

## Mikhail Gorbachev's speech at reception in honour of Milos Jakes

*Here follows the full text of the speech of MIKHAIL GORBACHEV, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, at the dinner in honour of the visiting General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia Milos Jakes given in Moscow on January 11 —*

Dear Comrades and Friends

Comrade Jakes has long been known in our Party and country as a prominent figure of fraternal Czechoslovakia, communist-internationalist and sincere friend of the Soviet Union. It is a great pleasure to cordially welcome him in Moscow today in a new capacity — as General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia.

I pondered more than once — what determines the strength of ties among socialist countries, the reliability of the relations between the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia?

Soviet-Czechoslovak friendship has many live roots. They are in the deep recesses of people's memory and in feelings of kinship shared by our peoples. They are in the strategic unity of the aims of the two allied socialist nations and the considerable benefit received by our two countries from economic interaction. No matter how great the role of these factors is, one cannot fail to mention the invariable solidarity of the Soviet and Czechoslovak Communists based on mutual respect, confidence and honest partnership.

All this is a gain of our peoples, our common property. Both sides are resolved to uphold and strengthen them in all ways.

We have just completed an exchange of views and discussed a broad range of questions. There is a clear unity of views between the CPSU and the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia on principal issues of building socialism, on the international situation and on chief, priority directions of internal and foreign policy.

There is mutual agreement that acceleration of social and economic development in the USSR and in Czechoslovakia will help intensify further Soviet-Czechoslovak cooperation and will, in turn, receive fresh powerful impetuses from its development.

Our economic interaction is fruitful and effective. But life does not stand still. It is necessary to look for and introduce promising and more rational forms of cooperation and specialisation in production.

The experience of restructuring has proved to us that the advantages of the socialist system, including in the field of economic cooperation, do not materialise by themselves. They are but a possibility that is to be translated into life through painstaking work and through innovative policies. An old Russian proverb conveys this relationship between the possible and the real like this — God helps those who help themselves.

The Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia now need a scientifically substantiated long-term concept of economic, scientific and technological cooperation for 15-20 years ahead.

This is a task of immense importance, it ought to be tackled with all seriousness. We favour the renewal of all logjams and barriers standing in the way of integration. Experience gained and advanced ideas should be put into use. The creative energy of the masses is to be released to achieve concerted solution to problems of scientific and technological progress.

In brief, the results of our talks with Comrade Jakes can be summed up in the following way — while highly assessing the present state of Soviet-Czechoslovak relations, we are convinced that it is in the mutual interests to advance our cooperation along all directions including in the sphere of the superstructure. We had a substantive conversation. It was agreed to issue specific instructions on a number of positions.

We also examined with Comrade Jakes major problems of international politics. We noted with satisfaction last year's positive achievements. The signing of the Soviet-American Treaty on eliminating two classes of nuclear missiles is a common success of socialist foreign policy. This agreement graphically shows that given political will it is possible to handle most complicated issues of disarmament. The new political thinking initiated by the socialist countries is beginning to make headway.

Two years ago we put forward the programme of ridding the world of nuclear weapons, which could destroy all living things on Earth. International public opinion highly assesses this call and backs it. But, to put it bluntly, many people hardly believed in the possibility of the implementation of this large-scale programme. We are no naïve people. We understand that difficulties are indeed great there. But our programme is based not on shallow dreams and illusions, but on realities of today's world. The accords reached in Washington confirm the realism of our idea.

A nuclear-free world can and should be established. The Soviet Union not only proclaims this, but is also carrying out specific deeds and initiatives. This applies to both the reduction by half of the strategic offensive arsenals of the United States and the Soviet Union and the elimination of chemical weapons, reduction of conventional arms and armed forces.

I would like to point out, however, that nuclear disarmament is incompatible with preparation for 'Star Wars'. It is a bad policy when weapons are destroyed with one hand, and new ones are forged with the other, when mankind is promised a chance of survival while this chance is crossed out by the implementation of SDI plans.

In our view, eliminating nuclear weapons and establishing a nuclear-weapon free and non-violent world comprises the only reliable shield for all countries and peoples. We are prepared for this. And we will spare no effort to attain this highly humane objective.

Considerable logjams of prejudices are yet to be overcome in marching the entire road towards drastic improvement of the international situation. Take Europe, for instance. Influential political circles are still cultivating mistrust in the objectives and intentions of the socialist countries. There are even attempts to portray the Washington INF Treaty as a result of Moscow's 'perfidious' policy directed, allegedly, at weakening the Western alliance. The clamour about the need for 'compensation' is being raised.

We believe that in our common European home there should be no room for unjustified suspicion. We regard Western European countries not as our enemies in a mutually destructive nuclear war, but as neighbours and partners in mutually advantageous cooperation. Europe, having realised its integrity from the Atlantic to the Urals, will be a reliable basis for peaceful coexistence of states, irrespective of their social systems.

The socialist countries give a befitting rebuff to attempts to present the Warsaw Treaty as a source of danger to the West.

We are told that the Western Europeans are alarmed over the imbalance, asymmetry in forces of the Warsaw Treaty and NATO. But alarm is felt also by peoples in Eastern Europe who keep in their memory the suffering and destruction caused by invasion from the Western direction. The more so, for asymmetry is in no way one-sided. We are prepared to reduce the arms in which we have an advantage but we expect a similar approach on the part of NATO member countries in areas where imbalance is in their favour.

In matters related to security, one should not be too smart, one should not seek merely unilateral advantages. It is possible to act here only on the basis of reciprocity and equal security.

The Warsaw Treaty countries stand for openness in politics and for its constructiveness and peaceful orientation. Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic jointly suggest creating in Central Europe a corridor free from nuclear and chemical weapons. Bulgaria and Romania suggest establishing a nuclear-free zone in the Balkans. Poland puts forward additional confidence-building measures on the border of the two military-political blocs.

Flowing into a single current, the efforts of  
(Continues on next Page)

### IN THIS ISSUE

Mikhail Gorbachev's speech at reception for Milos Jakes .....	p. 9
Mikhail Gorbachev's speech at CPSU Central Committee meeting .....	p. 11
Mikhail Gorbachev's replies to Chinese magazine Liaowang .....	p. 17
Nikolai Ryzhkov's visit to Sweden .....	p. 18
Eduard Shevardnadze's interview with Bakhtar News Agency .....	p. 20

# Mikhail Gorbachev's talks with Milos Jakes

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV held talks with Milos Jakes in the Kremlin in Moscow on Monday.

Describing the results of the December 1987 plenary meeting of the Czechoslovak Communist Party Central Committee, Jakes pointed out that Czechoslovakia is entering a new and crucial period in socialist construction connected with restructuring and deepening of socialist democracy. This calls for invigoration of the Party's entire work.

The principal task is to link the policy of restructuring and democratisation worked out at the Party plenary meeting with life and to direct it into the channel of real politics.

Gorbachev highly assessed the aspiration of the Czechoslovak Communists to renovate forms of public life and speed up the solution of topical problems facing fraternal Czechoslovakia. "The measures carried out in Czechoslovakia are evoking lively interest and understanding in our country," he added.

Gorbachev and Jakes pointed out that, while having specific features, scale and pace of change and forms and methods of attaining goals

advanced, the overall direction of the processes of restructuring in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia is identical.

This opens up favourable conditions for further all-round development of Soviet-Czechoslovak ties in the field of economy, ideology, science and culture.

Sharing the CPSU's experience, Gorbachev observed that a new stage of restructuring is beginning for the CPSU and country. In conditions when the interests of millions of people are affected and when all of society is being set into motion, Party work acquires new dimensions.

In fulfilling its role of the political vanguard of society, the Party is concentrating attention on elaborating a scientifically substantiated strategy of social development, determining personnel policy and ideological work.

Plenary sessions of Party committees and meetings of Communists are held, and reports of elective bodies on their work in guiding restructuring are discussed. In most places the campaign is proceeding in a spirit of frankness, constructive criticism and self-criticism.

Questions about the need to master political methods of leadership and relieve Party bodies of purely economic and managerial functions which are unusual to them are being keenly raised.

Mikhail Gorbachev described the work being

done in preparation for the 19th All-Union Party Conference.

Matters pertaining to the international situation were discussed during the meeting. Milos Jakes highly appreciated the importance of the Treaty on eliminating intermediate- and shorter-range missiles. He emphasised that the Czechoslovak people welcome the Treaty as a triumph of reason and political responsibility.

It was pointed out that the political-diplomatic results of last year have created good prerequisites for the New Year 1988 to be marked by substantial progress in the cause of strengthening peace and people's security.

A further solution to the problems of reducing nuclear arms and also conventional arms and armed forces in Europe, and of eliminating chemical weapons, acquires paramount importance.

The two sides reaffirmed the determination of the two parties and countries to continue actively to cooperate with the allied member states of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation and with all other socialist countries, seeking the removal of the nuclear threat, the attainment of disarmament and the establishment of a comprehensive system of international security.

The meeting was held in an atmosphere of cordiality, friendship and complete mutual understanding.

## At the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee

THE Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee at its meeting on Friday heard a report on the work of the Kiev City Party organisation on fulfilling the decisions of the 27th CPSU Congress.

The Politburo examined and approved the USSR Council of Ministers' proposals for drastic restructuring in environmental protection.

The Politburo examined major political results of the 42nd session of the U.N. General Assembly. It was noted that the session reflected the start of the process of renewal in international life.

Confidence was expressed that the Assembly's adoption (on the socialist countries' initiative) of

the decision in favour of establishing a comprehensive system of international peace and security opens up fresh opportunities for advancing in this direction on the basis of finding a balance of interests of the U.N. member states and developing relations of confidence and cooperation among them.

The Politburo approved the Soviet delegation's work at the session.

It considered and approved proposals for deepening contacts between the USSR Supreme Soviet and the parliaments in socialist countries with a view to exchanging mutually beneficial experience of developing socialist democracy, strengthening contact with the electors and fully implementing the rights and legitimate interests of citizens.

The Politburo approved the results of Mikhail Gorbachev's meeting with General Secretary of the Portuguese Communist Party Alvaro Cunhal. It was noted with satisfaction that the conversation reaffirmed the unity of both parties' views on principal problems of international life and the peoples' struggle for social progress and national independence.

The striving to promote relations of friendship and cooperation between the CPSU and the PCP and further the development of mutually advantageous Soviet-Portuguese relations was expressed.

The Politburo approved the results of Gorbachev's meeting with Bavarian Minister-President and Chairman of the Christian Social Union of the Federal Republic of Germany Franz-Josef Strauss.

It stressed the importance of promoting constructive political dialogue between the USSR and West Germany and broadening mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries in the economic, scientific-technological and cultural spheres — which facilitates

stronger confidence in Europe as a whole.

