

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV'S VISIT TO LITHUANIA

Gorbachev's first day in Lithuania

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev arrived in Vilnius, the Capital of Lithuania, on January 11. His visit is in pursuance of the resolution of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party.

From the airport the Soviet leader went to Lenin Square in Vilnius where he laid flowers at the monument to Vladimir Ilych Lenin.

During brief talks with residents in the city's streets Gorbachev noted that perestroika presupposes the resolution of numerous problems: the fate of socialism, entire society and federation – the future of all nations residing

in the country. "We believe it is perestroika that created the environment in which all these questions can be quietly discussed," he added.

Speaking about inter-ethnic relations, he stressed that it was possible to avoid confrontation on ethnic grounds only by changing the state of the federation, the situation of each republic and each nationally.

Restructuring the federation should proceed in such a way, and its role and the situation in all the republics, of all peoples should be reconsidered so as to make the situation better, not worse for all. To ignore the fate of a people, however small, is the most dangerous and hopeless policy.

It is necessary to agree to broad independence – political and economic, the Soviet leader stressed discussing ways to improve the Soviet Union's federal structure. He noted that there can only be one limit to independence – it must not result in degradation, autarchy and isolation.

We have to rethink our union – it is important for Russia as well as for Lithuania, the Ukraine and Armenia. The country's present and future leadership will be more and more open to this, Gorbachev said.

The Soviet leader stressed the role of the Soviet Communist Party as a binding, integrating force when society and the country are being decentralised. The Party has to think over all processes, integrate the interests of all people in order to achieve the set objectives, the Soviet leader said, favouring the broadest possible independence of republican Party organisations within the framework of the Soviet Communist Party.

Gorbachev's conversations with people in the street lasted for more than an hour. He then went to the Vilnius Fuel Equipment Production Association where he walked through its shops, talked with workers and responded to their questions. The Soviet leader addressed representatives of the association's work collective at a meeting in the hall of the association's community centre.

Later in the day, Mikhail Gorbachev met representatives of the republic's artistic and intellectual community in the House of the Press in Vilnius. □

Mikhail Gorbachev's meeting with Lithuanians workers

By Alexander Kanishehev and Yuri Sizov, TASS special correspondents:

SOVIET leader Mikhail Gorbachev spoke on the need to develop a comprehensive federation of the single economic basis which has developed historically. He was speaking on January 11 at a meeting with workers of the Fuel Equipment factory in the Lithuanian capital.

Gorbachev arrived on a three-day visit to this Baltic republic at the decision of the Soviet Communist Party which discussed the results of the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of Lithuania. It is known that Lithuanian communists voted for giving the Party an independent status from the CPSU. The decision caused a split in the 200,000-strong Lithuanian Party and gave further impetus to Lithuania's secession from the USSR.

Characterising the perestroika processes in the country, Gorbachev said they have taken on a tempestuous nature and are accompanied by painful phenomena in interpersonal relations, the economy, social sphere, inter-ethnic relations, ideology, culture and language. Having stressed the need for perestroika, he said that it actually started in 1989 as Soviet society started in earnest to change the economy and the political system.

The entire world, Gorbachev said, has been drawn into profound changes, which have been

tempestuous in the past decade and sometimes acquired an acute social and political nature.

Speaking about the political lessons of the past, the President stressed the need to uproot Stalinist ideology and everything linked with it, including the command-administrative system. He urged the creation of multinational state structures which would make it possible to realise the potential of every nation, intellectual and cultural, as well as its traditions.

Gorbachev condemned former attempts to unify inter-ethnic relations, dismissing them as profane and humiliating to all nations without exception. He stressed the need to restructure this policy on a basis supported by all Soviet peoples. Any discrimination against minorities in the country, or republic or region is inadmissible, Gorbachev said.

Speaking about the feelings in Lithuania, in connection with the secession from the USSR and redrawing of state borders, the President recalled that 30 years after the war the world wrote down in the Helsinki Act a provision about the inviolability of borders. This is important, he said, in relations between the states and relations inside the country. Any other approach could have unpredictable consequences.

Gorbachev paid special attention to economic integration that has taken shape within the framework of the USSR. He said that today no union republic can live without another republic. Even such a large republic as Russia, the President said, cannot cope with the problems single-handedly. Independence is crucial for the Soviet federation. It is necessary to give sovereignty to republics, to delimit the competence of the union and republics in political terms to the maximum.

Gorbachev urged to take, with due account for the development of the independence of each republic, actions which would promote their harmonisation within the Soviet Union. If Lithuanians, he stressed, feel hurt, unequal and humiliated, everyone will be hurt as well.

Meetings between the President and Lithuanian workers continue today. Gorbachev visited Siauliai, a large regional centre. He also met farmers at the Bridai collective farm and is due to visit a television factory. □

Gorbachev meets Lithuanian intellectuals

SOVIET President Mikhail Gorbachev said that he supports the independence of the Soviet republics within a revamped Soviet federation.

Speaking at a meeting with Lithuanian intellectuals in Vilnius late on Thursday, January 11, Gorbachev said that certain circles were speculating on people's ethnic sentiments, trying to impose a course of actions on them that is clearly at odds with reality. He warned of the danger of such tactics.

"The country can no longer live as it lived before, the renewal should embrace all spheres: the material basis, the ideological superstructure, the spiritual world, the federation and the army," Gorbachev said.

"The pressing problems cannot be solved by old approaches, on deformed structures and on the Stalinist totalitarian state concept.

"The USSR Constitution's article on the right of the union republics to self-determination is of fundamental significance," the Soviet President said.

He favoured the principle of self-determination up to separation and said that there was already a bill on the mechanism of realisation of that right by any republic, should it decide to quit the Soviet Union. This bill will be submitted for nationwide discussion.

Gorbachev meanwhile called for balancing

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Mikhail Gorbachev's address to Lithuanian Party activists

Here follows the full text of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's address at a meeting with Lithuanian Party activists on January 13:

MY STAY in the republic and participation in this meeting, at which both wings of the communist movement in Lithuania are present, indicates that you, comrades, have not yet got out of the state of euphoria and that it is so far difficult to direct the process of the comprehension of what is happening in your republic into a deeper channel. Nevertheless we still need to have a talk. No time should be lost.

Of course, this visit of mine goes beyond the framework of a regular one and is of unconventional nature. The fact that a group of members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and representatives of other republics and cultural figures are present here only emphasises the unconventionality of the situation.

Our stay in the republic and our talk here reflect the deep concern, which has manifested itself within the Party and its various segments and, in point of fact, throughout the country, over the course of the development of the socio-political situation in Lithuania and over the decisions taken by the Lithuanian Communist Party (LCP) 20th Congress.

This step of ours is aimed at finding a way out, on the basis of a broad dialogue with the working people, communists, and the Lithuanian public, and deeper understanding of the sentiments of communists and all people of Lithuania and at averting a dangerous development of centrifugal forces both in the CPSU and in the Soviet Union.

I must say that the Soviet Union and perestroika in our country is the central point of all changes which are now taking place in the world and in socialist countries and which promise that the entire human civilisation will get on to a new stage. How the world will change will depend in many respects on how perestroika will proceed, and what results it will produce.

