

Soviet President's address to CSCE summit

SOVIET President Mikhail Gorbachev described the Paris summit of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) as a sign of "deep-going changes offering the first chance to achieve an unprecedented world order."

Addressing the forum on November 19, he said the principal changes in the world recently have included the historic turn in the Soviet Union "from totalitarianism to freedom and democracy, from the administer-by-command system to a law-governed state and political pluralism, from state monopoly in the economy to diverse and equal forms of ownership and market relations, and from a unitary country to a union of sovereign states based on the principles of a federation."

"While remaining a great country, my country has become different and will never be its old self again. We have opened up to the world and the world has opened up to us. This predetermined the radical turn in international relations, a turn towards a fundamentally different perception by states of one another," Gorbachev said.

chev said.

He said the "key" role has been played by the "breakthrough in Soviet-US relations."

"The Soviet Union and the United States today are partners rather than adversaries. The level of their mutual understanding is such that makes them share responsibility for world peace and security," Gorbachev noted.

He described German reunification as a major event of European and world significance. The reconciliation of the peoples of the Soviet Union and the united Germany, which has been sealed in a treaty, is a long-term factor for co-operation and trust in the building of a common European home.

Joint declarations and treaties signed recently by the Soviet Union with France, Italy, Spain and Finland have made a substantial contribution to creating a new international political system in Europe, Gorbachev said.

He called for "actively resuming the Vienna talks without delay," with the involvement of all 34 CSCE nations.

In addition to continuing to reduce their armed forces and update their make-ups, they could work out further, all-embracing confidence-

building measures, Gorbachev suggested.

He argued for "both sets of negotiations of the first round" to merge in the "Vienna-2" talks and discuss a wider range of arms, most notably naval weapons.

Gorbachev described the situation in European affairs as "transitional" and stressed the vital need to ensure that the transition is peaceful.

He pointed to the special role of the conflict prevention centre. "We predict it a great future: a gradual transformation into a kind of pan-European security council," Gorbachev said.

He said the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait posed a "serious test" to the world community on the way to a new, peaceful period in its history.

The unanimous condemnation of Iraqi aggression and the common concern about the outcome of the crisis, he said, attest to "the radically changed mentality and understanding of the goals and means of world politics."

The Soviet Union is prepared to demonstrate patience in the search for a political solution to the Gulf crisis, but will be "firm and resolute" in fulfilling the will of the United Nations, Gorbachev said. □

Soviet and US presidents meet in Paris

SOVIET President Mikhail Gorbachev and US President George Bush met on November 19 at the close of the afternoon session of the Paris Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) summit.

In a spirit of openness, straightforwardness and deep trust in each other, the two presidents discussed their countries' roles in the CSCE process and in world affairs with due regard for the domestic transformations in the Soviet Union, the readiness and resources of the United States to give support to perestroika at its most crucial stage.

Gorbachev and Bush devoted special attention to joint actions with regard to the Iraqi aggression. Proceeding from their Helsinki agreements, the two presidents are resolved to do everything that accords with the will of the

international community.

Mutual support is particularly essential in the resolution of the acutest crisis at the very outset of the movement towards a new, peaceful historical period. The problem should be resolved. It should not remain unresolved, the two presidents believe.

Gorbachev and Bush are of the opinion that everything that has been undertaken within the UN framework is correct and meets the spirit and letter of Security Council resolutions.

On the strength of the information that the two presidents have available to them, they ana-

lysed in detail the Gulf situation at the present moment, stated that the Gulf crisis poses a serious danger to the international community, and agreed that it is necessary again to discuss the Gulf situation within the UN framework.

Most of the meeting was on a one-on-one basis. Then Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, US Secretary of State James Baker, Soviet Defence Minister Dmitri Yazov and presidential aides joined the conversation.

It was agreed that the President of the United States would pay an official visit to the Soviet Union at the beginning of next year. □

Treaty signed in Paris

A SUMMIT meeting of the heads of states and governments of member-countries of the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe opened in the Paris International Conference Centre on November 19. The Soviet delegation led by President Mikhail Gorbachev included Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and Defence Minister Dmitri Yazov.

The participants signed a treaty on conventional armed forces in Europe and a declaration by member-countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, in which members of the two alliances announced that they were no longer enemies.

Greeting the participants, President Francois Mitterrand of France noted that Europe was for the first time witnessing deep transformations

which did not result from a war or bloody revolution.

There are no winners or losers around this table here today, the French President said, but only representatives of 34 equitable countries. Earlier they discussed how to regulate relations of strength. Now it is necessary to create relations of solidarity on the basis of common values.

President Mikhail Gorbachev spoke in favour of the active and urgent continuation of Vienna talks, in which representatives of all 34 CSCE member-countries should take part.

They, Gorbachev proposed, could take up the elaboration of new comprehensive confidence building measures, along with the further reduction of their armed forces and changes in their structures.

The next two years before the Helsinki-2 Conference, he noted, will be "a test period for the unprecedented mechanism of European interac-

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Mikhail Gorbachev speaks at Rome ceremony

ACCORD between the USSR and Italy – two friendly states – in which they “state their readiness to act together in European and world affairs, has been recorded in an international legal document,” Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev said. He was speaking in Rome on November 18 at the ceremony of signing a treaty of friendship and co-operation between the Soviet Union and Italy. The Soviet leader was paying a one-day working visit to that country at the invitation of the Italian leadership.

Gorbachev pointed out that until “quite recently it was unthinkable for the states, situated on opposite sides of the ‘iron curtain’, to be able to sign a joint document, the title of which include the word ‘friendship’. However, the unprecedentedly rapid development of events in Europe has brought us closer together, and the concluding of a treaty of this kind has become a natural thing.”

The Soviet President stressed that the treaty, signed by the USSR and Italy, “gives a new impetus to the two countries’ movement towards each other and, at the same time, promotes the European cause and peace in general.”

Pointing to the symbolic nature of the signing of the Soviet-Italian treaty on the eve of the opening of the all-European summit in Paris, Gorbachev specially mentioned the fact that the summit “can rely on a series of bilateral treaties of a new type,” among which the Soviet-Italian

Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation “will hold its special and important place.” He also pointed out that the Soviet-Italian treaty “is to become an integral part of a new system of security and co-operation, which is being created to replace the bloc system. It will consolidate the trend, which has long promoted the European idea.”

Gorbachev urged that the treaty be turned into “an effective instrument of versatile bilateral co-operation and the implementation of the ideas recorded in it, which are bringing closer a new epoch.”