The Politburo examined the results of Viktor Chebrikov's visits to Vietnam and Laos, and his meetings and conversations with General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam Nguyen Van Linh and General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party and Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Laos Kaysone Phomvihane and other Vietnamese and Laotian leaders.

The importance was stressed of the further consolidation of the friendship and cooperation between the Soviet Union and Vietnam and Laos and between the CPSU and the fraternal parties of these countries.

The Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee discussed other issues of the country's domestic life and foreign policy activity of the Party and state.

(from front page)

the socialist countries are continuing the all-European process started in Helsinki. Implementation of their initiatives will help establish a new political atmosphere in relations between Western and Eastern Europe.

Dear Comrade Jakes

In conclusion, let me wish you, the leadership of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and the people of fraternal Czechoslovakia successes in handling problems of the country's social and economic development along the road of restructuring and deepening of socialist democracy.

This year, Czechoslovakia will mark major dates in its history — first and foremost 40 years since embarking on the road of socialism. We wish in a fraternal way our Czechoslovak friends success in this year in all areas.

We wish happiness and prosperity to the fraternal Czechoslovak people.

**Mikhail Gorbachev**  
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for a New Way of Thinking  
Speech at Czechoslovak-Soviet  
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Prague, April 10, 1987

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# Mikhail Gorbachev's speech at CPSU Central Committee meeting

*Here follows Mikhail Gorbachev's speech at the meeting with top executives of mass media bodies, ideological institutions and creative workers' unions held at the CPSU Central Committee on January 8:*

Comrades

We are meeting at the very start of the New Year. But our discussion will concern not only this but also the previous year. And this is not because precisely in this way and in this light problems are considered at the border of two years, but because the past year and the year that has begun already are closely interconnected.

We want to talk today in the spirit of the meetings that we have already had — in a comradely and frank way. The current time determines the future of our country, and we are to check our clocks again. This is why we are conducting such discussions, above all within the Party, with the Party apparatus and with all sections of our population.

Naturally, we want to continue the good tradition that we have established — meetings with top executives of mass media bodies and unions of creative workers.

We badly need exchanges of views and thoughts and comradely discussion. This is why we are attaching much importance to meetings with you, dear comrades.

I said that we are meeting on the border of 1987-1988. This alone creates conditions for assessing the past, what has been accomplished, and for trying to look into the future.

Another circumstance makes the discussion especially significant. We have completed on the whole the first stage of restructuring and a second stage is beginning. We are, therefore, at the threshold. Of course, this division into stages is symbolic.

In life everything is interrelated. Much of what has started is continuing and will continue.

We distinguish between these two stages in order to see more clearly what tasks are facing us. At the first stage, we had to work thoroughly to produce a theoretical analysis of the situation that had been established by the mid-eighties.

Now it is necessary to analyse the real state of society in which we live and make plans for the future — and this not on the basis of superficial and simplistic notions, but with awareness of responsibility before the country and before socialism and before the world, taking into account the weight and role of our country.

We have worked out a concept of perestroika or restructuring and adopted most important and major decisions. Without these decisions, we would be unable to act on a long-term basis while handling simultaneously current issues.

Many forces of our society were activated at that stage of restructuring — above all the potential of the Party, scientists, artistic intellectuals and mass media. The country was alive, the people were active. They were working, coping with tasks without waiting for the completion of theoretical and political studies.

The first stage differs from the next one

precisely in that we have found out what has to be done and in what way. This is a hard task, it remains topical today. But now the most complex stage has begun, when the concept of perestroika should come into broad contact with life and with practical activity of millions of Soviet people.

What has been realised by the political leadership and the foremost part of our people must be now realised by the entire Soviet people, by all its strata. Without it, without the clear understanding of the Party's policy there will be no firm belief in the need for it. It is this belief that determines the spirit of the people and their real deeds.

This task is indeed a daunting one. Man remains in the centre here. Both from the point of view that everything is made by man and from the point of view that people themselves must do all that we have conceived collectively.

Many things came to a head now and discussions are mounting. The process of perestroika is not without struggle. This is natural. If perestroika is indeed the continuation of the Revolution and if we are currently pursuing a revolutionary policy, then the struggle is inevitable.

This was the case in the years of all revolutions, it will be so now. We feel this. Quite another matter is the forms of the struggle and the forces involved. In our country they are not antagonistic warring sides with opposing class interests. One can rather speak about the time-serving interests of groups and sometimes even ambitions, if the latter can be regarded as interests at all.

We are all involved in the great creative effort to restructure our country. Therefore the nature of the struggle will have the form of discussions and ideological disputes, aimed at taking a better look at the situation and making the tasks confronting us clear. This should be in the focus of attention, comrades.

We are emerging from one stage and entering another. The tasks and especially the scale of the work undergo a qualitative change. The centre of gravity is already being shifted onto the plane of practical realisation, the plane of translating the policy into reality. This is a qualitatively new situation. We have all felt it.

All those who are taking part in this meeting are connected in the most direct way with the life of our society, receive every day extensive information and understand, see and feel the processes under way in the country and their prospects.

In this sense I would like to stress once more that the year 1987 has given us a lot. Evaluating it even by the most stringent yardsticks, we must admit that it was the year of great work. Indeed, if there was not the theoretical, political and practical work carried out last year in connection with the celebrations of the 70th Anniversary of the October Revolution, we would have been now two or three steps lower in our understanding of the past and the present stage as well as of our prospects. We have extended the analysis of society. We have now better knowledge of our history. This has exceptionally important significance.

One cannot agree with those who suggest that we forget history or use only a certain part of it. We understand full well now that such point of view is unacceptable. We must have profound knowledge of our country's history, especially in the post-revolutionary period. The knowledge of history, the knowledge of the causes of these or other phenomena and of the causes which underline the main achievements of our state and

the knowledge of the causes of major mistakes and the tragic events in our history — all this allows us to draw a lesson today as we seek to rejuvenate society and to tap more fully the potential of socialism and its assets. Indeed we now have better knowledge of our history and of the root causes behind many phenomena which gave us all cause for anxiety in recent years and were the main cause of the decision on the need for social restructuring.

At the same time, the understanding of our history we have achieved during preparations for the 70th Anniversary of the October Revolution is not dogmatic. It will be extended and developed in the course of further research.

Deepening knowledge, understanding history, drawing lessons from the past and working out the future path of advancement — this is what describes our work today. What has been done in this area has enriched the entire political, ideological and spiritual sphere of society's life. That's number one.

Secondly, as I have already mentioned, the year 1987 was a year of major decisions. I would put it like this — if we did not have the decisions of the January and June plenary meetings of the CPSU Central Committee, if we did not have the Law on the State Enterprise, we would be different. Our understanding of the situation and our notion of what is to be done now and in what ways to advance further would be different.

Substantial advancement in elaborating the theory and policy of perestroika imparts a conscious and purposeful character to our work. We can now act consistently, proceeding from decisions adopted and on the basis of scientific analysis and broad discussion of these problems in the Party and in society as a whole. This is what makes it possible to move on to the next stage of restructuring.

The past year convincingly showed that the processes taking place in the Soviet Union are of immense significance not only for our country and our people, but also for the destinies of socialism and for the world situation as a whole. We felt that keenly in the past year.

This determines also the measure of our responsibility. What we are doing inside the country, in combination with initiatives in the sphere of foreign policy, has enabled us to feel for the first time that it is possible to raise real tasks in changing the world situation for the better.

Let us recall. Not long ago, on 15 January 1986, we proclaimed the concept of a nuclear-free and safe world. The first reaction in the West (especially among politicians and political scientists) was as if it was a utopia.

From the very beginning we conceived and prepared the document in a way so that it would not be taken for another glamorous slogan, probably with a greater tint of pacifism but detached from realistic policy.

No, it clearly defines objectives and specific approaches to handling tasks and the balance of interests. We are sure that this document will work. Nevertheless, many believed at the initial stage that it only defined a remote goal with no present-day significance.

Today we see how the ideas which we have advanced and describe as new political thinking are breaking through — with difficulties, with struggle, by overcoming existing stereotypes and old approaches, but breaking through.

You all maintain extensive contacts with various representatives of world public opinion. I think you will confirm that there is

no exaggeration in my statement. The situation and the sentiments in the world are changing for the better. The past year showed convincingly that much weariness, many problems that complicate human life accumulated in the world. The arms race, military confrontation divert immense resources, human minds and human forces away from the solution of vitally important universal tasks.

This is why our concept followed by specific initiatives lay on prepared soil. The first sprouts have already emerged. I think we can describe the concrete result in the following way — a real process of improving the international situation has set in. No breakthrough has as yet taken place, but the beginning was made by the signing of the treaty on the elimination of intermediate- and medium-range missiles.

From the political viewpoint, considering the past year in a broad aspect, we assess it as a year of large-scale principal events and changes in world development.

The most important thing — from the viewpoint of the political assessment of the course of perestroika — which one should point out is that people are beginning to play the key part in its chief areas. They are making themselves seen to an increasing extent taking advantage of processes of democratisation and openness in the work of Party and state bodies and public organisations.

Look at the thorough way in which the working class is raising issues of the life of society and perestroika, how realistic it is in advancing its demands stemming from the new situation.

On December 31, we in the Politburo spent several hours discussing the most signal events of the past year. One of our conclusions is that it is probably only some individuals or small groups of people who stood on the anti-perestroika positions last year. On the whole, workers, farmers and intellectuals acted in the most keen debates and the strongest clashes of views and discussions of various issues of life in branches and work collectives with a sense of immense responsibility for the cause of perestroika, for the country, for socialism.

This, comrades, is a very important phenomenon. It's good that we have ceased to fear, ceased to flounder in perplexity at the slightest movement of thought within the people and at attempts to materialise the potential of socialist democracy intrinsic in our system. The Party is accumulating experience, the cadres are accumulating experience. That is not an easy process, it is not without pain. It is still often that we scare one another.

We are frequently criticised by some from the right, some from the left. The latter say that restructuring has stopped, and call for more resolute measures, for personnel reshuffles, and so on and so forth. This was manifested, specifically, at the October plenum of the Central Committee.

What did the discussion show? Now that we started serious work, implementation of the policy of perestroika and its translation into life, the 'ultra-perestroika' phraseology proved to be helpless. Representatives of the 'revolutionary' phrase have neither composure nor readiness to assume responsibility and the onus of stubborn and lengthy work in order to move our society to new frontiers.

We shall not conceal the fact that the Party's rebuff to this phraseology was viewed by part of the intellectuals, especially young people, as a blow to perestroika. That is the greatest delusion, and the people understood it correctly without yielding to demagogic phrases.