If you, comrades, think that I involve myself in exaggeration I can say that this is not only my point of view. This is already a considered point of view. We all are shouldering an immense responsibility. I do not separate you either from the country, the CPSU or myself. All discussions, however acute they become here these days, have emphasised the legitimacy of this statement.

I think Lithuanian communists and working people of Lithuania should always bear this in mind when the matter concerns the most vital problems of the people, the nation and the republic.

Moreover, I should say that we have no divergence of opinion – I also see this after my stay in the republic – over the realisation of the need that it is essential resolutely to change our life in all its aspects and spheres covering the economy, the social field, the political process and cultural interests, including both the Party itself and the federation.

As regards this, there is no divergence of opinion. Divergence begins over something else, namely, how to act: by taking different roads and breaking up what should be remade and what should be given a new quality? Or by acting together and providing oxygen for our organism and revitalising it?

This is where the lack of understanding begins. In this connection I shall repeat what I

already said: I am here not to impose my views.

Moreover, during all our meetings when I was asked to give my opinion, I began with listening to people first. Therefore I reject the accusation, voiced by a comrade who took the floor here, that I came to Lithuania not to listen but to impose my point of view. This is not true.

One can hardly take it in that a worker who had the possibility to see and hear how everything proceeded could think so. My speeches and attitude are already known but him, don't you see, he has become nearly sick and tired of them.

I do not believe that those were his own words! Some people exploit workers in this respect. I said during one meeting on Friday when I saw comrades taking the floor and, using slips of paper, reading what obviously were not their own words. This is my view, anyhow.

You know, I always speak my mind, unlike those who say one thing and think quite differently. This may not be done in my capacity. You may disagree but I say once again that we shall solve and overcome everything together, jointly, conducting a constant frank and straightforward dialogue. Perestroika provides unlimited possibilities for that.

When we were setting out to meet the military today, there was a group of citizens at the building of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Lithuanian SSR chanting all together to bring home to me the idea that Lithuania needed freedom. I asked them: aren't you free if you openly, all together say or chant this like a hymn? You expressed your opinion, I listened to it and heard it. This, in my opinion, is a real indication that freedom has indeed come to Lithuanian territory, come with perestroika. And – believe me – it will take root here and will grow deeper only if the perestroika process continues, if perestroika itself takes deep roots all over the union.

All these days were filled to the brim with encounters, talks, discussions. The dialogue was virtually held with entire Lithuania, because these encounters and talks – I am referring also to other comrades who arrived here – were held with representatives of 40 work collectives in 15 districts and cities of the republic. Numerous encounters in the streets and squares along the route must be added to these, as well as what was shown on television – live, without cuts or editing for the people to see for themselves and be able to think it over once again. This in itself is also an indication of freedom, real freedom, not just twaddle about freedom.

When somebody is vociferous about freedom but would not let a couple of lines expressing an opposing opinion appear in his newspaper – what kind of freedom is this? It is fiction. We did everything to bring the points of view of those who agreed or disagreed with us to the attention of entire Lithuania and the entire country.

This is the kind of discussion that resulted from these encounters when we were fulfilling the instruction issued by the Central Committee plenum in December. All that is happening in the country – this is my point of view, my stance – must be known to the Party and all our peoples. Our country is our home and I believe so far that I am not in a corridor, as you said here, kazimiera pranovna prunskene. I wondered if somebody wanted to make a yard with a through-passage out of Lithuania? Just imagine thinking like this – departing from realities, where there is a dependable shoulder to lean on,

in order to get into a yard with a through-passage and then wonder where one has placed itself.

We are concluding a long political marathon. The Central Committee plenum will have the final say in the matter, it is the plenum's prerogative. I would only like to try to get you, dear comrades, to take a look once again, to approach the assessment of the situation, the turn, the choice which you are now making in the context of perestroika's general processes, not in isolation from them. I believe it would make more understandable both the anxiety that arose in our society and the desire to work out mutually acceptable solutions, avoid confrontation and rifts. We do not need rifts.

He who engages in real politics must understand that even the smallest separatist or nationalist outbursts give rise to such confrontation, that in one case a million and a half people are set in motion, in another – not less than fifty. Our people should know this, they should know. I respect thinking people, people free from complexes and stereotypes, open to newness, to the life's dynamics, and I regard myself as such. These qualities are now in great need, or else we shall not understand this life, shall not construct a correct policy. I respect scholars, and I ask them not to take offence that a faint note sounded concerning 'professorial concepts' – this is what frankness, pluralism of opinions, and democracy are for.

This is not a game with only one set of goals. Some philosophers also took the floor today. I like the philosophical part, I follow the thought and dialectics of mind. But what is further out there, after philosophising and statement of concepts? Out there is the line where politics begins.

Take a concept, for example. This is a play of mind. Walking about an orchard in a light breeze, like Aristotle or before him Plato and his disciples donning white togas and freely reflecting on the nature of things. But there is politics behind the reflections, and still further – there is the life of real people who have their own interests, misfortunes, with their merits or otherwise.

Therefore one should always bring one's reflections from concept and free play of mind to real life and real people's interests, and not just juggle with big notions such as 'freedom', 'independence', and so on and so forth.

There is no absolute freedom or absolute independence anywhere. Neither is there absolute sovereignty. Everything in the world is interconnected and interdependent, and this interdependence is growing.

Politicians and scientists should look for answers by taking this interdependence into account, and not the other way round.

I personally think that politics cannot be successful without science. We are fed up with that kind of politics! Therefore everything that we are doing is always the product of collective creative activity, and not something that dawned upon some idol. Let no one lay claim to that. We shall leave this to the believers.

I think that there can be no politics without morality, ethics and humanitarian aspect. Technocracy and arbitrary distribution of productive forces – I simply mention two or three words for this to be clear. In our history we had such things and you know what that led to and meant for people.

All this I accept as a politician, as a person

who is now vested with great powers and, it means, with responsibility adequate to the powers. But I ask people to thoroughly think over everything that we suggest to the people and society.

Sometimes I hear that we make slow headway, that we should proceed quicker, and that we are lagging behind. I shall tell you this: even with such unhurried ways we have traversed such a path over the past four years as we had not traversed over 70 years. This is the first thing.

Secondly, even without hurrying, and by considering everything thoroughly we have made errors during perestroika itself, and we know what those miscalculations resulted in. Historical development and processes cannot be speeded up.

While we have difficulty in gaining an understanding of what is going on and quite often find ourselves gripped by emotions or exchange definitions, you can well imagine how difficult it is for the inexperienced person to realise the entire complexity of the turn, its versatility, novelty and magnitude.

In the final analysis it is precisely the working man that should realise and accept – or turn down – this or that policy. So, where are you hurrying? Don't you take interest in people's needs? Did 'superheroes' appear again, only in new attire, in the gowns of professors and academics? In one case, there was an idol – the teacher of all nations. Are there now teachers with a different aspect? Is this sharply put? Yes, it is.

Let us believe that this does not apply to the present company and that it applies to others. Let us think, ponder, analyse and compare. We used to impose quite a number of concepts and excluded the people from the process.

I welcome the fact that we are engaging in discussion and that the whole of Lithuania – communists, working people and members of all nationalities – are involved in it.