Touching upon the talks he had with the Italian leadership, Gorbachev said that he had discussed the Gulf crisis with Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti. “We regarded the Gulf conflict from the point of view of the fact that all of us, the world community and the United Nations, found ourselves in a really acute situation.”

According to Gorbachev, all the United Nations had done in connection with the Gulf conflict is evidence of the enormous potentialities of the United Nations, the Security Council, and of the level of maturity of the leaders of states and nations. “There are new ideas which are to be thought over and studied. I am sure that we are moving towards the settlement of the crisis affecting us all, and that we shall manage to find a solution to it,” he said.

He went on to say that he had discussed with Giulio Andreotti the possibilities of developing relations between the European communities and the USSR in the setting of the processes taking place in Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals. According to the Soviet President, the sides are optimistic about prospects of economic

relations between the European communities and the Soviet Union.

Gorbachev confirmed an invitation to Giulio Andreotti to pay an official visit to the Soviet Union.

Speaking about his meeting with the Pope, Gorbachev pointed out that it was “a very important contact.” Their conversation, the President continued, dealt with the most burning problems, which are a source of concern for the peoples in Europe and the world. “I was very much satisfied with the interest that his holiness showed in the processes taking place in the Soviet Union,” the Soviet leader stressed. □

★ ★ ★ Gorbachev meets Pope

THE next meeting of the heads of two states – the Soviet Union and the Vatican – will probably be held in the USSR, President Gorbachev has stated. Questioned by TASS about the results of his meeting with the head of the Roman Catholic Church, Gorbachev said that he was very much satisfied with their conversation.

President Gorbachev met Pope John Paul II during his one-day working visit to Italy. It was their second meeting. The first one taking place early in December, 1989.

The Pope is the head of a state that signed the Final Act of the European Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe in 1975 and the spiritual leader of 800 million Catholics living all over the world. □

Gorbachev meets Canadian Foreign Minister

ON November 17 President Gorbachev received Canadian Foreign Minister Joe Clark, it was officially announced in Moscow. Mr Clark was paying a working visit to the Soviet Union.

During the conversation which passed in a warm and friendly atmosphere the two politicians discussed the development of Soviet-Canadian relations and the two countries’ interaction on the international scene.

Gorbachev told the Canadian guest about the current session of the Soviet Parliament, the development of the situation in the country and contradictory processes accompanying perestroika.

The two statesmen substantively discussed

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tion, set in motion here in Paris.”

The Paris CSCE summit is a major event of European and world scope, UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar told summit participants. The development of the CSCE process, he noted, opens great possibilities for interaction between the member-countries and the United Nations, above all in such fields as peaceful settlement of conflicts, economic co-operation, human rights, the solution of social problems and environmental protection. The United Nations and the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe have common aims, he stressed.

Later in the day, President Mikhail Gorbachev had conversations with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar and US President George Bush. □

progress in implementing the agreements reached with the Canadian side during the previous summits in Moscow and Ottawa. They emphasised mutual desire to deepen the political dialogue between the USSR and Canada, extend areas of bilateral co-operation, solidify its legal basis and master new forms of trade and economic ties.

It recognised as important to take a new step in Soviet-Canadian co-operation – to utilise the accumulated potential of mutual understanding to solve specific practical issues of bilateral interaction, including in the field of public health, mutual insurance of citizens, legal assistance, humanitarian area, and so on.

The sides reiterated their preparedness promptly to work out a new trade agreement.

The Canadian side expressed readiness to give economic assistance to the Soviet Union, including by supplying food on easy terms.

In discussing international issues, priority was given to the situation in the Gulf. The two politicians emphasised both states’ determination to exert unremitting and consistent efforts, in co-operation with the other member-nations of the world community, to secure the fulfilment of respective UN Security Council resolutions.

The two statesmen pointed out the importance of the forthcoming Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) summit in Paris, which is meant to become a historic milestone in enhancing security and increasing co-operation in Europe.

★ ★ ★

Forty-five volunteer consultants from Canada will work in the Soviet Union, says a press release circulated in Moscow on November 16

after the end of Soviet-Canadian talks with the participation of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and his Canadian counterpart, Joe Clark.

Under a project worth about 500,000 dollars, experts from the Canadian Executive Services Organisation (CESO) will help state-owned and private companies in the USSR during privatisation and the transition to market relations.

A group of Canadian specialists in industrial production, agriculture and business will help Soviet organisations to prepare for the establishment of joint ventures with Western firms.

The CESO was established in 1967. It dispatched 6,000 volunteer consultants under 18,000 projects in various countries over the 23 years of its operation.

This year 2,000 similar programmes will be implemented in 45 countries with the participation of this organisation. □

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Soviet President reports on the state of the country

DETERMINATION, the separation of powers between authorities at various levels and the earliest conclusion of a new union treaty – these are the priority tasks facing the country, according to President Mikhail Gorbachev.

He was addressing the Soviet Parliament in a report on the state of the country on November 16.

Having emphasised that he shares the deputies' concern over the deteriorating economic and political situation in the country, citing inter-ethnic conflicts in particular, Gorbachev said he sees a way out of the situation through the consolidation of all pro-perestroika forces, not through confrontation.

Gorbachev categorically rejected accusations that the federal centre does not have a plan for getting out of the crisis.

"There is a specific programme and it should be implemented," he emphasised.

The President dwelt in detail on matters concerning the socio-economic situation in the country, including the preparation of the national economy for the coming winter.

He strongly criticised "a spate of speculations about approaching hunger and cold," saying that the country procured food with due regard for actual requirements. "Measures concerning the

Gorbachev meets East European party leaders

SOVIET Communist Party General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev met on November 15 the participants in a Moscow meeting of leaders of the Bulgarian Socialist Party, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, the German Party of Democratic Socialism, Poland's Social Democratic Party and the Czechoslovak Communist Party.

Gorbachev spoke of the need to analyse the legacy of leftist parties in Central and Eastern Europe.

The Soviet leadership greatly respects the choice of neighbouring nations and wants to preserve all that is good and valuable in its relations with these countries, he said.

"We are aware of difficulties several leftist parties in Eastern and Central Europe are facing. The majority of members in the existing and former communist parties in the region are honest, convinced socialists, prepared to work for the benefit of the people," Gorbachev said.

"We solidarise with them and demand an end to their persecution and will continue to expand friendly contacts with them.

"We shouldn't forget that anti-communism was always fanned up and used by Nazis and fascists to achieve anti-democratic, anti-popular goals," he said.

