

## Mikhail Gorbachev's statement on the Baltics

*The following is the statement made by the Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev on January 22:*

Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Comrades,

The crisis, moral and political tension in society and developments that led to the loss of life require a straightforward and frank talk. A lack of understanding and even unwillingness to understand the policy of the President are manifesting themselves.

I deeply feel the tragic turn the confrontation in Lithuania and in recent days Riga has taken. I convey my most heartfelt condolences to all families affected by misfortune. The circumstances connected with the use of weapons must be thoroughly investigated and judged according to law.

The first and most important thing that I want to say comes to the following: the developments in Vilnius and Riga are by no means the manifestation of the policy line of the presidential authority, for the sake of which it was instituted. Therefore I resolutely draw aside all speculators, all suspicions and calumnies on that score.

Neither domestic nor foreign policy has undergone changes. All remains intact as it was formulated in the documents and official statements of the Soviet leadership.

The developments in the Baltic republics evolved in an atmosphere of the severest crisis. Unlawful acts, trampling on the Constitution itself, disregard for presidential decrees, the flagrant violation of civil rights, discrimination against people of a different nationality, irresponsible behaviour with regard to the Army, servicemen and their families have created an environment and an atmosphere in which these kind of clashes can flare up very easily over most unexpected things.

This is precisely the source of the tragedy, not some mythical orders from higher authorities. This is how it happened in both the first and second instances.

As President I see the main task in preventing an escalation of the antagonism, in normalising the situation and securing civil accord and co-operation.

In this connection the following is necessary:

– The anti-constitutional laws of the republics' supreme soviets and governments' resolutions, and above all, those which violate human rights, should be abrogated.

– Any public organisations, committees and fronts, whatever their programmes, may seek to take office only constitutionally, without the use of violence. Any attempts to appeal to the armed forces are inadmissible in the political struggle.

– An absolute end should be put to discriminatory measures with regard to military units stationed on the territories of the republics and to the utterly disgraceful attitude to the families and children of servicemen. In accordance with the current union laws, troops are stationed wherever it is considered necessary for the requirements of defence and security of the country.

– Relations between civilian authorities and the military should be based on USSR laws.

At the same time, unwarranted actions by troops are impermissible. It is a duty and honour of commanders at all levels to act by order alone, show restraint, not to bow to provocations and strengthen discipline among subordinates.

– Confirming the constitutional right of a republic to secede from the union, we cannot allow spontaneity, nor arbitrariness even on the part of elected bodies. Secession is only possible on the basis of the will of the entire population – a referendum, and as a result of a process, envisaged by law.

In connection with what has been said there is a need to return to the discussion of the situation in the Baltics at the Federation Council.

Certain circles capitalised on events of the past few days to whip up tensions under the pretext of a right-wing takeover and the threat of a dictatorship.

I resolutely reject these conjectures. The gains of perestroika, democratisation and glasnost were and will remain lasting values, guarded by the presidential power.

This, certainly, does not mean that we can close our eyes when propaganda means, yes, precisely propaganda – let's call things by their

names – are intentionally used to provoke chaos, panic, ethnic strife, to pit the Army against the people, for calls to discard laws.

Events in the Baltics are being used speculatively as a pretext to dismember our armed forces and propose setting up republican armies.

Such irresponsible statements are fraught with serious dangers, especially when they come from the Russian leadership.

I believe every sensible person understands what this would bring to our country and the entire world.

Pleas to foreign countries and to the United Nations with invitations to decide affairs for us that we can and should decide ourselves are strange and ridiculous, to say the least.

We have opened our society to co-operation and interaction with the world and will continue to adhere to our foreign policy. However, the country's internal problems should be decided exclusively by the Soviet people.

I must say that the events are getting a one-sided interpretation abroad – and in some cases in a manner reminiscent of the ideological war of the past. Many people there and here perceive them inadequately and see in them a shift in the policy of the Soviet leadership.

It will be regrettable and dangerous if as a result of such wrong interpretation recent achievements in international relations would be threatened.

In the course of acute polemics in the country over the past few days, sombre voices remind us to prioritise political stability, firm legal order and discipline, economic normalisation, resolute movement towards a market and democratic reforms in our multinational state. I side with this position.

Society is increasingly aware that conscientious work and civil accord, rather than demonstrations, rallies, strikes, the instigation of political passions and confrontation will take the country out of the crisis.

I call on all citizens of my country to heed this. □

## Presidential decree against economic sabotage

SOVIET President Mikhail Gorbachev on January 26 signed the decree "On Measures to Promote the Struggle Against Economic Sabotage and Other Economic Crime". It gives additional, very extensive powers to Interior Ministry and State Security (KGB) officers during investigation operations.

According to the decree, they have the right to enter without hindrance the premises of enterprises and institutions (with the exception of foreign diplomatic missions) and production premises used by citizens for individual and other labour, as well as other types of enterprise. They can inspect production premises, offices and transport facilities. In some cases these actions can be taken without the presence

of the owner.

Interior Ministry and KGB workers can demand and receive from senior executives of enterprises and institutions, irrespective of the type of subordination and the form of property, on which they are based, including joint enterprises, amalgamations and institutions with the participation of Soviet and foreign legally qualified persons and citizens, the needed information, documents and written explanations dealing with the activities under investigation.

The decree also gives the right to Interior Ministry and KGB officers to receive information at banks about credit and monetary operations and foreign economic deals, to seal cash-desks and other places where money, valuables and documents are kept and, if necessary, to take other measures to ensure the safety of the above mentioned objects.

(continued on next page)

### IN THIS ISSUE

Moscow summit postponed after Bush – Bessmertnykh meet.....	p26
Soviet President receives Japanese Foreign Minister .....	p27
Troops in Soviet streets to hasten recovery, general says.....	p28
Izvestia: on maximalism of political forces in USSR .....	p29
War in the Gulf: and after?.....	p30
USSR-Japan: between the past and the future? .....	p31

# Moscow summit postponed after Bush-Bessmertnykh meet

ON January 28 President George Bush met Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh.

Bessmertnykh conveyed a message from President Mikhail Gorbachev to the American President.

During a substantial talk, they discussed a wide-range of international and domestic issues and Soviet-US relations.