I was not fully satisfied only because you, and not only you, sought to achieve one thing these days: to bring your point of view to me. But I keep saying all the time: let us ponder over things, consider the situation, and figure out what can be done.

Shall we hold the process or not? Let us ponder. I would not like these reflections to end today. The practice has been so far as follows: some people presented their 'commodity' – views – and other people presented their opinions. But one should go further than that: towards meeting one another.

One should not mutually lend a deaf ear to arguments. It means, let us think how to secure that the dialogue and exchange of views goes on.

It means that new obstructions should not be put in the path of this dialogue and exchange of views. We had enough of them piled up over the previous decades. And it needs a great power of mind to remove them. Let us not create new ones.

The Lithuanian situation – please have no hard feelings, I refer to it in this way for the sake of brevity, although this is not, of course, something like the Caribbean crisis – that we encountered is of importance for the entire Party, the entire state and the entire country, and not just for the republic. This primarily concerns the destiny of this country, its role, weight and the realisation of the idea which we named perestroika.

One should bear in mind that we encountered in view of the results of the LCP's 20th Congress occurred at a complex moment and, I would say, critical moment in the country's life – when it is being decided who will emerge victorious out of this in this contention: the mounting movement of the people for a radical remaking of society or the inertia mechanism that hinders progressive changes. When perestroika processes are only beginning to get into high gear, and when we reached a new level of the comprehension of the very essence of socialism and tasks for its renewal. When we closely approached and begin

to radically renew the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Never before were opportunities for the realisation of values inherent in socialist ideas so great as nowadays. It would be simply unpardonable and it would be the greatest error if we – owing to differences, political ambitions, every kind of prejudices, stereotypes in thinking and actions – miss this unique historical chance being given to us by perestroika.

It can be said that everyone is now for perestroika. We have heard a good deal of pronouncements in support of perestroika here on Lithuanian soil these days, including in this audience. There were no opponents, I did not hear any remarks against perestroika. But, frankly speaking, both previously and on these days when one hears statements of this kind one comes to realise that we say the same words but put, at times, different meaning into them.

If one does not get rid of this – and this can be done only through exchanges of opinion, dialogue, comparison, and intensive one, too – and if no clarity is introduced to the cardinal issue, then with the words being the same there may arise misunderstanding which is fraught with distortions affecting the common work to implement the policy of perestroika and may lead to serious complications.

Therefore I would like together with you to reflect on the purpose of perestroika. I consider it necessary. And this is what I want to say at once. From the principled, broad and historical point of view, we regard perestroika as a transition from the authoritarian-centralist model of society to a humane and democratic socialism, socially oriented towards the human being.

Can this divide us? No, it cannot. This is exactly what was voiced here. Since it is precisely the CPSU that, after thoroughly, and in an unprejudiced way analysing the path traversed by the country and the state in which it found itself, arrived at the conclusion that the authoritarian and bureaucratic system that took shape in the country, deformed society and values of socialism and led to an ugly phenomena, heavy tragedies and losses should be discarded.

It should be discarded because it does not ensure real rights and freedoms for people and a life worthy of the human being, and does not ensure the necessary dynamism for society and efficiency for the economy.

That system brought the country to a crisis and affected all peoples. We should see this and get on to a new level in both thinking, politics, and practical activities. This is perestroika's point of departure. Now tell me, does not this suit the Lithuanian communists and working people? What is not suitable in this?

I do not see anything of this kind. There are specifics of the phase we are going through – I would call it crucial. We have just arrived at a phase of decision-making. There were rallies because, as it turned out, we needed to tell each other so much. But we also need to learn to hear each other out. We have not yet learned to do that. But we are learning. Later, we had to get busy working out and putting together a policy on the basis of the analysis we had made and the conclusions we had drawn. It was easier during those phases of perestroika.

Now that all has been set in motion, the entire country, everyone's interests are involved. This is why we call the present phase crucial. And still, comrades, despite all problems and complications, we can firmly state that perestroika is moving ahead, and perestroika processes are embracing all the most important spheres of Soviet society. They have penetrated the most intricate and complex sphere of inter-ethnic relations, the spiritual sphere and work collectives – all layers of society.

These processes in the public consciousness are tempestuous and not uniform. They are accompanied not only by a revolution but also by a great confusion of minds. The country's politisation is proceeding at high speed. Within the framework of democratisation, glasnost, politi-

cal and economic reform, a practical transition is now being made from the past system of management that has existed for decades and that has fully exhausted itself, having no internal energy resources left work and meet the requirements of the country, society, all Soviet peoples.

This is happening on the basis of democratisation and the application of political and economic methods. Indeed, our society has changed considerably within a short period of time, even if we apply historical yardsticks. And we are now on the eve of the deepest transformations, on their threshold. The economy must be subjected to the most radical changes on the basis of new views upon ownership, land, the status of enterprises, work collectives, and so on.

I shall not enumerate all the components of the process. We are now following the path of political reform, as its second phase is being implemented in republics and localities: the soviets are acquiring real power and authority. We shall reinforce this with the law on soviets and local authorities.

Great work is being done to facilitate future efforts in all directions. But we see, naturally, that all is proceeding sharply, painfully, contradictorily and unevenly, with one step not always followed by another in due sequence, which creates further complications and gives rise to differing attitudes. The thing in question is not a machine, a system of engines, but a living organism comprising so many millions of people with their own volition, hopes, plans and real interests.

There will hardly be people here – although someone promises the opposite – who would do everything smoothly, without mistakes. This is nonsense, this is what Lenin described as 'the duping of the common people.'

Processes will develop with difficulty but they promise profound changes in the future and a new quality for our society. I would say that now it is necessary as never before that all progressive forces of society consolidate and that no one be able to disunite and weaken them.

I have already said that we, too, made mistakes and miscalculated. This has resulted in certain losses in the economic and political reform.

We have come across social tensions. There have been manifestations of destabilisation and weakened control of social and economic processes.

But this does not cast doubt on our choice, it only gives us to understand what we should do, without returning to the old methods.

There are quite a few people wishing to avail themselves of the difficulties and to turn everything backwards. But we should look forward and resolutely promote all processes of perestroika.

The main forces of advocates and opponents of perestroika are now confronting one another. I think that in principle the positions of perestroika supporters are stronger because in the long run perestroika meets the vital interests of all people.

But now there exists a threat from those who want to exploit the difficulties, sow panic and cast a negative attitude to perestroika, and to cast doubt on perestroika as a policy.

I'm saying all this for you to think about your place and your actions in conditions when the country is living through such a period and when the whole world is watching to see what will happen in the Soviet Union.

We had no possibility of raising the issue of accelerating the reform as we had no proper prerequisites, such as scientifically substantiated plans and relevant laws.

Now we have such prerequisites and in the next few months we will practically approach the solution of a whole number of major problems.

This is opening the possibility of setting the task of speeding up perestroika, a task that is real both politically and practically, so that the

period of transition from the system we are departing from now to the new one would be short and that the transition-related painfulness would not be protracted.

Otherwise, our society may not stand this and then there will appear other 'formulas', simple and easy to understand. And no symposiums will be needed then, just apply the formula – and everything will be 'in order'.

But we know what 'order' this will be, and not only from our own experience.

