residence of the US Ambassador in Moscow, on behalf of the President of the United States Ronald Reagan and Nancy Reagan in honour of Mikhail Gorbachev and Raisa Gorbachyova. The General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee said:

Esteemed Mr President,
Esteemed Mrs Reagan,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Comrades,

I thank you, Mr President, for your words of welcome. Two great nations have given us a sort of mandate: to determine what Soviet-American relations are to be.

Since the time of the first meeting in Geneva the relations between our countries overcame the prolonged period of confrontation and reached an acceptable level from which it was already easier to advance further.

In Reykjavik, in Washington and in the course of your present visit the dialogue proceeded intensively. The now already ratified first treaty on the reduction of nuclear arms is its biggest result.

The search for the solution of problems continues in the course of preparations for the 50 per cent reduction of strategic offensive arms.

The Geneva agreement on Afghanistan has entered into force. We already have 47 bilateral agreements on co-operation.

The visit by the President of the United States to the USSR is a good opportunity to glance back and at the same time to look into the future.

There have been all sorts of things in the history of relations between our two countries. Both good and bad. Of the good, the Soviet-American comradeship-in-arms during the Second World War is particularly memorable.

The first shoots of Soviet-American friendship appeared during those grim years.

And you will not find a single Soviet person who would not have experienced bitterness when this glorious page in the history of our relations was replaced by the cold war.

That was a grave trial for our peoples. The world found itself in a dangerous situation when we all felt the breath of catastrophe. To this day we occasionally sense cold winds.

But if we are to speak of the main tendency of world development, it is turning in the direction of search for political solutions, co-operation and peace. We all are witnesses of significant changes although considerable efforts will yet have to be made to achieve irreversible changes.

Although everything cries out for co-operation and trust, prejudices and stereotypes are still alive, rivalry continues and first of all in the military sphere. That this is senseless and catastrophic has been said at length at this meeting as well. More than that, we can note a certain advance towards better mutual understanding in this field too.

Today I would like to mention another crucial world problem.

The situation in the developing world, which cannot but also affect our countries.

The problems encountered by the developing states have turned out to be tragically difficult ones.

The terrible backwardness, hunger, poverty, mass diseases continue to plague whole nations.

The fantastic debt has become a burning issue that concerns the whole of mankind.

Everybody seems to see its complexity and the involvement of extremely different and really vital interests and to realise that a way out must be found.

We believe that the first and main thing that the international community, most notably the great powers, can do here by way of helping is to recognise the freedom of choice unconditionally.

We insist on justice. We have seriously analysed the economic situation in developing countries. And we are convinced that a way out is possible through a radical restructuring of the entire system of world economic ties, without any discrimination on political grounds.

This would assist also a political settlement of regional conflicts which not only hold up progress in the particular part of the world, but disrupt the entire world situation.

Given this kind of approach, our disagreements about which fate awaits the "third world" will not take confrontational forms.

In this issue our relationship is "doomed" to be of international significance as well.

Speaking of our bilateral relations, we look at their potentialities and prospects proceeding first of all from the domestic development of both countries as well as in the context of the world process.

Many Americans who study us and have visited the USSR — and now, I hope, those attending here as well — have had an opportunity to see for themselves the scope and momentum that changes have acquired in this country.

They are based on all-round democratisation and radical economic reform. It is with satisfaction that I can say that the President and I had an in-depth exchange on this topic. I have talked about our perestroika with other American representatives more than once as well. And this is very good. This, too, is a sign of change in our relations.

For our part, we seek closely to follow fundamental processes in the United States. We see the utter dissimilarity of what is happening here and in your country, in these very different societies based on different values. But we do not consider this a hindrance to identifying promising areas for mutually advantageous contacts, for co-operation in the interest of both nations.

We stand for competition, for comparison.

One more thing. In dialogue with America, with all its ups and downs, Soviet representatives upheld the interests of the Soviet State. The same is done by Americans in contacts with us.

The truth is that the Soviet Union and the United States, in building their relations, can effectively realise their own interests only by realistically appraising the interests and intentions of the partner and taking them into account. It is necessary to master the complex art of not only co-existing with each other but also building bridges of mutually beneficial co-operation.

The Soviet and American peoples want to live in peace, they want communication in everything in which there is reciprocal interest. There is such interest, and it is growing.

We experience neither fear nor prejudice. We regard communication as a good thing.

I envisage a future in which the USSR and the United States build their relations not on the basis of deterrence and perfection of military potentials, but on the basis of disarmament, balance of interests and all-round co-operation.

I envisage a future when the solution of real problems is not hindered by problems that are artificially preserved, that are historically outdated, being a legacy of the cold war.

And when the course towards rivalry gives way to a joint search based on reason, mutual benefit and readiness for compromise.

I envisage a future in which our countries, without claiming special rights in the world, constantly remember their special responsibility in the community of equitable states.

This will be a world more reliable and safer, a world that is needed by all people on Earth, their children and grandchildren, so that they could acquire and preserve the principal human rights — the right to life, to work, to freedom and the pursuit of happiness.

The road towards this future is neither easy nor short.

We are, probably, at the start of an exceedingly interesting period in the history of our peoples.

Our meeting, Mr President, confirms that we took a correct decision in Geneva three years ago.

Let the coming years bring about an improvement in the international situation. Let life triumph. □

(Moscow, May 31)

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The two leaders go on a walkabout

TASS correspondent Vladimir Shishlov reports:

IMMEDIATELY after the end of the morning round of Soviet-American summit talks, Mikhail Gorbachev at the request of Ronald Reagan went for a walk with him about the Kremlin grounds and Red Square.

During the walk the President and Mikhail Gorbachev stopped on more than one occasion and engaged in lively conversations with Muscovites and guests from other cities who greeted the leaders of the two countries with warmth and hospitality.

However, the Muscovites' remarks were not confined to exclamations of greeting. Many of them expressed hope to the President that nuclear arsenals would be fully eliminated by 2000 and asked if Mr Reagan shared those hopes. The US President answered in the affirmative and pointed out that if the young people of our two countries knew each other better, the menace of war would be removed. Anatoli Tomkovich, a young physician, agreed with him: "Yes, it is true, but you, the leaders, can also do something for that."

Mikhail Gorbachev remarked that he and the President had agreed that contacts started in the

past several years should develop not only on a political level, among specialists, but also on the level of students, young people and cultural organisations.

Gorbachev said: "When the President and I have meetings, he asks questions and says some critical things. I do the same with regard to America. I said to the President that many questions are the result of the fact that we know little about each other's countries. We agreed to make everything clear and exchange views. I told the President, for instance, and he can confirm my words, that I disagree with quite a number of his remarks about this country. If we did not have any problems, we would not have started perestroika. However, we are proud of this country, this is our country. Americans are proud of their country. We appreciate it. All the peoples love their native land and uphold its interests. However, this does not prevent people from living in peace and co-operating along with remaining different."

A large group of journalists waited for the Soviet and American leaders at the Cathedral Square near the Palace of Congresses. One of them asked Gorbachev to tell them in short about the problem of nuclear arms reduction.

The General Secretary said that the reduction of strategic and offensive armaments in their relationship with the anti-ballistic missile system and sea-based cruise missiles, as well as problems connected with chemical weapons and conventional weapons in Europe, were the centrepiece at the current talks. "They are discussed not only by myself and the President, but also by working groups and experts. Progress will be achieved," he said.

The question was asked if the fifth meeting of the two leaders would be held.

Mikhail Gorbachev passed the question on to the President.

President Reagan answered that it would be decided later. However, there is one thing that he can say for certain: "What we have decided to do is to talk to each other rather than about each other. And that is working."

President Reagan was so engrossed in conversations with Muscovites and so impressed by the beauty of the Kremlin that the signing of Soviet-American documents scheduled for 11.30, Moscow time, started 20 minutes later. □

(Moscow, May 31)

Defence ministers meet

A MEETING between General Dmitri Yazov, Defence Minister of the USSR, and Frank Carlucci, US Secretary of Defense, took place in Moscow on May 30 within the framework of the Soviet-US summit meeting. This is the second meeting between the heads of defence departments.

