

*SOVIET WEEKLY SUPPLEMENT*

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**MIKHAIL  
GORBACHEV'S  
SPEECH AT  
RALLY IN  
PRAGUE**

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**JOINT SOVIET-  
CZECHOSLOVAK  
COMMUNIQUE**

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*APRIL, 1987*

# Mikhail Gorbachev's speech at rally in Prague

**Dear Comrade Husak,  
Dear Comrades and Friends,**

First of all I wish to thank you wholeheartedly for the hospitality accorded me.

I highly appreciate the opportunity to address you, party and state leaders, representatives of all sections of the Czech and the Slovak peoples.

Our meeting is really a meeting with the broad public of Czechoslovakia. I take this opportunity to express the most profound friendly feelings that the Soviet people have for their Czechoslovak brothers.

Comrade Husak aptly described the nature of our relations, the durability of bonds linking the Czechoslovak and Soviet communists, the peoples of our countries, the importance of our co-operation. I am pleased to subscribe to his words. I appreciate the high appraisal of the policy of our party, of the course of the 27th Congress.

There is every reason to expect that the ties between our parties and countries will become broader and deeper in the foreseeable future. Assuring precisely such development is the essence of the talks we have had here in Prague yesterday and today.

A joint document will be issued on the results of the talks. But I can say right now that we have a common approach to domestic and international affairs. We have the mutual aspiration to continue advancing along the road to deeper and in every way richer Soviet-Czechoslovak interaction.

Mutual information on the course of socialist construction, on plans and intentions, bear as ever an important place in our conversations. Our Czechoslovak comrades have described how the programme outlined at the 17th Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia is being implemented.

We sincerely rejoice at each success of yours. You really have reasons to be proud. Present-day Czechoslovakia appears before the world as an advanced, economically and socially developed country. Its national economy has an en-

viable stability and is not encumbered with external debt.

Czechoslovakia has a considerable industrial, scientific and technological potential, and resource-intensive agriculture. The living standard, education system and health services, and care for the young generation and labour veterans in Czechoslovakia are on a par with the highest world indices.

All these are tangible results of socialism, the fruit of dedicated work of the masses guided by the communist party, and above all results of the effort of the working class which has proved by its entire history that precisely it is the motive force of society's progress in Czechoslovakia, just as in other socialist countries.

As we and our Czechoslovak comrades talked we touched on the outstanding problems and difficulties. We had a candid and sincere discussion about that, as befits communists. What are friends for, if not for sharing thoughts, joys and cares, if not for pondering together on what else can be done to live and work better.

I have no doubt that those present in the hall, just as the majority of the working people in your country, are well informed of the processes taking place in our country. The Czechoslovak mass media present broadly and in sufficient detail the essence of the reorganisation taking place in the USSR. And still we would like to share our cares and plans with you.

How are things with us today?

The idea of reorganisation did not materialise out of nothing. It was put on the order of the day by the entire objective course of social development, by the vital needs of the country. It happens that one might live in a strong enough house, with a solid foundation and a reliable shell, but many things are no longer satisfying as they lag behind increased requirements and needs. Minor repair will not be enough. Overhauling is in order.

In the same way we have now embarked, with the reliable basis of socialism, on restructuring in the economy and politics, in the spiritual sphere, in the style and

methods of party work.

In the seven decades since the October Revolution, trail blazing and honourably withstanding many grim trials, including imperialist invasion and the most devastating war in history, our people, guided by the communist party, have taken our country to the pinnacles of social and scientific progress.

The Soviet Union's achievements in various areas of social activity are well known. But it is precisely against the background of these achievements that the serious problems and phenomena of stagnation that manifested themselves in the '70s are particularly intolerable.

I must say openly that sharp contrasts appeared in our country.

We have a huge output of steel, raw materials and fuel and energy resources for which we have long been unmatched. And at the same time we are short of these resources because of wasteful, inefficient use. The USSR rates high for the output of grain, and it has to buy millions of tonnes of fodder grain every year.

Soviet science has generally recognised achievements, fundamental research included. It has the biggest number of doctors and hospital beds per thousand of population, and at the same time there are considerable drawbacks in the quality of medical aid.