This is why the pooling of efforts and consolidation are needed. Although we are not against pluralism of views and diversity of positions, we cannot let all kinds of conflicts develop.

Those who try to kindle social and ethnic strife in the country, or even political struggle, to disunite society on various pretexts and to set some people against others, do immense harm to our main cause.

Only civil peace, the coordination of interests on the basis of reciprocity and the active pooling of efforts on the principles of perestroika to solve tasks and achieve the objectives of this policy can lead the country out of the present difficult situation.

Any other way leads to the undermining of perestroika. We have no right to let this happen and should act in a resolute way.

The complexity of the perestroika-related situation and work is that everything takes place in a multi-ethnic country inhabited by tens of peoples.

They began to entertain great hopes in connection with perestroika and they should not be deceived in their hopes and expectations. Therefore any transforming moves in this country invariably acquire national colouring and involve the interests of the peoples, union republics, autonomy, and the entire federation.

It should be said straight: our multi-ethnic state is now living through the most crucial and difficult period. The essence of it is in complete and final renunciation of the Stalinist model of federation in which federal character was only declared while unitarianism was being implanted.

Nowadays we return to the Leninist idea of the nationalities question and to the premise that gravitation towards integration, towards the combining of efforts in the economy, science and politics does not contradict but is also inseparably connected with the upsurge of national awareness and national self-affirmation. These are not mutually-exclusive processes and goals. On the contrary, they are organically compatible and coincide. Moreover, this is precisely how one should act. Otherwise, the former and the latter would suffer damage.

The CPSU in its nationalities policy is firmly committed to the idea of a quest for effective forms of the development of the republics. Each of them will be able to make a specific contribution to the renewal of socialism. The differentiation of economic development models and types of republic economic ties and relationships becomes a reality.

Next in line is a transition to greater flexibility of federal relations.

As you know, the Second Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR instructed the Supreme Soviet to urgently take up the business of distinguishing between the competence of the union and of the republics so that the sovereignty issue could be resolved at constitutional level.

Thereby the issue which now gives rise to a lot of argument and leads to constitutional collisions and conflict situations will be decided. The point in question is to determine in which fields the union legislation will have priority and in which republican legislation will take precedence.

At present matters stand so that the union can seemingly resolve any question – hence remarks that someone in the centre did not like something, that the centre tackles local questions,

intervenes in all things, and so on and so forth. This results in what we saw together with you and we know what has been the outcome.

It must be clearly defined – and this we must do jointly – what the centre is as understood now.

I have been listening to you all these days. You criticise many things so strongly but you criticise yesterday's things, yesterday's policy and yesterday's concepts.

We have already embarked upon a different road – in every respect. You smile as if saying that no changes have yet taken place. But together with you we have already shaped a policy in matters concerning the economy, economic independence, sovereignty, competence, federation, and the Party.

Of course, the team of Comrade Prunskene would be pleased if everything that they said would be accepted by Comrade Maslyukov or someone else without discussion. Then it would be fine and the union would be nice, too.

But things do not happen that way. There are another 14 republics in the union! It is necessary that the centre should be such as the republics visualise it. We are on our way to this objective, and this is how it should be. We have not yet reached it but we are on the way to it.

The CPSU is true to the Leninist principle of the right of nations to self-determination. Right up to secession. This is a constitutional norm. It is recorded in the old constitution. And, I am sure, will be listed in a new one as well. We do not intend to waive this major principle. This is very important to our multinational state.

I have already had an opportunity to speak at one of the meetings about the inadmissibility of simplified interpretation of this constitutional provision. It seemed to some that it is enough to have a show of hands to decide the matter. This is understandable in an inexperienced man, but he who deals with history, politics and real life realises that problems of this kind are not resolved in this way. Things are considerably more complicated. Today, for example, we met with the military and I heard them cite some figures. The Baltic Military District alone has basic assets worth 21 billion roubles in Lithuania. Comrade Ivanov, Commander-in-Chief of the Baltic Fleet, said that the Navy's assets in the Baltic republics amount to 35 billion. These are real facts. Apart from security. You understand: it is necessary to study and sort things out to decide what is to be done. It is necessary, indeed, to come down from concepts, from rostrums – to life. These problems must be discussed with, for instance, a conciliatory commission, and the process should be conducted normally, democratically.

The problem of secession comprises deep economic, social, political-legal, defence-strategic and international-geopolitical aspects. It is impossible to ignore the interests of the union, in which the interests of all republics are interrelated and do not exist in isolation. I do not say here anything about what we should have begun with – the moral, psychological, purely humanitarian aspect, the fates of people of various nationalities.

It is necessary to weigh-up and think through everything a thousand times before one or another people sets out on an independent voyage. How can it be done without a compass, maps, a stock of fuel and a team...

Just let the people be – that's all. It is one thing if a group who authored this concept goes drifting on an ice floe or a raft – let them drift, we shall be able to rescue them one way or another. But you cannot do this to a people. Everything must be thought through and through quite thoroughly.

Yesterday I talked with farmers and workers. They are much more substantial philosophers than we are. What common sense they have! And you know, when we tell them everything, tell them how things work out and what should be done to alter everything, then people will certainly think again.

In brief, the Soviet Communist Party favours a federation. Because the federation enables the use of a shorter way to reach the same goals. For as regards goals, we and you do not differ.

As far as I know, the majority of the leadership both in the Party and in the Supreme Soviet adhere to this, so it will be this way. And then there will be political sovereignty and economic independence, not mentioning the spiritual sphere, culture and the language.

Then there will be the enrichment of ties that really exist, the change on these principles of the level of independence and exchanges through the market, and so on.

And all this will take place not through destruction and disunity but through consolidation.

Comrade Brazauskas said, 'an economically independent Lithuania should have an independent Communist Party.' I say this is a false thesis, because economic independence still implies that Lithuania is an organic, inalienable part of the whole country.

Inter-republican ties in our country are even closer than on the European market. And now Europe is going to unite in a confederation or federation.

Many politicians speak about it. Valery Giscard d'Estang told me: 'Mr. President, prepare to deal with a federation of Western Europe.' There are already signs of that state.

It is politics that follows economics and not vice versa. The need to orient oneself to the end results, to co-operate on an equal basis and to work more effectively brings about the need for a political superstructure that would serve these basic interests better.

I should say that all kinds of suspicions and political doubts concerning the federation have no real grounds. So I'll repeat: we all, including me, criticise the past experience and we are unanimous in our assessments and conclusions.

But we differ in principle in the following: we say it is necessary to transform and renew the federation and reveal its entire potential, and you go as far as to call for a withdrawal from the federation. Here our differences begin.

I don't think this is the best way. Although I said that the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party and I personally cannot find ourselves in a situation when, so to say, I would be more catholic than the Pope or more Lithuanian than you, I seem to care about the fate of the Lithuanian people more than you and to pretend that you care less about it.

After all, tackle your problems yourselves and lay your arguments on the federal round table. In this connection we should accelerate the drafting and passing of a law on the mechanism of the withdrawal of a constituent republic from the Soviet Union and of its self-determination.

There must be such a mechanism. If there is such a right, then there must be a mechanism of its implementations. I promise it will be developed, although I remain on my firm position: we need the federation, it is the second wind of socialism.