Now about criticism of perestroika from the right. Voices from that side claim that 'foundations of socialism' are being undermined. A legitimate question arises — by what are they being undermined? By people's movement, by their activity aimed at handling more confidently

the affairs in the country where they are the masters? On the contrary, socialism is not weakening. It is gaining strength and — through the people's political and social activity — is materialising more fully its potential.

A blow is being dealt at command-and-administer methods and those who carry them out, at their interests. At those who fail to understand the times and realise that we cannot move on other than through democratisation of our life. But precisely this was conceived when we embarked on restructuring. This is why we should firmly follow the path chosen. In this sense, the year 1987 was a great school of socialist democracy.

The lessons are, of course, hard to learn, but I will tell you they are absorbed well. We are no longer what we had been in April 1985, and not even what we had been before 1987. We have acquired much. Some might say: we have lost something. We haven't lost as yet anything of importance, and I think we will not lose anything if we stick to the principled line.

What tasks remain the most difficult today, where are the pitfalls of restructuring? I would put it like this — it would be unrealistic to believe that we have already broken the deceleration mechanism, that we have moved on to the tracks of broad socialist democracy, on to the tracks of the new economic mechanism. We are just starting perestroika, our society is just leaving the period of immobilisation. The task of breaking the deceleration mechanism which hinders the process of restructuring remains principal today.

The establishment of a new ideological and moral atmosphere characterised by broad openness, criticism and self-criticism, the deepening process of democratisation and the growth of the working people's responsibility for the state of affairs in the country is a great accomplishment of the first stage of perestroika. All this calls for consolidation and development. The main political result is the people's growing support for the Party's course towards perestroika. A process of consolidation of society around ideas of perestroika is under way. And this is not merely at the level of meetings and slogans, but also in actual work, in essence.

On the whole, we chose at the January plenum of the Party Central Committee a correct course, the course towards developing socialist democracy. Through democratisation and through people's involvement in all processes of society, it is possible to carry out this reorganisation and to make it irreversible. I would add at this point that democratisation and openness are not merely means of restructuring.

They are the exercise of the essence of our socialist system — a system of the working people and for the working people. This is not a short-lived campaign, but the essence of socialism — what distinguishes it from bourgeois democracy which creates through artful designs only a semblance of freedom and openness, pushing the people away from real political power and giving them only one opportunity, as Lenin put it; that of deciding during election campaigns who will fool them for the next term.

We want to involve people through socialist democracy in all processes of management. And when we are being pulled towards bourgeois liberalism and its 'values', this is a backward movement.

We have made our choice and we will follow the path started in 1917. We are seriously tackling the task of releasing the entire potential of our system, of socialist democracy. This is Lenin's idea — the proletariat is getting ready for socialism through democracy and can govern society following the Revolution only through broadening democracy.

Let us recall once again with gratitude the January plenum. It brought home to us the understanding of the need for broad democratisation of our society. This means that it

was not in vain that we worked jointly to prepare it. Everything that is contained in its decisions and documents is also the Party's collective experience and the realisation of thoughts and proposals put forward by the scientific and artistic communities, all sections of society.

Another important lesson of the past year that is to be learnt is as follows. We subscribe to Lenin's concept of political party. According to Lenin it is a party of a new type performing the part of political vanguard of society. The entire preceding history of the country, with all gains and losses, shows that this is precisely so.

We come to realise ever more clearly today that no transformations are possible without a political vanguard capable of rallying the best forces of the country ideologically and organisationally, of comprehending the processes taking place in society and realising the results of this scientific analysis — that is without the Communist Party.

But the Party must not lag behind the processes taking place in society. We have learned this in many respects last year. Wherever we lagged, there appeared many things that later evoked concern in society. We are learning the lessons from this and we draw conclusions. And not only at the level of political leadership and government but also in republics, regions and work collectives. This is very important, though we cannot say yet that all Party organisations act in this way.

What else can be said about the lessons of perestroika? We perhaps have not been realising completely how widespread various negative phenomena — parasitic attitudes, levelling of pay, report padding, parochialism, departmentalism, illegal actions — became in the years of stagnation. We are waging and shall be waging resolutely and consistently the struggle for the improvement, for cutting short criminal activity, and ridding society of persons with deformed morality. But we underestimated the scope of other negative phenomena that gripped our society.

Take the levelling of pay, parasitic attitudes. Things went so far that requests are sent to the centre — the Central Committee and government — wherever anything necessary for daily living — building materials, coal or other things — are lacking anywhere. And in a country with a population of nearly 300 million and large managerial apparatus in localities, decisions on many matters, even the simplest, have to be taken here in Moscow. Such are the fruits of stagnation, of unjustifiable centralisation, that we reap now.

There is another aspect. Our notion of social justice has been deformed in a certain measure. This was manifested also in the writings in the press. If views that have gained support in some bodies of our press were to be realised, there would be a need for ironing out our entire society and reducing everyone to the same level — a talented person and a mediocrity, a diligent worker and a shirker, an honourable man and a thief. Deplorably, a widely current attitude is that one can work ten times less, a hundred times less than others, can do nothing at all and at the same time enjoy all the benefits in the same degree as people who make by their work a large contribution to the country's development.

Our satirists aptly summed up this situation: "I want to live in a good flat, I wish there to be no queues, that there should be no crush, that I could emerge from a bus ride with all my buttons intact, I want to have all my wishes fulfilled. The only thing that I do not want is to do something for this."

We are right in criticising our cadres, our leading bodies. This criticism should be continued and its acuteness should not be lowered. But many problems have accumulated also in work collectives. Our entire society

should be made to realise our socialist values more profoundly.

If report padding, levelling of pay, consumerism, parasitic attitudes persist, there will be no progress in perestroika either in industry or in other areas.

We must live and act proceeding from the principle of socialism — "From each according to his abilities, to each according to his work". There is a high degree of social protection in our country. This is what distinguishes socialism. We have free education, free medical services, the right to work, the guarantee of getting a job and housing available at a moderate rent, though it is still an acute problem. Socialism protects everyone but what kind of contribution does society receive from everyone? This is where much thought should be given. It was recently reported in the press that in some collective farms milkmaids were earning 600 roubles per month, while getting yearly only 2,000 kilograms of milk per cow. When it was attempted to introduce pay according to work they assessed this as a blow at their interests. But the wages they were receiving so far were not earned. They were paid them through subsidies of the state, that is at the expense of other members of society.

There are examples of a different nature.

Capable and diligent people working under family contracts, collective and team contracts, for instance Siberians in collectives of intensive work, produce 8-10 times greater volumes of output per person than in most economies of the country. Their earnings naturally grow as well. And this immediately attracts attention. Various commissions arrive to investigate. What can they do with such an amount of money, it is asked. But is this the way to pose the question? They have earned all this. Moreover, while the end result of their work increases many times over, the wages grow only 50-100%. So there is a gain for society. If only things went like this everywhere. . . .

Meanwhile some people are concerned lest this should lead to the development of private-owner psychology.

Are such fears justifiable? A person works on socially-owned land, under agreement with the board of a collective farm or the directorate of a state farm, uses material resources allocated to him. Everything is done with a high sense of responsibility and with talent. So how can he be regarded as a potential private owner? What socialist justice can there be in this case and the one mentioned earlier?

We should also ponder why it is that a person who works honestly to earn his money is at times unable either to build the kind of house he wants or buy a cooperative flat or spend his earnings in some other way. The principle of socialism is violated in this case, too. A diligent worker and his family must be aware that the money earned honestly enables them to have higher living standards.

Perestroika has a bearing on the interests not only in the material sphere. It comprises also the spiritual, cultural sphere. The comprehension of our road in the past, present and future is taking place. This is also a process that is far from painless. There are debates on our past history. Some or other stages of it are being critically analysed.

And this deepens our realisation of what has been achieved by our people since the Great October. At the same time this enables us to assess the difficult periods of our history correctly, from the positions of truth. We must learn to live in the atmosphere of glasnost — of constant critical analysis of what has been achieved and what errors have been made.

Openness and criticism are a way of control of the masses, of society over all the processes. This is also the way of summing up the experience accumulated, of sensing the main tendencies in society and of warning against errors. This is the

normal state of things and no one should panic when critical remarks are made.

Let us have a dignified attitude to criticism. Let us respect each other. And sticking labels is absolutely inappropriate. At present, it is felt that what is written in articles, in magazines is at times determined by group preferences. Meanwhile the attention should be focused on the care for our common undertakings, the care for people.

True, everybody is saying now that they care for the country, the people and their artistic and cultural education. And under this flag attempts are sometimes made to gratify personal ambitions. This should be avoided. Let us not deny anyone the right to state his viewpoint, even if he held outdated views at some stage in the past. If he is consciously and honestly overcoming them now and joining the ranks of active participants in perestroika, why reject him and deny him the opportunity to contribute to the common cause as best he can?

One should be above personal emotions and attitudes and should give priority to the interests of perestroika. And what words are used sometimes to brand an opponent!

Words can have a great effect, but they should not be used to the detriment of principledness. Those who want to take us to a different road, to add a different fuel to the fire of perestroika should realise that this cannot be done. The Central Committee will firmly hold the Leninist positions and will be doing everything to expand the potential of socialist democracy and to deepen the process of perestroika on the basis of socialist values.

No one is outside control in our country. We have just put an end to the state of things when certain persons in our Party and certain areas have been outside control, outside criticism for years. And we shall not return to this state of things now. This applies to the mass media. The Soviet press is not a private shop. Let us recall again Lenin's premise that literature is part of the common cause of the Party. This is a fundamental provision and we continue being guided by it. We shall remain true to Lenin's ideas. The service to society, to one's people has always been characteristic of our intelligentsia and our literature.

Editors should have a sense of responsibility. I do not want to give names. We are talking in a comradely way. But it should be remembered that a magazine, a publishing house, a newspaper are not someone's private concern but a concern of the entire Party and of the whole people. And we all are in the service of the people.

Our people are for perestroika. So let us follow our line for perestroika and for the development of socialist democracy together with the people. Let us assert our values together and wage the struggle for the invigoration of society.

When I speak about this, I am stressing time and again — we are for openness without reservations, without limitations. But for openness in the interests of socialism. We answer firmly to the question as to whether openness, criticism and democracy have limits — if openness, criticism and democracy are in the interests of socialism, in the interests of the people, then they have no limits.

This is the criterion. On this road we do not need someone else's standards. Neither in politics nor in the spiritual sphere or the economy.

No one else will go so far in the questions of democracy as we will because this is the essence of the socialist system. We are extending socialist democratism into all spheres, including the economy. Nowhere in the West do they elect directors and foremen or do work collectives endorse plans. And this is what constitutes our socialist democracy.