The Soviet side noted that the policy of perestroika and new thinking pursued by the Soviet leadership allowed deep positive changes in Soviet-US relations to occur, and they are now characterised by a spirit of co-operation and confidence.

For the first time in the several decades, the interests of the Soviet Union and the United States are not as different as in the past, but are close or even coincide, Bessmertnykh said.

The Soviet Union favours retaining and developing the positive potential accumulated in Soviet-US relations. The development of relations between two great countries is not easy. Sometimes situations occur demanding coolness and weighed analysis, Bessmertnykh said.

At President Bush's request, Bessmertnykh dwelt on events in the Soviet Union, including in the Baltics. He spoke about President Gorbachev's efforts to resolve the emerging problems by means of dialogue and in the interest of perestroika and renovation of Soviet society.

In these conditions, some hasty assessments and statements in the West do not help. They contradict the task of retaining perestroika and developing new constructive elements in international relations, Bessmertnykh said.

President Bush welcomed the positive development of Soviet-US relations. He noted that

due to the new atmosphere in bilateral relations, an unprecedented level of international political co-operation had become possible. At the same time, the President noted that there are some difficulties, including in connection with events in the Baltics.

Speaking about disarmament, Bessmertnykh and Bush discussed the situation at the talks on strategic offensive weapons. The sides agreed that it will take some more time to finish the elaboration of the START Treaty. They agreed to continue intense contacts aimed at finishing the work on the treaty by February 1991.

They also discussed the date of a new Soviet-US summit. The results of the discussion were reflected in a joint statement read out by Bessmertnykh and US Secretary of State James Baker at a news conference following their meeting with President Bush.

"By mutual agreement, Presidents Bush and Gorbachev will be rescheduling their summit in Moscow, originally planned for February, to a later date in the first half of this year," the statement reads.

"The Gulf War makes it inappropriate for President Bush to be away from Washington. In addition, work on the START Treaty will require some additional time. Both presidents look forward to setting an exact summit date as soon as it becomes feasible to do so," the statement continues.

On Monday (January 28), Bessmertnykh and Baker held their second meeting. Another talk is scheduled for Tuesday (January), and it is expected to end the current round of Soviet-US talks.

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Bessmertnykh also met Senator Edward Ken-

nedy. They discussed the situation in the Gulf and Soviet-US relations. The Senator spoke about the attitude in the Congress to events in the Soviet Union. He wished success to President Gorbachev in implementing perestroika.

Bessmertnykh met American trade consortium president G. Giffen. They discussed prospects for Soviet-US economic co-operation. □



## Bessmertnykh-Baker talks in Washington

SOVIET Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh and US Secretary of State James Baker continue their talks in Washington on January 28, confirming the importance of close working contacts between the heads of the two foreign policy departments.

During their second conversation, Bessmertnykh and Baker covered all items on the extensive Soviet-American agenda, including disarmament, bilateral and regional relations and key political issues.

Their task is to assess the degree of readiness of the strategic arms reduction treaty for signing, to discuss remaining difficulties and seek a breakthrough in this major direction of Soviet-American disarmament interaction.

Bessmertnykh and Baker are also considering aspects of conventional arms and armed forces in Europe.

The Gulf War and the general situation in this strategic region as well as prospects for the Middle East feature prominently in the Soviet-American talks. □

## Bessmertnykh and Baker hold news conference

SOVIET Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh and US Secretary of State James Baker on Monday (January 28) held a news conference following their meeting with President Bush.

Baker noted that the sides discussed Soviet-US bilateral relations, work on the START Treaty, the Gulf crisis and situation in the Soviet Union.

Asked if the fact that the summit will be rescheduled reflected the US belief that the Gulf War will be over in a matter of weeks rather than months, Baker answered in the negative. But he made it clear that "if the Gulf War is still continuing then, I suppose we would have to look at the situation at the time."

Speaking about work on the START Treaty, Baker noted that "there are a few problems, some of which are of a technical nature. The Soviet minister and the President just agreed that we would continue to try and conclude the

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When taking these actions, Interior Ministry and KGB officers must ensure the observance of the existing regulations, that rule out the divulgence of the obtained information.

The presidential decree was issued "to promote the struggle against economic sabotage and other economic crimes, and to put in order the supply of the population with food and other consumer goods." □

strategic arms treaty if possible during the month of February. We will continue to work as hard as we can to conclude it," Baker said.

Baker said the position of the two governments is "to go forward with the strategic nuclear arms treaty as rapidly as possible, keeping in mind that this treaty has been eight years in the negotiation, and we're getting down to the very end of the line here."

"The two countries spent quite a bit of time negotiating when the relationship between the two countries was far less good than it is today," he said.

"I think it is obvious that President Gorbachev is wrestling with a number of problems, but that's nothing new. He's had these problems in the past, and he's coping with them to the best of his ability," Baker said.

"The question of the Baltics was discussed at quite some length. It's been discussed by the minister and myself over five hours. It was discussed here by the minister and the President during the course of their meeting. We have made our substantial concerns known to the Soviet Union in a substantial way," Baker said.

Asked to comment on his meeting with President Bush, Bessmertnykh said they "had a very substantive discussion that dealt with the prospects and the basic, the fundamentals of Soviet-US relations, the Baltics and arms control."

Asked if the Soviet Union was disappointed with the postponement of the Soviet-US summit, Bessmertnykh said it was not.

Asked about the Soviet assessment of operation "Desert Storm" to liberate Kuwait occupied by Iraq, Bessmertnykh noted that the Soviet and US sides "have not analysed together the military actions and we have not compared the evaluations of how it goes."

"But what I have referred to before is not something that makes our position different from the US," Bessmertnykh said. "The thrust of what I was trying to say is that there is a danger which could be brought about the logic of war, which may not be predicted or controlled. So, we've got to be careful to know that such a danger exists and to do the best we can do to avoid it."

Speaking about the development of the situation in the Gulf, Bessmertnykh said "the Soviet Union and the United States are acting together in accordance with the United Nations Security Council resolutions."