I hope you understand me. What I have said concerns everyone in the Soviet Union.

Society now needs accord between people of all nationalities as never before. So let us seek such accord. I think the main condition for a sound, fully-fledged life and development of our union, of the common home of Soviet nationalities and ethnic groups is this accord rather than the union's disintegration on ethnic grounds.

In the context of the huge transformations in the country we can say frankly that we should change our view of the Party, too. This change is extremely necessary.

The Party should be considered in the context of perestroika. We proceed from the premise that the renewal of our social life requires a renewal of the Party, a radical renewal.

Many of those who praise the Party and of those who criticise it think that the Party is inviolable, static. And today's speakers, including Comrade Brazauskas, said that nothing has happened in the Party.

But, first of all, the Party began perestroika and is restructuring itself too. If it had not happened, you and me, we would not be discussing the subject. That was point one. The second point – let Comrade Brazauskas tell you if the Politburo hampers him in his work.

Brazauskas: No, it does not.

Gorbachev: Or let comrades Kuptsov and Goriyev, representatives of Russia and Byelorussia, tell you how matters are decided in regional Party organisations, to say nothing of republican organisations. Personnel matters, the most important ones, are decided by communists themselves, and they do it quite thoroughly – five, six and more delegates are nominated for each secretarial job at plenums, then they are discussed for a week or a month and only after that the election is held. New models of democracy appear, deep renewal processes develop in the Party. We shall have to sum up this experience in order to advance towards a new programme document and adopt new rules. All this should be done thoroughly. The commitment to radical changes in our Party, above all by democratising it, is great. And you will feel it very soon after the Politburo considers these matters and they are widely discussed at a regular Central Committee plenum.

In short, comrades, we are on the threshold of big changes in the operation of the Party, in its structure, in its entire activity and status in society. And I shall say this: it is a bad thing that some comrades fail to feel it, do not see it, if they hurry to isolate themselves and look for freedom in a closed national space. This is no freedom. The Soviet Communist Party will deliberate, work at its plenums and congresses, decide on union affairs, political questions, how perestroika should be developed, and meanwhile Comrade Brazauskas will be reading newspapers to learn what we have decided and what the fate of Lithuania should be in this connection. An interesting situation! Is that really your intention? Comrade Vilkas will you be working in the Supreme Soviet and head the commission?

Vilkas: So let them decide questions there.

Gorbachev: And what is then the Party for? Or do you want to first bury it here and then spread the experience farther? Then go ahead and say so. We shall not be able to do without the Party. Moreover, we already see new parties appearing here. We shall not be able to do without. Parties exist and will exist the world over, in any society.

True, one hears people say that a multi-party system will save all. But you know, when I look at it, I see some people simply trying to get more portfolios through a multiparty system, through creating new institutions. It's all right – they think, we shall explain things to the people and squeeze everything within a framework. The main thing is to have more portfolios and then compete against each other. But what we do need is to get away from these portfolios, to make them fewer. Lots of portfolios and verbiage are not yet democracy. We know tens of states with ten to twenty parties but ruled by dictatorial regimes. And not all have been freed from them. Everything is determined, comrades, by the regime of political power, the level of democracy, the political process, the functioning of structures, public opinion, public movements that are capable of accumulating and expressing and making known public interests.

If there is no democratic environment, no glasnost, no one will express and realise any interests. Together with you we have embarked upon the road of democratisation, openness and decentralisation – this gives the possibility to involve the people in all the processes. This is where answers to such questions can be found.

The strategy of the renewal of the CPSU is to fundamentally change its status and role in Soviet society through the separation of functions and through relationships with all socio-political movements and groups.

This signifies ridding the Party of the complex of infallibility, of claims to guidance over everyone and everything and of political monopolism.

The CPSU should be a party serving the people, realising their interests and be under their democratic control.

In other words, the Party should serve the people. This must be a political force, a self-governing, self-developing and renewing organisation. It must be open to both theoretical quest, political debates, and the comparison of positions.

This means that democratic processes within the Party itself, just as the principle of democratic centralism, should be reassessed.

And of course, comrades, the reorganisation of the Party – to convey the essence of its renewal by one thesis – should proceed towards the realisation of the Leninist idea that the power of the Party masses should triumph within the Party.

The Party masses should fashion everything. Primary Party organisations should elect their leaders directly, and not through bureaux or committees. They should influence the formation and work of district and city committees and the choice of delegates – right up to the Central Committee.

And if so, why, query, should you break away? It is necessary for you to elect your delegates to the CPSU Congress in this way and to raise any questions there, right up to those concerning General Secretary, Party Chairman, Politburo, Presidium, and so on.

And finally, in the new rules of the Party, we must reflect a new status of the communist parties of the union republics. This section of Party rules must determine what kind of independent communist parties with really immense possibilities the republics should have.

Shall we dictate to them something about membership dues or what structure and what number of members the Party staff should have and what kind of publishing activities should be conducted? No, we shall not do that. All this should be removed from new Party rules.

Then, the following question arises: if all this is done and if the Communist Party is represented in all spheres of Party guidance and participates in all processes, what more is needed for its independence?

It means that, apart from the fact that in this case everything works as it should, the Party also retains the benefits of being shoulder to shoulder with all the communist parties of the union of republics.

In this connection I want, as someone already said here, to end my address at a positive note. I think that these days were not spent in vain and I hope that this is so not only for us together with you, comrades, since all this is open to the entire country and the whole world.

I think that these days have given much food for thought. I only hope that, despite the fact that we exchanged lists of mutual demands, we have still laid a good foundation to hope that we, while carrying the dialogue on – but already within the framework of the plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee – will find an answer to the question of how to do so as to take into account the concern and interests of the Lithuanian Communist Party and of that part of the Party that remained on the positions of the CPSU – well, I do not want, though, to refer to the LCP as if it is no longer on the positions of the CPSU.

I still feel that I am among Party comrades. Yes, we must think everything over, upon receiving consent from you, from two wings of your Party, so to say, for both the leadership of the CPSU Central Committee and your leading bodies to carry the dialogue on and to try with the participation of the CPSU Central Committee plenum to find a formula that would reflect urgent requirements and at the same time would not weaken the CPSU.

Submit all your proposals, even the most far-

reaching ones, to the 28th Congress of the CPSU for consideration. There is an opportunity for Party comrades and your bureau, to think matters over – let them bring their proposals to the plenum and tell everything. I know that proposals do exist. Therefore, I hope that comrades will bring them to Moscow.

In general, let us think and act very responsibly. You and we are at such a stage of perestroika and take such decisions that we cannot afford to make an error that would cost too dearly to our peoples, to the entire cause of socialism and to the destiny of the world. I count on this co-operation.

Question: Are you in favour of a one-party or multi-party system in the Soviet Union? Which of them gives a better guarantee of the democratisation process?

Gorbachev: I believe that in my speeches I have already answered this question. All should be determined by the political process. I do not see anything tragic about a multi-party system if it emerges and meets the realistic interests of society.

Incidentally, after the October Revolution the government and the all-Russia Central Executive Committee were formed on a multi-party basis. So, one should not dread a multi-party system. Neither should one artificially impose it. This is the first thing.