The first meeting took place in Berne on March 16-17, 1988. At the time the sides discussed the nature of the military doctrines of the two states, the problems of reducing and limiting armaments. At the same time they did not set the task of substituting for the official talks of the delegations and also for the regular meetings between the Soviet Foreign Minister and the US Secretary of State. Dmitri Yazov said dialogue of the defence ministers must give one more chance for an in-depth discussion of the military, political and technical issues of bilateral relations and, consequently,

promote the strengthening of mutual understanding and trust.

At the talks in Geneva, drafts of a number of documents, relating to an agreement on a 50 per cent reduction of strategic offensive arms of the USSR and the USA, were formulated. The outlines of the future agreement begin to stand out clearly enough but further movement is being hampered by several key issues that are not resolved.

In particular, the Soviet side proposes to include in the text of the strategic offensive arms agreement a provision, set out in a statement on the results of the summit meeting in Washington of December 10, 1987, which stipulates that the ABM Treaty should be observed in the form it was signed in 1972.

The question of verification covering long-range sea-launched cruise missiles remains unresolved. The American side, itself not advancing any constructive proposals on verification, only calls in question the feasibility

of large-scale verification measures proposed by the USSR. It is obvious that without SLCM limitations, no extensive cuts will be possible in strategic arms because it will leave a potential possibility for circumventing the treaty.

No agreement has been reached either on the question of the procedure for counting long-range air-launched cruise missiles. The Soviet side believes that on heavy bombers the number of missiles they are really capable of carrying should be counted. As for the American side, it proposes to count them on the basis of an arbitrarily chosen figure: for the USA the number of such missiles would be below the real capacities of American bombers. A number of other issues also remains unsettled.

The discussion by the ministers on measures to build mutual understanding and trust in the military field has a great significance. At the Berne meeting the sides reached an understanding on the expediency of holding bilateral consultations to discuss the question of military activities, outline the principles and create a relevant forum to prevent incidents between the armed forces of the USSR and USA. □

GORBACHEV ANSWERS QUESTIONS

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV made the following remarks in response to reporters' questions immediately after the document signing ceremony in the Red Sitting Room of the Grand Kremlin Palace on May 31:

"The US President and I had a serious discussion on economic co-operation in the morning today. I expressed this simple idea: 'we have proved that economically we are independent of each other. But is this normal if in the interest of our two nations and in the interest of other countries we should co-operate?'"

"When countries and peoples co-operate and develop trade, the economy and friendly ties, they come to know each other better. This is the basis for a political relationship.

"Then, predictability is generally better:

there's no fertile ground for stereotypes and suspicion and for prejudice. This is very important.

"Moreover, if there are good economic and trade ties, this means a greater dependence of countries on one another, and if there's greater dependence, there is predictability in politics. So the discussion was very substantive.

"I criticised the position of the President and Congress for having thrown up a great deal of logjams in the way of healthy economic co-operation. And the President agreed that we should seek improvement in this area as well," Gorbachev continued.

Replying to another question, he said he had handed the President letters from Soviet people. "Those were interesting letters and he'll find it interesting to read them," the Soviet leader said. □

Return of Soviet troops from Afghanistan

A total of 9,500 Soviet servicemen and nearly 1,000 units of military equipment have been returned from Afghanistan to the Soviet Union up to today, said General of the Army Alexei Lizichev, chief of the main political administration of the Soviet Army and Navy. He made this statement on May 25 at the Press Centre of the Soviet-American summit meeting, addressing a press conference on the subject of "political settlement around Afghanistan — a model of new thinking in action".

By the beginning of May 1988 Soviet casualties in Afghanistan had been 13,310 men killed, 35,478 wounded, and 311 persons reported missing, he said. □

Central Committee Theses for the 19th All-Union Party Conference

APPROVED BY THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE PLENARY MEETING
ON MAY 23, 1988

OUR country is going through profound revolutionary reforms of historic significance, initiated and organised by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The April 1985 plenary meeting of the central committee and the 27th Congress set the party's course towards acceleration of social and economic development, towards all-round renovation of Soviet society, towards raising socialism to a qualitatively new level.

This innovative strategy was deepened and concretised at the January and June 1987 plenary meetings of the central committee, during celebration of the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution, and at the February plenary meeting this year. This laid down foundations for the theory and scientific policy of restructuring of every aspect of society's life.

The purpose of restructuring, or perestroika, is fully to reveal the humanitarian nature and constructive vigour of socialism. Attainment of this objective is inseparable from promotion of democracy and openness, from self-management of the people, a radical economic reform, moral cleansing of society, and from discovery of the creative potentialities inherent in the free and all-round development of the person.

What are the first results of perestroika? What needs to be done to remove the obstacles, to give a new and powerful impulse to the revolutionary process of renewal, to make it irreversible? The answers to these questions which keenly concern communists and all Soviet people must be given by the 19th All-Union Party Conference, which opens in Moscow on June 28, 1988.

The agenda of the Conference is as follows:

1) Progress in implementing the decisions of the 27th CPSU Congress, the main results of the first half of the 12th economic plan period and the tasks of party organisations in deepening the process of perestroika;

2) Measures to further democratise the life of party and society.

The issues being submitted for the consideration of the Conference are of vital significance for the party and the country. We must give a realistic assessment of what has been done, approach achievement from positions of serious critical and self-critical analysis, see how the decisions we adopted are being carried out, focus on priority issues, sum up positive experience and define the prospects for our advance.

These theses of the CPSU central committee are being offered as a platform for discussion.

1. Perestroika has produced a fundamentally new ideological and political situation in society. It has become a reality and is gaining in strength, spreading in width and depth and extending to every stratum and sphere of life of society. The February 1988 plenary meeting of the central committee described the ideological essence of the ongoing processes as a revolution in mentality, as ideological renovation. A salient feature of our time is the appearance of a real pluralism of opinions, open comparison of ideas and interests.

Thanks to this, the Soviet people are now in a position to exploit their intellectual and moral potential more fully and to join more vigorously in public life.

The platform of perestroika is politically consolidating the working class, the farmers, the in-

tellectuals, all social forces. The Soviet people, by their work and social activity, are giving increasingly effective support to the revolutionary changes in the country.

This is today's main trend in social development, the most important result of perestroika's first stage.

At the same time, perestroika is a conflicting process, proceeding as it does through difficulties and the struggle between the old and the new. Survivals of the conservative and bureaucratic mentality have proved especially tenacious. Adherents of dogmatic concepts of socialism are slow to yield. Attempts are being made to preserve the old, high-handed methods of running the economy and other spheres of life.

Without dealing with these negative phenomena, it is impossible to advance further and accomplish the major tasks of perestroika. We must raise the theoretical level of ideological and political work and deepen the creative discussions on the burning issues of socialism. While backing diversity of views, the CPSU central committee stresses that discussions can be fertile only if they are carried out on the basis and in the name of socialism. They must not lead to political confrontation, to disunity of social forces, because that would complicate the solution of problems vital for our entire society.

This also applies to many sensitive issues of history, interest in which has grown unusually of late. The party will consistently conduct its policy of openness and glasnost, of free discussion of problems of our past and present, for only such a policy promotes moral improvement of Soviet society and its cleansing of everything that is alien to its humane nature.

We are by no means indifferent not only to goals and values of socialism, but also to means of attaining them, to the human price that has to be paid for them. It is our party and civic duty to rehabilitate those who in the past fell victim to unjustified political accusations and illegality.

We need a constantly operating mechanism for comparing views, for criticism and self-criticism in the party and society.

The undoubted gains of the policy of openness are to be consolidated and multiplied. With the one-party system, which has historically evolved and established itself in this country, and is being closely combined today with processes of democratisation, this is a matter of vital importance. A Leninist-type approach is essential here.

In condemning factionalism, Lenin was definitively against persecution of his party comrades for thinking otherwise. A constant and constructive political dialogue, the civilised way of conducting discussions, wide information available on matters of domestic and foreign policy, and study and account of public opinion have to become part and parcel of the party's life.

2. Matters of economic and social development have featured prominently in the party's activities since the April 1985 plenary meeting of the central committee.

The years of stagnation put the country on the brink of an economic crisis. An extensive, spendthrift system of economic management fully exhausted itself. Its structure and technical level are at variance with modern requirements. The command-administrative methods of management became a serious brake. Production, its efficiency, and living standards of the population ceased to grow. Many social questions were neglected. The finances of the country became seriously disrupted and the sense of responsibility of per-

sonnel and labour discipline slackened.

