SOVIET NEWS

Wednesday, February 25, 1987

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Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to the Soviet Baltic Republics

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV'S SPEECH IN RIGA

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, made a speech in Riga on February 19 at a meeting with Party officials, local government officers, and economic executives of Soviet Latvia.

"The Baltic peoples' road to socialism has been a thorny and complex one," he said. "The entire heroic struggle for the proclamation, restoration and consolidation of Soviet power in the Baltic region has been an evidence that it is impossible to break the peoples' revolutionary will and to turn backwards their development. The Baltic peoples have traversed a long path on the way to their present choice. This choice and the present day, one can say, have been achieved by the peoples through suffering, and have been gained through the joint struggle together with the Russian and other peoples of the Soviet State."

Mikhail Gorbachev stated that the Baltic republics, the youngest ones in the multi-nation family of the USSR, had gained their national Soviet statehood, which ensured genuine freedom and democracy for the working people, within this family of nations.

"In socialist conditions, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, having pooled their material, cultural and intellectual resources with those of the other union republics, gained an opportunity to rely on the huge economic potential of the entire country.

"This is not a mere addition but a multiplication of energies.

"As compared wth 1940, the year when these republics became part of the USSR, industrial output in Latvia has grown 55-fold, in Estonia — 58-fold and in Lithuania — 77-fold.

"The aspects of towns, villages, and farmsteads, and the way of life of the Baltic peoples have changed. Socialism opened up a wide road for the national revival of all peoples and nationalities of the USSR.

"Our reality itself disproves the malicious and slanderous inventions by reactionary emigré circles and by their Western patrons," the Soviet leader said.

"They try to calumniate the achievements of the Baltic peoples within the fraternal family of the peoples of the Soviet Union. As the saying goes, 'dogs bark, the wind carries it away, but the caravan goes on'.

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"No one will manage to stop the progress of the Baltic peoples. Neither will anyone manage to stop the progress of the Soviet people."

Mikhail Gorbachev emphasised that socialism can give the working people even more if the road of the development of creativity and initiative of the masses, innovation and renewal, the road of reconstruction, is taken. It is very important now that there should be no gap between what we have proclaimed, between our policy, and practical deeds, he said. And we must constantly bear in mind this problem: unity of words and actions. Mikhail Gorbachev further said that a relapse to the past when one thing was said and quite a different thing was done in reality is impermissible. This split, distorted morality affected the way people felt, their attitude to social activity and work. This had a negative effect on the shaping of the civic stand of the younger generation.

Many questions stemming from the decisions of the 27th CPSU Congress, of the January plenary meeting of the Party Central Committee — cardinal questions of reorganisation are, above all, meant — will be discussed at an all-union CPSU conference, the decision on which will be adopted at one of the coming plenary meetings of the CPSU Central Committee, the General Secretary said. "I think we shall discuss there also everything related to

upgrading the inter-party activity, the life of the CPSU, including the nature of elections and the shaping of elective party bodies."

In his speech Mikhail Gorbachev paid much attention to shortcomings in the development of the country's national economy. He noted that the national economy had not yet picked up the needed tempos, nor has it achieved stability.

"When we speak of changes, of reorganisation in all the areas of the life of our society, we always emphasise that what is meant are not some cosmetic measures but profound processes of our society. This creates new conditions of work for our Party bodies. We in the Central Committee of the Party have the following approach: everything we have started after the 27th CPSU Congress for the reorganisation of our society should be started from the Party itself, from the work of personnel," Mikhail Gorbachev said. He urged all executives of the Party, government and managerial apparatus to embark on practical activity and, as far as possible, stop churning out instructions. The problem of the personnel's responsibility acquires concrete importance now. Reorganisation must be the gauge for everything: what is a person's attitude to reorganisawhat contribution he makes reorganisation, how he alters his methods and style of work, taking into account the democratisation of society.

GORBACHEV'S CONVERSATIONS IN RIGA

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV, who arrived in Riga, the capital of the Soviet Baltic Republic of Latvia, on February 17, had his first meeting with the people.

During a conversation in the centre of Riga Mikhail Gorbachev said: "After the April plenary meeting we were consulting the people, scientists, and were analysing the past so as to determine what issues should be raised at the Congress so that our proposals be prompted by life. We have collectively arrived the hard way at the policy of the Congress, and people have accepted it."

"The problem now is to implement all this in the economy, in the social and spiritual spheres, and in Party work. And wasting no time we should be applying this political line of ours in every area. I shall tell you outright that I greatly appreciate the fact that our people, I believe, realised in their hearts and minds how business should be conducted. That people accept this policy as their own is the main thing.

The General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee talked with veterans of the October Revolution and of the Great Patriotic War.

Later Mikhail Gorbachev had another conversation with the people of Riga. When one of those present remarked: "We should take a tougher stand as concerns the policy of the US Administration," Mikhail Gorbachev answered: "I shall tell you this: as to questions of defence, of our capability of protecting our interests and our security, this is sacred to us. And you may rest assured: we are strong now, so that nobody

can afford not to take us into consideration. On the other hand, this has given us the opportunity to act vigorously in conducting a peaceful foreign policy."

"Take the Moscow International Forum. People from every corner of the world, representatives of more than 80 countries gathered for it. People hope that we shall be leading the world along the normal path, and that there will not be a clash that could lead to dramatic consequences. I shall say this: we will not sacrifice our security, even though we do not press for military superiority over anybody, the United States included. This is the main thing.

"Second, we cannot put the destiny of the world at the mercy of the military-industrial complex of imperialism. It would like to have more cannons, more tension, in order to make profits. It is least of all concerned over the destiny to which the world will be doomed.