"The United States is doing difficult and important work in implementing the United Nations Security Council resolutions. And it is getting moral and the other kinds of support in those actions, because the aim is to get the aggressor out from the country he occupied. And this is a goal which is a mutual goal, and we are going to achieve this task," Bessmertnykh said. □

# Soviet President receives Japanese Foreign Minister

PRESIDENT Mikhail Gorbachev, receiving Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama in the Kremlin on January 23, said his visit confirms the dynamics of the Soviet-Japanese dialogue.

The Soviet leader expressed hope that, together with his new Soviet counterpart, the Japanese minister will strive to prepare in a proper way the forthcoming summit meeting in Japan due next April.

The Japanese official handed to Gorbachev a message from Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu who hopes that the visit will become a landmark event in bilateral relations.

The minister said that Japan's parliament, general public and businessmen welcome Gorbachev's visit, which is confirmed in numerous invitations, letters and other messages to the Soviet leader from Japan.

Gorbachev and Nakayama considered specific dates for the trip and discussed preparations for the event which, as Gorbachev put it, may acquire a truly large-scale, fruitful character.

The sides had a preliminary discussion of the most difficult – territorial – issue related to a peace treaty. The President called for taking into account all aspects of the problem, its historic and present-day contexts, Japanese and Soviet viewpoints.

It is necessary to discuss and look for ways to combine them all, now that both sides do not lack goodwill. The search will be successful if it is directed at attaining a balance of interests.

At Nakayama's request, Gorbachev expressed his view of the Gulf war. He reaffirmed the

principled assessment of the causes of the conflict, the significance of the Soviet-American accord on the issue and the determination to pursue a policy agreed upon at the UN Security Council.

Gorbachev stressed the importance of taking into account possible consequences of hostilities for the future of the region and the development of the world situation. The use of force should be adequate to the objective put forward in the Security Council's resolution. Otherwise, he said, it would not be possible to avoid numerous casualties and destruction and great complications upon the completion of the war.

Nakayama raised the issue of the developments in Latvia and Lithuania. He reiterated that problems should be resolved in a humane, peaceful way even though the President is convinced of that more than anyone else.

The discussion of this subject confirmed the fact that correspondents' conclusions, based on hastily gathered information, do not always apply to conclusions at state level, the more so when this information is used to question fundamental gains in world politics.

The President and the minister agreed to continue intensive preparations in all areas towards the Soviet-Japanese summit meeting. □

(Pravda, January 24. In full.)



## Soviet-Japanese memorandum signed

The following is the full text of the memorandum on additional matters related to preparations for

## Gorbachev's press conference on Gulf crisis

PRESIDENT Mikhail Gorbachev voiced concern that developments in the Gulf "are tending to escalate".

In response to questions from a number of journalists at the Soviet Foreign Ministry's Press Centre about Soviet evaluation of the Gulf situation he emphasised that the Soviet Union "acts proceeding from the principled positions of co-operation with the United Nations Organisation within the framework of the Security Council."

The leadership of the USSR, Gorbachev said, co-operates "on a permanent regular basis with the leadership of the United States, other Security Council members, the leaders and the governments of European and Asian countries." The dialogue with the leaders of Arab countries is particularly active, he said.

The President believes that there is a threat that developments in the Gulf "may get out of control." In this connection he called for co-operation among all sides concerned, describing it as "a matter of the international community's common concern."

The UN Security Council, Gorbachev emphasised, does everything to secure the attainment of the goals it set before itself: to liberate Kuwait and to restore its independence.

Gorbachev recalled the Soviet stand on the Gulf situation, pointing out that it is essential "to settle the conflict by political means and to prevent military operations from assuming such a character that may lead to heavy consequences

and complicate for long the entire situation in the world." □

(TASS, Moscow, January 22)



## Meeting with IBM president

SOVIET President Mikhail Gorbachev met IBM President Michael Armstrong in the Kremlin on January 24.

Armstrong briefed Gorbachev on the main trends of the corporation's activity in the Soviet Union. He spoke about joint research, computer production, computerisation of secondary and higher education and the development of a computerised air traffic control system.

Armstrong stressed the corporation's interest in long-term co-operation and in creating an IBM infrastructure in the Soviet Union, using the latest achievements in the field and new progressive forms of interaction.

The Soviet President welcomed these activities and praised the IBM leadership's large-scale and far-sighted approach to co-operation with Soviet partners.

President Gorbachev greeted the corporation's intention to take root in the Soviet market and deal with long-term projects. These projects will be given all the necessary support, he said.

The Soviet President spoke about steps to reform the country's economy and integrate it into world economic relations.

Armstrong expressed confidence in the success of Soviet reforms, noting that his confidence was based on knowledge of the Soviet Union's immense scientific, intellectual and production potential. □

president Mikhail Gorbachev's forthcoming visit to Japan. The memorandum was signed by Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama during his official visit to the Soviet Union.

Proceeding from the principal agreement on an official visit to Japan by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh and Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama held talks in Moscow on January 22, 1991. The talks resulted in understanding on practical issues concerning preparations for the visit.

In addition to topics mentioned in the memorandum on issues concerning preparations for the Soviet president's visit to Japan, signed in Tokyo on September 6, 1990, the sides will exert the necessary efforts to work out and prepare for the Soviet President's visit to Japan bilateral inter-governmental agreements and documents on issues mentioned below:

– On burials on Soviet and Japanese territories and other related issues,

– On co-operation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy,

– On co-operation in holding exhibitions and fairs in the Soviet Union and Japan,

– On co-operation in protecting historic and cultural monuments.

The sides agreed to continue consultations to improve conditions for diplomatic and consular activities in the partner – country and develop co-operation in fishing and on other issues, relating to the development of bilateral relations in practical spheres, and work to clarify those spheres where the sides could reach agreement and mutual understanding. □

(Moscow, January 22)

## Besmertnykh receives British Ambassador

SOVIET Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh on January 24 received British Ambassador to the Soviet Union Sir Rodric Braithwaite.

During the conversation they pointed to the importance of maintaining contacts and regularly exchanging views, especially now, in a period of the worsening of the international situation. The sides stressed that the Soviet Union and Britain continue to firmly believe in the need for the unconditional fulfilment of resolutions of the UN Security Council concerning the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. They voiced the mutual interest of the two countries in a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East conflict.