Our rockets home on Halley's Comet with pin-point accuracy, are flying toward Venus for a rendezvous. And hand-in-hand with this triumph of science and engineering there is obvious backwardness when it comes to application of new science in the national economy, and there are annoying flaws in ordinary household appliances.

Contrary to what our ideological adversaries assert, it is not the socialist system that is to blame for this. These things resulted from miscalculations by leaders and managers, and we have openly said as much to the party and the people. We said that discipline had slackened, that incentives for productive and inventive work had lessened.

We are often asked, also by friends, to what degree such sharp criticism of short-

comings is justifiable. Will it not damage the prestige of the Soviet Union and socialism as a whole?

We know not only from books, but from our vast experience that success in the development of socialism and progress are impossible without constructive criticism and self-criticism. Regrettably, this fundamental rule has not always been abided by in practice. Presentation of events as if no problems existed did a disservice. A gap formed between words and actions, engendering social passivity, lack of faith in the slogans proclaimed.

As to the attractiveness of socialism, it proceeds, in the long run, by real actions and not by words. Frank admission of oversights and blunders, and the resolve to repair them only strengthen socialism's prestige.

Our efforts are now geared to reorganising the entire social mechanism. In the economy this means the transition from extensive to intensive methods, with speedy social and economic progress via the most advanced science and technology.

Broader democracy and self-government of the people, an end to bureaucratism and abuse of office, and greater socialist legality are the aims in the political sphere.

Creative development of Marxist-Leninist theory as opposed to dogmatism, with assertion of high moral principles and socialist values are the aims in ideology, in the spiritual sphere.

In short, radical change is needed in the way we go about our entire activity, in our social awareness, in the psychology of people, in their attitude to work — a change that is revolutionary in nature.

Is it appropriate to speak of revolutionary changes in a country that has lived through the most profound social revolution in the history of humanity, a country in which socialism has been built? I think yes, it is appropriate, for it accurately reflects the essence of what is taking place.

I shall venture to dwell at length on this matter which has not only theoretical but a vast political importance.

The October Revolution signified a fundamental upheaval in the political area, in the entire system of social relations. It deprived certain classes of power (the bourgeoisie and landowners), while it entrusted other classes with the levers of power (the proletariat and most impoverished peasants). It took the means of production from private owners and turned them over to the people. The new socio-political basis of society that formed as a result of radical transformations has been and remains an unshakable foundation for the development of socialism.

But the need for periodical renewal of the forms of social relations, or for bringing them into accord with the level of the development of the productive forces, as proclaimed in the famous law discovered by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, might arise and does arise in the framework of this process.

As a matter of principle, this task must be constantly tackled under socialism through upgrading aspects of social relations. But if the needed transformations are not implemented, are put off, and problems pile up, then more radical means and revolutionary methods are called for.

Vladimir Lenin said that we should have to polish and even re-do many things in our system more than once. We face precisely this task now. And its solution means none other than expanding the creative potential of socialism more fully, consolidating our social system.

It is fundamentally important that the communist party has initiated the revolutionary process under way in our country and that the entire Soviet people, all classes and segments of society are taking part in it.

The ultimate goal of the restructuring is a better life for Soviet people, still higher standards of social organisation and social justice. Is this goal feasible? We are firmly convinced that it is.

It is not utopia, not fantasy, but a realistic plan based on sound calculation and a thoroughly considered and balanced forecast. We have truly vast potentialities.

What is needed is to bring fully into play those social mechanisms that have not been operating to full capacity or have functioned irregularly up to now, to discard everything that hampers our development and to introduce those things that lead to acceleration.

What is the generator of this restructuring and acceleration? Further development of our social democracy, the drawing of the huge masses of working people and every honest Soviet citizen into direct work to run the country. And this is the essence of the decisions of the January plenary meeting of the CPSU central committee.

Only a people that has full state power and is aware of being a master has a sense of responsibility for the state of things in the country, region, city, at every enterprise, and is capable of tackling the complex and varied targets comprised in the reorganisation, of bringing Soviet society out to new frontiers of social, economic, scientific and technological progress.