Second, a multi-party system is not a cure all. Democracy and openness are the main things, just as realistic participation and involvement of the people in all political and social processes and institutions.

Otherwise, parties may mislead people by political game and leave the people – the principal character of history – outside the framework of the political process and genuine government by the people. Such a state of things would not, of course, suit us.

Brazauskas: Dear Mikhail Sergeyevich, members of the Politburo, dear guests, we have conducted a very complex and very intense discussion for nearly four hours. In many respects, I would say, a discussion incomprehensible to each other. And comprehensible in many respects, too.

I shall not repeat reproaches and doubts concerning our life and our affairs in our small republic. Of course there are many questions and problems in our entire state. We also have problems that are in correspondence with union ones and some others that are specifically ours. It can naturally be so, and so it is.

Much became clearer over this past week. Certainly, the main purpose was, as far as I understand, to try and understand each other as much, as well and as fully as possible. Good if we managed to do this. Bad, if we failed. I do not think all was understood, but much of what is being done in this republic must have been understood. We realise the complexity of the situation within the Lithuanian Communist Party and, in this connection, within the Soviet Communist Party, but this is life, take it or leave it. We also thought for a long time after the congress what additional steps can be taken, what else can be done. How best can we express our intentions, our sentiments? About the possibilities for more rapprochement and understanding. But I believe that time will do what it can, and so will perestroika, in the course of which our country is marching marches on day after day in the same, good, direction. It cannot be said that our republic is not moving along the same path. It is advancing along this road, perhaps in a somewhat different gait, and its steps are sometimes shorter, sometimes longer in some fields of our life, but this is perestroika, this is life as it is.

Mikhail Sergeyevich, you visited us nine years and six months ago. Now you are with us again, one of a large group. You always recalled Lithuania in good words, how it developed, how much was done on this small territory. You

(Continued on back page)

Decree introduces State of Emergency to Nagorno-Karabakh

THE Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet on January 15 adopted a decree imposing a State of Emergency on the Nagorno-Karabakh autonomous region and some other districts.

The document says that despite the measures taken the situation in the Nagorno-Karabakh autonomous region and around it continues to exacerbate.

Various nationalist and separatist associations intensified their activities. In peacetime, the number of refugees is on the rise and there are casualties. In this complex situation, actions of the leading bodies of Azerbaijan and Armenia were not sufficiently firm and consistent, the document says.

In a number of cases they were unable to hold their own against extremist, nationalist elements. As a result of this, the decisions of the USSR Supreme Soviet are being fulfilled, tension on an ethnic basis is escalating. This was encouraged by acts with regard to Nagorno-Karabakh adopted by Armenia's Supreme Soviet. These acts are not in keeping with the Constitution of the USSR.

The situation in Baku, Gyandzh and a number of other towns and villages are particularly exacerbated.

In view of this, the Presidium of the USSR

Supreme Soviet decreed to impose a state of emergency on the territory of the Nagorno-Karabakh autonomous region, adjoining districts of Azerbaijan, the Goris district of Armenia, as well as on the zone along the USSR state border on the territory of Azerbaijan. The Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet took into consideration the address of the Presidium of Azerbaijan's Supreme Soviet and was guided by **clause 14 of article 119** of the USSR's Constitution.

Bodies of state authority and other authorised state bodies and officials in the above-mentioned localities are given the right to prohibit meetings and assemblies, to control the media, halt unlawful activity of citizens' organisations and associations or to disband them, to prohibit strikes, impose curfew, and so on.

In addition to these measures they are given the right to check documents and, when needed, to search citizens and examine their belongings.

In accordance with law, internal forces of the USSR Interior Ministry will be involved in the elimination of consequences of extraordinary situations, in the protection of rights of citizens, public order and security, and vital facilities.

Military units of the Army and the Navy and the KGB of the USSR will also be involved in the protection of citizens and vital facilities.

To ensure steady operation of transport, rail-

ways and other communications will be guarded by internal forces of the USSR Interior Ministry, by units of the Soviet Army and forces of the KGB of the USSR.

The Presidium of Azerbaijan's Supreme Soviet is instructed to take the necessary measures, including the imposition of a curfew in Baku, Gyandzh and other cities.

The Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet demanded that the Presidium of Armenia's Supreme Soviet take the most decisive steps to cut short instigatory actions from Armenia's territory.

Articles of the decree introducing these measures go into effect at 23 hours local time on January 15, 1990 and will operate until the state of emergency is lifted.

The USSR Foreign Ministry has been instructed to continue and shortly conclude the negotiations on regulation on the state border and corresponding matters of relations between the Soviet Union and Iran and also to inform of this decree adjacent countries and international organisations. □

Ryzhkov and Gro Harlem Brundtland meet

SOVIET Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov and Gro Harlem Brundtland, Chairperson of the Norwegian Labour Party and of the Foreign Policy Committee of the Norwegian Parliament, met in the Kremlin on January 15. Gro Harlem Brundtland is a participant in the Global Forum on Environment and Development for Survival, now in session in Moscow.

During their conversation Ryzhkov thoroughly analysed specific features and complexity of the present stage of perestroika in the Soviet Union.

He said that during the past year, democratisation had continued at a rapid pace in all aspects of Soviet society. This was reflected in the activity of the supreme body of state authority. Ryzhkov accorded special importance to the government programme for economic recovery that was supported by the Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR.

It was emphasised that the programme was drawn up on the basis of the real situation in the national economy, the social tendency of the economic policy of the state, the need to deepen economic reform stage-by-stage and ensure broad public support for the programme.

Gro Harlem Brundtland expressed the hope that democratic transformations in the Soviet Union would be successful. She views them as an important factor and part of the humanisation of international relations, their stabilisation on the basis of mutual confidence and co-operation.

During the discussion both sides showed interest in the problems of environmental protection, the preservation and restoration of territorial ecological systems, and the development of international co-operation in environmental protection in the Arctic, specifically in the Kola Peninsula and in other areas in the north of Europe.

Some aspects of Soviet-Norwegian relations were also touched upon.

The Soviet side expressed gratitude for Norway's assistance in the restoration of the earthquake-ravaged districts of Armenia. □

Co-operation between the USSR and EC to develop

By TASS diplomatic correspondent:

THE year 1990 will see the implementation of the agreement on commercial and economic co-operation between the Soviet Union and the European Community signed in Brussels last December, said Vladislav Malkevich, President of the Presidium of the USSR Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

In a TASS interview on January 15, he said that this document is the largest commercial agreement ever concluded by the USSR. It regulates economic ties with all 12 EC member-countries.

DECREE on Armenia

ON January 10 the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet adopted a decree which says that a number of decisions of the Supreme Soviet of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic aimed at blocking the functioning of the resolution of the USSR Supreme Soviet of November 28, 1989 'On Measures Towards the Normalisation of the Situation in the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region' have led to further aggravation of inter-ethnic relations in Nagorno-Karabakh and around it.

The decree says that the proclamation of unification of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic and Nagorno-Karabakh without the consent of the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic is an outright violation of **article 78** of the Constitution of the USSR.

The Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet decreed that the decisions of the Supreme Soviet of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic of December 1, 1989 'On Unification of the Arme-

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There have been certain achievements in the area. Joint ventures with industrialised capitalist countries registered by the USSR Ministry of Finance include some 500 joint enterprises formed with enterprises and companies from EC countries.