We will push forward the process of democratisation in the Party as well. You

probably can see how thoroughly we are conducting the campaign of reports by Party committees. Things are changing for the better and very seriously, although here as well there is a lot of inertia and passive attitudes. But the ordinary communists, comrades, are not to be blamed. We know full well how many elected bodies of the Party acted. Comrades, we have done little so far to make the elected bodies play the role which we have conceived and formulated in the CPSU Rules. Everything is lying ahead. But if such processes will not take place in the Party then neither will they happen in society.

We will seek new approaches to make better use of the potential of the Soviets. What is the use of talking, comrades, if in many cases Party bodies took on many of their functions? And what is the result? The Party itself permitted in this connection lagging behind and overlooked many questions because it was overloaded with functions uncharacteristic of it.

Now in the new conditions of economic reform and democratisation the Party can really fulfil the functions of political vanguard. The questions of theory, ideological backup, cadre and national policy and international relations offer a wide scope for the Party activity.

We are thoroughly preparing for the 19th All-Union Party Conference. We are drafting the concept of holding it. We can see already now that the questions of democratisation in Soviet society will be key, central issues. We will cover everything here, including the electoral system, the court and law reform, improving control bodies in the country, etc.

The mass media must have their own say here. How is the perestroika drive proceeding, what are its lessons, what conclusions can be drawn and what adjustments made to the policy of the Party? I am convinced that there will be no shortage of serious proposals.

Now to the questions of economic reform and a change-over to cost-accounting. What do I want to draw your attention, comrades, to? First of all to the complexity and importance of the nascent processes. We are making the first steps in implementing the radical reform in conditions of the five-year plan period which has been drafted before the reform. And we are trying to act so as not to wreck the five-year plan. Various enterprises found themselves in different economic and social conditions at the start. The picture is very particoloured here. Conditions at the start were different. Some have completed modernisation, have new funds and are ready and can work successfully while others are only starting the most profound modernisation which demands forces and time. All this has to be done simultaneously with introducing cost-accounting and self-financing. One can understand how far from simple all this is.

The press, however, sometimes takes an easy approach to covering the activities of the collectives of enterprises in conditions of the ongoing reform. One has to bear in mind that we were fully aware that the old forms and the new methods of cost accounting will act simultaneously at a certain period.

Such is the transitional period with all the multitude of approaches. One has to outgrow it and draw lessons. We already know how people are changing even on approaches to cost-accounting. There are also many others who were lightminded. Now they will start to experience difficulties as was the case with the state-run quality control system. Nevertheless, the process has got under way and people are being retrained and get involved in the management. The reform already covers enterprises producing nearly 60 per cent of output. This is tens of millions of working people.

We want the reform to gain momentum so that we could acquire experience and knowledge and be prepared and fully armed by the next five-year plan. Therefore the task can be formulated as

follows — to search and to subject to convincing criticism all that runs counter to the reform both in science and in life. People are supporting us and understand that one has to act exactly in this way and to master new methods.

What are we wary about and what should we pay more attention to? To ease the difficulties involved in the switch-over to cost-accounting and self-financing, we have created some reserves to keep afloat any enterprise which finds itself in a difficult situation at first and needs time to organise its work along the new lines. It will receive credits and aid to pay them back. We will control of course, to prevent the money being wasted. All branch trade unions closely examined and supported the documents on reform. Hundreds of work collectives were involved in discussion. The reform documents and its principles deserve full trust and respect.

It is inadmissible when one article or another makes one feel no pain for what is taking place. At times they easily and even dashing pass a verdict on the fate of an enterprise or a man. This is hardly the way to do it.

Let us put it straight. It took two years only to formulate the economic policy of the restructuring. To translate into life what we have conceived a great amount of organisational work — patient, everyday and far from simple — will be needed. There are sure to be deviations.

Today openness must help introduce democratic attitudes and economic methods of management. It is especially important to search for and support everything that is new — new experience and new achievements. Much competence is needed. Involve scientists on a wider scale and not only those who have glib tongues. What is important is competence, solidity and everything that helps solve the problems of real life. We are facing a very responsible stage. The next two or three years will decide where the perestroika drive will go. Two or three years! Therefore one has to be especially attentive to the processes which are under way in the society.

It is even hard to imagine that everything can be foreseen. One needs to draw lessons from the past and work to change the situation for the better, so that aspiring and enterprising people ready to risk in the name of perestroika can search for new approaches without fear and can impart acceleration to both thought and practical movement.

The press should discern these people and back them, be on the side of those who push forward perestroika and our society along the road of rejuvenation. Here the positions must be clearcut.

We are conducting the policy of perestroika so that man can breathe freely in our society, so that his dignity be respected and living conditions improve and so that the entire country embark on the road of renewal.

The Party is very interested, comrades, in seeing us all feel confident and work to full effect. Society is very much interested in this. Your stand and your understanding, being transformed through the mass media and through contact with the people, constitute a mighty support for our policy. This is why we are interested even more than at the initial stage in your constructive effort. This includes openness and sharp criticism. What is particularly important is that our press should actively defend people struggling for perestroika.

Leaders of the Party and the government visited the other day an exhibition of machines. We were shown machinetools manufactured at the factory headed by A. I. Chabanov, the same man whom the Party Central Committee and our press had once defended. I also had to raise the issue, as you remember. The man was saved. His machinetools are selling like hot cakes now, there are waiting lists to buy them. What had happened? He made a non-standard move,

he disrupted old plans, discarded ancient instructions. Envoys turned up and launched such intrigues, found so many sins — he failed here and there. And they would have beaten him, probably, had it not been for our intercession.

It is necessary, comrades, to fight till the end for every person who is a protagonist of perestroika, who is flayed for his initiative and non-standard approaches — for every person and, it goes without saying, for whole work collectives.

Izvestia correspondents recently described a collective farm where a third of its members were unable to have a general meeting convened to discuss vitally important issues of the collective farm's development.

The district Party committee joined in, so did the executive committee — all those whose duty it was and wasn't — to crush the people's initiative and prevent them from exercising their right. The newspaper was correct in interceding for the collective farmers. Soon a meeting was held and the people's proposals were backed. They were right.

What's of interest here? The initiators of the conflict in that collective farm strongly criticised the management, sharply raised issues, but no one left work. They worked well. Many of them are front-rank farmers. They should have been backed, their spirit should have been boosted. We ought to cultivate a democratic atmosphere, not to stop. That does not mean we can weaken responsibility, however.

I sometimes think about the complex developments that are taking place across the vast expanses of our country involving nearly 300 million people. What a great time. If we stopped the emerging processes, got frightened by them, this would have most serious consequences, for we will not be able to mobilise our people for an undertaking of this scope one more time. But there are now some people who are only watching what is taking place. At heart, they support perestroika but they have not as yet become involved in it by their deeds, their actions — politically.

We feel that we all are in for a time of responsibility. And this responsibility should be assumed comrades. The Party will assume it and so should you. I'm sure that this will be so. Each should be guided in this not by petty passions, but by the fate of the people. This does not blunt the acuity of struggle, does not narrow openness or democracy. This road must be followed. The process of renewal, democratisation and further unfolding of the humanistic essence of socialism must be deepened and made an irreversible and permanent feature of our society.

*The following top executives of the mass media bodies and the unions of creative workers took the floor then — Mikhail Alexeyev, Editor-in-Chief of Moscow; Vitali Korotich, Editor-in-Chief of Ogonyok; Sergei Zalygin, Editor-in-Chief of Novy Mir; Grigory Baklanov, Editor-in-Chief of Znaniye; Kirill Lavrov, Chairman of the Board of the Theatre Union of the USSR; Ivan Laptev, Editor-in-Chief of Izvestia; Pyotr Fedoseyev, Vice-President of the USSR Academy of Sciences; Valentin Chikin, Editor-in-Chief of Sovetskaya Rossiya; Valentin Falin, Chairman of the Board of the Novosti Press Agency; Viktor Afanasyev, Editor-in-Chief of Pravda; Yelam Klimov, First Secretary of the Board of the Union of Cinematography of the USSR; Mikhail Nenashev, Chairman of the USSR State Committee for Printing, Publishing and the Book Trade; and Vladimir Karpov, First Secretary of the Board of the Writers' Union of the USSR.*

**Mikhail Gorbachev** Let us wind up our meeting. When I was preparing for it I asked for the 1985-1987 statistics. What has happened and is happening with our economy and the social sphere over these years? The data here are very eloquent. We were always concerned about the

growth of the productivity of labour for example. But in the past three years the rates of growth of the productivity of labour have exceeded the average annual indices in the Eleventh Five-Year Period in industry 1.3 times, in construction 1.6 times, in agriculture 2.8 times and on railways 3.6 times. Putting the growth of the productivity of social labour at 86% of the growth of the national income between 1981 and 1984 and at 95% in 1985-1986, in 1987 it accounted for 100%. In industry this was achieved while the workforce was reduced.

It is very important that the situation has changed for the better in the rates of growth of remuneration and the productivity of social labour. This was always our worst bottleneck. Look at the situation in 1981-1984, the most alarming years. The growth of pay of workers engaged in material production was 17 per cent higher than the growth of the productivity of labour. In other words, they paid money but there was no return on it.

Now a wage increase is tied to growth of the productivity of labour. The economic mechanism has started working even as we were only approaching the reform, comrades. This is the first.

Second. No less important is the fact that qualitative changes are also taking place in the field of scientific and technical progress. The main emphasis here is laid on primary engineering — machine tool building, electrical engineering, instrument making and other industries which must ensure the solution of scientific and technical problems, the development of food and light industries and the social sphere.

The product lines in these industries were renewed 2.9 times faster in 1987 as compared with 1985. I must admit that we ourselves were somewhat surprised during our recent visit to the Engineering Exhibition. There was a perceptible change, even though we have not taken all the decisions and have been working on the programme to modernise our engineering only for the second year.

What does the Exhibition show? Products were compatible with those of the world level and even superseded them. Moreover, if 15-20% were samples which have only passed tests, the rest were already in batch production. Once our people — scientists, technicians and workers — started to work, things began to run smoothly.

You know that our engineering was treated in such a way in the past that it found itself simply neglected. The oil boom allowed us to earn foreign currency, and we thoughtlessly bought equipment to solve production tasks and purchased spare parts without developing our own engineering and science properly. This "import plague", as it was aptly called by Academician A. P. Alexandrov, actually stifled the process of scientific and technical development.

All this was happening in our huge country which cannot afford technical dependence on anyone at all. We found ourselves literally in a corner. A complex turnaround was to be made. And only now have we moved forward. The computer technology started to make progress as competing collectives of scientists came close to developing, for example, computers capable of handling a billion operations per second. In the next few years they are to be followed by machines with a speed of 10 billion operations per second, and computers with speeds of 30, 50 and even 100 billion operations per second will not be slow in coming.