At the request of the British Ambassador, Bessmertnykh set forth the Soviet Union's assessment of the developments in the Baltic republics. The sides expressed allegiance to the settlement of emerging problems by political means. □

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# Troops on Soviet streets to hasten recovery, general says

"SENDING troops out onto the city streets with police patrols will improve the situation in the Soviet Union," Major-General Viktor Solomatin, head of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces Department, says in an interview with the newspaper *Krasnaya Zvezda* on January 29.

Joint patrols by police and Soviet troops is being introduced by the decree of the Soviet Defence and Interior Ministers starting from February 1 in Moscow, the capitals of union and autonomous republics, territorial and regional centres and in cities that have military garrisons.

Solomatin said that the introduction of such patrols in large cities was caused by the surging crime rate in the country. He stressed that servicemen would strictly abide by the laws of the USSR and the union republics.

Police and troops will complement not replace each other. The police ensure social order and troops discipline among servicemen. Certainly, troops will, if need be, come to the aid of the police.

"The servicemen do not intend to ride on armoured vehicles in the streets as some presume," Solomatin added. "Each garrison will have a permanent reserve of patrols on armoured vehicles and duty units, but they will be stationed only on the territory of the garrison."

Solomatin referred to the tragic events in Sumgait, Baku, Fergana and Osh. He said a recurrence of such events should be avoided.

Solomatin noted that those who saw the decision to send Soviet troops out onto the

streets of major cities as a "threat to democracy", evidently pursued another objective. "I cannot avoid evaluating all this as one more attempt by definite persons to use any pretext for anti-Army speculation," he said.

The Russian Parliament will discuss today the legal aspect of the two ministers' decree, which is regarded by many democratically-minded people as unconstitutional. □

## Izvestia: what stands behind the order?

THE order to organise joint patrols by Militia (police) and Army servicemen comes into force on February 1, 1991.

Patrols are a measure forced on us and are intended to curb the wave of crime which is sweeping the country, said spokesmen for the two ministries in an interview with the newspaper *Izvestia* on January 28. They stressed that both ministries will be guided by Soviet federal laws, laws of individual republics and the respective rules of the armed forces and the militia. Servicemen to be engaged in joint patrols will have instruction in Soviet law, they said.

Representatives of the Constitution Compliance Committee, the USSR Procurator-General's office and the USSR Ministry of Justice had no comment to make. Acting chairman of the Moscow City Council Sergei Stank-

evich told a news conference that he found the issue of the order and its substance "unprecedented".

Stankevich stressed that patrols were elements of a state of emergency imposed on the country at the will of two ministers. He said that the directive, which is bound to change the order in public places in Moscow, had not been coordinated with the Moscow Council and has not been sent to the Moscow City Council through official channels.

This, he pointed out, openly infringes on the rights of the Moscow City Council of People's Deputies and discredits Soviet power.

Chairman of the Moscow Executive Committee Yuri Luzhkov noted that the operational situation in the city was complicated but was fully under control by law-enforcement bodies. He said there was no need whatsoever to draw the Army into maintaining public order in the capital.

Without a clause stating that patrols are only allowed on request from local authorities, the order does not fit the legal framework. Although a reliable protection for the order is provided by the clause, saying it is intended to combat crime, it fails to conform to the spirit of conciliation and accord which we would all like to feel, the newspaper says.

Confrontation between the military and civilians, between the Army and the people is again thrown into prominence.

The newspapers say that it is expedient that the Procurator-General, the Constitution Compliance Committee and the President voice their assessment of the order or at least clarified their viewpoints.

## Presidential Decree – first results

FROM the point of view of the struggle against the shadow economy, the sudden exchange of banknotes is the most effective and the only possible way of removing the money, acquired by criminal methods. This opinion was expressed in television interviews on January 24 by Yuri Golik, Chairman of the Soviet Parliamentary Committee for Legality and the Struggle Against Crime, and Alexander Gurov,

head of the Soviet Interior Ministry department for the struggle against organised crime.

They were commenting on the first results of the implementation of the Presidential decree on removing from circulation 50-ruble and 100-ruble banknotes.

The suddenness factor caused panic among the shadow dealers. On Wednesday morning (January 23) 100-ruble banknotes were changing hands at only 75 roubles. By lunch-time the price had dropped to 50 roubles, and by the evening – to 25 roubles. Late that night they were being exchanged for only 10 roubles.

Air and railway tickets to the south were soon sold out another indication that the shadow dealers have been perceptibly affected by this measure. Those who have money at their southern homes, Golik explained, seek to leave Moscow in order to save as much as possible. On the afternoon of January 24 railway tickets to some destinations were being sold at 20 times the real price. And, finally, the shadow dealers began feverishly looking for those who could exchange money for them, allegedly on their own behalf.

Of course, some of the money will be laundered and saved, but it will be impossible to save billions of roubles. It is just impossible to do in three days, Golik believes. At the same time, he said that the Cabinet of Ministers had worked out measures aimed at protecting people, who have earned the money by their honest labour.

Golik's approval of the methods used by the Soviet Government for curbing the shadow dealers is shared by Alexander Gurov. He refuted speculations that the shadow dealers allegedly got wind of the decree beforehand and had had enough time to take measures to save

their money.

Professional gamblers, swindlers and the like have been affected by this measures, Gurov believes. A strong blow was dealt at the overseas branch of the Soviet mafia. Large sums of money had been accumulated abroad, amounting, according to specialists, to about 12 billion roubles in 50-ruble and 100-ruble banknotes. A blow was also dealt at officials, who kept large sums of money to bribe other officials.

Of course, some shadow dealers, especially those who kept the money in banks, preserved their capital, but most of them have been affected most seriously, Gurov said. □

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# *Izvestia*: on maximalism of political forces in USSR

ALEXEI KIVA, Doctor of Sciences (History), writes in the newspaper *Izvestia* on January 24 about the vital need for the Soviet Union's political forces, including the leftists, to elaborate a realistic approach to the country's problems. "Many representatives of our left-wing movement have clearly not developed the need for a political compromise," he points out.