"Here are two aspects of our policy: a strong economy and politically rallied society; reliable defences and vigorous peaceful foreign policy. This foreign policy meets with huge support all over the world. This is how we shall act."

Mikhail Gorbachev, who has been in Riga since yesterday, early today saw one of the republic's leading enterprises, the VEF Production Amalgamation. The amalgamation produces quasi-electronic telephone exchanges, telegraph stations, telephone technology and household electronic goods.

Talking to workers about reorganisation,

(continued on next page)

Mikhail Gorbachev's speech to Estonian Party activists

"WE have developed a powerful multinational state, which is flourishing and which offers broad opportunities for all the peoples, for their social, cultural, and national development under conditions of the socialist system," Mikhail Gorbachev told Party and government activists and economic managers of Estonia in Tallinn on February 21.

He said that the process of the flourishing of nations and nationalities had been ensured by the Leninist nationalities policy. Of course, there were shortcomings and mistakes in that great cause (we are aware of them and neither overlook nor forget them) but all this does not change the main result of the Party's efforts to bring the nations and nationalities of the USSR together.

The situation in our country is different from that in other states of the world. The bourgeois system is virtually unable to resolve the nationalities problem. Strife between nationalities, cultural isolationism, antagonism and enmity among nations continue in different parts of the world because the nationalities issue remains unsettled.

Conflicts and strife between nationalities today are, perhaps, the most acute and wide-spread phenomenon in the world. Imperialism uses such phenomena on a large scale to further its interests by bringing peoples and nationalities into conflict within states, or states into conflicts with one another. Today's imperialism also uses the old "divide and rule" policy to weaken its antagonists, to plunder and exploit others.

Touching upon the course of democratising Soviet society currently pursued in the country, Mikhail Gorbachev stressed that the experience gained so far proved that it was correct. "Today we have only one way of setting society into motion, coping with our plans and reaching new frontiers, and that is the unfolding of our socialist democracy," he said. "It is a guarantee of our plans being fulfilled, a guarantee that what caused serious drawbacks in the economy and in the spiritual and social sphere in the past will not recur. We must develop democracy primarily in the ruling Party itself."

Touching upon the processes of reorgani-

sation taking place in the country, Mikhail Gorbachev noted that not everyone had yet realised the depth and scope of those processes and the demands made by them. One must not adapt oneself to reorganisation and limit oneself half-measures. "What it amounts to is fundamental work to fortify our entire building of socialism and to strengthen and improve our socialist democracy," he said.

Mikhail Gorbachev stressed the importance of the resolutions of the January 1987 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee. He noted that today we still could debate and exchange opinions on this matter. "But already by tomorrow those who will persistently fail to realise the demands of our time will have to step aside," he said.

Touching upon the activities and role of the CPSU, Mikhail Gorbachev noted that the Party should act as a vehicle of political leadership. The meaning of political leadership, he clarified, is to involve every communist in the process of reorganisation in reality by promoting the initiative and activity of primary Party organisations, which actually amounts to the involvement of all the work collectives, the entire Party and the entire people in reorganisation.

SPEECH AT ESTONIAN KOMSOMOL CONGRESS

"THE present generation has the great mission of bringing the country to new heights in social progress and opening up vast opportunities for the development of man and for the realisation of his creative abilities," Mikhail Gorbachev told the opening session of the 20th Congress of the Leninist Young Communist League (Komsomol) of the Soviet Baltic Republic of Estonia on February 20.

Mikhail Gorbachev said that over the seven decades since the triumphant Great October Socialist Revolution, the country had made progress equalling centuries of development.

"Everything we have achieved, everything we have today—the strong economy, the vast scientific, intellectual and cultural potential and the great gains in the social field—is the result of selfless effort by all generations of the Soviet people and forms a solid, dependable basis for

further constructive plans and for confidence in the future," he said.

On reorganisation in the USSR, the Soviet leader said that it needed the vigorous participation of all working people in the country. It opened unprecedented possibilities for young people to apply their youthful ardour and knowledge.

Time was calling for thinking in a new way, acting in a new way and pressing for further qualitative changes in everything and everywhere, Mikhail Gorbachev pointed out.

In this endeavour, the Party counted on its faithful assistant and reserve, the Leninist Komsomol and Soviet youth.

"If I was asked," he said, "how the present young generation should respond to Lenin's call to study communism, I would reply: to prepare oneself for reorganisation, take an active part in restructuring, develop our society and enhance the prestige of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics."

(continued from previous page)

CONVERSATIONS IN RIGA

personnel policy and improvements in the economic mechanism in the light of the resolutions of the January 1987 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, Mikhail Gorbachev asked them how their relations with state quality control inspectorates were going on. The workers told him that it had been strange at first but that now things were looking up.

Mikhail Gorbachev noted the weak points which state control had revealed. Constant upgrading of qualifications, vocational training are needed in order to improve the quality of goods, he said.

Talking with workers about the social and political reorganisation taking place in the country, Mikhail Gorbachev pointed out that difficulties still exist. In the past 10-15 years we have slackened our discipline and attitude to work. And now we have said to ourselves: Enough! Everybody should pull their weight. This applies to all—the State Planning

Committee, the government and the workers.

At the same time. Mikhail Gorbachev emphasised: everything good we have should not be discarded. The reconstruction should absorb everything that is good, while all the bad things — envy, consumerist attitudes, lack of discipline and shoddy workmanship — should be got rid of..

Then Mikhail Gorbachev had a meeting with Party activists of the amalgamation. He thanked them for a frank conversation which confirmed the correctness of the Party's policy.