The party was faced with a difficult task, one of taking the country out of the doldrums, of improving the economic situation, of putting development at the service of the people, of working out and implementing a set of long-term measures to speed attainment of the advanced frontiers of world scientific, technical and economic progress.

As a first step, considerable work was done to introduce elementary order and to tighten discipline in the national economy, to set greater demands on personnel, and to remove the more glaring instances of bureaucratic methods standing in the way of people's normal work.

A practical start was made on implementing a new structural policy, with the emphasis on further scientific and technological progress and modernisation of engineering as the basis for raising the technological level of the entire economy. Specific measures of an economic and organisational kind are being taken to raise the quality of products.

To counterbalance the "residual principle" used in the past in allocating funds for the development of the social sphere, more money was assigned for housing construction and healthcare, for the development of public education, the strengthening of the material base of culture, and for other social aims.

The main stress was placed on the development and real implementation of a radical reform to ensure transition from the predominantly administrative to economic methods of management, on increasing the interest of collectives and individual workers in the results of their work. The Laws on the State Enterprise (Association), on Co-operatives, and on Individual Enterprise, which were adopted, marked major milestones along that road.

Large-scale work began across the country to transfer enterprises to profit-and-loss accounting, to progressive forms of organisation and stimulation of labour, to self-management.

These forms unfetter the initiative of work collectives and the enterprising spirit of people, prompt them to work with maximum effect, help extirpate wage-levelling in all forms, and put the process of democratisation on a material foundation.

The party set the course towards full application of the potential of the collective and state farms through the development of diverse contract forms, establishment of a wide network of co-operatives within the framework of existing farms and in conjunction with other enterprises and branches of the economy.

Certainly, two to three years is not long enough to implement radical economic reforms. We are at an early stage, in a sort of transition period. It is only from this year that the Law on the State Enterprise and other decisions relating to the economic reform have begun to operate, and even they are not functioning at full strength, for they were put into effect in the middle of the five-year period, with old prices, in the absence of wholesale trade in the means of production, in conditions of continuing scarcity of goods. The major programmes of technological progress that have been drawn up and put into operation will not bring returns at once.

And still positive shifts are taking place. The main thing is that we have been able to halt the growth of negative tendencies that threatened to grow into a crisis, to reverse these trends and to

create certain prerequisites for further steady advance.

This is not only a question of raising the rate of growth in industrial production, in increasing the commissioning of fixed assets and improving other quantitative indicators. The important thing is that these rates have been achieved on a more sound economic basis.

For the first time, the entire increment in national income last year was obtained through labour productivity. Early encouraging results have appeared in the development of prototypes of modern equipment and technology. There has been some increase in agricultural output.

The situation in the social sphere has changed too. Over the past two years the average monthly wages of industrial and office workers have gone up by almost six percent, and labour remuneration of collective farmers by 8.9 percent. The amount of housing annually completed for tenancy, compared with the 11th Five-Year Plan, has grown by 15 million square metres. The death rate has declined and the birth rate has risen, with the measures against alcoholism and drinking contributing to that in no small degree.

Positive results are here to see, but they do not give grounds for speaking about a radical turn in the country's social and economic development. The economic structure is still heavily handicapped, bearing a manifestly spendthrift character. Targets for national income growth and resource-saving are not being met. Engineering is developing more slowly than was planned. There is still a shortage of high-quality electronic goods and progressive constructional materials.

Especially intolerable are failures to meet assignments for accelerated growth of consumer goods production. Difficulties remain in food supplies for the population. Targets for increasing the output and raising the quality of consumer goods, for raising goods turnover, have not been achieved. Commodity-money disbalances, and the deficit of the state budget are having a negative effect on current production and the course of the reform itself.

The potentialities that opened up with the start of the reform are being put to obviously insufficient use. The conference is to look into the causes of that.

Evidently, despite all difficulties of changing over from one system of economic management to another, a good deal stems from the conservative and backward mentality of some of our economic executives and whole collectives, from a striving to cling to habitual ways and methods, to live and work in the old way.

One cannot fail to see that measures to implement the economic reform are being paralysed to a considerable extent by the bureaucratic position of some ministries and departments, of economic bodies. In many instances, the old ways of administrative diktat are being preserved under a guise of state-placed orders, economic normatives and other new methods of management.

Perestroika at the level of branch ministries is clearly behind perestroika at enterprises.

In view of this, we must uncompromisingly condemn moves that distort the essence of the economic reform and are directly or indirectly undermining the law on enterprises.

Life is also posing the serious question of promoting economic competition as an antidote to monopoly, stagnation and conservatism.

In the context of this situation, the activities of the USSR State Planning Committee, the USSR State Committee for Material and Technical Supplies, the USSR Ministry of Finance, branch ministries and other union departments, economic bodies in republics, enterprises and organisations, must be analysed and assessed. This is especially important in view of the forthcoming transfer of enterprises in all branches to cost accounting and self-financing.

In drawing lessons from the initial stage of perestroika, we must accelerate solution of the problems which decide the full application of the principles of the economic reform.

We must accelerate transition to wholesale trade of the means of production, carry out measures to improve the credit and finance system, and prepare carefully and conduct in good time a reform of prices and pricing. Without that, it is impossible to introduce really full cost accounting at enterprises, ensure full autonomy of work collectives, develop the co-operative movement, and raise the efficiency of the economy and ultimately the prosperity of the people.

It should be stressed also that revision of retail prices must be done without detriment to the living standards of the population.

An effective social policy is one of the chief priorities in the party's activity. This is why it is vital to highlight the social purport of economic development while elaborating the 13th Five-Year Plan. Special attention should be given to meeting Soviet people's need for quality foodstuffs quickly.

It is also important that the market gets a big range of quality consumer goods, that a modern sphere of services is created, housing construction accelerated, and that existing public health and education programmes succeed.

One of the main tasks is to step up the efforts for environmental protection and improvement of the ecological situation in the country.

As decided by the 27th CPSU Congress, the number one production task is the programme for accelerated development of key mechanical engineering branches, electronics, instrument making, and machine-tool construction.

Next year we have to start changing structural policy more resolutely and radically in the field of production and investment and taking rigorous economy and resource-saving measures.

It is quite possible to reach the targets set in the 12th Five-Year Plan and raise our economic and social sphere to a new qualitative level. Hundreds and even thousands of Soviet work collectives have considerably raised labour productivity and achieved world-beating levels under the new conditions of management. Not only individual enterprises and associations, but whole branches are keeping the set pace according to all indicators.

Thanks to better management, certain regions and republics have performed better than average in food supplies and goods and services for the public.

The paramount task of all economic executives and all work collectives is to follow the example of advanced enterprises, use their experience, eradicate parasitic attitudes, and show their own initiative.

3. Restructuring stipulates the all-round development and maximum use of the intellectual and spiritual potential contained in progressing science, education, and culture.

The party's economic and social strategy is based on speeding up scientific and technological progress and, first of all, mastering the achievements of its present stage linked with the development of advanced technologies — microelectronics, robotics, informatics, biotechnology — and also

the development of materials with preset qualities, instrument making etc.

Positive shifts are taking shape in the development of Soviet science and technology. Higher standards are put on the technological level of products. The terms for introducing up-to-date items into production have been reduced. The network of technological research organisations has become more flexible.

Fundamentally new structural entities have appeared: intersectoral technological research complexes, engineering centres, and task forces. More than 500 research and production associations have been established. Investment in R & D has grown. It is also important that research organisations are becoming an integral part in the system of cost accounting.

But no substantial changes have taken place in scientific and technological progress. Effective mechanisms have not yet been found for reflecting work collectives' interests in this important sphere.

The material base of Soviet science continues to lag behind. Many executives still consider only the benefits of the moment and fully rely upon higher-ranking bodies.

The mainstream for influencing technological progress lies through restructuring an economic mechanism which is supposed to ensure the steady perfection of production and maintain the quality of items at world-beating levels.

The call of the day is more resolute measures in perfecting the management of technology and overcoming departmental barriers. Intersectoral associations that are not directly subordinate to ministries are one of the new organisational forms.