"One has to be amazed how left-wing, democratic forces do not sense the situation in the country. The centre hardly manages to contain the rightists' offensive and many democrats are demanding that Mikhail Gorbachev backtrack from the centrists' position and that the bloc of the left-wing forces be reinforced. But relying on what forces — on the Army, the KGB, the Interior Ministry, the Party apparatus or managers of state enterprises and collective farms?

"Those who are today demanding the resignation of Gorbachev, the Soviet Communist Party to be put on trial, the disbandment of the KGB,

and so on cannot be understood at all. What is it — elementary political ignorance or insanity?

"Right-wingers criticise Gorbachev for the breakup of the empire, for new thinking, for the refusal to save 'real socialism' and for the course of democracy and openness. The leftists, criticising Gorbachev relentlessly, are helping the right-wingers," Kiva points out.

He thinks that the leftists have failed to understand the role of the centre in the political life of any country. "The centre should be fought for permanently, because the centre (the more so in conditions of general poverty, animosity and the lack of political culture) is capable of protecting us against new acts of large-scale social extremism, a civil war. Ultimately, it will exactly be the centre that will decide the destiny of perestroika," Kiva writes.

At the same time, the scholar noted that indecision frequently let our leader down when the situation favoured making crucial decisions to pull the country out of the impasse. "His background as a Party functionary also constantly makes itself felt."

The author of the article calls for preserving

the USSR as a strong state. Certainly, as a union of sovereign states rather than a unitary state. "But the union can survive only if republics' sovereignty declarations are recognised, arms spending abandoned, the Army reduced, the cumbersome political superstructure dismantled and a viable economic mechanism created," Kiva emphasises.

He thinks that leaders of some republics also sometimes lose the ground of realism. One cannot hope for the centre's non-involvement in the formation of a new union and ignore the real existence of unions structures.

"They can and need to be trimmed, transformed, but they cannot disappear at once, without causing upheavals in society. In this sense, the President is right. Both sides need more realism. A mutually acceptable solution can certainly be found. But only on the basis of a compromise and common interest.

"After all, the centre needs to realise that declarations of sovereignty by the republics are a reality rather than a myth or a bluff. The republics, too, should equally admit that the centre is also a reality." □

## The USSR is a country of sensations

By Alexei Dumov

THE USSR is a country of sensations. Thus, a monetary reform was declared contrary to numerous government assurances that nothing of the kind would happen.

The reform, first announced on the Soviet television programme *Veremya* (Time) on the night of January 22, is to be completed in the main within three days. The announcer read out a decree by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. The decree cancels the old rouble notes of 50 and 100 denomination and of 1961 issuance and limits cash withdrawal from accounts. Then the TV viewers were given a brief outline of the government's resolution, which specifies the decree's provisions. The resolution was signed by the newly-appointed Premier Valentin Pavlov, who was formerly Soviet Finance Minister, and chief administrator of the Cabinet of Ministers M Shkabaridya.

The main aim of the reform is to replace the old bills of 50 and 100 rouble denomination, the largest in use in the USSR, with new ones, which have already been issued, and to change them into smaller ones, which will be permanent.

The reform will be carried out in two stages. During the first three days people will be able to change their last year's average monthly earnings for equivalent amounts which, however, must not exceed 1,000 roubles. Pensioners will be allowed to change 200 roubles or their pensions in full if they do not exceed the indicated sum. People in hospital or on holiday will be able to change 500 roubles. The document says nothing about other categories of citizens.

Special declarations will be needed to change anything above the official amount held by individuals. In keeping with the resolution, the declaration should indicate the origin of the notes, i.e. when and how they are accumulated other and data certifying their legitimacy.

The declarations with the notes enclosed must be forwarded within three days to local district or town councils where special commissions are being established to evaluate them.

The second stage will take 10 days. During

this period the commissions are to approve or disapprove the amount of money to be paid and the order of payment.

In a word, the basic problems remain unsolved. What is the ceiling for changing money without evidence of its legitimacy? How authoritative should this evidence be? Will any limits be set for nonequivalent exchanges? The Soviet Premier has not so far answered these and a lot of other questions. But during the TV programme he said that the government does not want to deprive most Soviet people of their savings. Pavlov added, however, that it would not be normal for a person with an income of 150 roubles to make an application to exchange 150,000 roubles.

From the presidential decree it follows that the reform is being carried out for the benefit of the overwhelming majority of the population and in order to stiffen measures against profiteering, corruption, smuggling, forgery, and unearned incomes and to normalise the circulation of money and the consumer market. Most Soviet people agree that it is vital to combat all the above negative phenomena. But they, it would appear, doubt that the present reform will benefit the overwhelming majority of the population. This thesis demands further confirmation. Will the reform become confiscatory for considerable groups of the population? The situation is to be shortly elucidated.

Importantly, people who keep their money in savings banks will be caused practically no inconvenience. True, cash withdrawal is being partially frozen. In the first half of 1991 each person will be allowed to take from his account every month not more than 500 roubles which is the equivalent to two average monthly salaries. But the generally accepted practice of money transfers by written order is preserved.

In Pavlov's view, over one third of all money in circulation is to be changed. Leading Soviet economist V. Selyunin believes that the total sum exceeds 45 billion roubles.

It is hard to judge how the state will profit from the current reform, since unearned incomes are impossible even to estimate. One thing is certain: the billions of roubles smuggled abroad

and now kept in banks or owned by private persons will turn into wastepaper. Pavlov estimates this sum to be seven billion roubles. Meanwhile, bankers in some Western countries willingly buy up Soviet money.

The attitude to the reform in the USSR is diverse. Many people treat it very negatively. Yuri Luzhkov, one of Moscow's city fathers, stressed in his TV appearance that the reform will benefit no one and only weaken the money's prestige. He also reminded the viewers that the Soviet Government had assured people that no reform was expected. "Someone must be held responsible for these lies," noted Luzhkov.