The main roads in this direction have been charted. They are the development of all forms of representative and direct democracy; broader self-administration at all levels; an enhanced role for work collectives, the Soviets and public organisations; strengthened juridical and economic guarantees of the rights of the individual; enhanced legality; more openness, and more control by the people.

But life is at times ahead of plans. The changes in the electoral system are just being worked out, but leaders are already being elected in a new way in many party and public organisations, at enterprises, in science and the arts.

More democracy means extra scope for popular initiative and innovation.

Everyone has an opportunity to show their worth in conditions of democracy. Meanwhile money-grubbers, idlers, demagogues and bureaucrats feel uncomfortable in such a democratic atmosphere. The effort is mounting to remedy such dangerous social ills as alcoholism, drug addiction, crime. Democratisation is a moral purification of society, restoration of its moral health.

I shall dwell particularly on how we are going to enhance the efficiency of our economy. The main thing is to reach the most advanced level within a short period in the key scientific and technological areas — information science and electronic engineering, electronisation and robotisation of the national economy, the use of rotary lines and combinations of rotor and conveyor lines, biotechnology and a number of other areas.

In investment structure the emphasis has shifted from increased output of raw materials and fuel to their conservation, from new construction to modernisation and technological retooling of existing facilities.

Resources are being allocated above all to the priority areas in science and technology. We have even decided to stop the construction and modernisation of enterprises where the highest technological and economic standards were not envisaged.

The new technological reconstruction of the national economy we plan is backed by a programme for modernisation and development of mechanical engineering that bears no precedent in national history. The process of updating the products of mechanical engineering is largely to be completed by the early '90s, with the new equipment streaming to all branches of the national economy.

These are deep-lying reserves. The returns will take time, coming somewhere around the end of the five-year period or even later. We shall meantime be working to bring the organisational, economic, moral and political factors fully into the restructuring drive: discipline and progressive forms of organisation and pay, including the effective form of team contracts. As you are probably aware, we have introduced state quality control to bar shoddy workmanship and departures from technological standards.

We are gratified that these large-scale measures involving the interests of millions of people have met with active support from the working class and all people in our country.

We hold out great hopes for the new system of economic management and incentives based on cost accounting. The system is to harmoniously combine the interests of the individual, work collective and society, producer and consumer, the plan and the market.

The economic independence of enterprises and the assertion of self-management in production will give broad scope to initiative and socialist enterprise and will foster a proprietary feeling in each worker.

Drastic changes are also needed in the upper echelons of management. The idea is to channel the attention of central bodies to strategic tasks and to proceed to normative planning and incentive management.

The relations between the central and local bodies should be built anew. Ministries and departments have to really feel their responsibility for technical-scientific progress as the determinant aspect of the sector, and for meeting social requirements.

Big decisions envisaging deep-going changes in management, planning and control conditions have been taken in our country of late. The far from easy process of mastering new methods and testing them in practice is under way.

The need to combine the measures taken into an integral system and to create a new management structure is being increasingly felt. A regular plenary meeting of the CPSU central committee shall be devoted to the consideration of these matters.

We are aware that to date only the first steps have been made, and that the most difficult still lie ahead. We do not think that we have found final answers to all the matters that have arisen.

We are also far from intending to call on anyone to imitate us. Each country has its own specifics, and fraternal parties determine their political course with due regard for national conditions. Besides, some problems which are now in the foreground in the USSR have been solved in other socialist countries or are already being tackled in their own way.

But for all that, neither do we conceal confidence that the reorganisation which has been undertaken in the Soviet Union accords with the most profound essence of socialism and with the urgent requirements of social progress.

Our determination to press on with the tasks set at the 27th Congress of the party and by the January 1987 plenary meeting of the CPSU central committee is redoubled by the support which our policy finds among friends and allies. We value that support.

We know that communists, friends of socialism, and democratic and progressive-minded people throughout the world have welcomed the Soviet reorganisation with ardent admiration and in many respects associate with it their hopes for the future.

Essentially, only the most diehard reactionaries and militarists bear malice, knowing that the realisation of our plans would make socialism better and hence the more attractive.