They make it possible to ensure strict succession between research, technology and equipment, investment, production, sales, and services. Work collectives will be able more promptly to renew equipment and technology without any delays and departmental co-ordinations.

Technology issues have to be viewed in the general context of social development. The social impact of large-scale projects needs to be carefully studied if we are to avoid grave ecological and moral consequences. The latter must be reduced to a minimum or excluded altogether.

The new tasks facing society at the present stage considerably raise the role of science in all processes of restructuring. The present level of society's development calls for a major breakthrough in all natural, technical, and social sciences.

The USSR Academy of Sciences is expected to make a growing contribution to this.

Socialism today cannot successfully develop without advancement in science and technology. This progress, coupled with socialism, in turn becomes a mighty lever for social rejuvenation and onward movement.

The humanistic principles of our policy are aimed at ensuring society's spiritual progress and boosting people's cultural and educational standards. In the last three years much attention has

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been paid to the development of education at all its stages and levels.

Problems of restructuring the system of general, specialised, and higher education were examined at the February 1988 plenary meeting of the CPSU central committee. Our higher and secondary school is lagging far behind the needs of the time and scientific, technological, and cultural progress. Vigorous efforts by all society are needed to assure an improved quality of development.

More and more favourable conditions are being created in the course of restructuring for Soviet culture to advance, for people to refine morally and intellectually, for talents and gifts to win through and for civil qualities to dominate.

Our intellectuals are making a weighty contribution to the accomplishment of these tasks. Earlier existing and newly-established artistic unions and associations have stepped up their activity. The artist's responsibility for the destinies of the country has become an even more topical problem.

4. The CPSU's policy for restructuring and speeding up the country's socio-economic development has from the very outset been linked with democratisation of Soviet society and affirmation of the people's socialist self-government. Very important shifts have taken place in this respect.

Thanks to truthfulness, openness, and greater criticism and self-criticism, the country's life has become more vigorous, democratic processes are being launched in production management, and resolute steps are being taken to combat inertia and outdated structures.

But what has been done up to now is only a prelude to the accomplishment of an extremely significant and complicated task — profound and all-round democratisation of the party and society.

An unbiased analysis of the achievements in the economic, social, and cultural spheres over the past three years and the problems emerging in the course of restructuring testifies to the need for reforming the political system of Soviet society. The aim is to really draw broad sections of the population into running all state and public affairs and to complete the formation of a socialist law-based state.

It is vital to strengthen and develop the fundamental principles of socialist statehood born of the October Revolution. These principles and, first of all, the power of the people with the communist party in the vanguard, are an indispensable condition for our country's subsequent social progress.

Restructuring is called upon to free the political system of Soviet society from all that is linked with the consequences of the personality cult, administrative regimentation, red tape, working people's alienation from government, and deviations from the Leninist norms of party and state life. It should go on dynamically and lead to timely rejuvenation, with due regard for the changing conditions of home and international life.

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5. Restructuring presents in a new light the CPSU's role as the guiding and organising force in Soviet society.

The CPSU central committee proceeds from the Leninist concept of the party as the political vanguard of the working class and all working people.

Guided by the Marxist-Leninist doctrine, the party is called upon to work out a theory and strategy of social development, home and foreign policy, and the ideology of socialist rejuvenation. It must also carry out political and organisational work among the people and properly educate and place the personnel.

The party acted in this very way in Lenin's lifetime and under Lenin's leadership. But after Lenin's death, deviations from the Leninist principles started. Freedom of discussion, traditional for the party, was curtailed. Foundations of collective leadership and inner-party democracy were violated.

This vicious practice remained in the years of stagnation to one extent or another. The absence of limitations on elective offices upset the natural rejuvenation of personnel.

Some executives started thinking that they had been appointed to their posts for life. They considered themselves infallible, abused power, and neglected the interests of rank-and-file party members and working people.

Such a situation gravely affected the activity of the CPSU central committee, the government, local party organisations, and all communists.

Party bodies increasingly tackled current economic and administrative management problems, substituting for the soviets and other state bodies. This had a negative impact on the implementation of the party's basic functions, weakened its political and ideological influence, and sharpened many social development problems.

The party had the courage to critically examine the situation. It has launched restructuring and is step by step transforming itself and inner-party life. One of the most urgent tasks is to establish such political mechanisms and guarantees that would rule out any possibilities for future violations of the Leninist principles of party leadership in society.

Taking account of the views expressed at party meetings, in work collectives and in the press, the CPSU central committee believes it expedient to consider the following suggestions during the conference.

To restore in full measure the Leninist understanding of the principle of democratic centralism in accordance with which freedom of debate should be ensured when issues are discussed, and concerted action ensured after a decision has been passed by a majority.

To proceed in the relationship between the party and the state from the Leninist principles of a precise delimitation of their functions. All party organisations should act in compliance with the Constitution of the USSR and with Soviet laws.

Party committees should not pass resolutions addressing direct instructions to state and economic bodies, or to public organisations. The CPSU shall steer its political course via communists working in bodies of state authority in all spheres of society's life.

Proceeding from the tasks of the CPSU as the political vanguard and from deep-running changes in society, the activities of primary party organisations should be restructured radically.

While remaining the political nucleus of each collective, they should not supplant work collectives and their bodies in the discharge of the functions provided for under the Law on the State Enterprise, the Law on Co-operation and other legislative acts.

Acting primarily via communists and working in the midst of the people, party organisations should ensure that every work collective copes in full with the functions entrusted to it, and exercises its democratic rights.

The role of party meetings, party committees and every communist in implementing the deci-

sions of the party should be reconsidered from that viewpoint.

The atmosphere of openness, debate, criticism and self-criticism, party comradeship and discipline, collectivism and personal responsibility should be restored in full measure. Current developments in the life of party organisations are proceeding precisely in this direction. They should be supported and developed in every way.

Questions of the qualitative composition of the party ranks and the performance by communists of their vanguard role are being widely discussed in the party and society.

In this connection the view is expressed that the practice of regulating the growth of party ranks by 'order' runs counter to real requirements of the development of the party itself and of all society.

The common view is that demands on those joining the party should be made decisively more exacting so that really worthy people with superior political, moral and business qualities, convinced fighters for the programme goals of the party, could join its ranks. The opinions of the work collective concerned absolutely must be taken into consideration.

To consider during the conference the expediency of conducting in the period before the next CPSU congress a discussion of the social and political posture of every communist, this being an effective means for self-purification and for making the party stronger. The discussion of communists' work at open meetings of party organisations shall promote activity by them and a personal contribution to the life of their collective and to the cause of perestroika.

In the light of the experience accumulated since the January (1987) plenum of the CPSU central committee, changes should be made in the procedure of forming elected party bodies.

Genuine competition, wide-scale discussion of candidates and voting by secret ballot should become a norm. What matters here is not the post one occupies, but one's ideological, moral and business qualities, one's political authority and one's active stance in advancing perestroika.

During the elections to all party committees, communists shall have the right to nominate a number of candidates exceeding that of the committee membership.

Such a procedure of nomination, discussion and election of party committee members and secretaries could be applied to the process of forming party bodies from the level of district and city party committees to the central committees of the communist parties of the Union republics and at the CPSU central committee level.

All party committees starting at the district and city level shall be elected for a standard term of five years. Simultaneously a communist shall not hold an elected post in the CPSU for more than two terms in a row.

Election for a third term in a row shall be possible only on the initiative of communists and shall require a preliminary decision on admission to the

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elections. Such a decision shall be passed by no less than three-quarters of the membership of the party committee concerned.

The voting shall be by secret ballot.

Special responsibility in affirming the party as the political vanguard rests with the CPSU central committee. It should develop and consolidate in every way the principles of collective leadership in its work so that all members of the central committee can participate in deciding principal questions related to the political course of the party on a basis of wide-scale discussion.

The conference is to consider possible suggestions concerning new forms of collective work of the central committee members in between plenums. All that should eventually be directed toward enhancing the role of the party's central committee.

To provide for the possibility for a partial replacement of central committee members in between congresses and assure a continuing inflow of fresh forces: Decisions on this score should be made by a qualified majority. Voting should be by secret ballot.