The Soviet Communist Party regards leftist democratic parties as partners in renewing and developing economic and political co-operation between countries in the region in order to promote international and social stability, Gorbachev said.

Stabilisation is a necessary requirement for the common European process that is expected to be expedited by the forthcoming European summit in Paris. □

import of food will also be taken," he said.

Speaking about the political situation in the country, Gorbachev pointed to "pressure by disruptive forces that hinder the consolidation of society and the country's exit from the crisis."

He said a real struggle for power was under way, with participants "not disdaining any means" at their disposal. Ferocious attempts are being made to discredit state power bodies, he added.

The President believes that republican or regional barriers to the flow of commodity and material sources are inadmissible "because they would have a ruinous effect on an all-union market."

Speaking about creating an all-union market, Gorbachev criticised overt or covert bans, introduced by some republics, on concluding contracts outside their territories.

"Does this promote entrepreneurship, the display of initiative, economic freedom, including the freedom to choose partners?" he queried.

"If matters follow this trend, it could result in a worst diktat with regard to enterprises than was previously the case. Economic managers are beginning to point this out increasingly often," Gorbachev said.

Reporting the results of his recent meeting with Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin, Gorbachev voiced surprise that the meet's results "are being presented in the form of ultimatum-type demands, nearly as an act of capitulation."

The discussion focused on the drafting and conclusion of a new union treaty, he said. The separation of powers was considered within the same context. The reorganisation of power structures was considered as well, he added.

Speaking about Yeltsin's proposal to set up a coalition government, Gorbachev said that such an approach is possible only provided it is observed at all levels, including the republican one.

Touching upon the crisis-of-power subject that has been discussed often recently, Gorbachev said that it was to a large extent brought about by the lack of a clear-cut delineation of competence between the union and republics and between power in the centre and at the local level.

People are "becoming increasingly convinced of the need to conclude a new union treaty as soon as possible," he said.

Signing it soon will help normalise the political situation and tackle matters in concert to stabilise the economy and switch to a market economy, Gorbachev said.

Before such a treaty is signed, the President of the USSR suggested devising an approach "that would ensure an effective functions of the entire system of power during the transitional stage."

Such an approach, he believes, should include, on the one hand, "the absolute recognition and observance of the current constitution" and, on the other, the "realisation of the legitimate interests of the union republics." This would require changing power structures.

Gorbachev suggested that the USSR Supreme Soviet propose that republican parliaments announce a moratorium on decisions that give rise to arguments over the competence issue, until a new union treaty is concluded.

"Otherwise, we shall be paralysed and will not be able to overcome the paralysis," he said.

Speaking about the federal government structure, Gorbachev said it should undergo radical changes before the treaty is adopted. With this end in view, outdated, obviously unnecessary

structures should be abandoned, and work should be finalised to shape new elements necessary for the transition to a market. All this should be accompanied by the renewal of government composition, he added.

"We need a government with a broad social basis," Gorbachev emphasised.

"Without people's trust it is difficult, if possible at all, to effectively pursue a policy to exit from the crisis," he said.

The need to conclude a new union treaty, Gorbachev stressed, is prompted by arguments of both domestic and international nature. "The role of the Soviet Union in the world and its responsibility for the course of international development are exceptionally great. We cannot reconcile ourselves to separatists' attempts to turn the union into a flabby entity devoid of single will or even to dismember it," he said.

The President also drew deputies' attention to the economic aspect of the issue. "Many countries, financial and business communities are prepared to give us assistance during the difficult transition to a market," he said.

Speaking about the country's foreign policy course, Gorbachev said that in his capacity as the President he will represent the course "that was endorsed by the Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet and that we have consistently pursued throughout the years of perestroika. This course has already yielded considerable positive results."

Having recalled that he would leave for France soon to attend the second Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) summit, Gorbachev referred to it as "a major landmark in the history of our continent."

He said three major documents are expected to be signed: a treaty on cuts in conventional arms in Europe, a declaration on non-aggression between NATO and Warsaw Treaty countries, and a special document that is expected to map out the main directions of the CSCE process.

The President's report at the parliamentary session was followed by a discussion. □

CPSU Politburo discusses Party role

THE Politburo of the Soviet Communist Party met in a session, presided over by its General Secretary, Mikhail Gorbachev, on November 16.

The Politburo discussed the Party's role in political, economic and legal stabilisation of the country. Speakers noted the need for persistent work to implement economic reform and transfer to market relations.

The Politburo considered the concept of a union treaty and the tasks confronting Party organisations in the present situation. It decided to convene a Central Committee plenary meeting in early December.

Participants discussed anti-democratic acts and facts of human rights violations in Lithuania. The Politburo condemned these acts spearheaded against public forces seeking to safeguard democratic gains and socialist ideals and favouring the signing of a new union treaty.

It condemned anti-communist hysteria and the persecution of people for their pro-union views.

The Politburo also discussed plans for Politburo work in November and December and some other aspects of Party work. □

Gorbachev proposes measures to stabilise the present situation

PRESIDENT Mikhail Gorbachev on November 17 proposed to the Soviet Parliament a host of measures to enhance political and economic stability, establish better public order and discipline, and normalise inter-ethnic relations.

Gorbachev proposed dissolving the Presidential Council, setting up a council of security in the office of the President, vesting the USSR Federation Council with qualitatively new powers and turning it from an advisory body into an effective structure to co-ordinate efforts between the centre and the republics.

An inter-republican committee, in which highly-qualified specialists and experts, delegated by the constituent republics, could co-operate on the permanent basis, should become the Federation Council's working body.

Gorbachev thinks it is necessary that an urgent fundamental re-organisation of executive power in the centre be carried out by subordinating it directly to the President.

He said new resourceful people with an unorthodox mode of thinking should be brought into the cabinet of ministers. He proposed that the post of vice-president be instituted. Simul-

aneously, necessary decisions need to be taken to ensure the effective operation of local executive bodies.

The President proposed forming a presidential supervising body to ensure that laws, decrees and decisions were implemented all over the country. This body should have plenipotentiary representatives in all regions.

Emphasising the need to tighten law and order, Gorbachev proposed forming a body to co-ordinate the activity of law enforcement organisations within the framework of the presidential rule.

He also proposed setting up a special body in the office of the President to combat organised crime, the shadow economy, profiteering and other manifestations of the criminal activity that has swept the country. Gorbachev said this issue had already been worked out and the new body could begin operating within ten to 12 days.

Gorbachev said he was categorically against "the division of the state, the reshaping of the territory and rupturing of the peoples' age-old ties."