The political circles of the West do not mind 'playing' on our reorganisation and arguing what kind of Soviet Union is more suitable to them: weak or strong, fully democratic, according to their yardsticks — or not quite.

Some people expect to sow doubt as to the practicability of our plans or by speculating on them to create differences in the socialist world. Various oppor-

tunists seek to interpret in their own way the goals of the restructuring, and to cash in on it.

All this must be seen. Should we give up perfecting socialist society just because of the intrigues of the ideological adversary? We have firmly chosen our road and will not depart from it.

Allow me now to touch upon co-operation between socialist countries.

At the working meeting in Moscow in November last year, the leaders of the fraternal parties from member countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) drew the unanimous conclusion that greater dynamism should be imparted to our interaction and that the machinery was in need of a kind of restructuring.

There is something to go on in this respect. Over the post-war period socialism has turned into a powerful international entity. The fraternal countries have established a ramified network of intercommunications along party, state and public lines.

Solid foundations for international socialist division of labour have been laid down. Wide experience of the functioning of multilateral organisations of socialist states has been gained. Exchanges of achievements of science and culture have increased in scope.

However, many forms and methods of co-operation established in the past cease to meet present-day possibilities and requirements. One can say that the period of the formation of socialism as a world system is over. A new stage has begun. It calls for raising the entire system of interaction between our countries to a qualitatively different level.

What is being put to the fore in this respect and what principles are regarded as of paramount importance?

We proceed, first and foremost, from the assumption that the entire system of political relations between socialist countries can and must be unswervingly built on a basis of equality and mutual responsibility. No one has the right to claim a special status in the socialist world. The independence of every party, its responsibility to its people and its right to decide in a sovereign manner how the country should develop are firm principles for us.

At the same time it is our profound conviction that the socialist community cannot succeed unless every party and country looks not only to its own but to common interests, shows respect for its friends and allies and takes account of their interests.

In economic relations, we all believe, it seems essential to consistently respect the principles of mutual benefit and mutual assistance. Equivalent exchanges of national products are in full accord with the nature of socialism and constitute the logical basis of integration. And the very internationalist nature of our socialist system presupposes assistance to less developed countries with a view to their being more fully involved in the socialist division of labour and

eventually reaching a par in economic development.

Lastly, our co-operation in international affairs is directed at the settlement of issues vital to all of us — security, the prevention of nuclear catastrophe and the provision of normal external conditions for the peaceful endeavours of nations.

The record shows that the more energetically the socialist states act and the more initiative they display, the greater they advance their common goals.

A dramatic increase in the importance of exchanges of experience in building socialism and general conclusions from it constitute, in our view, one of the more substantial qualitative characteristics in the growing co-operation of socialist countries at the present stage.

As Lenin observed in his day, integral socialism can emerge only from a series of attempts, each taken individually.

Historically, at the dawn of the world socialist system, the Soviet Union was the only country with any experience in building socialism. That experience, naturally, was viewed as a model.

Nowadays a number of fraternal countries have a rich history of socialist development with ingenious forms and original solutions. And no party has all the right answers. It stands to reason that all have a vital interest in applying everything valuable found in the socialist world with due consideration for the conditions of their own countries.

One can say that one's attitude to friends' experience, and not just one's own, constitutes an effective measure of the soundness of the ruling communist party. As for the value of that experience, we have only one criterion, socio-political practice, socio-economic performance and the actual consolidation of socialism.

The assessments made and conclusions drawn at the working meeting of the general secretaries of the central committees of the fraternal parties are ushering in a new stage in socialist economic integration, including that between the USSR and Czechoslovakia.

We have broadened our economic co-operation to a large extent. Our trade turnover will be 14 billion roubles this year.

However, far from all the reserves of integration latent in the production, research and technological potentials of our countries have been tapped. Moreover, they cannot be used in the old way, through the expansion of commodity exchanges. Economic relations have to be drastically overhauled, the quality improved.

We have an opportunity to substantially upgrade the structure of the mutual division of labour in the next five-year period. We agree with our Czechoslovak comrades that emphasis could be on such forms of integration as specialisation and co-production, primarily in engineering.