Preparations for the reform have taken place over a period of nearly 12 months and kept top secret. But rumours on this score have been leaked to the press during the last few weeks. However, they were officially denied. Those who disbelieved the official denials disposed of all their notes of high denomination. Others who possess 50 and 100 rouble bills are waiting for additional information. But its absence is, certainly, stirring up social tensions. The reform affects all Soviet citizens to some extent or other. □

(*Novosti*, January 25)

### From a Woman's Viewpoint GALINA STAROVOITOVA

People's Deputy of the USSR, People's Deputy of the RSFSR, senior research associate with the USSR Academy of Sciences, Candidate of History.

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# War in the Gulf: and after?

*NOVOSTI'S Nikolai Vikhlayev asked Professor Vitali Naumkin, Deputy Director of the Institute of Eastern Studies, a think tank of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, to answer questions on the Gulf crisis and the aftermath of the war.*

**NOVOSTI:** Will all the states of the region have to remain within their current frontiers after the war in the Gulf?

**NAUMKIN:** It is now impossible to answer the question, because it will be solved by the states of the region through negotiations. I believe that after the war the way of resolving all territorial disputes between the Persian Gulf states should be determined in the same manner, that is, through negotiations.

**Is the Palestinian question the only one that should be solved after the victory over Iraq? Are there other problems, such as the Kurdish one, that should be tackled?**

There are very many problems in that region and the Kurdish problem is only one of them. There is the Lebanese problem which remains to be solved, there are problems in Maghreb and in Sudan, too, and there is a great deal of territorial disputes between various states situated in that region. They will have to be solved one way or another, because the situation in the region has become really explosive. I am afraid that after the war, too, the region will not become an example of stability.

You should not forget the Arab-Israeli con-

flict which is not just the Palestinian issue. Moreover, the problem of relations between the Arab states and Israel will be a very acute one and it will also have to be tackled. Quite possibly, that will require efforts no less intensive than the Palestinian question.

**What kind of security structure should be created to avert, at least potentially, the emergence of regimes similar to the Saddam Hussein regime which is striving for expansion through violence?**

A special system of regional security should be created for that problem. It should probably be founded by the UN, the countries of the anti-Iraq coalition which are engaged in combat operations these days, the Soviet Union and China. No one can deny that it's time to give serious thinking to the idea of establishing such a security system.

There is one more point which is inseparably linked with the question of security: it is important that the disarmament process spread to that region. It is obvious that the region should be demilitarised by every means, our country has already made proposals on that score in the past. The senseless arms race which is in progress there should be gradually curbed. Otherwise, there can be no guarantee against the emergence of a similarly ambitious leader who could push the region into new military adventures.

**Can such a system be created without one or several great powers taking part in the effort? Or should, in your opinion, such a system include only the Arab states.**

Such a system can function efficiently only if the

international community becomes involved in it. The states of the region, even if backed and assisted by great powers, will not be able to accomplish the task. You should not forget that arms trade is flourishing in the world. These days Third World countries, too, are willingly dealing in arms. Take Brazil and South Korea for example.

It is only natural that the principal task is to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Unless all countries are involved in that process, weapons will proliferate. This is only natural. It would be senseless and naive to think that non-proliferation bans be monitored by regional forces. It is only a system of strict international verification combined with sanctions against third parties that can be regarded as effective.

The UN proposals set forth by the UN Secretary General, Javier Perez de Cueller, on January 15 provided for the solution of some problems of the Middle East. If the Iraqi troops had been withdrawn from Kuwait at that time, there would have been guarantees of non-aggression and guarantees of UN efforts to settle the Middle East conflict.

It is next to impossible to say what should be done to accomplish all that when the war is in progress or when the war ends. Of course, the anti-Iraqi coalition faces the temptation of utterly destroying the Hussein regime so that it can never rise again. No one is suggesting that Hussein should be saved. However, a systematic and pre-planned destruction of Iraq and Kuwait will, in my view, lead to very tragic consequences. □

(Novosti)

## TASS comment:

## Dangerous aspects of Gulf war

By Tass political analyst Yuri Tyssovsky:

THE Gulf war is becoming increasingly ominous. Operation 'Desert Storm' is not strictly limited to desert areas. The war is mainly ravaging densely populated towns and cities. The number of casualties is truly alarming, although the belligerents prefer to keep silent about them.

No matter how accurate the allied air-raids and missile attacks may be, they are bound to

kill many people in such large Iraqi cities as Baghdad and Basra. The strictly censored official information will not be able to conceal their true number.

Referring to US military experts, former Bundeswehr General Opel said in an interview with the newspaper *Koeln Express* that about 300,000 people had already perished in Iraq, including 100,000 in Baghdad. These figures are appalling, though they seem to be exaggerated. But, nevertheless, hundreds and even thousands of people are being killed daily in the Gulf region.

Equally sinister are the Iraqi leadership's actions. If US steps can at least be explained by the desire to wipe out Iraqi strategic targets, including those in urban areas, Baghdad is firing Scud missiles at densely populated Israeli cities in order to kill as many civilians as possible and thereby provoke Israeli retaliation. Iraqi generals are taking identical steps against the civilian population of Saudi Arabia, not even caring to find plausible excuses for their actions.

It is also worth noting Iraq's treatment of captured allied pilots. It was announced in Baghdad the other day that they would be used as a "human shield" to protect strategic installations. This is a direct violation of the Geneva conventions and rules for the civilised treatment of prisoners of war.

According to the latest news, the Iraqis have launched their long conceived plan to turn Kuwait oil deposits into a "sea of fire". They have already set fire to oil wells at Wafr and Shuaiba, as well as to oil installations in the port of Mina-Abdullah. Such acts, regardless of their justification, can be described only as crimes against

humanity, because they are fraught with grave ecological consequences not only for the region, but for the entire world. The Iraqis apparently lack the wisdom to realise that the Iraqi population will be the first to suffer from such actions.

The dangerous character of the Gulf war calls for speedy actions to stop the conflict. Many states, including the Soviet Union, are prepared to support them. But we must be realists: peace can be achieved only if Baghdad complies with the world community's just demands and fulfils corresponding United Nations resolutions. □

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# USSR-Japan: between the past and the future?