And the tasks continue growing. Do you realise what potential our society has? The acceleration has been started.

This was reflected by the Exhibition which has already been visited by half a million people, which is a sort of commentary on it.

The progressive transformations in agriculture continue from around 1983. This is a steady trend. The productivity in livestock breeding has been growing all these years and growth in all kinds of products is taking place now. We had a complex legacy from the years of stagnation. Therefore we are obliged to develop restructuring on the basis of scientific and technological progress, the increase of personal interest and the democratisation of social and economic processes. Such is our path.

We have no room for retreating. We have considered how the national income for various branches is growing. We shall have a smaller volume of the national income than we could have had because of the foreign trade since the situation with petroleum is unfavourable, and also because of the fall-off of receipts from vodka sales. But you know that the long-term social and economic policy should not be based on circumstantial considerations, the way we did until recently. Therefore the turns we are making now are very much needed and well substantiated. We intend to open every door to the agrarian sector. We have actually already adopted decisions removing every obstacle to its development. The psychology of managers is the hitch now, while the people are ready for initiative, for responsibility and for taking the risks with which agriculture is associated, for they believe in their own resources and have already proved it everywhere.

We now open broad opportunities for collective and state farms from the viewpoint of independence, economic conditions and technology. I think we shall achieve stability in the agrarian sector and certainly in crop-growing particularly.

And consider what interesting processes take place in other areas. We have done a lot to enhance the social tendency of our entire national economy. What does this yield? This turn is in progress, but the rate of growth of capital investments for these purposes and for the creation of the material basis of the social sphere in 1987 was thrice as great as in the national economy as a whole. And what do we have as a result? Take the years 1985-1987. In these three years the average annual commissioning of housing rose by 9%, of schools by 28%, vocational technical schools 4%, pre-school institutions 10%, hospitals 9%, polyclinics 24% and clubs 46%. The housing conditions of 32 million people were improved over these years. Interesting figures indeed.

The consumption of material goods and services by the population has increased. The absolute average annual growth of consumption in 1985-1987 made up 18 billion roubles as against 11 billion roubles in the previous three years. Hence the absolute increase made up seven billion roubles. I dwell on these facts for the reason that all we have undertaken is for the sake of the people and it is the people that have the final say. And people responded and supported perestroika by their work. This is the main thing. For this precisely is what determines our huge potentialities in all areas. Does any other country have such potentialities?

It can be said — how can it be that statistics report the growth of consumption while we still lack everything? We feel this acutely.

The reason is that the monetary incomes grew on one curve while the trade turnover grew on another. Consumption was increasing but the solvent demand was growing even faster. So the demand not met by supply was increasing. This is why we are short of everything.

It was mentioned here that novelty in economic activity at times gives rise to some doubts, even suspicions. When work is done to meet the needs of people and to improve the living standards of people this should be welcomed. But we must not and will not tolerate any elements of grabbing. We have economic, social and political mechanisms to protect us against this.

I would also like to mention another thing. The interest in people should be maintained. This principle is applied in the whole world and it should be applied in our country. Consider the fact that 13,000 various cooperatives already operate in the country, more than 300,000 people are engaged in individual labour activity. This is not very much for a country such as ours, but the initial step, nevertheless, has been taken.

What is achieved by our line at the invigoration of society and economy and improvement of the social climate, including the effort to combat drunkenness and alcoholism? Here are some demographic data. They are not without interest for all of us.

The average annual mortality in 1986-1987 was 200 thousand people fewer than in 1984, and mortality of able-bodied men as a result of accidents decreased by 37%. Drunkenness entails violation of safety rules, accidents, traumas. People in their prime were dying. It was not easy to alter that tendency, but it has been altered.

The birth rate increased in the past two years. 5.6 million babies were born annually over this period, while 4.9 million babies were born in 1980. The strengthening of the family is an important thing. People see prospects now and their confidence is increased. Moral improvement took place above all. We have been thoroughly engaged in improving the health services. The average life expectancy of the entire population increased by nearly two years while the life expectancy of men increased by 2.6 years.

This all is certainly nothing accidental. I would say this is further proof that the entire society is overcoming stagnation. But the positive tendencies have just started manifesting themselves.

I think the positive processes will be growing now that we bring economic factors into play, develop glasnost and democracy, now that social initiative is stimulated by every means. We shall certainly have ailments more than once, and our ailments will not be easy, but we shall strengthen and shall be advancing ever more confidently. The Politburo and the government are absolutely certain that we shall be advancing. Therefore, entering a most complex stage of perestroika when we shall come up against many new problems, we shall not panic and shall not be nervous. Perhaps we shall even have to retreat somewhere if it turns out that we have made an error. The undertakings we have embarked on are not simple, and we shall not fear mistakes. We shall firmly advance along the charted road.

We must certainly make fewer mistakes. It is believed that those who do nothing make fewer mistakes than anybody. But doing nothing is precisely the gravest of mistakes.

I wish to thank you sincerely for responding to the invitation to share your views about perestroika.

I see that we are in full accord and that we fully understand the responsibility and historic significance of the stage which we have entered. This is in itself extremely important, I will tell you. This understanding should transform into deeds, into actions. This is for one.

Secondly. All understand that we are in for big work. It will be very good if we bring that understanding home to our people. We succeeded in accomplishing much in this area in the past year. Perestroika brought to life a kind of revolution of expectations. But initially, the expectations were as follows — a good man will come, and everything will go by itself, and boons will fall down as manna from heaven. The people now realise that we have to cover a path that will not be easy before we achieve tangible positive results for society, for each family and each individual — in the moral and material sense.

Everything that we have defined should be done on the basis of perestroika, on the basis of new approaches, on the basis of preserving and upholding the atmosphere that has been established in the country. This understanding should be further supported and upheld. It is necessary to boost the morale of the people, comrades.

I'll put it bluntly. People need the truth. When they are told the truth they will do everything in a selfless way despite any hardships. When lies are palmed off upon them, packed in pink, this generates apathy. People are very sensitive to good attitude and they regard absence of truth as disrespect for them. Our nation is very educated and knowledgeable now, probably one of the most educated and knowledgeable nations in the world. People are very sensitive not only to honest earnings but also to a good atmosphere, to respectful attitude towards them and to honour and fame for their conscientious work.

Recall our history — our people have always been ready for self-sacrifice. This must not be forgotten. But it must not be abused either.

By the way, about our history. Many issues were raised here. I'll touch only upon several of them. The principled stance on issues of our history was formulated in Party documents related to the 70th Anniversary of the Great October Revolution. Our understanding of historical processes and their reviewing should be deepened on their basis. But there should be no excess here.

I ought to tell you that the Central Committee's Commission, set up in line with decisions of the October 1987 Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee to consider many complex issues of our history, is working. Some first results of its work will probably be published before the 19th Party Conference.

The Politburo discussed at one of its latest meetings the issue of what "essays on CPSU history" should be like. Great interest is shown in this. It is necessary that the "essays" be truthful. For a truthful word about our history, comrades, is our common heritage and our strength. It is therefore a great undertaking to write a good and truthful book that could become a textbook of CPSU history. We think that probably this task cannot be resolved now without the Central Committee's assistance. It is necessary to set into motion the entire potential of ours so as to cope best with the task. Of course, the bulk of effort is up to scientists possessing the necessary scientific background. It is necessary to set up a good task force that will include creative, principled and competent people. Indeed there must be a group of authors, but there should probably also be the Commission of the CPSU Central Committee.

The work ahead is large in scale and important. This is our history with everything that it has. We studied and mastered new values in the economy and spiritual culture, and moved forward along the path of progress. We studied, made miscalculations and errors, drawing lessons even from difficult and tragic periods of our history.

Any smoothing-down of history is unacceptable for us. History is here. It is only to be truthfully depicted. This is up to our honesty and responsibility and a scientific approach. We appreciate everything that was great in our history, but we cannot forgive those who perpetrated lawlessness, the more so crimes.

I see no grounds for cutting roots underneath. The truth is one. We cannot divide it into periods. Our history took place, and it should be known and analysed in a true way.

It is the richest science. The more we address ourselves to it, the more we understand what we must do today and tomorrow.

We come to this Earth but once. The attitude to man, to his life and to all his work must be the most respectful and honest — especially with regard to those who bore on their shoulders the

onus of struggle at the sharp turns of our history. Injustice and disrespect must not be allowed with regard to an individual, the more so with regard to a whole generation. That would be a crime. And if our system has withstood all the trials that befell the Soviet people — including those that hit us all like bursts of submachine-gun fire from the past — this means that it is a durable system backed by the population and a system that we should try and truthfully portray in all stages of its emergence and development.

A dialectical approach rather than wavering from black to white is required. There are no such things in life — everything is going side by side, in struggle and in interrelationship. I would like very much to see that we fully share the understanding of this — one half-truth should not be replaced with another half-truth. All that is our history with all its achievements, losses and tragedies.

We take pride in our history, each day of it, because even when people, the glory of the

motherland, unjustly perished, even in those hard times factory workers, farmers and intellectuals worked and upheld life and raised the country to new heights of progress. That's why when we talk of history we don't want to exalt or overthrow individuals, but we give due to the people, the decisive force in history.

The dialectics is not easy here, comrades. But this is the only way for moving forward while honestly analysing history and drawing conclusions for today. At the beginning of our meeting I touched but briefly on that subject. You raised it, so I found it necessary to speak out once again on what concerns our history.

Returning to topical tasks of perestroika I want to stress once again that the main thing now is to boost the morale of the people and to back their struggle for restructuring. It is necessary to show perestroika in the real struggle of social forces. People want changes, they want to take part in the restructuring drive but in many cases they simply don't know how. They don't know —

that's too bad, comrades.

It is necessary to help people master new approaches. It is necessary to address oneself also to the past and to draw from it everything that can well serve our cause. We should act, so to say, using the method of dialectical negation. To absorb everything that is best, everything that once worked and served us at all stages. Everything obsolete, outdated must be discarded and replaced with new things. Such is our formula.

The CPSU leadership pins great hopes in handling the new and major tasks of the new stage of restructuring also on those who are present here. Let us move forward confidently and firmly; and let you have no doubts — we shall not give up positions in the policy of restructuring. We are committed to this policy to the end. The choice has been made and we shall not swerve from it. But it is necessary, comrades, to raise the entire society, the entire country.

I wish you success.

## Mikhail Gorbachev visits Engineering Exhibition

THE programme to modernise the machine building complex — endorsed by the June 1986 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee — has become an important part of the concept of acceleration of the country's socio-economic development. An exhibition organised at the USSR Exhibition of National Economic Achievement is graphic proof of how vigorously this programme is being implemented.