To introduce the necessary structural and personnel changes in the party with due account of the party's growing role as the political vanguard and with due account of delimiting the functions of party committees from those of state and economic bodies. The principle of strict subordination and accountability of party functionaries to elected party bodies should be followed, while bureaucracy, communist conceit and unwarranted secrecy in party life should be fought decisively.

The party's personnel policy demands serious renewal in the conditions of democratisation. A formal approach to the selection and distribution of cadres is becoming outdated.

The organisation of cadre training and retraining, cadre education and the recommendation of both communists and non-party people for ranking posts should become the principal method of work of party committees. Election results should determine the final settlement of personnel questions.

It is expedient to consider during the conference the question of improving control and auditing work in the party.

At present the party has the central auditing commission of the CPSU and the party control committee attached to the CPSU central committee. The suggestion is made that there should be one body in the future which should be elected by the party congress to oversee the compliance of communists with the demands of party discipline and the CPSU rules, and monitor the financial and economic activity of party bodies.

All these proposals should be directed toward a consistent observance of the democratic principles of party life, enhance a spirited character of the party and its ability to lead the process of revolutionary renewal of Soviet society and set the pace of perestroika.

6. The main guideline for making our society and state more democratic is restoration in full measure of the role and powers of the soviets of people's deputies as plenipotentiary bodies of popular representation.

Lenin discovered in the soviets, born of the experience of the revolutions in Russia, a political form according with the nature of socialism.

Being representative bodies of power and organisations with a mass public membership, the soviets organically combine the principles of statehood and self-government. Having an immense democratic potential, they have demonstrated their viability and corroborated the correctness of Lenin's discovery.

At the same time we notice serious shortcomings in the work of the soviets and the dissatisfaction of the working people with their performance.

As a result of known deformations, the rights and powers of the representative bodies have been curtailed and they remain under unwarranted tutelage from party committees. In many cases ministries and departments decide matters of economic and social development over their heads. Not infrequently, executive committees and officials employed by them usurp functions of the soviets, while deputies are left to sanction predetermined decisions.

It is vital to change this situation radically and reinstate the soviets in their real governing powers by turning over to them all specific questions of state, economic, social and cultural life for consideration and decision.

Material and financial possibilities of local soviets should be substantially broadened.

It is important to ensure the formation of local budgets on the basis of long-term norms with emphasis made primarily on augmenting budget receipts of local soviets from enterprises and economic agencies located on their respective territories.

Local bodies of state authority should be made fully responsible for and independent in deciding matters related to the development of their respective territories. Broad use should be made of profit-and-loss accounting, contractual and other forms of relations with enterprises and agencies, no matter to whom the latter are subordinated.

Consistent efforts should be made to preclude intervention by higher bodies of state authority and management agencies in the process of making decisions within the competence of local soviets situated lower down the line, and also to preclude numerous unnecessary co-ordinations.

The correct relationship between local soviets and councils of work collectives acquires special importance. The basic premise here is that a soviet of people's deputies co-ordinates the drafting and implementation of plans for social development of enterprises, collective and state farms, the promotion of democratic principles in production management, and defence of the interests of the population from what Lenin described as excessive departmental zeal.

Changes in the functions of the soviets and the need for a more careful and competent study of questions shall make it essential to extend the duration of their sessions.

A number of deputies should be relieved, either for the entire duration of their term, or periodically, from their official and production duties so that they can work in the soviets, standing commissions and constituencies.

The soviets should work in an atmosphere of the greatest possible openness. Members of the general public and media representatives should be free to attend their meetings, and the electors and public should be kept systematically informed about the results of their work.

Genuine primacy of soviets over executive bodies should be ensured.

It should be stipulated that officials employed by executive bodies accountable to a given soviet cannot simultaneously be deputies to that soviet. This rule should be applied to persons making up the Council of Ministers of the republics and, with only a few exceptions, to members of the All-

Union government, as well as to judges, state arbiters and procurators.

Officials should be appointed to executive bodies by the soviets, and as a rule only after standing commissions make corresponding conclusions to this effect.

Local soviets (with the exception of those at village and settlement levels) should establish presidiums that could concern themselves with organising the deputies' work, co-ordinating the activities of standing commissions and deputies' groups and which in between sessions could supervise the work carried out by executive committees.

It is expedient to concentrate the attention of executive committees on economic, administrative and executive functions.

To ensure better continuity and efficiency of deputies, the standard term of all soviets of people's deputies in the country should be fixed at five years.

The transfer of power in its entirety, from top to bottom, presupposes that the role of the country's supreme body of authority should grow radically. In its structure and activities due account should be taken of the accumulated experience of the functioning of our political system, including the procedure of work of soviets' congresses and of the central executive committee of the USSR — a practice that took shape under Lenin.

Various versions and suggestions are possible here. Some of them have already been put forth during the current debates: on extending the duration of sessions of the supreme body of authority; on precisely delimiting powers and making up for the lack of functional individuality of the chambers; on electing a number of deputies directly from public organisations that make up the political system of our society, and so forth.

To observe the Leninist principles of state life, a rule shall be introduced according to which no one may hold an elective government post for more than two terms, i.e. for ten years. Election for a third term running can take place on deputies' initiative, with an obligatory preliminary decision on allowing the nominee to run for elections, taken by no less than 75 percent of deputies of the soviet involved, by secret ballot.

The constitutional premise shall be strictly observed that one person may not be deputy of more than two soviets at a time.

The necessity to dramatically enhance the role of soviets requires an election system reform to guarantee free nomination of candidates, and wide and multi-sided discussion of the nominees at public meetings and in the mass media.

Elections must naturally proceed from the will of the voters, who give preference to principled, efficient and dynamic persons able to become worthy representatives of the people in Soviet state

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bodies and to express the whole range of the people's social, ethnic and occupational interests.

The new conditions enhance the role of the Soviet government, the supreme executive and administrative state body in exercising home and foreign policies, governing the country, and in the elaboration and implementation of plans and long-term programmes for economic, social and cultural development.

The conference shall pay due attention to the restructuring of the state management system, with account for the democratic change under way in the Soviet community, and the radical economic reform.

The formation of economic, organisational and legal conditions for efficient performance of all offices and organisations shall become the main purport of the work of state bodies. The structure of the apparatus and the number of its officials must be brought into correspondence with those functions, with unnecessary sections abolished.

The performance of management bodies needs strict supervision by soviets, the people's inspectorate and community activists to do away with command and pressure management, the bureaucratic spirit and red tape. Wide publicity and openness in management are also highly effective here.

Perestroika and democratic change in the Soviet community requires the Leninist principles of organising the inspection to be fully implemented, to become a genuine, truly efficient vehicle of direct and immediate participation by workers, peasants, intellectuals and representatives of all other social strata in the running of state and social affairs.

It seems expedient, in this connection, to set up a unified system of state and public inspection under elective ruling bodies. Supported by its groups in work collectives and territorial units, such a system can largely promote the implementation of current national tasks.

7. The restructuring of the political system requires timely measures discussed and adopted to further improve the Soviet federation.

The brilliant results of the Leninist nationalities policy over the 70 Soviet years are evident to all. We have done tremendous, historic work to overcome inter-ethnic strife, guarantee the right of nations to self-determination, revive and encourage ethnic cultures, and boost the progress of what used to be backward national outskirts. A unified national economic complex has taken shape and functions successfully as the material basis for the unity of Soviet peoples.

Practice has shown, at the same time, that inter-ethnic relations require constant attention, as does the progress of every ethnic entity. A political line to satisfy all ethnic communities' interests and promote their rapprochement and mutual aid, alongside an internationalist ideology incompati-

ble with nationalism and chauvinism, provide the basis for the solution of inter-ethnic issues.

All Soviet constituent republics and autonomous units have built on their economic, cultural and manpower potentials. Ethnic awareness is duly growing. The independence of constituent and autonomous republics and other ethnic administrative units must go hand-in-hand with their responsibility for national state interests.

Herein lies the way to further progress of ethnic communities, to closer friendship between them, and the consolidation of the Soviet nation. Herein is our strength and the earnest of prosperity for the Soviet Union as a whole and for every ethnic entity.

Decentralisation and concession of as many management duties as possible to local bodies fully concern every form of Soviet ethnic entities' statehood and autonomy, with strict observation of constitutional premises and the Soviet legislation, which guarantee the rights of constituent and autonomous republics, autonomous regions and national districts.