"Of course," he said, "there are also those affected by the reorganisation. It has deprived them of some conveniences and disturbed the machinery which became standardised over the years. But you see that all working people and the entire mass of the population are for the reorganisation, for renewal. It is important for people to become more active and more bold".

USSR and China sign Protocol on co-operation in sports

THE USSR State Committee for Sports and the Chinese Committee for Physical Culture and Sports signed a co-operation protocol on February 23 in Moscow.

The protocol provides for exchanges of delegations in 17 sports this year.

The signing ceremony crowned a week-long visit to the Soviet Union of a delegation of China's leading sports officials led by He Zhangleang, Deputy Chairman of the Sports Committee.

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SOVIET-AFGHAN TALKS

THERE is not, nor can there be any alternative to national reconciliation as a means of achieving peace and tranquility in Afghanistan, Nikolai Ryzhkov, member of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee and Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, and Sultan Ali Keshtmand, member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party and Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, stressed in their talks in the Kremlin on February 18.

Sultan Ali Keshtmand is on a working visit to the Soviet Union.

The Soviet side voiced firm support for the PDPA's course of national reconciliation as a realistic opportunity to put an end to bloodshed in Afghanistan and to consolidate the efforts of all Afghans having a real interest in strengthening independent, sovereign and non-aligned Afghanistan and promoting its progress and prosperity. The Soviet side noted that the truce was a courageous and constructive step towards creating a situation conducive to broad inter-Afghan dialogue and to mutually acceptable compromises to the point of point of establishing a coalition government.

The Soviet side stated its readiness to contribute in every way towards an early political settlement of the situation around Afghanistan, primarily to the success of the Afghan-Pakistani talks in Geneva. Emphasis was laid on the fact that progress towards national reconciliation would contribute substantially to the achievement of a settlement, which in turn will expedite withdrawal of Soviet troops Afghanistan.

Nikolai Ryzhkov and Sultan Ali Keshtmand expressed their satisfaction with the onward development of relations of friendship between the USSR and Democratic Afghanistan on the unshakeable basis of good-neighbourliness, mutual respect and trust, equality and non-intervention in each other's internal affairs. Special emphasis was laid on the fact that these relations with their deep-going historical roots met fully the national interests of the Soviet and Afghan people.

The sides discussed progress in the fulfilment of agreements and protocols of Soviet technological and economic assistance in the construction of industrial, agrarian, power and other economic projects and reached accord on further joint activities in that field.

Agreement was reached on broadening trade between the USSR and Afghanistan, including cross-border trade, and on balancing out the trade turnover.

Possibilities were examined for further comprehensive assistance to Afghanistan in the economic and social fields.

The talks passed in an atmosphere of traditional friendship, full mutual understanding and comradeship.

Meeting of Soviet and Pakistani **Foreign Ministers**

SHEVARDNADZE, **EDUARD** member of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee and Foreign Minister of the USSR, had a meeting on February 23 with the Pakistani Foreign Minister Yaqub Khan who is in Moscow en route to Geneva for the Afghan-Pakistani talks on a political settlement of the situation regarding Afghanistan.

The Soviet side expressed full support for democratic Afghanistan's policy of seeking an early political settlement and pointed out that the Soviet Union has been making a constructive contribution to this important cause with its

It also reaffirmed that a political settlement

around Afghanistan on the basis of termination, and guaranteed non-resumption, of outside interference would correspondingly expedite the return from Afghanistan of the limited contingent of Soviet troops staying there at the request of its government.

The fact that the resolution of the Afghan problem requires reciprocity on the part of Pakistan was brought to the attention of the

Pakistani Foreign Minister.

Eduard Shevardnadze stressed that the Afghan leadership's policy of national reconciliation was a practical manifestation of the constructive approach taken by the Government of Afghanistan to the problem of normalising the situation in and around that country.

Hope was expressed that at the forthcoming talks in Geneva the Pakistani delegation would take a stand that will help work out mutually acceptable solutions.

Eduard Shevardnadze receives **Qian Qicheng**

EDUARD SHEVARDNADZE received on February 23 Qian Qicheng, Deputy Foreign Minister of the PRC and leader of a government delegation from the People's Republic of China to the Soviet-Chinese talks on border issues.

After pointing out that the Soviet people are following with keen interest the Chinese people's efforts to carry through the modernisation programme and wishing them success in this work, Eduard Shevardnadze told Qian Qicheng about the results of the January plenum of the CPSU Central Committee and the significance of its decisions for fulfilling the tasks of renewal and social and economic acceleration which have been set by the 27th Congress of the

They discussed some questions for further developing relations between the USSR and the PRC as well as international issues of mutual interest, including those related to the situation in Asia and the Pacific.

Both sides expressed satisfaction with the resumption by the USSR and the PRC of their talks on border issues, which can help create an atmosphere of good-neighbourliness in Soviet-Chinese relations.

USSR Foreign Ministry briefing

"THE fundamentals of criminal legislation are under review in the Soviet Union now, and the criminal code will be reviewed as well," stated Gennadi Gerasimov, head of the Information Directorate of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

He was speaking at a briefing for Soviet and foreign journalists at the Ministry's Press Centre in Moscow on February 19.
"This is a long process," he said. "However, a

tendency towards mitigation of the legislation is

Restructuring is Urgent, **It Concerns Everyone** Mikhail Gorbachev's speech at meeting of Khabarovsk Party

activists, July 31, 1986.