Vladlen Sirotkin and Igor Tyshetski, researchers  
at the Diplomatic Academy, USSR Foreign Ministry

THE "problem of the northern territories" as it is known in Japan is the legacy of the protracted period of the "cold war" and was born of confrontational thinking. One can quote Stalin in this connection who explained to the Soviet people in 1945 that the islands which came into the possession of the Soviet Union as a result of the war "will serve not as an instrument of separation of the Soviet Union from the ocean and a base of Japanese aggression against our Far East, but as a means of direct linkage of the Soviet Union with the ocean and a base of our country's defence against Japanese aggression". This is how the question was put.

It seems clear to everyone today that no-one intends to attack anyone. Moscow has adopted a realistic stand towards the US-Japanese "security treaty", while Tokyo found it possible in 1990 to officially give up the "Soviet war menace" thesis for the first time in postwar history. So what's the matter then, or has the territorial issue become a "thing in itself"?

To a certain extent it has. Several generations of Japanese politicians have so often turned to the subject of the "struggle for the return of the northern territories" that they have become hostages of the issue which they themselves have over-dramatised. Public opinion in Japan today will hardly accept a radical modification of its government's position.

## Soviet Foreign Minister discusses Gulf crisis with PLO officials

SOVIET Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh on January 25 met visiting members of the PLO Executive Committee to discuss ways out of the Gulf crisis. Both sides expressed concern over the danger of escalation of the conflict, the growing threat of loss of control over the situation, which would have grave consequences for the region and the international situation as a whole.

The Soviet minister pointed to the need to find a formula to ensure the withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait and an end to hostilities as a precondition for a comprehensive political settlement in the Gulf and further efforts to solve other Middle East problems, including the top priority issue of the national rights of Palestinians.

The Soviet minister called for maximum restraint and circumspection by all sides in order to curb plans to further escalate the Arab-Israeli conflict and war.

Both sides confirmed their interest in the arrangement of an active peace process in the Middle East with the participation of all countries involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organisation and the United Nations Organisation with its considerable peace-making potential.

It was stressed that the sides attached great importance to the further development of Soviet-Palestinian relations and bilateral consultations on topical aspects of the Middle East situation. □

Our so-called "patriots" have been taking the same approach. Soon after the war, to impart some respectability to the imperial Soviet foreign policy in the Far East, Stalin's propaganda launched the thesis about the "historically Russian" Kurile islands, although any person with even rudimentary knowledge of history and ethnography will tell you that the native population of the Kurile ridge were not Russians or Japanese but the Ainu who had their own distinctive culture. As a result of the Russian and Japanese colonisation their tribes practically disappeared from the face of the Earth.

As it is, behind the outward, emotional aspect of the problem stand much more serious things: namely, the two approaches of the USSR and Japan to foreign policy at the end of the 20th century: the old traditional balance of power under which the "historical territories" are defended by the Army, and the new, modern balance of interests where the decisive factor is not the amount of weapons, bases and troops, but financial and economic co-operation in the Asia-Pacific region.

The founder of this financial and economic "Eurasianism" was the prominent Russian reformer, finance minister, Count Sergei Vitte.

It was precisely Vitte who tried for the first time in Russian foreign policy to replace in practice the balance of power with a balance of interests with respect to China, Korea and Japan. He encountered strong opposition to this policy, however. In Japan, which had emerged from two centuries of self-imposed isolation only in the middle of the 19th century, the proponents of the balance of power got the upper hand. Left out during the division of the spheres of influence in China, these circles were trying to gain new markets by force.

It was not the Japanese, however, who defeated Vitte, but the Russian defence department for which the Far Eastern outskirts of the Russian empire were a home estate of sorts. So the department started a struggle against the "Vitte line" and scored a "Pyrrhic victory": in 1903, a year before the Russo-Japanese war, Tsar Nicholas II sent Vitte into an honourable retirement.

By a paradox of history, when the "war party" disgracefully lost the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905, the Tsar ordered Vitte of all people to conduct the difficult negotiations with the Japanese. A Portsmouth peace was concluded on September 5, 1905. Vitte saved the face of the hapless "warriors" headed by General Kuropatkin if only by bargaining back half of the Sakhalin island and by dismissing outright all the hints by the Japanese at acquisition of Kamchatka.

Alas, history repeats itself sometimes. Today's "Kuropatkins" refuse to listen to modern "Vittes". Having lost to the reformers in the West, in Germany, they want to retain the *status quo* in the Far East.

How can one speak of perestroika or economic reforms in the Soviet Far East, when this region today is not only part of an economically underdeveloped and locked system which the whole country is, but simply a raw materials appendage of its European part and, worse still, with a historically strong influence of the military on all sides of life.

It is imperative to change the entire policy in the Far East, for otherwise real participation in the affairs of the Asia-Pacific region will be totally out of the question. For the success of the policy of economic reforms in the Far East it is essential to revise the very concept of regional

security and to liberate the Soviet Far East from the power of the central authorities and especially of the Defence Ministry. Regional security must be ensured not by a special closed status and a special regime typical of the Far East today, but through the development of its independent market links and, eventually, through its integration into a regional economic structure. It must be clearly realised that militarisation and isolation are incompatible with market relations and integration.

It is possible to overcome today's backwardness only by broadening normal economic relations with all countries of the region and especially with its most advanced nations, Japan and South Korea. These links should have nothing to do with the giving away of Far Eastern resources for Japanese and South Korean deliveries and loans to the federal government. What is needed is direct investments by these countries into the Soviet Far Eastern economy. By the way, in their economic development over the past three decades the Japanese have entered a fundamentally new technotronic and computer era and they don't need our coal, oil, timber or other resources that much today.

In effect, we dare say that they don't need the "northern territories" as such either. Japan has long given up the power line of its "Kuropatkins" and has embarked on the road of "Vittes" which has gained it many more financial and economic victories than did all the sacrifices of the former Emperor's army to build a "Great Asia". The demands of "northern territories" are rather a matter of prestige for Japan today and one of the ways of self-assertion as a great power.

We believe that there must be an end to the fruitless disputes about the "historic" territories and an official announcement that the payment demanded and received by Stalin from Churchill and Roosevelt in Yalta for the USSR's part in the war against Japan was a sample of the old imperial policy. That deal must be publicly condemned, as was the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact by the Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR. This must be followed by negotiations on a peace treaty (including the future of the islands) on a new basis with due regard for the fact that, like Germany, Japan can substantially help in the construction of the "Eurasian bridge" which Count Vitte dreamed about in the beginning of this century. □

(Izvestia, January 18. Abridged.)