Political institutions whose duty it is to spotlight ethnic interests and bring them into mutual accord shall grow more active. That is a topical demand.

Ethnic entities which have no statehood and no territorial units of their own are entitled to more possibilities to express and satisfy their demands.

Inter-ethnic issues shall be settled on the basis of genuine democracy, in the spirit of perestroika. Such is the opinion of the CPSU central committee. Whatever their ethnic background, communists have always been the heart and the cementing force of the great socialist union of Soviet peoples: a sublime and responsible mission, which will remain just as vital in the future.

8. The process of consistent democratic change in the Soviet community will complete the formation of the law-based socialist state as a form of organisation and workings of political rule which fully corresponds to socialism and socialist democracy.

Legality, supreme and triumphant, which expresses the people's will, is the pivot of such a state. State and party bodies, mass organisations, work collectives, and all officials and private persons shall proceed from strictly observed legality in all their actions.

As we add the concept "law-based" to the characteristics of our state, which belongs to the whole people, it should be emphasised once again that the state is responsible to its citizens, just as they are responsible to the state. Constant concern with strengthening the guarantees of Soviet citizens' rights and freedoms is the duty of the state. The latter premise pertains to further extension of social rights (to work, leisure, education, health protection, social security etc.) whose har-binger the Soviet Union has been for the whole world.

It also implies material and juridical conditions for the exercise of constitutional freedoms (freedom of speech, the press, conscience, assembly, meetings, street processions and demonstrations etc.) and firmer guarantees of personal rights, such as the inviolability of the person and the home, and privacy of correspondence and telephone conversations, to name but a few.

We must make further headway along those lines to implement all intrinsic potentials of socialist society and eradicate the distortions and deformations we owe to deviations from the Leninist principles of statehood and to authoritarian government methods alien to the socialist system.

With this end in view, a deep-going juridical reform is necessary. It is called upon to radically improve the work of all bodies whose duty it is to consolidate legality and protect the democratic principles of statehood, and citizens' rights and freedoms.

The first priorities of that reform include dramatic enhancement of the role of justice, and strict observation of democratic principles in court procedure, of contestation of the judicial process, of the principle of equality of the parties, of

publicity and presumption of innocence.

There is a noteworthy proposal to increase the number of people's assessors (jurors) for especially important cases.

Procurator's offices need new work patterns, which would correspond to Leninist concepts, to efficiently observe unified application of laws, firmly protect Soviet citizens' rights and interests, and safeguard the observance of state and social discipline.

Judges, public prosecutors and investigators shall have guarantees against any pressure or interference with their work. They are subordinate to the law — the law alone.

Legality will also be strengthened by a resolute increase in the militia's responsibility for combating crime and misdemeanours, by increasing the competences of state arbitration bodies, and encouraging the activities of the bar. Juridical services in the national economy require major improvements, as does the organisation of universal legal education.

The improvement and codification of Soviet legislation demands a vast and concerted effort. On the one hand, outdated laws and numerous departmental instructions running counter to the demands of economic and political reforms have become part and parcel of the braking mechanism and have to be cancelled. On the other, we need a set of new laws to promote the interests of the people, their collectives and organisations.

To update Soviet legislation, we must firmly adhere to the following principle: everything is permissible unless prohibited by the law.

9. For the political system of socialism to function meaningfully it must rely on a ramified network of public organisations which will express and satisfy the interests of various social, professional, and age-based groups.

The trade unions, the Komsomol, co-operatives and other public organisations, research associations and artistic unions are called upon to vigorously contribute to perestroika in all its areas, restructure themselves and reassess their standing in society and the role they play, and tap their potential to the full in the new conditions.

Perestroika brought into existence women's and veterans' associations, the Soviet Culture Foundation and the Children's Fund, and many public initiative bodies. These came as expression of the workers' patriotic sentiments, of their desire to immediately contribute to the revolutionary renewal of society, ensure broader access to the values of the national and world cultures, improve the life of the people, protect the environment and historical values.

Talking about public organisations, we cannot but see that formalistic and bureaucratic attitudes are still there. Attempts have been made to contain independence of such organisations and order them about. There are efforts to make public organisations into state-run agencies and overstaff

Mikhail Gorbachev

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them. This is something that destroys public initiative.

The main avenue of progress for public organisations is creative initiative of rank-and-file people and encouragement of self-government. As more democracy is introduced inside public organisations, steps should be devised to give them a bigger say in the political process.

They should use their right to initiate bills, send representatives to the bodies of power, be partners of the state in pursuing social programmes, in solving the problems of housing construction, healthcare, labour, social security, education, leisure, provision of amenities, trade, day-to-day life, etc.

There is a need to formulate right now a legal basis for the operation of public organisations, voluntary societies and independent associations. The political criterion to go by is that any public activity should be recognised as long as it stays within the Constitution and does not jeopardise the progress of our Soviet socialist society.

10. The Soviet perestroika effort has emerged as a world factor. Capable of promoting peace by definition, it needed a foreign policy that would adequately express its humanistic essence, call for more democracy in our international ties, and for a new role for this country where the international division of labour is concerned.

A critical analysis of the past has been made, to show that our foreign policy, too, did not escape dogmatic and subjective attitudes. It trailed behind fundamental changes that occurred in the world and missed chances to reduce tensions and enhance understanding among nations.

In our bid for military-strategic parity we occasionally failed to use opportunities available to attain security for our nation by political means and, as a result, allowed ourselves to be lured into an arms race, which could not but affect this country's social and economic progress and its standing on the international scene.

The foreign policy relies on a new mode of thinking, one that is consistent and based on research and free from historically hackneyed stereotypes. The new mode of thinking reflects the realities of the modern world, versatile and controversial as it is, a world that questions the very survival of humanity and yet contains a formidable potential for coexistence, co-operation and a quest for political solutions to urgent issues.

The new political thinking has made it possible to advance a number of major ideas that have cap-

tivated an alarmed world. The main ones are a programme for stage-by-stage elimination of nuclear weapons by the year 2000, a system of comprehensive security, freedom of choice, a balance of interests, a "common European home", a programme to overhaul relations in Asia and the Pacific, defence sufficiency and a non-offensive doctrine, international economic security, build-up of national and regional security through arms cuts, readiness to mutually put an end to the presence of foreign troops and bases in alien territory, confidence measures, and an idea for direct involvement of the authority of science in world politics.

Such is our creed in foreign policy. We have announced it without imposing any conditions or dogmas on anyone. We have announced it, inviting everybody to participate in joint reflection and quest and do it on the basis of national and humanity's interests.

In disarmament we have offered far-reaching decisions and shown readiness to compromise in a major way. This has enabled such significant breakthroughs to happen as the Geneva summit and, especially, the Reykjavik summit. These two meetings broke the deadlock on the process of negotiations and made a major impact on the entire international climate.

The whole style of our foreign policy has changed. Its distinguishing feature is dialogue. There is an unprecedented intensity of contacts at leadership level with the outside world, as represented in heads of state and ordinary citizens.

This has signified a "fresh discovery" of the Soviet Union. And for us — feedback, a chance to know and understand better the world and correspondingly build our policy, furthering the formation of international relations which are civilised and contemporary.

The priority trend is with the socialist countries. Together with our friends we have set about a comradely clean-out of the encrustations of formal attitudes and showiness, and in action have linked the principles of equity, independence and non-interference with the objective reality of the multitude of national forms in socialist society.

Our internationalist contracts are built on a basis of mutual benefit, a balance of interests, common responsibility for the destinies and prestige of socialism, and augmentation of its role in world development.

Over the years of perestroika, relations with a large number of states neighbouring and remote have been improved or inaugurated. And relations have been spoiled with none.

We have stated anew our inter-relations with such eminent forces influencing the world process as the communist and social-democratic among other political parties, the Non-Aligned Movement, and intellectual quarters embodying the authority of science and culture.

Events have shown that the new political outlook correctly reflects the urgent requirements and imperatives of the modern world. It has evoked hope, opened the road to a major breakthrough in human conscience, and increases the real thrust of public opinion in the world.

The arrival of the new outlook in international politics has been crowded with big practical achievements: the INF Treaty was signed and the Geneva agreements have initiated the withdrawal of our troops from Afghanistan.