"We see from our own bitter experience, which witness peoples' blood, that we will not be able to break up. Therefore, we cannot and should not embark on this path. We should get down urgently and seriously to separating pow-

ers and competence and implement everything which is envisaged by our plan to renew the multi-ethnic state," Gorbachev said.

The president called to help soviets to maintain close interaction and co-ordinate their efforts, and to shun confrontation and futile rivalry in the interests of the common cause.

Gorbachev emphasised the importance of taking urgent measures to improve food supply to the population and ensure the smooth operation of the railway transport and the power industry.

He urged increased attention to the problems faced by the Army and put in place social safeguards for servicemen and members of their families.

"The proposed measures aim to accomplish our strategic tasks and carry on democratic transformations in the country," Gorbachev said. "I appeal to the citizens of all of the fifteen republics to support this programme of practical measures," Gorbachev said.

The President expressed hope that he would receive support and co-operation from "all people of the country, all creative forces who cherish the goals of national accord, civil peace and stability, without which we will not be able to advance."

"A political defeat should be administered to those who will go against this general sentiment of the people," Gorbachev said. □

Soviet Parliament approves Gorbachev's proposals

WHAT will be the future of the Union of Soviet Republics – this was the focus of the deliberations in the Soviet Parliament in the November 17 debate. Following Mikhail Gorbachev's proposals on this subject made at a joint session of Parliament a vote was taken. Three-hundred-and-sixteen deputies were in favour, 19 against and there were 31 abstentions.

Parliament decided to give the floor first to leaders of the Soviet republics. They were all taking part in the debate (with the exception of the leaders of Lithuanian and Estonia).

Russian President Boris Yeltsin again demanded the resignation of the federal government, regarding it as the bulwark of the country's conservative forces. He believes executive functions should be transferred to a coalition body – an extraordinary anti-crisis committee – which should be formed of representatives from the union republics on an equal footing.

"The anti-crisis committee must be charged with the difficult task of co-ordinating republican programmes for the creation of a market economy and transferring the federal property to the republics, particularly the part affecting their sovereign rights," the Russian leader stressed. "It must implement an anti-crisis policy and gradually form a new structure of economic power with due account for the functions that the republics will delegate to the union."

Noting that it was the President's prerogative to consolidate various political forces, organisations, parties and movements, Yeltsin called for "enhancing the President's authority. He must stop making mistakes and clinging to the old system, propped up by the federal government today."

Noting that "the economic and political crisis in the country has come to a head, the people's patience was ending and an explosion could oc-

cur at any time," Yeltsin said this was explained by the desire of central authorities, primarily the federal government, to perpetuate the unitary character of the USSR and the power of federal bodies.

Noting that the food situation was extremely tense, Yeltsin called for rationing food supplies and using strategic reserves. He said that "pride should be pocketed and the West asked for food aid."

"The economic and political crisis besetting the Soviet Union is explained by the federal leadership's inconsistent and sometimes simply illogical policy," Ukrainian Premier Vitold Fokin stressed. He said the situation in the USSR was characterised by a continued economic collapse, spiralling inflation, the disintegration of economic ties, the agony of the crediting, financial and monetary systems and complete anarchy in social production.

Fokin qualified as a "political miscalculation" the fact that the all-union programme for switching over to a market economy was drawn up without first deciding whether there will be a federal treaty or not. "The President's report has not clarified the situation," he noted.

The same point was stressed by the Byelorussian Prime Minister Vyacheslav Kebich. We must admit that the Soviet Union "today exists only constitutionally," he noted. Kebich urged saving "what is left of the erstwhile union. But this must be done without zigzags and with due account for the existing realities," he added. Kebich believes the new union should be "a union of equal partners from its very inception."

Kebich noted the federal leadership's inconsistency in the economic matters. "One gets the impression," he said, "that, while paying lip service to consolidation, practically everything is being done in the centre to engender the opposite and to create precedents for putting the economic interests of the republics one against the other."

Speaking on behalf of the leadership or Uzbek-

kistan, a Central Asian Soviet Republic, People's Deputy Alikhan Atadzhonov said the political power crisis in the country could be overcome by the immediate conclusion of a new federal treaty "within the next 10 or 15 days." Recalling that the Uzbek Republic was among the first to declare its sovereignty, he said its population "does not dream of separatism or secession from the union."

Atadzhonov said that central executive bodies can be formed only after the federal treaty was concluded. Without referring to the recent meeting between Gorbachev and Yeltsin, during which the Russian leader claimed the posts of Prime Minister and defence and finance ministers for the Russian Federation, the Uzbek representatives criticised attempts to share ministerial portfolios now, the more so since "this is being done behind the backs of other republics."

Chairman of the Kazakh Supreme Soviet Yurik Asanbayev went on record for the prompt conclusion of a new federal treaty "irrespective of which republics want or do not want to sign it." Nevertheless, he noted that the powers of the centre and the union republics should be clearly delineated before the document is signed. "The technology of delegation to the centre," he said, "must envisage their partial transfer by the republics to the centre, and not vice versa."

Asanbayev believes republics must be "plenipotentiary subjects of foreign economic relations" and the federal bodies should only play a consultative role.

Describing the present situation in the country, Asanbayev noted that "there were no co-ordinating efforts by the federal government. We get the impression," he stressed, "that it prefers the tactic of belated revelations, which will finally ruin the country." He blamed primarily the federal government for the existing situ-

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Prices on luxury items to soar

THE Soviet Government has decided to allow free market prices on car parts and other non-essentials. Russian Deputy Prime Minister Stepan Sitarian told a news conference in Moscow on November 14.

Deputy Chairman of the Soviet State Pricing Committee Anatoli Komin told journalists about the resolution adopted by the Soviet Government on Monday, November 12 *On Transition to Contract Retail Prices for a Number of Consumer Goods*. Producers of jewellery, natural fur coats – except for sheepskin and rabbit hides – furniture, tapestry, fourth generation radio electronic equipment, crystal, porcelain, vintage wines and brandy will price their products under contracts with sellers.

The list also includes imported goods, including cosmetics.

The consumer market situation makes it obvious that prices for luxury articles will double as soon as administrative control is loosened.

The government hopes to balance the consumer market and combat profiteers with their own weapons. Unfortunately, according to the Soviet Pricing Committee, the population has hoarded 130-billion roubles worth of food. Why not compensate for the skyrocketing luxury article prices by selling essentials at exorbitant prices? A chain reaction effect will send these prices up all the same.