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# To protect perestroika

THE Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party dedicated its latest regular session to a careful analysis of the current political situation in the country.

Assessing the situation, Deputy General Secretary Ivashko, who chaired the session, said: "Some people time and again try to make us reduce our attention merely to the questions of the Party's inner life. But no matter what, it is the interests of the people and the country that are more important for the Communist Party than its own interests. So, we should work with these aims in view without avoiding difficult questions and shunning any area in which the fate of the people is at stake."

During a detailed exchange of opinions prime attention was attached to the need to protect perestroika and its principled line now that the idea of "perestroika's falling down", "a conservative coup" and the centre's giving up of democratic transformation and economic reforms is being sold to the masses, on the one hand, and there are purposeful attempts to provoke and carry out actions which may force the authorities into adopting tough measures, on the other. Speakers pointed out that in these conditions of special importance was consistency in implementing the political decisions of the 28th Congress of the CPSU and the constructive decisions of the Fourth Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR.

The protection of perestroika is inseparable from the protection of the President of the country, for the ostentatiously slanderous accusations levelled against the President in some mass media, at vocal rallies and in certain Parliaments pose a threat of an anti-democratic coup by which the captains of the shadow economy and the self-styled "masters of life" would benefit.

The political opponents of the Soviet Communist Party often attempt to gain popularity by speculative statements and rabid political manoeuvring. But the insolvency of all this becomes crystal clear as soon as practical work begins, stressed E.S. Stroyev, Central Committee Secretary. Populist demagoguery and so-called radical measures, which are calculated for an outside effect but which do not accord with the reality and are not backed up by material resources only lead to the impoverishment of people. The Party committees and members of the Communist Party cannot afford such an imprudent approach. They should display speci-

fic concern about people and promote and support concrete and important undertakings in each region and each work collective.

A number of speakers stressed that an early formation of the government Cabinet was of great importance in this connection. A 30-day intermission in the work of the national Supreme Soviet is too long. Politburo members Prokofiev and Frolov, Secretaries Semenova, Baklanov and Kuptsov and other comrades stressed that the Communist Party should do its utmost to ensure there are fewer pauses in perestroika. It should facilitate the formation of the structures of power and a movement in the market and more clearly determine its strategy and tactics.

The participants actively discussed the development of the situation in Eastern Europe and the Soviet policy in this region. It is hard to overestimate the importance of the USSR's traditional relations with its East European neighbours, Ivashko said, opening the discussion of this issue. Although the region is no longer united and there are difficulties in carrying out economic ties, nevertheless, our economies and markets are integrated to such a degree that, no matter what some might contend, in the next few years there will be no alternative to the established contacts either for us or for the countries of Eastern Europe. Hence the need for a prudent and clear-cut policy.

V. M. Falin, Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, stressed that the current developments in Eastern Europe should be looked upon not as the last chapter in our relations, but rather as the beginning of a new one. We should try to retain old friends and keep up mutually advantageous co-operation, preventing a mix-up of what is advantageous and what is not. We are more and more leaving not only the economic sphere but also the market of information in

## New Soviet resolution protects people in risk zones

A NEW resolution of the USSR Cabinet of Ministers charges the USSR Ministry of Nuclear Power Engineering with including, starting from 1991, in the spending on the construction of new and expansion of operating nuclear stations funds for building social sphere facilities in the 30-kilometre zone around nuclear power stations. These funds can amount up to ten per cent of the capital investments.

The resolution says that projects to build new and expand operating nuclear power stations should provide for building houses with adjacent service areas, heating, central water supply and a sewage system for workers living in settlements, located around nuclear power stations. Up to 20 per cent of such houses will be turned over to local governing councils.

It is also planned to include in projects the construction of health-building camps for schoolchildren and children of the pre-school age. Diagnostic centres to examine citizens living within the 30-kilometre zone will be set up in medical institutions in those stations' settlements.

The USSR Finance Ministry and the Ministry of Nuclear Power Engineering are asked to elaborate in the first six months of 1991 proposals for introducing mandatory state insurance for the person and the movable and immovable property of citizens residing around operating nuclear power stations against the risk of exposure to radiation and compensating for possible damage caused by this exposure.

(Pravda, January 26. Summary.)

Eastern Europe, requesting that payment for our newspapers and magazines should be made in hard currency. Western Europe and the United States, for their part, sell theirs for local currency or give them free, Falin said.

Various aspects of building a new relationship with East European countries were also broached in statements made by G. I. Yanayev, Vice-President of the USSR, A. S. Dzasokhov, Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, V. A. Kryuchkov, Chairman of the KGB, Y. A. Kvitsynsky, Deputy Foreign Minister of the USSR, A. A. Rusanov, Deputy Permanent Representative of the USSR at the CMEA, and M. F. Nenashev, Chairman of the USSR State Committee for Publishing, Printing and Book Selling.

Participants in the session pointed to the importance of keeping up mutual deliveries which are beneficial for us and for our partners. The difficult situation which is the result of a transition to mutual payments in hard currency was also discussed. It was stressed that continued curtailment of economic ties and the reduction of the volume of mutual trade would have negative consequences for both sides, negatively affecting their economic and social situation.

It was proposed to intensify contacts with the leaders of East European countries and stressed that the attempts to conclude separate agreements between these countries and individual Union republics could lead to harmful consequences.

Alarm was voiced in connection with an abrupt discontinuation of contacts in the field of cultural, tourist and information exchanges and people-to-people contacts. The promotion of citizen diplomacy, invigoration of ties at the local level, twin-cities contacts and co-operation between press organs could contribute to the maintenance of stable good-neighbourly relations. It was emphasised that the mistake made should be corrected and Soviet newspapers and periodicals should be sold abroad for local currencies.

It was decided to intensify the activities of the Party's and other research institutions which deal with East European problems.

The Secretariat also heard a report on the situation in some Party organisations at Soviet institutions in foreign countries and discussed other questions.

Press-Centre of the CPSU Central Committee  
(Pravda, January 26. In full.)

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