The definite improvement in Soviet-American relations, symbolised by the summit meetings, gives grounds to reckon on a fundamental turn toward eradicating the nuclear threat.

The multilateral process of negotiations which we have actively promoted is bringing near a ban on chemical weapons and opening up an opportunity to ease the dangerous confrontation between the two most mighty military alliances — the North Atlantic Treaty and the Warsaw Treaty — and to reduce conventional forces in Europe.

We are not casting aside the militarist danger which lurks in the essence of imperialism. Soviet defence construction is defined by this and the efficiency of it henceforth should be supplied by

parameters of quality in respect of technology and personal staff alike.

The realities of the contemporary world and permutations for objective factors born of war lead us to think that the security of states will more and more be removed from military correlations to the sphere of politics with pre-eminence for law, human morality and fulfilment of international obligations.

The radical economic reform and our new approach to commerce have produced the first shoots needed for more efficient involvement of our country in the world economy.

The three years of perestroika allow us to respond to the paramount question worrying our people and the nations of the world. Will we send back the threat of war? Yes, certainly.

The direct threat of a war involving the major powers has diminished. The international position of the Soviet Union has markedly improved, and through heightened trust in our country rather than an increase in might. The world situation has acquired more stability and predictability.

More real is the prospect of bridling the arms race with all its consequences. The burden of military expenditure will decline.

An opportunity has opened to offset the threat to peace on a broader social and political basis than ever, a chance to lay the ground and have global problems resolved in joint efforts by the world community. The Communist party will actively and persistently act for these goals.

The path to a brand new state of society and a new face for socialism lies through revolutionary restructuring and democratisation in the ideological, economic and social spheres, through reform in the political system.

We must reproduce in full, deep significance the principles of scientific socialism whereby a person's actions rather than words are the main factor in material and cultural development and are the goal he sets himself.

The party will build its policies with distinct orientation on the humanitarian principles and targets of socialism, and will seek to accomplish them by humanitarian and democratic means.

Naturally, real life and the dialectics of social development will add plenty of new aspects to current ideas about the ways to socialist reforms, allowing us to clarify and enrich. Several questions will require amendments to the Constitution and legislation, and some new decisions in party congress.

Advancing these considerations for discussion, the central committee anticipates active participation by communists and all workers. This will enable the 19th All-Union Party Conference to adopt well-considered measures which will speed resolute onward progress and confirm perestroika as revolutionary and irreversible.

The Meeting in the Kremlin

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Yegor Ligachev's address to Supreme Soviet ratification meeting

THE Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR held a meeting in the Kremlin on May 28 to consider ratification of the Soviet-US Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, signed by Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan in Washington on December 8, 1987.

The Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Soviet of the Union Yegor Ligachev, Member of the Political Bureau and Secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee, addressed the meeting on behalf of the Foreign Affairs Commissions of both chambers of the Supreme Soviet. He said:

On behalf of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Foreign Affairs Commissions of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities have thoroughly considered the Soviet-US INF Treaty, signed by General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Mikhail Gorbachev and US President Ronald Reagan in Washington on December 8, 1987 and submitted by the Soviet Council of Ministers for ratification.

A working preparatory commission was set up of ten deputies to work in detail on all treaty-related issues.

The discussion of the treaty at joint sessions of the commissions of both chambers and at the preparatory commission was held in an atmosphere of debate, in a business-like, specific and thorough way.

Opinions of Soviet ministries and departments concerned and those of authoritative experts and scientists were heard.

One of the sessions was attended by representatives of parliaments of the German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia as countries directly concerned by the treaty.

Representatives of various sections of the Soviet and foreign public also expressed their views.

The work proceeded in a spirit of openness, as a rule in the presence of a considerable number of reporters, including foreign ones.

Television, radio and newspapers covered the sessions, which allowed the public to watch the treaty's discussion.

The commissions' analysis of the treaty and its thorough discussion have made it possible to come to conclusions that could be summed up in the following way:

First — on the INF Treaty's correspondence to the security interests of the USSR and, in broader aspect, to the requirements for equal security for the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Treaty countries, on the one hand, and the United States and its allies, on the other.

This issue was given special attention by the commissions, especially as we knew from letters from the Soviet people that part of our citizens were worried whether its implementation would fully meet the security interests of the country, meaning that the Soviet Union was to eliminate more intermediate- and shorter-range missiles than the United States.

Besides, British and French missiles were not to be reduced.

A comprehensive and profound consideration of the issue let the commissions draw the conclusion that the principle of equality and equal security of the parties to the treaty was observed — the defence capability of the Soviet Union and its allies remained reliably guaranteed.

The treaty improves foreign policy conditions for carrying out the policy of perestroika in the Soviet Union.

At the same time, the Foreign Affairs Commissions of the chambers of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR point out that if NATO implements its plans, under discussion now, to 'compensate' for the American missiles to be eliminated in Europe by modernising and building up other nuclear means, that no doubt would undermine the nascent process of disarmament.

Second — on verifiability of the observance of the INF Treaty's provisions.

Having studied this issue, the commissions established that the treaty offered a verification system, including on-site inspections, that guaranteed a high degree of confidence that the treaty's provisions would be strictly complied with.

Instruments of ratification signed

ANDREI GROMYKO, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee and President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, summed up the results of the meeting in the Kremlin of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR which discussed the question of the ratification of the Soviet-American treaty on the elimination of their intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles, signed in Washington on December 8, 1987.

"Our meeting is being held on the eve of the visit to Moscow by the President of the United States and the summit talks", he said. "The ratification of the treaty by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR will patently demonstrate the support given by the legislative body on behalf of our entire people to the policy of constructively developing relations with the United States. We are for a business-like discussion and, wherever it is possible, for a solution of ripe problems. The importance of consolidating exactly such an atmosphere in Soviet-American relations for the entire situation in international affairs is obvious to all."

Andrei Gromyko moved to ratify the Soviet-American INF Treaty.

The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR unanimously ratified the treaty.

Andrei Gromyko signed the instruments of ratification. □

As regards the Soviet Union, relevant Soviet ministries and departments have already started and continue to do the necessary work guaranteeing timely implementation of the treaty by the Soviet Union after it comes into force.

Third — on socio-economic and other aspects of the INF Treaty.

The commissions, on the grounds of materials provided for them, saw that the country would gain from channelling labour, material and financial resources, to be released as a result of the treaty's implementation, into civilian use.

The commissions thoroughly considered also the issue of preventing any undesirable ecological consequences of the process of missile elimination.

Measures already taken and those adopted now ensure necessary conditions for ruling out any possibility of harmful effects on people's health or damage to the environment as a result of the elimination of missiles in the

Soviet Union.

In assessing the Soviet-US Treaty, the commissions' members constantly compared their conclusions with people's opinions, attentively studying all information concerning the attitude of Soviet people and various public groups to the treaty.

We drew the conclusion from the nationwide discussion that the overwhelming majority of Soviet people supported the Soviet-US INF Treaty.

Letters and appeals concerning the treaty express complete trust in and approval of the CPSU's policy of peace.

As a folk wisdom goes, 'he who builds a house needs no fire'. He who improves the life of the people wants no war. This truth is fully applied to our country where man and his peaceful labour are the top social values.

As for the NATO countries, a number of their influential figures are pursuing a nuclear deterrence policy.

The United States is trying to make the world enter a new round of the arms race, whose burden is shouldered by popular masses, in the name of the so-called Strategic Defence Initiative.

Someone would like the signing and ratification of the INF Treaty to be followed by a 'pause'.

The real disarmament process should not be stopped — such is the demand of the Soviet people.

The conclusion of the INF Treaty could signal the beginning of a restructuring of Soviet-American relations on the basis of peaceful co-existence and active international co-operation.

But there are forces in the United States and Western Europe that oppose any steps to curtail the arms race and develop Soviet-American relations.

These forces include above all the military-industrial complex which sees arms manufacturing as an extremely profitable business.

The process of the treaty's ratification in the United States was held back through various kinds of manoeuvring and procrastination without the influence of those forces.

Overcoming tremendous difficulties, mankind is following the road of real disarmament and strengthening peace in the world.

A mere three years have passed since March 1985, since the April plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, when the Party advanced the policy of accelerating society's development and taking active political actions on the international scene.