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ation and moved to “decide the question of its present composition.”

A large delegation from the Georgian Parliament came to the session at the invitation of the USSR Supreme Soviet. During the recent elections, most of the seats in the Georgian Parliament were won by opposition forces.

On behalf of the new Georgian Parliament, First Vice Chairman of the republic's Supreme Soviet Akaky Asatiani officially declared that “Georgia would not sign the federal treaty.” He claimed that Georgia “lost her national independence in 1921 due to Soviet Russia's aggression” and therefore it could not juridically regard itself as a member of the union.

The Georgian representative said that the first meeting of the Georgian Parliament declared the republic's transition to the restoration of its statehood. Reckoning with the fact that “today Georgia is actually part of the Soviet Union,” the Georgian Parliament favours peaceful, compromise steps towards this goal in order not to destabilise the situation, he said.

Chairman of the Azerbaijan Supreme Soviet Elmira Kafarova favoured the preservation and further development of relations between the republics within the framework of the union, provided it is radically renovated. She believes the draft federal treaty should determine the common interests of republics, for the sake of which the union is to be created. In her opinion, the present draft “presupposes a modernisation of the existing union and not its reorganisation.”

President of the Moldavian Republic Mircha Snegur expressed reservations about the federal treaty. “We will be able to make our final decision after the concept or draft of the treaty is discussed in the Supreme Soviet of our republic,” he said. Snegur added that the signing of the treaty or accession to the union “must be decided by all the Moldavian people.” The Moldavian leader favoured the foundation of the future alliance of sovereign states on confederative principles. He said the sovereign republics “must be able to choose the terms on which they

As for those who hoard jewellery to protect themselves from devaluation of the rouble, they will hardly be put out by the doubling of prices.

What can be done to stop producers from reducing, not increasing production in order to maintain high prices for their goods?

What can be done with the distributors who will sign contracts for higher prices and share monopoly profits with the producers?

There is no anti-monopoly legislation in the country. According to the initiators of the new experiment, the Soviet Finance Ministry will be able to use turnover tax rate as a lever to control enterprises. If this fails, the State Pricing Committee and the USSR Trade Ministry will punish rapacious entrepreneurs and dealers by cutting their contract prices and transferring to the state budget the money they have siphoned from the consumer.

The government believes in local authorities endowed with the right to supervise and coordinate pricing in conjunction with the distributors.

There will be fewer questions if the union government released its grip over prices in line with active privatisation and economic demonopolisation.

One thing is clear at the outset – we shall be badly bruised because we are entering a market of which as yet little is known to most of us, Sitarian said. □

will accede to the new union.”

The Moldavia President also informed Parliament on the situation in his republic. He described it as complicated and contradictory. Turning to the coming elections in the so-called Dniester republic on the territory of Moldavia (mostly inhabited by Russian-speaking people), scheduled for November 25, he said: “It is difficult to foresee the consequences that may be triggered by these elections, if they take place.”

Chairman of the Latvian Supreme Soviet Anatoli Gorbunov said that Latvia would sign agreements with the Soviet Union only if it was recognised as an independent state. “Our parliament will conclude political treaties only if the political status of the Latvian Republics is recognised. Mutually advantageous and friendly relations can be guaranteed only by a treaty signed by equal subjects in the sense of international law, that is between independent states,” he stressed.

Gorbunov disagreed with Mikhail Gorbachev's call to the republics to honour the Soviet Constitution until a new federal treaty is signed and to declare a moratorium on decisions engendering disputes with the centre. According to the Latvian leader, this is “incompatible with Latvia's interests.”

Kirghizian President Askar Akayev backed the concept of the new federal treaty. After it was signed by the republics, he said, “our country will remain a mighty power in the contemporary world and will continue to exert a huge stabilising and revitalising influence on the planet's political climate. Everybody who is prepared to sign the treaty, must immediately start talks to add the last touches to it,” the Kirghizian leader said.

Outlining ways to overcome the economic crisis, the Kirghizian President stressed as one of the primary measures the “injection of foreign consumer goods into the country.” He moved to “turn our eyes to the East,” since “the West promises much, but we have seen no real steps yet,” he said.

According to Akayev, it is very important to “settle the political contradictions with Japan and to conclude an economic co-operation

Mikhail Nenashev appointed Soviet Press chief

PRESIDENT Gorbachev on November 14 appointed Mikhail Nenashev, former head of the Soviet Committee on Television and Radio, Chairman of the Soviet Committee on the Press.

In accordance with the enforcement of the Soviet law *On the Press and Other Mass Media* and the need to ensure Soviet citizens' rights to receive and disseminate information, broader rights for publishing houses and polygraphic enterprises and the differentiation of functions between central and local authorities, it is deemed necessary to radically reorganise the State Committee on the Press, Gorbachev's decree says.

Nenashev has been given a two week deadline to submit proposals on ways to reform current state media structures to the Soviet Government.

The decree also said that in new economic conditions the mass media needed state support and economic and legal protection. □

agreement with that country.” He also called for accelerating Gorbachev's visit to Japan in order to hold corresponding talks.”

President Levon Ter-Petrosian of Armenia proposed creating new supreme authority bodies in the centre, capable of conciliatory functions. He said it was necessary in the first place to establish an economic conciliation committee consisting of republican premiers with the Union Prime Minister as the chief executive, directing the fulfillment of their decisions.

The functions of the conciliatory committee may be vested in the federation council, if its status is clearly defined, Ter-Petrosian suggested.

He said, that the time when a new union treaty could be signed is already past. It is impossible to sign it now when sovereignty processes are deepening in the republics which are concerned with the division of authority with the centre.

President Kakhar Makhkamov of Tajikistan adhered to an opposite viewpoint – he insisted on the prompt signing of a union treaty. Makhkamov recalled that Tajikistan's declaration of sovereignty stressed that the republic found inconceivable its existence outside the Soviet Union. He supported Mikhail Gorbachev's proposal to impose a moratorium on republican decisions which are at variance with the present Soviet Constitution until a new union treaty was signed.

First Deputy Prime Minister of Turkmenia Ata Charyev also favoured the prompt conclusion of a union treaty, based on the declarations of sovereignty approved by the republics. Taking into account that forming new state structures will take a long time, while the country needs a firm hand, Charyev proposed vesting executive powers in the President without delay.

On behalf of the Estonian Government, permanent envoy of the republic to Moscow Yuri Kahn told the Soviet Parliament that his republic had no intention of signing a treaty in which Estonia's status as part of the union would be laid down.