Mikhail Gorbachev and other leaders of the CPSU and the Soviet

state familiarised themselves with the display in Moscow last week.

During the visit to the Exhibition, an open and exacting conversation took place on the need to satisfy the top priority and long-term requirements of the national economy for highly efficient products of machine building.

Summing up the results of the exchange of opinions that took place, Mikhail Gorbachev said that the Exhibition is very important in that it reflects fairly well the important practical steps in the main area of the restructuring of the machine building complex — ensuring the attainment of world standards. The exhibition gives an unequivocal answer — Soviet machine builders can cope with the solution of this complex and

exceptionally responsible task. Not to copy foreign examples, even the best ones, but to use the achievements of Soviet science to create advanced equipment far surpassing them. This is the course of the machine building complex from now on.

It was specially stressed that, now that the perestroika drive is going through the most complex period, it is becoming increasingly clear that the Party is right in assessing the role and importance of machine building and setting special state priorities for its development.

Taking the machine building complex to the highest stage of world practice is today a task of the greatest economic and political importance.

## Anatoli Dobrynin meets American youth delegation

ANATOLI DOBRYNIN, Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, received in Moscow on Saturday a delegation from the American Council of Young Political Leaders (ACYPL) visiting at the invitation of the Committee of Youth Organisations of the USSR.

The visitors particularly stressed the historic significance of Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to the United States during which the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and the U.S. President signed the Treaty for eliminating intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles — this has come as a good sign of progress towards the real demilitarisation of international relations.

They spoke openly about the big impression that Mikhail Gorbachev made on the American people during his visit to Washington and expressed the hope in this connection that possibilities will open up to steadily improve the relationship between the two countries.

Dobrynin gave detailed answers to the numerous questions of the American visitors, emphasising that the far-reaching and thorough-going processes of renewing every aspect of life in Soviet society are very significant for bilateral relations between the USSR and the U.S. and for cardinal improvements in the international situation as a whole.

In the light of the results of the summit talks in Washington the meeting covered also the issues of further developing contacts between the peoples of the two countries, especially between young people, as a field where good traditions have already been formed but large reserves still remain to be tapped.

Stress was laid also on the growing importance of broader contacts between the USSR Supreme Soviet and the U.S. Congress, in particular in view of the forthcoming examination of the issue of ratifying the INF Treaty.

In conclusion the American guests said their visit to Moscow enabled them to get a better and more objective idea of Soviet policies and expressed their heartfelt gratitude to the hosting Soviet organisations for the hospitality and unflinching attention shown to them.

They called for continuing and extending such contacts and invited a Soviet delegation to visit the United States.

## U.S. experts visit Soviet nuclear test site

A GROUP of U.S. experts led by Robert Barker, an assistant to the Secretary of Defence, arrived in the Soviet Union last Friday to visit the nuclear testing range at Semipalatinsk in Soviet Kazakhstan.

The understanding on reciprocal trips by Soviet and American specialists to each other's nuclear test sites was reached during the summit talks in Washington in December 1987.

Barker was received at the Soviet Foreign Ministry on Saturday by Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Petrovsky who stressed the need for the early resolution of the problem of stopping nuclear testing, a problem which has become very urgent in the light of transition to the process of eliminating nuclear weapons.

Petrovsky called the U.S. visitors' attention to the Soviet proposal for a mutual moratorium on nuclear testing for the duration of full-scale Soviet-American talks on this issue.

The U.S. experts flew to Semipalatinsk on Sunday.

The return visit by Soviet experts to the nuclear testing range in Nevada USA will take place in the second half of this month.

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# Mikhail Gorbachev's replies to Chinese magazine *Liaowang*

Here follows Mikhail Gorbachev's replies to a number of questions put to him by the Chinese weekly *Liaowang* on New Year's Eve —

**Liaowang** Looking back at the course of development of the international situation in 1987, do you notice any encouraging changes?

In your view, what disquieting questions still exist?

What hopes do you pin on the coming year?

**Gorbachev** Nuclear physicists once portrayed the present-day state of the world as a clock face on which proximity of the minute hand to '12' shows how dangerously close mankind has approached the fatal hour. The image is grim, but it conveys the sensation of mounting alarm.

Assessing the outgoing year through this imagery, one can say, I think, that the hand has moved somewhat off from the danger mark, although it would be too early to speak about the start of a fundamentally different count.

First of all, I mean the outcome of the Soviet-American meeting in Washington. The historic significance of the meeting that riveted worldwide attention is indisputable. An agreement on eliminating two classes of nuclear missiles has been reached for the first time, thus launching the process of real disarmament and opening up the prospect of deep-going cuts in major, strategic arsenals of nuclear weapons.

All this became possible as a result of the gradual change in the psychological climate in the world and changes in the state of minds. Various factors played their part in this. We have the right to single out among them world socialism's contribution to awakening the universal human impulse to improvement and normalising international relations, a contribution directly linked with profound changes, restructuring and renovation — everything that characterises today the development of socialist society.

It is socialism which offers an alternative to the outdated and dangerous concept of nuclear deterrence — the prospect of building a world without weapons of mass annihilation. It is no accident that two great socialist powers, the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, have unilaterally pledged not to be the first to use nuclear weapons.

On the whole, the change of the overall political atmosphere seems to be the most important result of the year.

Of course, making a realistic assessment of the situation, one should say that only the first bricks are being placed in building a truly safe world. Many obstacles along this path will have to be overcome. The chief of them are old-thinking stereotypes under which the strength of a country is in its weapons, notions of a world divided into spheres of influence, and ignoring the growing gap between the 'rich' West and the 'poor' South. Related to this are also regional conflicts whose fair settlement, wherever they are, is sought by the Soviet Union.

Indeed, the obstacles are considerable, the problems are serious. But the strong positive impulse given to international relations in the outgoing year open the way for a chain reaction of change along the entire front of arms limitation

and elimination — whether the point at issue are nuclear or space, chemical or 'conventional' weapons. All our designs are directed at attaining these objectives. We count here, naturally, on cooperation with the People's Republic of China, whose policy means a lot in world affairs.

**Liaowang** What prospects, in your opinion, are visible in the development of Soviet-American relations and what trends exist in the development of East-West relations?

**Gorbachev** The prospects have improved, in our assessment, as a result of the third Soviet-American summit meeting and its outcome. The Americans have better learned what our policy is in fact, what we really want and what the meaning and objectives of our restructuring are. They were able to feel directly the realities of Soviet society and our respect for the American people. All this makes an encouraging headstart for the future.

We do not simplify the situation. The USSR and the United States belong to different social systems. Their relations are part of a broader and diverse array of relationships between these systems or, as it is sometimes said, between East and West. Both countries possess their unique historical experience, 'preach' their own ideology and way of life. Each has its own allies and its own established ties with the broadest circles of states, above all states close to them by social system.

In our age, it is important — and this is one of the central ideas of new thinking — not to turn differences and contradictions into a pretext for and justification of confrontation. This is the more true now when processes of renewal, democratisation and openness in the world of socialism are creating trends that favour contacts between countries in the East and West and make it possible to begin a new page in their relations.

The USSR and the United States are called sometimes 'super-powers', implying a meaning that one cannot agree to. We do understand our international responsibility, but we are far from the thought that everything in the world, including East-West relations, depends only on Moscow and Washington. The new political thinking that we have embraced rejects the old simplistic rule: if you maintain good relations with someone, it is necessarily to the detriment of others.

The present time dictates another morality, other laws. It shows convincingly that today one cannot build one's long-term policy at another's expense, that it is necessary to look for the balance of interests. Not against someone, but together with all — this is a hard but the only correct path leading towards universal security and equitable cooperation.

**Liaowang** What major changes have been accomplished in your effort toward restructuring? What problems have you encountered? How are you going to handle them?

**Gorbachev** The period that our country is living through can be described as a turning-point. We opened windows wide to welcome the refreshing wind of change. A new ideological and moral atmosphere has been established in society. People's activity and vigour are growing. The Party's rich intellectual potential is unfolding.

A theoretical and political programme of restructuring has been worked out. Its key directions are democratisation and radical economic reform. We took advantage of the 70th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution to assess in all ways our past, draw lessons and analyse the restructuring drive as the natural stage of development linked with

transition to modern forms of organisation in socialist society.

Naturally, there have been and will be difficulties. Many of them were engendered by contradictions of the initial, transitional period of restructuring. Inertia, the habit of thinking and working in old ways and — in some people — the unwillingness to keep abreast of the times and the fear of losing privileges made themselves felt. There have emerged leftist, avant-garde sentiments and aspirations to do everything at one stroke, and ensuing panic and disappointment in the event of failing. The Party gave a keen assessment to these phenomena. Conservatism and skipping stages are two sides of the same coin. Objectively, they mean dragging back to the past and lead to the revival of command-and-administer methods.

Restructuring has entered a new stage. Enterprises are to be transferred to self-repayment, self-financing and self-management. Relations between all elements of the economic system are to be reorganised accordingly.

These changes affect the interests of masses of people, virtually the entire workforce. They are directly linked with the rejection of distorted notions about socialism as a kind of society of universal levelling. Therefore, there is only one way to attain the objective — through direct involvement of broad masses in management, in decision-making and in control.

Very much will depend on the Party. The Party will have to restructure itself seriously, put an end to substitution for state and economic bodies and alter forms of work. These issues will be handled at the all-union Party conference in the summer.

The restructuring that we have started grew out of conditions of Soviet society and is directed at its renewal. Objectively, the entire international community is greatly interested in it in the same way as we are interested in making economic development and social progress the property of every nation.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, I will say that we are greatly interested in reforms of the economic mechanism and the political system currently under way in the PRC. The similarity of problems handled by our countries give much room for a mutually beneficial exchange of experience.

China is our neighbour, and we feel satisfaction with the accelerating mutually advantageous cooperation in economy, culture, science, education and sport. Soviet-Chinese border negotiations have made a successful start. Political dialogue is being established. A Soviet-Chinese summit meeting could become, in our view, its logical development. As all signs indicate, an objective need for it is felt by both sides. By moving towards each other, it is possible to find mutually acceptable solutions — we are sure of this.

In conclusion I would like to wish the friendly Chinese people and its leadership successes in accomplishing the large-scale tasks advanced by the 13th Congress of the Communist Party of China and happiness and prosperity in the New Year.

## Mikhail Gorbachev Speech in Vladivostok July 1986

Price 20p

The above speech is available as a booklet from Soviet Booklets, 3 Rosary Gardens, London, SW7 4NW (01-373 7350).

# Nikolai Ryzhkov's visit to Sweden

Between the Soviet Union and Sweden "there are no such contentious issues and unresolved problems as would prevent the joint building of a structure of goodneighbourliness, cooperation and mutual respect," Nikolai Ryzhkov, Member of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee and Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, said in Stockholm on Monday.