The CPSU Central Committee's theses for the 19th National Party Conference point out that a direct threat of a world war has diminished and the international position of the Soviet Union markedly improved.

The conclusion of the INF Treaty and the Soviet Union's role in that have enhanced the prestige of the country and its foreign policies around the world.

Summing up the results of their work at a joint session on May 23, the Foreign Affairs Commissions of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR came to a unanimous conclusion — the Soviet-US Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty should be approved and recommended for ratification by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet.

(Continued on next page)

USSR Foreign Ministry Statement

Here follows the full text of the USSR Foreign Ministry Statement published in Moscow on May 28:

The signing of the Geneva accords on Afghanistan, which represent a package of concrete and balanced commitments for achieving a political settlement of the situation around that country, produced a broad positive response from the world community. The latter quite justifiably received the accords reached in Geneva as a basic step, a turning point in de-blocking one of the most acute and drawn-out regional conflicts, which opens the way towards a complete and comprehensive solution of the Afghan problem in all its aspects.

However, two weeks have passed since the entry into force of the Geneva accords, and the optimism which accompanied the completion of the Geneva diplomatic process, is increasingly yielding place to bewilderment and disappointment felt by all the peace forces which sincerely wish to see an end to the bloodshed and the establishment of stability in the much-suffering land of Afghanistan.

Like any other international agreements, the documents signed in Geneva assume a practical sense and significance only if strictly complied with by all the sides participating in them. It is in this manner, strictly and responsibly, that the Soviet Union and the Republic of Afghanistan approach the Geneva accords. This is attested to by the withdrawal from Afghanistan, during the first two weeks following the entry of the accords into force, of army units numbering 10,000, with their fighting equipment and arms. The withdrawal of Soviet troops was observed by dozens of foreign correspondents who stayed with those troops. In addition, all the necessary conditions were created for the representatives of the UN control mechanism to register the beginning of the withdrawal and its parameters.

One gets the impression that the other participants in the Geneva accords still regard implementing them as "playing into one goal", actually trying to reduce the whole thing solely to the observance of the dates and stages of the withdrawal of the limited Soviet troops contingent. This approach to the Geneva accords has no legal grounds whatsoever but constitutes

a direct encroachment upon, an attempt to torpedo, what has been so painstakingly achieved in Geneva. It ought to be recalled that the basis for the Geneva accords, their pivot, is the provision on ending the interference in the internal Afghan affairs from the territory of Pakistan. It was only within the context of the commitments included in the text of the Afghan-Pakistani agreement on non-interference, that it also became possible to agree on the question of the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan.

However, the accords signed in Geneva are not being fulfilled by Pakistan. The outside interference in the Afghan internal affairs, far from ceasing by May 15, had even increased. Being grossly violated is article two of the bilateral Afghan-Pakistani agreement on the principles of mutual relations, and, in particular, on non-interference and renunciation of intervention, which lists concrete measures to end the interference.

Not to make unsubstantiated statements, one can cite concrete facts. Thus, for instance, the official Pakistani Government organisations ensure an unobstructed transfer of units of the armed Afghan opposition as well as of caravans with arms through the numerous mountain passes, including Gakgai, Shingor, Lavanroi, Arandu and others. Intensive use for these purposes is also made of the caravan routes going through the Kyber, Kurram and Bolan mountain passes. During May 16 and subsequent days over 100 vehicles were dispatched from Islamabad to the transit bases in the area of the border towns of Parachinar and Landi-Kotal, carrying military cargo for the Afghan opposition, including rocket projectiles, anti-aircraft and anti-tank means. Operating around the clock are the storage facilities of the Pakistani army in Havelian, Kohat and Novshar, from which the Pakistani military transports carry arms and ammunition intended for the Afghan anti-government forces to border areas.

In Pakistani territory there continue to operate the headquarters organising the combat operations in the territory of Afghanistan, as well as the information and propaganda centres of the Afghan anti-government groupings which engage unobstructedly in an unbridled anti-Afghan campaign full of slanderous inventions.

The central headquarters of the armed opposition, which is part of the "alliance of seven" situated in Pakistani territory, operates following its usual routine.

Still undismantled and operational in Pakistan are the centres for training the detachments of rebels and saboteurs and large armed formations of the "alliance" are also there. On May 21 the Pakistani authorities "recommended" that the leadership of the "alliance" step up its shipments of arms and ammunitions into the Afghan territory.

The listing of such flat violations of the Geneva accords, as cited here, is far from complete, and it can be complemented by other factual material.

The interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan by Pakistan continues to take the most diverse shapes and forms, including crude anti-Afghan pronouncements at the official level as well. Insulting attacks are made against the lawful government of the Republic of Afghanistan and President Najibullah. The armed opposition is actually calling for a continuation of active hostilities against Kabul. Contrary to the spirit and letter of the Geneva agreements the Pakistani side, including at the official level, states that the shipments of arms to the Afghan opposition must be continued. It ought to be said that the bellicose mood of the Pakistani leaders is backed up by lavish supplies of US arms to Pakistan, intended specifically for the anti-government Afghan forces, which does not serve the goals of ending the fratricidal war between the Afghans.

In the light of the above, it appears to be utterly natural if the Soviet Union and the Republic of Afghanistan, faced with such clear and evident violation by Pakistan of the provisions of the Geneva accords, should draw pertinent conclusions with respect to the timetable of the troop withdrawal and take concrete steps caused by the illicit actions of Islamabad. In any case, if the Pakistani side does not adopt appropriate measures to end interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan from its territory, the Soviet Union reserves itself the right to react to this in a manner as warranted by the situation. One would wish to hope that the Pakistani leadership will show common sense and realism and do everything for the strict implementation of the Geneva accords. □

Soviet Government Statement on Vietnam

ON May 29 the Soviet Government issued the following statement:

Recently the governments of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV) and the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK) announced a decision to withdraw 50,000 Vietnamese volunteers from Kampuchea this year, i.e. half of the personnel of the SRV's military contingent which is stationed in that country. The command of the Vietnamese volunteer forces in Kampuchea is being transferred to the SRV while the command over the remaining part of the contingent has been turned over to the PRK. With a view to establishing a zone of peace along the Kampuchea-Thailand border, it was also decided to withdraw Vietnamese units from the border to a distance of 30 kilometres. Representatives of governments, international organisations and all those who showed interest in the Kampuchean problem are invited to

(Continued from previous page)

Years will pass. Other times will come. But grateful descendants will regard this act as a remarkable event in the long and difficult struggle waged by mankind for a nuclear-free and non-violent world. □

supervise the troop withdrawal.

The decision of the governments of the SRV and the PRK is viewed in the Soviet Union as a major constructive contribution to the settlement of the regional conflict in South-East Asia, to the process of eliminating military tension and normalising the situation in that part of the world.

This action is being undertaken without any conditions. It fully fits into the efforts of all those who are interested in resolving the Kampuchean problem as soon as possible. It is perfectly evident that this decision is based on concern for the genuine interests of the Kampuchean people and takes into account the balance of interests of all the states in the region.

Such a substantial reduction in the contingent of Vietnamese units confirms that the Vietnamese Government's words match its deeds and that it consistently implements its announced intention to withdraw all Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea in 1990.

The step being made by the governments of the two friendly countries is also illustrative of further stabilisation of the internal political and socio-economic situation in Kampuchea, and shows Vietnam's respect for the sovereignty and

independence of People's Kampuchea.

It is doubtless also that the new initiative creates favourable opportunities for further development of the dialogue between Hun Sen, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the PRK, and Prince Norodom Sihanouk, and for the holding of talks between all Kampuchean sides with due regard for the well-known understanding reached between Vietnam and Indonesia.

The Soviet Union welcomes and fully supports this important action of the governments of the SRV and the PRK, which opens new possibilities on the road to a political settlement of the situation around Kampuchea in the spirit of national reconciliation, on the basis of recognition of existing realities and with the participation of all forces drawn in this or that way into the conflict. Vietnam and Kampuchea are taking a big step towards the other side. Now much will depend on the reply reaction.

The Soviet Union is prepared together with all the interested states actively to facilitate the search for constructive settlements of the conflict situation in South-East Asia and the establishment of peace, goodneighbourliness and co-operation in the Asia-Pacific Region. □