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Rudolf Kuznetsov, head of the foreigners' visas and registration department (OVIR), in answer to a question about the procedure for entry into the USSR and for departure, pointed out that the question of departure of this or that person from the country is considered only when the said person applies to the internal affairs

"All applications addressed to us by citizens are studied most attentively, from the viewpoint of satisfying the applications.

Oleg Avramenko, First Deputy Head of the Consular Department of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, when speaking of new provisions for entry and departure, pointed out that there were rather flexible formulations which made it possible with maximum humaneness to decide on these matters.

The new rules envisage that an application for departure or entry should be reviewed within a month and in a case of urgent nature, within

"Departmental instructions accompanying the new legislation," he emphasised, "will be of an open and public nature.

Expert Opinion

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Andrei Gromyko receives US Ambassador

ANDREI GROMYKO, member of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee and President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, received in the Kremlin on February 19 Arthur Hartman, US Ambassador to the USSR, in connection with the expiration of his term of office in Moscow and his coming return to the US.

During the conversation Gromyko pointed out the complicated nature of the present stage of Soviet-American relations. There exist real conditions for their positive and steady development. However, these conditions can be used if new approaches are displayed to the solution of the problem of mutual security. Well-balanced and large-scale Soviet proposals at the Reykjavik meeting which took into account the interests of both sides are a vivid manifestation of a new political thinking. They revealed a possibility of finding a way to a nuclear-free world. The significance of the Soviet-American summit meeting in Reykjavik consists in the fact that it changed dramatically the essence of the debate about the future of the world and about its destiny.

It was emphasised that the provisions of the speech delivered by Mikhail Gorbachev, at his meeting with participants in the international forum For a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World, For the Survival of Humanity were a concentrated expression of the Soviet views on international relations as a whole. Specifically, the USSR is ready to reduce to a reasonably sufficient minimum all armaments and to aim at a complete elimination of weapons of mass

destruction

The USSR and the US could work out in the near future agreements in all the spheres included in the talks on nuclear and space weapons. However, the way to it is blocked by the stubborn striving of Washington for blasting the ABM Treaty after it has blasted SALT-2, and for speeding up the implementation of the Star Wars programme (SDI). It is deplorable as well that the US stubbornly refuses to stop its nuclear tests.

Arthur Hartman thanked Andrei Gromyko for the considerate attitude accorded to him in the Soviet Union.

The conversation was held in a business-like and frank atmosphere.

It was attended by Richard Combs who remains as chargé d'affaires ad interim of the US in the USSR.

PRAVDA EDITORIAL:

The work of restructuring has become irreversible

"THE work of restructuring started in the Party and the country has actually become irreversible, spreading far and wide and penetrating to the deepestlying levels of our life," *Pravda* says today (February 24) in a leading article describing the most characteristic features of what has been done in the country since the 27th Congress of the CPSU (which opened in Moscow on February 25, 1986).

Some very important changes have taken place in the Soviet economy during the year that has passed since the Party Congress, the newspaper says.

TEN YEARS AFTER HELSINKI

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Progress Publishers

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Industrial output made a gain of 4.9 per cent in 1986, an increase of one-third over the mean annual increment achieved in the previous fiveyear plan period. Serious work has been started to switch the economy to new methods of management and control. Considerable headway has also been made in the agrarian sector. The policy of giving more attention to the social sphere is reflected in increased housing construction and the commissioning of new poly-clinics and hospitals, cultural and public service establishments. The measures taken to strengthen discipline, improve order in the country and to combat hard drinking and alcoholism and other negative phenomena have had the effect of considerably cutting down the wastage of working time and the number of criminal offences.

"The current changes, revolutionary in scale, are assuming great importance not only for Soviet society but also for socialism at large and for the whole world," the article goes on. "At this crucial stage, the international policy of the Party and the Soviet State is determined, more than ever before, by their home policy. Indeed, it is only a lasting peace that will enable our people to concentrate in maximum measure on the realisation of the reforms planned. The Soviet Union has put forward the concept of establishing an all-embracing international security system and is persistently urging the world to adopt a new political thinking capable of delivering the peoples of the world from the threat of war and aggression, from new spirals of a senseless arms race."

"We have stepped up our work and the Soviet Union's weight and the prestige of its home and foreign policies have grown considerably in the world. But it is not in the traditions of the Leninist Party to rest content with the successes made. It must be borne in mind that only the first steps have been made along the difficult road of renovation and only initial experience gained on it.

"We are still to solve the deep-lying major problems of acceleration affecting the mainstays of our economy and social policy, the functioning of our political system, the state of the spiritual sphere of our society and eventually the life and activities of the Party as the decisive force and guarantor of success in our work of restructuring."

Andrei Gromyko's meeting with Amintore Fanfani

"THE Soviet Union will as ever be putting its authority and influence onto the scales of peace and friendship, also as concerns European countries. Europe is the common home of both Italy and the Soviet Union," Andrei Gromyko said on February 23 when receiving in the Kremlin the prominent Italian politician, President of the Senate of the Italian Republic, Amintore Fanfani.

"Our foreign policy steps and doctrines also reflect the Soviet people's plans in the sphere of the internal development of the state," Andrei Gromyko said. "Peace and peace alone — such is the direction of the Soviet Union's foreign policy. It is reflected in the concrete proposals set out by the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Mikhail Gorbachev in Geneva, in Reykjavik and quite recently in Moscow at the International Forum For a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World, For the Survival of Humanity."

Assessing the transformations taking place in the Soviet Union in connection with reorganisation, Amintore Fanfani said that nobody in Italy thinks that a better world can be built without the USSR. Therefore Italy follows with interest how the Soviet Union is overcoming its difficulties. He emphasised the great interest existing in Italy in the transformations taking place in the USSR.