"We hope for more decisive changes. Most joint ventures that have already been formed are small or medium-sized and cannot make a decisive contribution to the economic development," Malkevich said.

He said the agreement rids the Soviet Union of the label "a state trading country", which had been widely used - as a pretext for various discriminatory measures against the USSR. Opportunities for integration into the world economy have widened and conditions for real rapprochement with the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) have been created.

Regarding the role of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in implementing the provisions of the agreement, Malkevich said that entrepreneurs should be in touch with Soviet consumers. He said the lack of such ties leads to the delivery of unwanted and substandard goods and hampers the development of trade, to say nothing of more profound ties in production.

Some steps have already been taken to establish such ties. Departments in the Chamber of Commerce and Industry issue more than 30 publications. A new journal called *Business Ties* will be published, with the first issue coming out this month.

It will appear in English, German, Spanish, French and Russian, and will contain information about potential partners in the Soviet Union and abroad.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry is striving to create a data bank and retrieval network that would make it possible to exchange information with partners in the EC about the state of the market and existing offers. □

Session of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance

COMMUNIQUE

THE 45th session of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) was held in Bulgaria's capital Sofia from January 9 to 10, 1990.

The session stressed the need for a resolute renewal of the CMEA system of mutual co-operation and the mechanism of multilateral co-operation, a fundamental renewal of the CMEA's activities, revision of its functions and aims, and a new charter to be up to present-day and future requirements of counteraction between the CMEA member-countries.

The session deemed it necessary to form a special commission to discuss proposals by countries on fundamental questions of co-operation within the CMEA framework and to draft new basic CMEA documents as soon as possible.

A business-like and constructive discussion at the session was marked by the spirit of mutual understanding.

The session was attended by the CMEA delegations led by Bulgarian Prime Minister Georgi Atanasov, Hungarian Prime Minister Miklos Nemeth, Vietnamese First Deputy Prime Minis-

ter Vo Van Kiet, the German Democratic Republic's Prime Minister Hans Modrow, Deputy Chairman of the State Council and Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Cuba Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, the Mongolian Prime Minister Dumagiyn Sodnom, Polish Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Romanian Prime Minister Petre Roman, Soviet Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov and Czechoslovak Prime Minister Marian Calfa.

The meeting was also attended by CMEA Secretary Vyacheslav Sychev and representatives of CMEA agencies.

A Yugoslav delegation led by Federal Executive Council member Branimir Pajkovic attended the session under the agreement between the CMEA and the Yugoslav Government.

The session was attended by observers from representatives of Afghanistan, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Republic of Nicaragua and the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

The session was chaired by Georgi Atanasov. □

Soviet Prime Minister meets the Press

NIKOLAI RYZHKOV, Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers who headed the Soviet delegation to the session of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, held in Sofia from January 9 to 10, described the session as crucial.

Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister ends visit to Beijing

CHINESE Foreign Minister Qian Qichen received Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Rogachev, who visited Beijing for Soviet-Chinese consultations on bilateral relations and the Cambodian settlement.

The two sides expressed mutual satisfaction with the dynamic development of bilateral relations after the May (1989) Sino-Soviet summit. The intention to broaden the relations in various areas, in line with the accords, was affirmed.

Touching upon the situation in Cambodia, the two sides favoured the United Nations active role in relieving the regional conflict and preventing the escalation of hostilities.

The sides duly appraised the initiatives by a number of countries for a political settlement. They underlined the need to invigorate negotiations at all levels and noted the importance of the forthcoming meeting on Cambodia, which will be attended by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council.

Meanwhile, there are still differences between the sides about some aspects of the Cambodia settlement.

Soviet-Chinese consultations on the further development of bilateral relations and ways to settle the Cambodian conflict were held in Beijing on January 10-11. The Soviet side was represented by Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Rogachev and the Chinese side by Deputy Foreign Minister Tian Zengpei.

Rogachev left for Moscow on January 12 upon completion of his three-day working visit to China. □

He met Bulgarian and Soviet journalists at their request in Sofia on January 10.

The head of the Soviet Government is of the opinion that the session laid down the foundations for new economic relations among CMEA members.

Transformations taking place in socialist countries gave an impetus to this.

"As regards the Soviet Union, we became convinced of this again when we were drafting a government programme for the Second Congress of People's Deputies," Ryzhkov said.

"We worked on the programme thoroughly and for quite a long time. When we analysed it, we realised that the existing economic relations between CMEA member countries would be one of the factors which would hinder this programme," Ryzhkov said.

"The problem was posed in this way: either we create a really effective mechanism for foreign economic activity of the member countries, or CMEA loses its importance as such," Ryzhkov said.

"But we believe CMEA should exist. We need it. But it should be a different organisation," he said.

Ryzhkov believes it was the first such conversation over many years when each country openly stated its considerations. Some specifics aside, all heads of the governments believe that CMEA should be reformed.

The Soviet side proposed that starting from 1991 CMEA countries in their bilateral and multilateral relations should proceed from the following principles: first, to be guided by world prices, second, to settle accounts in convertible currency.

"The transition to these fundamental principles is a difficult path, so we suggested that this should be done in stages, and this view was supported by virtually all heads of government, Ryzhkov said.

"This should be done in stages, or else the economy of many countries might be destroyed."

The Soviet side holds that this gradual transition will take approximately three years. Besides that we believe that bilateral relations should be seriously considered, Ryzhkov said. □

Nikolai Ryzhkov's interview to Pravda

IN an interview with Pravda on January 11 Soviet Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov described as crucial the CMEA session that ended in Sofia on January 10.

"Restructuring and reforms are under way in CMEA countries, and we should dramatically change and renew our relations. The situation is like this: either we lose CMEA, or we create a good economic organisation based on new principles," Ryzhkov said.

The USSR believes that CMEA can no longer exist in its present form, the Soviet Prime Minister continued. A true market is necessary. The exchange of goods between CMEA countries does not mean that a market exists. If there is no competitiveness, then there is no desire to continually improve the quality of goods.

The general opinion was expressed in Sofia that the situation should be radically changed. Of course, some countries have their particular views. For example, Cuba believes that the status quo in CMEA should be preserved. In its opinion, there is no need to adopt world prices nor to introduce trade payments in hard currency.

"I said at the session, and I repeat it now that three countries — Cuba, Mongolia and Vietnam — need special treatment, and we should find special solutions." This does not mean, however, that, because the views of these three countries differ from those of the rest of CMEA member states, we should not take common actions to change the mechanism of co-operation. We realise that we should help them, and, at the same time, we should look for new approaches. This stand was firmly supported by Mongolia and Vietnam.

"I want to be understood correctly: the task for 1991 is not to destroy everything and later, on the ruins, to create a new CMEA. On the contrary, we must make decisions of principled importance, to think them over carefully and to confidently overcome certain stages in order to avoid trouble, such as an economic crisis," Ryzhkov stressed. □

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nian Soviet Socialist Republic and Nagorno-Karabakh', "regarding the resolution of the USSR Supreme Soviet of November 28, 1989 'On Measures for Normalisation of the Situation in the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region' and of January 9, 1990 'On Including the Plan for Social and Economic Development of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region for 1990 in the State Plan for Economic and Social Development of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic for 1990'" are not in keeping with the USSR Constitution and due to article 74 of the USSR Constitution cannot function in the republic's territory.

The Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet also suggested that the Presidium of Armenia's Supreme Soviet takes measures to bring legislative acts in the republic in keeping with the Constitution of the USSR. □

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Eduard Shevardnadze's meeting with UN Secretary General

SOVIET Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar met on January 15. Perez de Cuellar is in Moscow for the Global Forum on Environment and Development for Survival.

Special attention was given to the United Nations growing role and responsibility in the rapidly changing situation.

The Soviet side noted that the eighties saw a transition from the cold war to a new peaceful period of world development, opening an opportunity to get rid of the nuclear and ecological menace and crisis phenomena in the world economy.

The necessary conditions are taking shape for turning the United Nations into a strategic centre for consolidation of peace among nations, co-operation and stability.

The United Nations Secretary General emphasised the importance that new political thinking, the ideas Mikhail Gorbachev set out in his United Nations address, have had for the improve-

ment of the international situation.

Ushering in the new decade, the United Nations should concentrate on current global problems and on the enhancement of its peace-making role. It should prove that it is an effective instrument for international co-operation.

There was a substantive discussion about assistance to the United Nations in solving crises and conflicts in various areas. The Afghan theme was thoroughly discussed. It was suggested that an international consensus should be formed regarding a political settlement and the need to create an effective mechanism for negotiation and to intensify the efforts regarding domestic and foreign aspects of the problem.

It was emphasised there is a need for vigorous actions by the United Nations and all parties concerned to stimulate the quest for settlement in Cambodia, Central America and Cyprus.

The two leaders noted that the initiatives by the Soviet Union and the United Nations to advance the Iran-Iraq negotiating process are in one and the same direction. There is a similarity in approaches with regard to the United Nations

potential, and its Security Council in connection with the Middle East settlement.

Perez de Cuellar expressed support for democratic changes in Eastern Europe, due to which old fears and hostility, predominant for decades, have begun to disappear.

Both sides noted that these changes should be analysed and that the policy of all states should be adjusted accordingly on the basis of the preservation of international stability.

Shevardnadze said that the arrival of the United Nations Secretary General and his participation in the Global Forum on Environment and Development for Survival are favourably received in the Soviet Union.

"We highly appreciate your contribution to the achievement of the lofty goals of the United Nations, to the quest to solve the most important problems encountered by the world community. The Soviet Union will continue to support all the positive understandings of the United Nations and its Secretary General," Shevardnadze told Perez de Cuellar. □

Soviet Foreign Minister receives Israeli minister

SOVIET Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze on January 10 received Israeli Minister of Science Ezer Weizman at the latter's request.

Weizman was invited to the Soviet Union by the USSR Academy of Sciences.

The two ministers discussed the situation in the Middle East and prospects for an Arab-Israeli settlement.

It was noted at the meeting that the preservation of the potential of tension and the accumulation of up-to-date armaments in the region runs counter to the positive trends on the international scene and is impeding the restructuring of international relations along the lines of strengthening security for all countries and peoples.

Both ministers pointed to the importance of overcoming the barriers of confrontation and mistrust in the region in the interests of achieving a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East conflict on the basis of the balance of interests of all the parties, both Arabs and Israelis.

Satisfaction was expressed with the positive changes in the Arab world, specifically with the constructive, realistic policy of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, the recognition by the PLO of UN Security Council **Resolution 242** and **338** and the normalisation of Egyptian-Syrian relations.

Shevardnadze emphasised that the problem of the security of Israel as a Middle East state "is inseparably linked with the security of all of its neighbours and with a just solution of the Palestinian problem.

"The Palestinian people should be ensured

(Continued from front page)

the interests of all nations. "Economic, political, spiritual and cultural relations should not be broken but enriched with a new content," he said.

"Gorbachev said the Soviet Communist Party's role in the renewed political system would be a consolidating, balancing and unifying force, acting in the interests of the USSR as a whole.

He supported the united Soviet Communist Party and the independence of the communist parties in the republics. □

the right to self-determination in the same degree as the people of Israel."

Setting forth the Soviet stand favouring multi-optional approaches to the achievement of a settlement, the Soviet minister noted that "all practical steps taken within this framework, including dialogue between the interested sides, should be oriented to the preparation and convocation of an international conference as the direct road to genuine and durable peace in the Middle East.

"The participation of the Palestine Liberation Organisation – the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people – is necessary at all stages of the peace process.

"The recognition of the important role of this organisation in the Middle East settlement determined the Soviet Union's decision to recognise the PLO Mission in Moscow as the Embassy of the State of Palestine."

Shevardnadze expressed serious concern over the continuing occupation of Arab lands by Israel, by the unceasing repressions against the Palestinian civilian population and by mass violations of human rights.

He said this policy "is not in the interests of Israel and of peace of the region."

Weizman received the considerations of the Soviet side with understanding.

He spoke about approaches in Israel to the settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and favoured the achievement of this settlement by political means, at the negotiating table.

In his view, recognition of the PLO by Israel and the beginning of an equal dialogue between them could ensure real headway in settlement efforts.

The Israeli minister emphasised the importance of the Soviet Union's active participation in all peace efforts in the Middle East.

He said an improvement in Soviet-Israeli relations would allow the Soviet Union to use its potential more fully in the interests of peace between Arabs and Israelis.

The Soviet minister expressed readiness for talks on regulating the status of consular groups of the two countries.

Speaking about trade, economic, scientific and technical ties between the Soviet Union and Israel, Shevardnadze said it would be advisable to conduct them through the chambers of com-

merce and industry of the two countries, which have the required resources and potentialities.

Both sides favoured the continuation of political contacts between them, above all on Middle East settlement issues. □

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always remember people. I would like to take this opportunity in connection with the conclusion of today's talk and your visit to the republic in order to say that over these almost ten years, Soviet Lithuania has become still more beautiful and the people residing in this republic, people of all nationalities, beginning with Lithuanians who are a majority, have become still better. If we do not understand what another man is saying, we must strive and understand. I do not think this obstacle to be insuperable. We are and remain optimists.

I would like to thank you, Raisa Maximovna, all comrades who are here in the hall, the entire group that has been with us a whole week. Thank them for their work, for giving so much of their time to us. Probably, some extreme expressions were voiced, some extreme slogans and calls were displayed from one and the other side in the streets, here and in other auditoriums – well, this is life. I believe that the main part, the core of the Lithuanian people is following the correct path, and following it quite consciously, and when a people is following a path consciously, it seems to be always right.

Thank you all, comrades.

Gorbachev: I am saying goodbye to you. We shall think. Let us and you think. And the main thing – let us tackle those great tasks we have taken up. There is no other way. I wish you all the best. I want to thank all working people of Lithuania, all those who reside here – Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians and all other people for the interest they have shown in the arrival of comrades and myself personally. We saw it all – the lively interest, excitement and concern. People sought to bring home to us their thoughts and considerations. And we tried and talked with them sincerely. Because it is inadmissible to play up to people. It is necessary to present one's stance as you understand it. I thank all working people of Lithuania for the contribution they made to this big, even great dialogue. Thank you. □