He called on the Soviet Parliament to recognise the Estonian republic as a de-jure independent state and not to hinder the restoration of complete political independence de-facto. He called for continuing talks to search for a compromise in meeting the mutual interests of the Soviet Union and Estonia and not hampering mutually beneficial relations between Estonian and other union republics.

Representatives of autonomies spoke after a brief intermission. □

Gorbachev meets participants in world trade union congress

SOVIET trade unions are vitally interested in partnership relations with all constructive political and public forces, capable of consolidating the country and improving living standards on a new economic basis, President Mikhail Gorbachev told participants in the 12th World Trade Union Congress meeting in Moscow on November 14.

Gorbachev called for a radical renewal of Soviet trade unions, following their recent congress.

"I am convinced that we are not straying from the chosen path, and do not abandon the socialist choice, supported by most Soviet citizens," Gorbachev said.

"We have abandon barracks socialism, and the command-bureaucratic system, which limited man's freedom and his creative abilities.

"By casting aside heavy deformations, we, step by step, focus our attention on the rights of the man of labour, his economic freedom, a chance to implement political, social and other creative capabilities.

"A pluralism of opinions and approaches is being asserted in our country. However, there are calls for other ideological and social policies.

If they do not contradict the law we believe they are acceptable and even normal," Gorbachev said.

The President thanked trade union representatives from across the world for their solidarity with Soviet perestroika.

"We primarily rely on ourselves, on our human and scientific potential and natural resources. We have to fully consider the historical specifics of such a unique multi-national country as ours, and at the same time rely on the best in world culture and international experience," he said.

The Soviet leader is in favour of active interaction of all political and public forces, including trade unions, in order to overcome the legacy of the cold war and improve relations between the East and West, North and South.

It is necessary to overcome the consequences of the global standoff and the exhausting arms race, a deficit of trust, ethnic alienation, poverty, hunger and excessive foreign debt, Gorbachev said.

International trade union leaders supported political solutions of international conflicts and greater authority of the United Nations and wished success to the peoples of the Soviet Union in their reforms, which, they said, is a major guarantee of irreversible, positive change in the world. □

Russia and the Ukraine sign agreement

RUSSIAN and Ukrainian presidents Boris Yeltsin and Leonid Kravchuk on November 19 signed an agreement between the Russian Federation and the Ukraine.

The agreement, proceeding with the republican declarations on state sovereignty passed several months ago, notes that the sides recognise each other as sovereign states.

Under the agreement, they will develop equal and mutually beneficial co-operation in the political, economic, cultural and humanitarian spheres, health protection, ecology, science, technology and trade, promote broad information exchange and conscientiously and strictly observe the obligations taken.

In order to implement the agreement, of ten year duration, the sides considered it necessary to set up a permanent interparliamentary commission for co-operation.

The presidents also adopted a joint statement demanding that the Soviet Parliament respect the two republics' sovereignty.

Welcoming the Russian Parliament's delegation, which came to Kiev to sign the treaty, Kravchuk noted that the Ukraine attaches great importance to the meeting. "The two republics and the peoples of the Ukraine and Russia can have a stabilising influence on the process of perestroika," he said.

Speaking of the economic, scientific and cultural potential of the two republics whose population exceeds 200 million people, Yeltsin noted that by joining their efforts they could better resolve problems to improve people's well-being.

It is especially important in conditions when an economic crisis is aggravating and people's living standards being lowered, he said. "We resolutely denounce the settlement that Russia is claiming the key role and that the centre is shifting to Russia. On the contrary, having arrived in Kiev, we have shown our desire to build relations on an equality basis," Yeltsin said. □

Alexander Yakovlev addresses international forum

THERE is no moral justification for the persecution of dissenters - this is against freedom, talent and creativity, against man and against man's human nature, Soviet Presidential Council member Alexander Yakovlev said on November 15.

He was speaking to participants in an international round table discussion on global

morale and human dimension in the European process, which opened in Moscow on November 15.

Yakovlev spoke about the history of the dissident movement in the Soviet Union.

"We are only beginning to analyse the dissident movement," Yakovlev said.

For decades, the persecution of dissidents won broad public support and this could happen even now, he said.

Commenting on the moral aspect in international relations, Yakovlev said confrontational thinking was a major case of conflicts - from judicial to military.

He called for legal solutions to all future conflicts.

Global progress should serve the interests of each individual person, he said. □

Gorbachev meets Italian communist party leader

ON November 15 Mikhail Gorbachev met Italian Communist Party leader Achille Occhetto, who was in Moscow on a short working visit, to discuss pressing problems of internal and international politics.

Occhetto informed Gorbachev of the situation in his party in connection with its transformation into a new "democratic party of left-wing forces."

Gorbachev noted that discussion in society on ways of its further development has escalated sharply at the present stage of perestroika. The top priority task is to consolidate society and to prevent extremists from winning the popular masses to their side.

The next one or two years will be the most difficult, Gorbachev continued. It is very important to conclude a new union treaty without any delay. The Soviet people now often witness a "parade of sovereignty" and defiance of the centre.

Of course, people need another centre which is devoid of bureaucracy. "But it is also self-evident that our multinational state has been developing during centuries and that there was and is interdependence between all the republics in the economy, culture and human relations," Gorbachev continued.

When discussing the international situation, they focused on the Gulf crisis. Gorbachev stressed the principled nature of what the international community encountered.

In fact, the nations of the world are now dealing with the first major international crisis since the end of the cold war. The world is now asking whether states can give an adequate political answer to challenges cast by development.

Unanimity within the United Nations is a great achievement. The international community should use all possibilities arising from this unique fact in the organisation's history.

It is very important to make active use of the Arab factor. World nations should welcome the Moroccan King's initiative to hold a pan-Arab summit.

On the other hand, the international community should use any option capable of ensuring the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions.

It is necessary to maintain close contacts with the United States, France, Italy and Arab countries, having in mind the great responsibility resting on all to prevent the spread of the conflict and to restore the legitimate rights of the aggression's victims. □

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A stage of creation

Sergei Karaganov, Deputy Director of the Europe Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences, answers questions put by the Dutch newspaper Krant op Zondag:

KRANT OP ZONDAG: What is the historical importance of the CSCE summit now that the positions of European countries and relations between them have changed. Germany has reunited, Albania has changed its attitude to the CSCE process, major changes are under way in East European countries and the Soviet Union and so on?

KARAGANOV: The historical importance of this summit is obvious. In 1989-90 Europe has entered a new stage in its history, and the main problem now is to seal it organisationally, determining the institutions and rules necessary for the creation of the future system of European security.