The interlocutors discussed some questions of the development of the situation in Europe. They declared for the development of the European process and the successful continuation of the Vienna meeting, for broad peaceful co-operation in Europe on both a multilateral and bilateral basis.

Both sides expressed satisfaction with the development of relations between the Soviet Union and Italy, specifically along parliamentary lines. The volume and importance of commercial and economic ties for the Soviet Union and Italy were also discussed.

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PRAVDA:

Article by Soviet Defence Minister

THE responsible and constructive approach of the CPSU and of the Soviet State to problems of war and peace finds its expression in bold relief also in the Soviet military doctrine, which is unequivocally defensive. Its main provision is to prevent war, Marshal of the Soviet Union Sergei Sokolov, USSR Defence Minister, stressed. The newspaper *Pravda* carried an article on February 23 by Sergei Sokolov on the occasion of the 69th anniversary of the Soviet Army and Navy.

The attainment of that goal, Marshal Sokolov points out, is ensured through political means and through the maintenance at the necessary level of the combat might of the Soviet Armed Forces. "This might does not allow anybody to disregard it. At the same time it poses no threat to anybody, being a real factor for the preserva-

tion of peace and for ensuring international security."

The Soviet military doctrine, the minister points out, provides for the need of maintaining military-strategic parity. "Our principled policy on that issue is that we do not strive for military superiority over other countries, yet we will not allow superiority over ourselves," Sokolov stresses. "The USSR never initiated the development and creation of new types of weapons."

Marshal Sokolov points out that the USSR unilaterally committed itself not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. Together with the other Warsaw Treaty member countries, the USSR has said that it would never, under any circumstances start military actions against any state, provided it and its allies do not become themselves targets of an attack.

The USA is out to ensure unilateral military superiority for itself. Therefore it discards agreements limiting the nuclear arsenals, Sokolov emphasises.

The USA has broken the SALT-2 Treaty and far from joining in the Soviet moratorium on

nuclear blasts, has also continued tests. The Pentagon is preparing to deploy a large-scale ABM system, now being created according to the SDI programme, and has set out to scrap the Soviet-American ABM Treaty. The ambition of the USA to put weapons into outer space as soon as possible, the Marshal points out, is aimed at lending the SDI programme an irreversible character, as a matter of fact, excluding the possibility of limiting and controlling the weapons race.

The USSR is for resolutely lowering the level of military confrontation, reducing the military potentials down to a limit which is indispensable and sufficient for defence, to eliminate nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction from the strategic balance, the Soviet Defence Minister points out.

Marshal Sokolov notes that the reorganisation currently underway in this country is taking place in the armed forces too. Its gist is to increase the practical character of the training of units and ships. The key to resolving the task is to draw the conditions of training as close as possible to a real combat situation.

Plenary meeting of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan

TWO-THIRDS of the members of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan work in industry, agriculture, science and culture and in elected bodies of popular power, making a tangible contribution to policy, proclaimed by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, of speeding the social and economic advancement of Soviet society, Gennadi Kolbin, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan, said on February 21.

He was speaking at the plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan held in Alma Ata.

Most members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan, he said, have been setting a personal example in the drive for change and battling against the consequences of the negative phenomena of the past.

However, not all Central Committee members, he continued, have been demonstrating exemplary honesty, Party-style fidelity to principle, and unselfish service.

Vladimir Kadyrbayev and Seilkhan Akkoziyev (both of them now removed from their posts) committed gross breaches of Party, economic and moral norms while being respectively leader of Kazakhstan's trade unions and Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Dzhambul Region Soviet of People's Deputies

Dyusetai Bekezhanov, former aide to the previous First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan practised favouritism, interfered in the process of personnel selection without valid reasons, and promoted his kith and kin to senior official positions.

The plenum unanimously decided to strip the three communists of their central committee membership for their flagrant violations of the rules of the CPSU and their actions contradicting the Party line.

Bekezhanov was also expelled from the Party

Nazhameden Iskaliyev, First Secretary of the Uralsk Region Party Committee, Grigori Knyazev, Interior Minister of Kazakhstan, Svyatoslav Medvedev, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Dzhambul Region Soviet of People's Deputies, and Yuri Meshcheryakov, First Secretary of the Oktyabrsky District Party Committee of Alma Ata, all of whom enjoy the support and trust of communists, were elected full members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan.

The plenum expressed the firm resolve of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan to do away with violations of the Leninist norms of Party life.

Pravda editorial on Moscow Forum

"TO act immediately, actively and decisively in order to erect insurmountable barriers in the way of the forces of war before it is too late is an urgent demand of our epoch," *Pravda* says editorially on February 19.

It is this wish that has brought to the International Forum For a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World, For the Survival of Humanity in Moscow representatives of the public at large from all over the world. The forum was a true reflection of world public opinion. Its impassioned appeal to defend the future and the very existence of mankind sounds forceful and convincing.

Today international relations are deprived of soul by the cult of force and militarised consciousness. They should be made more humane and civilised, the newspaper continues. The responsibility which history has put on the present generation is immense: to save the Earth from nuclear conflagration. Is this mission feasible? Soviet people answer this question unhesitatingly: Yes, it is quite feasible.

from nuclear conflagration. Is this mission feasible? Soviet people answer this question unhesitatingly: Yes, it is quite feasible.

The overwhelming majority of people in the world are beginning to realise the goals of the titanic struggle in the present-day world. Today policy has ceased to be the sphere of action of politicians alone, it is near and dear to hundreds of millions of people. Mankind is beginning to see itself as a complete entity, gaining confidence that the forces of militarism are not omnipotent, that nations acting in concert are capable of curbing these forces.