He was speaking at a dinner given in his honour by Prime Minister of Sweden Ingvar Carlsson.

Speaking about prospects for Soviet-Swedish relations, Ryzhkov said that for the USSR they are closely connected with the fundamental renewal of every aspect of life in the Soviet Union and with the policy of peaceful coexistence in international affairs.

This policy "is now acquiring a new quality since in the light of new thinking it is becoming the goal to achieve peace without wars and without threat of violence in every sphere of international affairs — military, political, economic and humanitarian," the Soviet Head of Government continued.

"This is our creed and the philosophical and moral bedrock of the foreign policy of our Communist Party and the Soviet State," he said.

Ryzhkov stressed the significance of the Soviet-U.S. INF (intermediate-range nuclear

force) Treaty which "bears out the real possibility of building a nuclear-free and more secure world."

"The process of nuclear disarmament — for which millions of people on this planet and all peace-loving nations, including the Soviet Union and Sweden — have been calling for decades has thus been started."

Nikolai Ryzhkov then dwelt on security and cooperation in northern Europe, calling attention to Mikhail Gorbachev's proposals made in Murmansk on 1 October 1987.

"They represent a wide-ranging programme for action towards the single goal of bringing about a drastic lowering of the level of military confrontation in the northern hemisphere, edging out mistrust and suspicion and also confrontation from our region and replacing them respectively with trust and broadly-based peaceful cooperation and interaction."

Ryzhkov said the Soviet leadership, returning to the issues posed in Murmansk, has considered further ideas with a view to translating the proposals made there into life more actively.

In particular, the USSR, "without waiting for a solution to the issue of confidence-building measures in the marine regions around Europe intends to invite observers from nordic countries to one of the Soviet Navy's exercises to be held in 1988," he pointed out, adding that the Soviet Union counts on reciprocity in the matter.

"For us this step appears important as a first real landmark on the way to overcoming the

dearth of trust in the marine regions of the north and the Arctic and solving the problem of scaling down military confrontation in Europe radically," the Soviet Head of Government said.

He also suggested that the issue of limiting and reducing military activity in the north be considered at the second phase of the Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe.

"The early commencement of consultations proposed by the USSR between the Warsaw Treaty Organisation and NATO for reducing military activity and limiting naval and air-force activity in the Baltic, North, Norwegian and Greenland seas and for extending confidence-building measures to cover them" will help prepare productively for the discussions at the Conference, he continued.

Ryzhkov added that, taking account of the wishes expressed by northerners, the USSR is prepared to include in the zone covered by confidence-building measures both the Greenland, North, Norwegian and Baltic seas and the Barents Sea.

He said it will be better if these consultations between the Warsaw Treaty and NATO involve Sweden and Finland as well.

Touching on the issue of a nuclear-free zone in northern Europe, the Soviet visitor said a fundamentally new situation is shaping for realising the Finnish proposal on this score put forward nearly 25 years ago, in May 1963.

First, he said, the Soviet-U.S. INF Treaty means that three years after it has gone into force security will grow stronger not only in the areas directly adjacent to the possible zone, but also globally.

Secondly, Ryzhkov continued, the prerequisites are being formed for signature of a Soviet-American treaty to halve strategic offensive arms. This radical step will also favourably impact the situation in the regions that some northerners were expressing concern about.

Third, the Soviet Head of Government said, the USSR is prepared as before to discuss with the sides concerned the issue of giving the Baltic Sea nuclear-free status. In the context of creating a nuclear-free zone in the north of Europe, he added, the Soviet Union is prepared to support northerners' practical efforts towards this aim — understanding by this the withdrawal of submarines with ballistic missiles from its Baltic fleet.

Nikolai Ryzhkov reiterated the Soviet readiness for a constructive exchange of opinions on all aspects of the proposed nuclear-free zone in northern Europe with representatives of the nordic countries. □

## Nikolai Ryzhkov's talks with Ingvar Carlsson

TALKS between Nikolai Ryzhkov and Swedish Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson were held in Stockholm on Monday.

The sides examined in a favourable atmosphere the present state and prospects of developing Soviet-Swedish relations and a broad range of issues of the present-day international life.

It was stated that relations between the two countries — based on principles of equality, respect for sovereignty and non-interference in each other's affairs — are currently developing in all areas and this was largely facilitated by Carlsson's official visit to the Soviet Union in April 1986.

The sides expressed readiness for further deepening of bilateral relations.

The two heads of government reached understanding on the issue of maritime demarcation in the Baltic Sea.

Ryzhkov described the profound changes in all spheres of the USSR's life and gave a detailed picture of the current stage in the development of Soviet society.

Carlsson wished success to the policy of restructuring and expressed the hope that it will promote greater understanding and trust among the peoples of Europe and the entire world.

The exchange of opinions revealed identity or proximity of the two countries' views on vital problems of world politics. It was noted that the USSR and Sweden attach special importance to issues of averting the threat of nuclear war and strengthening security.

Both sides pointed out with satisfaction that the world situation has been lately characterised

by a number of positive changes.

In this connection, Carlsson highly assessed the Soviet-American Treaty on eliminating intermediate- and shorter-range missiles which paves the way for broader agreements in the field of nuclear disarmament.

He pointed to the positive interest displayed in Sweden in Mikhail Gorbachev's Murmansk initiatives directed at strengthening security and stability in northern Europe, developing international cooperation in studying and using resources of the north and the Arctic and in environmental protection in that region.

Ryzhkov stressed Sweden's active role within the framework of the Group of Six for peace and disarmament and the movement of the neutral and nonaligned nations. He pointed to the great contribution made by Sweden as a member of these organisations and on its own to preserving peace and opposing the arms race.

The sides declared their aspiration to facilitate the further consolidation of the United Nations and its Charter as key instruments of upholding peace. The urgent need was stressed for a political settlement of conflicts in various parts of the world in keeping with generally recognised standards of international law.

Nikolai Ryzhkov yesterday laid a wreath at the tomb of prominent statesman and politician of Sweden Olof Palme.

Olof Palme won great respect and recognition in many countries of the world, including the Soviet Union, owing to his activities aimed at consolidating peace and security in the world, eliminating the threat of a world nuclear war and attaining better mutual understanding between peoples. □

## Seminar on perestroika in USSR held in Stockholm

"PERESTROIKA, glasnost and economic reform" is the title of a seminar which opened in the Swedish capital on Sunday.

The seminar which has been organised by the biggest Swedish newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* is being attended by Viktor Afanasiev, Editor-in-Chief of *Pravda*, Valentin Falin, Chairman of the Board of the Novosti Press Agency, Colonel-General Nikolai Chervov, head of department of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the USSR, a number of prominent scientists and economists from the Soviet Union, Sweden, the United States and Britain, and representatives of Swedish political and public circles.

Declaring the seminar open, Christina  
(Continued on next page)

# Nikolai Ryzhkov addresses Swedish businesspeople

THE Soviet Union is for widely developing trade and economic relations with the West. The nascent turn from confrontation to detente as well as the perestroika policy in the Soviet Union are creating good prerequisite conditions for this, Nikolai Ryzhkov said in Stockholm yesterday.

Ryzhkov was speaking at a meeting with representatives of the Swedish business community.

"For the first time over the 70-year history of our state the press in capitalist countries is not only recognising the peaceful objectives of Soviet foreign policy but is also giving its due to it.

"There is no need to explain what has been the cause of it. It is the perestroika policy in the USSR, the new manner of political thinking and, as its manifestation, the Soviet-American Treaty for eliminating intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles, as well as the prospects it

(from previous page)

Jutterstroem, Chief Editor of *Dagens Nyheter*, pointed out that the changes taking place in the Soviet Union now are characterised as revolutionary in their essence and evoke a lively interest in the world and in Sweden as well.

The Soviet participants in the seminar explained in detail the meaning and essence of the current restructuring process in the Soviet Union. It was pointed out that restructuring being effected on the initiative of the CPSU with the support and participation of all Soviet people covers all spheres of societal life — economic, political and social.

An important role in the process belongs to democratisation and glasnost (openness) which is becoming the norm of life for Soviet people. The new processes are of great international importance and are closely interconnected with the Soviet Union's foreign-policy course which is characterised by the new way of thinking in the nuclear age.

The INF Treaty signed in Washington during the Soviet-U.S. summit meeting is viewed throughout the world as the first important step in the cause of real elimination of nuclear arsenals, and is vivid illustration of the Soviet Union's striving to proceed along the road towards a nuclear-free world.

All countries in the world, including nordic ones, can and must contribute to establishing a comprehensive system of international security.

The new Soviet initiatives set out by Mikhail Gorbachev in his speech in Murmansk are reaffirmation of the Soviet Union's readiness for joint actions with these countries in the international arena in the interests of peace. The Soviet proposals contain a large-scale programme aimed at strengthening security in the nordic region, making it an area of lasting and steady peace, lowering the level of military confrontation there, and strengthening the relations of trust, goodneighbourliness and cooperation.

"The restructuring processes taking place in the Soviet Union are regarded with great attention among Swedish political, economic and social circles," Christina Jutterstroem pointed out. "The seminar has special importance, for it is being held on the eve of Nikolai Ryzhkov's official visit to Sweden. We hope that this visit will be a major event in relations between our two countries and will serve to broaden mutual understanding between the Soviet and Swedish peoples."

opens for the entire international community," the Soviet Head of Government said.

He said that Soviet-U.S. confrontation had led not only to an abrupt drop-off in bilateral trade, but also to serious difficulties for the USSR in developing economic relations with other Western nations.

Ryzhkov gave the following example. The share of industrialised Western countries in Soviet foreign trade over the past seven years has shrunk to 22% from 33%. It has diminished in the trade of all socialist states as a whole as well.

"This is why when we analyse prospects for international trade and economic contacts, it is essential to be clearly aware that there are two diametrically opposite variants. Either further advances along the path of scaling down confrontation and reducing arms — which will produce a drastically new situation in international relations — or preserved military confrontation and a continued arms race, which will mean unfavourable conditions for increasing trade, which are already well known to us, dwindling spheres for cooperation and many lost opportunities," Ryzhkov said.

Speaking about Soviet-Swedish commercial contacts, he linked prospects for developing economic relations stably and on a broad scale with updating the Soviet export pattern and with closer ties in industry.

The Soviet Prime Minister expressed the hope that in the next few years "interesting and mutually beneficial projects can be found, the circle of Soviet organisations and Swedish firms forming partnerships and making cooperative arrangements will grow and it will be possible to use the Soviet Union's scientific and technological potential more fully."

He said in this connection that the economic reform effected in the USSR "is creating a fundamentally new situation". Already, he explained, enterprises granted the right to maintain independent operations in foreign markets account for about a quarter of all Soviet

foreign trade including almost 65% of the exports of machines and equipment.