Changes in Eastern Europe and the two German states clearly show that the existing institutions, NATO and the Warsaw Treaty, though they may be useful, cannot meet the challenges facing European security now. These are the challenges of the transition period, such as instability and the new natural and unfounded fears of East European countries before each other and the power of the re-united Germany.

It is obvious that we need new institutions, and I think the Paris summit will lay the foundations for their creation (such as centres for averting the risk of conflicts at the CSCE Secretariat). The new historical stage which we have entered reminds me of Europe in 1949-55, when the foundations of the current security system were created. But at that period Europe created the systems and structures of a world of confrontation. Today we shall attempt to establish systems of a non-confrontational world.

What will the signing of the agreement on conventional arms reductions mean for the military situation in Europe?

To begin with, it will mean the alleviation of the military burden weighing down on all states, the growing belief in national security in the USSR and other countries, and a start to overcoming military confrontation, which only seems to have become a thing of the past but has not actually been eliminated yet. The signing of the agreement on conventional reductions will pave the way to further reductions of military arsenals.

I am not sure that further reductions will be a result of negotiations. It is very difficult to hold talks now that the Warsaw Treaty is becoming a less monolithic organisation. But is it clear that the current ceilings, provided for in the Vienna agreements, will come down in a few years and countries will start unilaterally reducing their armaments on a much greater scale than now, on condition that the political situation does not worsen.

It is also important that the Vienna agreement was complemented by the unilateral reduction

of the Bundeswehr. I do not believe that a military threat emanates from Germany, but that country, with its history of wars, engenders a feeling of psychological suspicion. The major reduction of the armed forces of the re-united Germany will add trust to the peace-loving aspirations of that great European state.

Why has the problem of tanks in each member country appeared in the Warsaw Treaty? How was it solved? Are there any differences in the Warsaw Treaty as regards conventional reductions?

As far as I know, all questions have been settled in principle, apart from the small ones and those that concern technicalities. The problem appeared when the Soviet Union was left more or less without allies due to the dramatic weakening of the Warsaw Treaty integrity. The Soviet Union was forced to regard its armed forces largely from the viewpoint of the task of being equal to NATO's forces.

This logic can be questioned, yet it is reasonable from the military viewpoint. That is why the Soviet Union advanced the idea, semi-officially, of having a greater share of tanks than that accorded it under the preliminary agreement. The Soviet Union suggested that it should have some 40 per cent of the tanks remaining in Europe and 80 per cent of the Warsaw Treaty's tanks. NATO thought that the Soviet Union should have some 30 per cent of tanks in Europe and, consequently, about 60 per cent of the Warsaw Treaty's tanks.

The sides eventually reached a compromise agreement, with the co-ordinated figure closer to that suggested by NATO.

In general, the issue raised by the Soviet Union was treated with understanding and we settled the problem.

Quite new problems have appeared in Eastern Europe and the USSR. There are ethnic conflicts (in Moldavia and other regions of the USSR as well as in Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Romania). How will this influence the CSCE process? Has this raised a new task before the CSCE, namely the task of settling ethnic conflicts and problems? What will happen if some nations (ethnic groups) in Europe decide to change borders? Will the solution of such problems become a new sphere of activity within the CSCE process? How can the CSCE solve such problems?

It is absolutely clear that there will be two key problems among the multitude of issues which the new system of European security is called upon to resolve. The first concerns ethnic minorities. The elimination of confrontation has created a situation in which many historical and underlying contradictions came to the fore and became more acute. I mean that many problems in Yugoslavia, in Yugoslav-Hungarian, Hungarian-Romanian and Hungarian-Czechoslovak relations. There are also such problems between Soviet republics.

We are in for a protracted period of acute ethnic problems. This can affect, and is already affecting, international relations. It is obvious that there is no more effective mechanism than the CSCE process to settle these problems. Sooner or later we shall have on the agenda the question of creating an agency for mediating in these conflicts, a centre for settling them. Maybe we shall have to think, and not in the distant future but very soon, about creating special limited multinational forces for maintaining peace, preventing conflicts and rendering assistance in case of calamities.

As for changing borders, I think that if nations or ethnic groups in Europe decide to change them, the CSCE and all European political organisations, be it the European communities

or NATO, should clearly express their attitude to the problem. If we give the green light to the changing of borders in Europe in any way other than by peaceful mutual agreement, this will throw us back fifty, a hundred and even more years.

We must do everything in our power to prevent the revision of borders recognised by the CSCE. At the same time, in the near future we must give small nations, and probably parts of states (in our case republics), the possibility to become members of corresponding CSCE bodies, which would satisfy their craving for sovereignty. In this case the CSCE would be not only a prohibiting but also an alleviating mechanism.

We are witnessing a parade of sovereignties, but after a while countries and republics will come to understand that they will have it harder if they try to go it alone. At the same time, to understand this they should see the world as it is, which many of them do not now. The real world is best understood through such a body as the CSCE, which is the focus of all European problems. This educational function of the CSCE is useful also for the new elites in East European countries.

We expect a great flow of emigrants from Eastern to Western Europe, in particular to Germany (some 30 million people). Will this raise a new problem before the CSCE, meaning the promotion of a quicker economic progress in the USSR and East European countries (in order to prevent or at least bring down this wave of "emigration of poverty")? What will happen in Europe and the USSR if the Soviet Union opens its borders to all, that is, if it lifts restrictions on the freedom of movement? What will be the role of the CSCE in this case?

At present the flow of emigrants from Eastern to Western Europe is considerable, but I do not think that 30 million people will emigrate to Germany. This figure was prompted by panic. However, it is clear that the opening of borders will raise new problems. Even in conditions of peace migration can become a problem for the USSR and East European countries, as well as for Western states.

For the former this will mean the emigration of highly educated specialists. But apart from them the poorest, the least adapted people will be emigrating to the West, which can aggravate many social problems and crime there. This can negatively affect relations between the East and the West, force the West to close its borders, and consequently shatter one of the key aims of the CSCE, the one of an open Europe.

That is why we should establish within the CSCE a service or a centre to regulate migration. Otherwise the new Europe will not be able to open its borders.

I do not think it would be expedient to use the CSCE for promoting a quicker economic progress of the USSR and East European countries. The CSCE should take a more active part in regulating economic processes in Europe and facilitate the creation of a common European space.