The international forum in Moscow showed that thinking mankind has both the striving and the capabilities for saving the valuable gift of life on Earth. In the course of mounting struggle people learn the difficult but necessary art of living in peace with each other. The voice of the forum will resound all over the world enlisting more and more people in the struggle against nuclear catastrophe. Mankind must and will live.

As for the Soviet people, they will exert every effort to attain this goal, the most humane and noble of all.

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Stepan Shalayev on the tasks of the Soviet trade unions

SOVIET trade unions, which have a membership of 140 million, "fully support the Party's acceleration, reconstruction and democratisation policies." Stepan Shalayev, Chairman of the All-Union Central Council, of Trade Unions (AUCCTU) of the USSR, said in Moscow on February 24.

He said in the main address to the 18th Congress of Soviet Trade Unions that the unions had used the time since the 27th Congress of the CPSU, which took place in February and March last year, to join in the effort to expedite the country's social and economic progress.

"But these have only been the first steps," Shalayev added.

He said the Soviet trade unions saw their mission in making sure that the Soviet people's requirements for good working and living conditions, recreational facilities, education and medical services were met increasingly more fully.

Stepan Shalayev described the goal of

doubling the pace of phasing out manual labour by the year 1990 as "quite feasible".

He then dwelt on measures to provide better conditions for women to be able to combine motherhood with active involvement in work and public affairs.

In the current five-year planning period (1986-90), he said, the paid leave granted to working mothers to care for their babies would be extended to 18 months and they would also be granted the right to an extra unpaid leave of up to six months.

The prenatal leave of absence would be increased to 70 days and the number of paid days a mother could take off work to attend to her sick child would also be raised, Shalayev said. He added that medicines for children under three would be made available free of charge.

The AUCCTU chairman went on to speak of trade union participation in extending democracy and advancing socialist self-government by the people.

He pointed to the Draft Law on the State Enterprise, which defines, among other things, the status of the trade union committee in the new economic conditions, as an example of the positive changes taking place in this field.

Speaking of co-operation in the framework of the world trade union movement, Shalayev said "the alternative to the plans for nuclear and space madness is the Soviet programme for building a system of international security and the Soviet proposals for achieving a nuclear-free and non-violent world."

On behalf of the Soviet trade unions, he urged the trade unions in all countries to support the proposal for setting up an international fund for the survival of mankind, made at the International Forum For a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World, For the Survival of Humanity recently held in Moscow.

Responding to an address by the European Trade Union Confederation, Shalayev expressed the Soviet trade unions' readiness to discuss ways of developing co-operation between trade unions in the East and the West in scientific and technological fields and in environmental protection and strengthening trade and economic relations with the aim of creating new jobs in Europe.

MOSCOW FORUM:

Problems of Peace and Business Co-operation

"THE meeting gave us optimism," said Yevgeni Pitovranov, President of the Presidium of the USSR Chamber of Commerce and Industry, following a round table meeting on the theme "Problems and Peace and Business Co-operation".

The discussion, attended by heads of companies, trading firms, banks, national chambers of commerce and industry and other business organisations from 25 countries, was held within the framework of the International Forum For a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World, For the Survival of Humanity held in Moscow on February 14-16, 1987.

Before the forum began, Western news agencies had intimated that the businessmen, ostensibly invited for talks, were made to discuss political problems.

"None of the businessmen who took part in the round table (over 90 persons) said he was displeased with the fact that the programme we had sent them in advance was somewhat different from topics under discussion," Yevgeni Pitovranov told a Novosti correspondent. "Many speakers from the USA, Western Europe and elsewhere linked them with the issues of disarmament and world peace. So, politics and human survival kept cropping up by themselves, by no means at our initiative."

According to Yevgeni Pitovranov, the keen and frank atmosphere at the round table was the consequence of a happy choice of topics for

Election procedures in the USSR

Price 35p Available from Soviet Booklets (SN), 3 Rosary Gardens, LONDON, SW7 4NW. discussion: problems of and prospects for economic co-operation between East and West, new forms of business co-operation, disarmament and economic security of states, the role of banks in promoting international economic co-operation, and so on. A few short reports by Soviet participants covered the changes underway in the Soviet economy, the current reform of the country's external economic activities, and the expectations connected with the newly-adopted Soviet law on joint ventures. Incidentally, it was this report that caused most interest, comments and questions.

Yevgeni Pitovranov would not overestimate the significance of joint ventures, though he believes they are certainly useful both for Soviet economic advance and progress of international co-operation. It is much more important, he holds, that now Soviet factories and ministries, members of the USSR Chamber of Commerce and Industry, have direct access to the world market.

The latter circumstance presents the chamber with additional responsibilities. Reports at the round table described the impending changes: the chamber will expand its publishing activities to be able to inform the business community of the Soviet partners' potential and will set up a consultative service intended to provide Soviet factories with marketing and market condition information and help them cope with contractural, arbitration, patents and other problems.

The business-like atmosphere of the round table debates confirms the optimism of the business community and its confidence that world peace will be preserved.

"The meeting gave us optimism," Pitovranov summed up the interview. "Honestly speaking, I didn't expect so much unanimity on our problems. I thought there would be more biting and controversial judgments. But people are really at one when the issue involved is preserving world peace. People are beginning to understand that general human interests are superior to class interests."

Pay rises in the Soviet Far East

WAGED and salaried workers in the south of the Soviet Far East have received pay rises. This is one of the measures provided for by the government programme to stem labour turnover in the country's far eastern area.