As factories received broader rights, "foreign firms are getting opportunities for investments and commercial activities in our country and for direct involvement in production projects," Ryzhkov said. He assured the attending businessmen that "the rights and property interests of our foreign partners can be guaranteed."

He said that the period of extensive growth in the Soviet economy is now over and a phase of wide-ranging intensification is beginning.

"Both for the nation as a whole and for individual enterprises participation in the international division of labour is becoming a highly important means of raising economic efficiency and cutting expenses."

"It is indisputable that the broader and brisker cooperation with Western firms will be, the more opportunities there will emerge for opening the Soviet market and tapping its vast potential as a factor for universal economic growth," the Soviet Head of Government said.

He added that prerequisites for such cooperation are available even today and this was stressed in the recent Soviet proposals made by Mikhail Gorbachev in Murmansk.

These proposals, Ryzhkov reminded the businessmen, call for developing Arctic resources, including natural wealth in the Kola peninsula, as one of the priority areas of cooperation.

Speaking of the Kola peninsula Nikolai Ryzhkov said —

"There we have such a blend of a unique mineral base, a qualified workforce, dependable power supplies, well-developed infrastructure and, finally, large scientific potential that offers possibilities for diverse and interesting economic combinations, which can undoubtedly bring benefit to all participants in such international cooperation. Besides it can help improve the ecological situation in northern Europe."

## USSR Foreign Ministry briefing

"THE main task of the present round of the Soviet-American negotiations on nuclear and space weapons in Geneva is to prepare the draft document on a 50-per-cent cut in strategic offensive weapons with observance of the ABM Treaty and its non-violation over an agreed period," Gennadi Gerasimov, head of the USSR Foreign Ministry information directorate, told Soviet and foreign journalists at a briefing yesterday.

The USSR Foreign Ministry spokesman also said that the talks to agree the text of an international convention on prohibiting and destroying chemical weapons were resuming yesterday within the Disarmament Conference. "The Soviet Union proceeds from the fact that the convention can be concluded at the earliest opportunity provided there is political will."

The Soviet Union states with satisfaction that such an approach is also shared by other delegations. For instance, on Monday Swedish representative Rolf Ekeus, head of the Special Committee on Chemical Weapons in Geneva, said that all the main military and political

obstacles to the convention have been lifted and only some intricate technical issues were left to be resolved, which will be quite possible to do this year. "We also paid attention to Mr. Ekeus's words that the convention's ban should also embrace binary weapons."

### Soviet parliamentarians' statement

A group of deputies of the USSR Supreme Soviet who are members of the Soviet-Arab section of the USSR Parliamentary Group have expressed anxiety and concern over the developments taking place in the past several weeks on Israeli-occupied Arab territories.

The Soviet parliamentarians described the developments in Israeli-occupied lands as "unequal confrontation between the Israeli military-police apparatus and the peaceful Palestinian population protesting against the occupation regime". They pointed out that the apparatus "is defending the order established by Israel some 20 years ago. It runs counter to all the international legal norms including provisions of the 1949 Geneva Convention. In practice it means gross violation of basic human rights, infringement of the national dignity of the Palestinians, trampling of their religious feelings, arbitrariness and discrimination".

# Eduard Shevardnadze's interview with Bakhtar News Agency

**EDUARD SHEVARDNADZE**, Member of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee and USSR Foreign Minister, on a working visit to the Republic of Afghanistan, gave an interview in Kabul last Wednesday to the Bakhtar News Agency before departing for home.

**Bakhtar** This is the second time that you are starting the new year visiting Afghanistan. With what is your working visit associated?

**Shevardnadze** It is associated with the new stage in Soviet-Afghan relations, which started with the meeting of the supreme leaders of our two countries Mikhail Gorbachev and Najibullah late in 1986. It is associated also with the implementation of the policy of national reconciliation in Afghanistan which we wholly support and to which we wish complete success, and with the coming into the decisive stage of the Geneva talks on the political settlement of the situation around Afghanistan.

The Soviet leadership attaches much importance to contacts with President Najibullah and other Afghan leaders. These contacts are particularly needed now that the implementation of the second stage of the policy of national reconciliation is started and now that the question of the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan is the order of the day.

We would like the year 1988 to be the last year of the stay of Soviet troops in your country.

**Bakhtar** Are there conditions for this?

**Shevardnadze** Having discussed this question with President Najibullah we have arrived at the conclusion that the necessary conditions can be ensured shortly. The two aspects of the problem — the external, international, and the internal — should be borne in mind. Both are very important and interrelated, but the main thing from the political viewpoint is the completion of the Geneva process. Virtually the entire package of the necessary arrangements has already been agreed upon at the Afghan-Pakistani talks conducted through the mediation of the personal representative of the United Nations Secretary-General.

There is an opportunity to conclude these talks at the next round in February. If this happens, the obligation on the ending of outside interference will go into effect. Under the documents prepared, the USSR and the USA will be guarantors of this obligation. It must be emphasised that the U.S. side agrees to be a guarantor and consequently to stop aid to armed groups conducting military operations against the people's power in Afghanistan.

It is precisely with the coming into force of this obligation that the Soviet troop withdrawal will be started.

As envisaged by the agreement, this is to take place 60 days after the signing of the arrangements reached at the Afghan-Pakistani talks. In other words, we believe the conditions for the political settlement of external aspects of the Afghan problem will be ensured.

Not sparing their lives, Afghan patriots have been waging armed struggle to protect the gains of the April Revolution. Soviet soldiers-internationalists were next to them at the most difficult stages of the struggle. But new political thinking has been persistently seeking the ways and means of precluding a military solution to the problem. This is how the projects of political settlement around Afghanistan and the policy of national reconciliation have emerged.

We shall leave Afghanistan with clear

conscience and awareness of the duty fulfilled when outside interference is stopped. We have complete understanding with the Afghan leadership to this effect. It is proceeding precisely from this that President Najibullah proclaimed the possibility of the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan within 12 months. If the situation is favourable, then as the President said the withdrawal can be made earlier than this schedule. Troops will be withdrawn ahead of schedule from those provinces where the ceasefire assumes a steady nature.

**Bakhtar** You also touched upon the internal aspect of the Afghan problem. Don't you think that an end to outside interference might not automatically lead to an end to hostilities within the country?

**Shevardnadze** Any revolution, any sharp social changes affect the interests of certain circles which do not accept these changes and resist them, sometimes by armed struggle.

There are certainly such forces also in Afghanistan.

The policy of national reconciliation is aimed precisely at finding the basis on which all patriotic forces of the Afghan people can cooperate on a peaceful non-confrontational basis.

The essence of the policy of national reconciliation is that the opposing forces can shape the future of their country not by armed struggle, but by participating in the all-Afghan political dialogue, in decision-making and governing the country.

Afghan society is split, but all sections, groups, tribes and the clergy are now invited to find by political means, by methods traditional for Afghanistan, the common denominator of their interests in the future independent, sovereign, neutral and nonaligned Afghanistan.

Is this impossible for true Afghan patriots to achieve? They cannot but see and realise that the continuation of the split and bloodshed undermines the future of the nation. He who ignores its true interests and gives priority to considerations of an ideological nature, inordinately concentrating attention on them risks contradicting the supreme moral law.

We believe that a constructive political dialogue in which no one will claim the monopoly to power is indispensable to internal political settlement in Afghanistan. As we see the programme of national reconciliation, what is at hand at the given stage is the forming of a coalition government on the broadest basis. It should be taken into consideration that the creation of the coalition government is viewed as an initial step toward working out a common Afghan accord about the future road of Afghanistan's development.

To avoid broad political dialogue and the determination on this basis of the destiny of one's country and one's people means to put some transient, circumstantial, personal considerations and aspirations above the interests of the nation.

We believe the forces that disregard the call of the nation and the motherland can lose support in those circles of the population on which they rely.

The road to national reconciliation in Afghanistan is open and it can be achieved only by the Afghans themselves.

**Bakhtar** Can it be said that, taking into account the present stage of the developments in Afghanistan, the nature of Soviet-Afghan relations is changing or will be changing?

**Shevardnadze** The Soviet Union and Afghanistan are linked by long-standing bonds of friendship and goodneighbourliness. We had

good relations with Afghanistan when it was a monarchy, when it was ruled by Daud and after the April Revolution. We are confident that such relations will remain under the government which will be formed in Afghanistan as a result of national reconciliation. Moreover, we are convinced that the experience accumulated and the programme of cooperation drawn up jointly with the Afghan leadership make it possible to predict that Soviet-Afghan relations will reach a new and higher level.

In the past as well the Soviet Union believed it to be its duty to assist the economic development of a neighbouring friendly country. Our economic ties are now being adjusted to the demands of the time. Economic and foreign trade institutions of the Soviet Union are interacting actively with the Afghan entrepreneurs and with the peasantry. Joint ventures are being set up. Steps are being taken to establish ties at regional and production levels. Cooperation in production and marketing can yield good results. Republics, territories, regions and cities of the Soviet Union, in the framework of direct ties with Afghan provinces, will be more and more vigorously building industrial enterprises, transport and communication facilities, cultural and everyday amenities and helping train cadres of the Afghan national intelligentsia.

The USSR Academy of Sciences, the academies of sciences of the union republics, universities and institutes, creative workers' unions, youth, women's, sport and other public organisations are involved in this activity.

Our main aim in the implementation of all this programme is not just the restoration of Afghanistan's war-ravaged economy and a return to normal conditions in the functioning of the national economy, but also putting it on a contemporary level and the genuine flourishing of Afghan national culture.

The foundation for this is being laid down now.

**Bakhtar** Soviet leaders have had of late many meetings and conversations with representatives of various countries. The results of the Washington summit and the signing of the Treaty on the elimination of intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles was welcomed in Afghanistan. All this gives us fresh hopes for a better future also for our country. Are these hopes justified?

**Shevardnadze** Undoubtedly so. The overall improvement of the international situation will invariably have an influence on Afghan affairs. But I also see in this the other relation, the feedback. The policy of national reconciliation and its practical implementation by the Afghan leadership headed by President Najibullah, reflecting world tendencies, in its turn has a beneficial effect on the international climate. One would think all the forces involved in the intra-Afghan conflict should realise that in searching for ties leading to nationwide accord and reconciliation they give a chance to their own people and the whole world.

And another aspect of the international importance of the policy of national reconciliation. Being tried out in Afghanistan it increasingly becomes a basic model for the settlement of conflicts in other regions. Interest is being shown in it and it is being watched closely so that peoples, adjusting it to local conditions, can put it at the service of their countries.

In this respect the experience of our Afghan friends in implementing the policy of national reconciliation also assumes international significance.