But there are organisations that could be used to promote a quicker economic progress of the USSR and East European countries. I mean the European communities and, possibly, dialogue between them and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

We should probably establish a small section at the CSCE to facilitate the interaction of these organisations. This could be done on the basis of the UN European Economic Commission, which includes nearly all CSCE countries but has been sleeping. It should be woken up. □

From a Woman's Viewpoint

Novosti correspondent Yelena BOGATYKH interviews ZOYA KRYLOVA, member of the Committee of the USSR Supreme Soviet on Women and the Protection of the Family, Maternity and Childhood, and Editor-in-Chief of the magazine *Rabotnitsa*.

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Germany: victory or defeat?

By Alexander Bovin

NEW documents on Soviet-German co-operation open up new vistas for the relations between the two countries.

For the first time, Germany was brought together by Bismark who gained victory over France. The second time came only 120 years later, under Gorbachev who gained victory over himself...

My correspondence reveals increasing anxieties of some Soviet people about what they see as meek foreign policies of their country which have already brought about the loss of Eastern Europe and the annexation of the German Democratic Republic by West Germany and NATO. They are also anxious about the disintegration of the Warsaw Treaty and COMECON which upsets the international prestige of the USSR and saps its security.

Often, write my correspondents, we have to keep smiling when things are spinning out of control, but we also have to face the music: we have been politically defeated by allowing West Germany to annex East Germany and the West to make it part of NATO. This is the opinion of many.

Well, I can understand this viewpoint and I respect these feelings. However, politics aren't about feelings at all. Guided by feelings we may pose the question about victories or setbacks, but we may answer it only guided by logic and a detailed analysis of political phenomena and developments. So, here it goes.

Let's start with basic premises. Did we fight a war with the purpose of dismembering Germany? No. We fought that war because we did not want Germany to be a source of military threat and aggression.

Two German states, special rights of the allied powers and a balance between the East and West reduced the German threat *per se*. We could pretend to have solved the German question, but we could not close our eyes to the German frustration with the split that bred new uncertainties in the heart of Europe.

That *status quo* could apparently be perpetuated, but the nation and history had their ultimate say. The pulling down of the Berlin Wall headed off a chain reaction and brought about German unification less than one year later.

Warsaw Treaty and NATO reach agreement on conventional arms

PARTICIPANTS in the Vienna talks on November 17 reached the final agreement on a treaty on conventional forces in Europe. The treaty drastically slashes the arsenals of non-nuclear weapons of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation and NATO to equal quantitative limits. It covers an area stretching from the Atlantic to the Urals.

The over 150-page agreement on conventional forces, which is an historic first, will be signed by the leaders of 22 Warsaw Treaty Organisation and NATO member-states at the all-European summit in Paris on November 19.

The treaty envisages dramatic reductions in the armouries of the two alliances.

Each alliance will be limited to 20,000 tanks, 20,000 artillery pieces, 30,000 armoured cars, 2,000 attack helicopters, and 6,800 combat aircraft. At issue are all combat aircraft, including front-line aviation, medium bombers, anti-aircraft defence interceptor fighters and training combat aircraft.

The national ceilings for the Soviet Union under the Budapest agreement, envisaging li-

Now, let's ask ourselves another question: what military-strategic changes does the German unification entail? The NATO-controlled territory augmented by another 100,000 sq. km., with its manpower increased by 17 million. In a few years, the last Soviet soldier will leave what has been East German territory. And that's that. If we recall that we are living not in 1941, but half a century later and that the emergence of nuclear weapons has drastically changed the concept of security, and that the current developments do not upset the balance of forces, any smart talk of strategic setbacks has lost its meaning.

Another positive factor is that the Federal Republic of Germany will actively participate in the further radical reductions in the CFE. Moreover, the FRG has pledged not to have chemical, biological and nuclear weapons. One more point is that the FRG has given all conceivable legal guarantees against militarist foreign policy.

I can envisage many an objection, like guarantees are only words and inked paper. When other generations of German politicians come, they will say different things and ink other papers. Okay, there is no denying this possibility, and there is nothing absolute in this world. But what should be realised is that real guarantees are not papers and words, but real interests.

At present and in the foreseeable future, neither of the German interests require a war. Germans don't need war, since it will not help them attain what they want, but can destroy everything (which refers not only to the Germans).

This premise is the only tangible and solid guarantee for peace in Europe. If the development of Europe remains within the Helsinki framework, which is very likely, these guarantees will only grow stronger.

And one more question: Could the Soviet Union prevent the re-unification of Germany? Could it not have "given" Germany to the Bundesrepublik? Theoretically, it could. Yes, the Soviet Union could have preserved the Wall and erected new walls if it had used force. But what next?

Even if we avoided a third world war and a nuclear missile exchange, we would have exploded detente, torn it to shreds, turned Washington back from partner into an opponent, called back to life the worst possible version of the Cold War and engendered a new spiral in

the arms race. I don't think it was worth it.

But the point at issue is not only this simple calculation. It is that in the latter half of the 1980s we grew smarter - though with a mighty delay - and saw the world around us as it is. We rejected the pain-killer illusions and saw that peoples, nations, which the Red Army liberated from fascism, did not accept Stalinist and neo-Stalinist models of "barrack socialism", they did not want to remain junior partners and renounced our armed interference in their affairs.

Understanding this was the first step. The second thing to do was to gear our policy to this understanding and to give "fraternal" countries the freedom of choice. And the third thing to do was to accept their choice even if we do not like it. We covered this road very quickly and, having overcome ourselves and our past, we geared our policy to the principles we proclaim. This initiated the work to heal the division of Europe, which was logically and politically crowned with the re-unification of Germany.

Yes, we have lost. We have lost the world we created ourselves and therefore suitable to us, the world where we were listened to and where we thought ourselves the most important and the most reasonable. The world we gained, where we found ourselves, is much more complicated and contradictory. In this world you cannot give orders - instead you have to negotiate. In this world you cannot demand respect for yourself if you do not respect others.

With time the feeling of loss and defeat, brought about by the fact that we are measuring modern realities with yesterdays yardstick, will become less painful and eventually disappear. But the things we have gained - co-operation instead of hostility, disarmament instead of the arms race, free exchange of ideas and people instead of visible and invisible walls - will become even bigger and ever more important.

In conclusion I shall repeat what I said and wrote more than once. Nobody is threatening us. Nobody is going to attack us. Because "they" do not need war. And because we are strong enough to be left alone. Against this background the new treaty with the new Germany is a major step towards the creation of a new Europe. It is also a step towards a better international position and security for this country. □

(Izvestia, November 11. In full.)

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