Fyodor Bezruchko, head of the Khabarovsk Labour Division, told TASS on February 24 that a 20 per cent increase in salaries and wages had been paid there even earlier. Now the incomes of working people have increased by another 10 per cent, topping the country's western areas. This attracts many people who then settle for some time in places with difficult living conditions.

Even higher wage rises were received by residents of cities and villages situated in the north of the Khabarovsk Territory. Each newcomer to Komsomolsk-on-Amur receives a 40-60 per cent addition to his basic wage. A year later the pay rises by another 10 per cent. Residents of northern villages on the shores of the Sea of Okhotsk get double wages. They enjoy longer paid holidays, and once in three years the state pays their fares to any part of the Soviet Union.

"These measures," pointed out Fyodor Bezruckho, "created a situation under which the population's migration rate fell considerably in the past few years, and a stable inflow of labour was registered." The government programme provides for another 20 per cent rise in the incomes of residents in the Far East by 1990. □

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Political settlement of the Afghan problem: the Soviet view

By M Alexandrov

THE 7th round of the Afghan-Pakistani talks, assisted by the UN Secretary-General's special envoy Diego Cordovez, resumed in Geneva on February 25. Moscow sincerely wishes success to the talks whose aim is to achieve a political settlement of the Afghan crisis in the interests of all nations in the region.

The Soviet leaders have repeatedly stated the USSR's position of principle on the Afghan issue. It's essence is that the key to political settlement is a guaranteed termination and nonresumption of outside interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. The sooner it is achieved, the sooner the Soviet troops will be pulled out of that country.

The USSR has never been a passive onlooker with respect to the Afghan-Pakistani dialogue, which began as a result of Afghan efforts in 1982. For example, in a bid to give an impetus to the Geneva process, last October the Soviet Union withdrew six regiments from Afghanistan. The USSR supports the Afghan leaders national reconciliation policy announced in late 1986.

As is known, the Afghan Government has been observing a self-imposed unilateral ceasefire since January 15 and has started a dialogue with the opposing side. More than 20,000

Afghans have returned home and nearly 15,000 have renounced armed struggle in the last four weeks. Nearly 5,000 detainees have been granted amnesty. The country's leaders have declared that they are willing to set up a government of national unity and even make it a coalition government. The Soviet Union approves this policy and regards national reconciliation as a prerequisite for political settlement of the situation.

For its part, the USSR has stepped up its diplomatic efforts. The Afghan problem was discussed during the visit to Pakistan by Anatoli Kovalyov, First Deputy Foreign Minister of the USSR, and during the visits to Moscow by Diego Cordovez and the Foreign Ministers of Pakistan and Iran.

Speaking, on February 16, before the participants in the Moscow International Forum For a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World, For the Survival of Humanity, Mikhail Gorbachev said that the Soviet Union would recall from Afghanistan "the whole of its troop contingent within time-limits as short as possible. But there has to be reciprocity on the part of the United States and Afghanistan's neighbours, as well as international efforts to resolve this problem."

Regrettably, thus far there has been no reciprocity. The United States is taking an openly destructive stand. It is seeking to foil the policy of national reconciliation pursued by the DRA Government and goes on supplying the Afghan counter-revolutionaries with sophisticated weapons, including ground-to-air Stinger missiles. In the current fiscal year alone, the US Administration intends to spend 600 million dollars on armed interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

Iran is also taking an unconstructive stand. During the recent vist to Moscow by the Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, the Soviet leaders drew his attention to the fact that rebel bands making armed attacks on Afghanistan were being sent from Iran. The Iranian leaders would do well to help settle the Afghan crisis by political means

The Soviet Union is prepared for constructive co-operation. It is ready to work out and put into practice the terms of a political settlement which would take into account the interests of the Afghan people, as well as those of Pakistan and Iran.

The new round of the Afghan-Pakistani talks starting on February 25 in Geneva "could become the final one," Nikolai Ryzhkov, Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, said in his speech at a luncheon in honour of Sultan Ali Keshtmand, on February 18, "if both sides sincerely seek to achieve this." Afghanistan is clearly showing such a wish, Pakistan has also stated that it is in favour of a political settlement and so, "we expect that these statements will be translated into practical steps," Nikolai Ryzhkov said.

Sultan Ali Keshtmand: there is no alternative to national reconciliation

LIFE is ever more convincingly proving the irreversible character of the revolutionary process in Afghanistan, said Sultan Ali Keshtmand, a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party and Chairman of Afghanistan's Council of Ministers,

who paid a working visit to the Soviet Union, reports Bakhtar News Agency on February 18.

He noted that since January 15 of this year the combat operations of the armed forces have been unilaterally suspended for six months. In keeping with the decree on amnesty, a large number of convicts have been released, the gist of the policy conducted within the country and outside it is being consistently explained.

During the month since the announcement of the cease-fire over 20,000 Afghan refugees have returned home from Pakistan and Iran. More and more adherents of reconciliation are appearing among our enemies. Today thousands of former dushmans have laid down their arms and have started peaceful constructive work for the benefit of their homeland.

We have stated our readiness to form a coalition government and are taking concrete steps in this direction, Sultan Ali Keshtmand pointed out. Even now some prominent figures of past regimes hold important posts in the

Afghan Government. Practically all strata of society, tribes and ethnic groups of this country are represented in the Revolutionary Council — the supreme legislative body of our state. Non-party representatives of workers, peasants, intellectuals, national capitalists and clergymen, respected figures of tribes and ethnic groups make up about 65 per cent of the local councils' membership.

Despite the difficulties caused by the undeclared war, our economy is moving forward. Pre-revolutionary indices have been exceeded in practically all branches, the Afghan Prime Minister said.

The course to normalise the internal situation

is linked with the efforts to reach the speediest

political settlement of the situation around Afghanistan. The main principles of our foreign policy are the struggle for peace and security, the promotion of friendly relations and co-operation with all nations. We stand for the speediest attainment of mutually acceptable accords at the Geneva-based Afghan-Pakistani talks. Such accords would become a major contribution to normalising the situation in the

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A builder cannot become an aggessor

By Eduard Baskakov, Novosti Press Agency

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV'S just-completed trip to the Soviet Baltic Republics has an international as well as a domestic significance. For the Soviet leader's frank discussions with the working people of Latvia and Estonia permit an unbiased reader abroad to see the Soviet Union's present and future aspirations. They concerned the drive for national renovation, economic, scientific and cultural progress, human fulfilment and wider democracy.

Western observers may take notice of the fact that the theme of international security did not feature in the trip. Some even may try to tell the public "Oh yes, the Soviet Union is losing its dynamism in international affairs." We already heard that after the January plenum of the CPSU Central Committee. Yet Mikhail Gorbachev's trip is yet another proof of the Soviet Union's interest in peace as stated at the 27th CPSU Congress and in his speech at the International Forum For a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World, For the Survival of Humanity.

Our peaceful restructuring plans in no way

coincide with NATO's nuclear-missile arms race and world tension scheme. They indicate not merely a desire for co-existence, but also the intention to co-operate with other states and to solve the world's issues by political means, without prejudicing anyone's interests.

And once it comes to the Soviet Baltic area's prospects, we cannot help recalling the specific steps Moscow has taken to improve the political climate and strengthen trust in Northern Europe. For example, the recent dismantling of medium-range missile launchers on the Kola Peninsula and a large part of such launchers in the remaining part of the Leningrad and Baltic military districts.

The USSR has declared that it is ready (if an agreement is achieved with appropriate states) to remove from the Soviet Baltic Fleet submarines equipped with ballistic missiles and to start limiting the intensity of its large military training exercises in the North, Norwegian, Barents and Baltic Seas. The Soviet Union is also prepared to recognise and guarantee a nonnuclear status for Northern Europe.

The idea of concluding a treaty of such a status was first put forward in 1963 by then Finnish President Urho Kekkonen. Opposed to this idea, in which all peoples of the region have a stake, are the forces that count on the long-

obsolete "force" methods of solving international issues and therefore keep talking about a "Soviet military threat". Official Washington and the US military-industrial complex as a whole were the first to oppose this idea. It is the United States that did not respond to the Soviet unilateral nuclear moratorium. It is the US that has hastily reneged on the important accords of Soviet-American working meeting at Reykjavik, accords which could have started the long-awaited nuclear disarmament in the world. It is the US that has violated the SALT-2 Treaty and, in violation of the ABM Treaty, has embarked on a space militarisation programme. It is the US that is refusing to recognise the 1967 Tlatelolco Treaty on a non-nuclear zone in Latin America. It is the US that has refused to join the (1985) Rarotonga Treaty on a non-nuclear zone in the South Pacific.

In short, it is not Moscow's fault that the nuclear threat remains an alarming reality in the world.

Mikhail Gorbachev's trip, aimed at solving the internal tasks of Soviet society, has again proved the most important thing: a builder nation, a nation that intends to spend maximum funds on peaceful construction, a nation where there are no classes or groups getting fat on preparations for war, cannot become an aggressor.

Openness: short-lived campaign or long-term policy?

By Vitali Dymarsky

WHEN a small group of Soviet writers and scientists spoke up against plans for diverting water from Siberian rivers to the country's southern regions, the outcome of the controversy seemed a foregone conclusion. Indeed, members of the group, which until mid-1985 were at best allowed to publish a few articles in the press, came up against opposition from as many as 185 organisations favouring the river reversal scheme, which could

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have uncertain economic, ecological and other implications.

But 1985 saw the April plenum of the CPSU Central Committee and a wide-ranging discussion of the documents to come before the 27th Party Congress, which later stated: "Greater openness is a matter of principle for us." The river reversal scheme also figured at the Party Congress and in the Soviet mass media. And here an open discussion revealed that the opponents of the scheme by far outnumbered its advocates. As a result, in August 1986 the government decided not to go ahead with the project.

What makes that controversy remarkable is that the public made their voice heard, proving that openness was more than just an attractive slogan, it was becoming common practice and a norm of life. Inefficient economic management, self-employment, abuse of high office, relations between nationalities, youth problems, including drunkenness and drug addiction, and Party democracy — these are just a few of the subjects addressed by the media in the past two years. I believe that the issues raised have given the public much to think and talk about.

Not that greater openness just means greater press freedom. It applies to all aspects of social practice. Already, the election of factory managers by the workforce has become a reality, a practice which will soon get legislative confirmation. The state enterprise bill which has now been put to a nationwide discussion makes a provision for such elections. Although the bill is yet to be debated and enacted, I think this democratic practice will get legal sanction.

Apart from that, the new legislation will provide the legal framework for far-reaching economic reform and for the application of the principles of self-government, and will give the workforce a greater say in personnel, production and welfare matters, and in planning, profit

allocation and collective bargaining. Naturally, all that is impossible without workers being fully informed.

The Soviet people are positive that openness and democracy must, and will be carried forward. Their confidence is based on the increased awareness of the need to extend democracy. Speaking at the Party plenum in January, Mikhail Gorbachev said: "We need openness, and we need criticism and self-criticism as effective forms of socialist democracy. In our state — a state of workers and farmers — everything is people's concern, for this state is theirs."

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