You and we are destined to co-operate even more closely to put out advanced products, such as metallurgical, chemical and power equipment, robots, auto

engines, video recorders and personal computers.

To accomplish these goals, a policy of establishing direct production, scientific and technological ties and setting up joint enterprises and organisations is being introduced.

First steps have already been made: take the *Robot* research and production amalgamation and a biotechnological laboratory in Nitra. Other agreements have been signed but the point is to prevent bureaucratic snags of which, alas, there still are quite a few.

It is far from easy, of course, to develop direct ties, let alone set up joint enterprises. Far from all the economic, managerial and legal issues, such as price formation, wages, organisation of management and distribution of profits, have been settled. It is important for all of us today to display a constructive approach to their settlement, to give every support to new beginnings in socialist co-operation and to let them grow stronger. We will be paid back over and over again.

Vigorous co-operation should be organised between many Soviet and Czechoslovak production, research and design collectives under the comprehensive programme for the scientific and technological progress of the CMEA member countries through the year 2000.

Permit me, dear comrades, to express the confidence that our countries, co-operating closely and in concert, will effectively accomplish the task facing us at the current stage of development and make a fitting contribution to the renewal and upgrading of socialism and to strengthening its positions.

Dear comrades, our time is setting us complex, brain-racking problems related to the destiny of peace and the future of humanity.

Our world is interdependent to such an extent that all the peoples are like several climbers bound by one rope on a mountain slope. They can either proceed together to the summit or crash down into the abyss together.

To avert the latter, politicians should rise above narrow-minded selfish interests and realise the drama of the current situation. That is why the need for a new political outlook for the nuclear age is so acute.

Only such a mode of thinking can lead all the parties in international relations to urgent measures to avert the nuclear catastrophe which threatens to obliterate humanity.

One cannot say that the idea of a new outlook has evoked no response. On the contrary, more and more people are embracing it all over the world. Among them are many scientists, physicians, other professionals and artistic intellectuals, as we saw once again at the recent international forum *For a Nuclear-Free World, For the Survival of Humanity* in Moscow.

We are witnessing manifestations of a new approach by leading Western politicians and statesmen to some international issues. But all these are merely the first

shoots. Old stereotypes are still strong in the West and making their imprint on foreign policies.

We will have the right to talk of the new mode of political thinking as a real force only when the cause of disarmament is at long last given an impetus.

Can one hope for such an outcome and what do the prospects look like today?

I will say right away that there are certain hopes and that the threat of war can be lessened. This conviction of ours comes both from the realisation dawning on the world that a nuclear conflict would have deadly consequences for humanity and from the opportunities produced in Reykjavik for drastic cuts in and the eventual elimination of the more destructive nuclear weapons.

The Soviet Union states responsibly its desire to look for mutually acceptable solutions to the entire range of nuclear disarmament issues. Radical cuts in strategic offensive weapons remain the root problem.

We, as everyone knows, are ready for the most resolute steps in that field, either 50 percent reductions over five years or total elimination over ten years, naturally, on the condition that the ABM Treaty is strictly respected, and that the arms race in space is prevented.

Seeking to take at long last a first and therefore extremely important step towards disarmament, we have suggested an accord on medium-range missiles. In doing so, we reckoned with world public opinion and with the desire voiced by our Western partners to have Europe completely freed from those missiles.

But what we have got is a paradox: some politicians and even governments are now frantically disowning their own 'zero option' and are trying to hedge an accord on medium-range missiles with reservations and linkages of every kind.

Much is being written and said in the West about shorter-range weapons. We are prepared to resolve the issue in a constructive manner and yet do it so as not to impede an accord on the pivotal issue of medium-range missiles.

To promote an urgent accord on medium-range weapons in Europe we offer to begin discussing prospective cuts in, and subsequent elimination of, missiles with a range of 500 to 1,000 km deployed in Europe, and avoid linking the issue either to progress in or the outcome of discussions on medium-range missiles.

The sides could pledge not to increase the number of shorter-range missiles as long as the talks continue.

I want to emphasise: we are for deep cuts in and ultimate elimination of shorter-range missiles in Europe and we think we must leave no loopholes in pending accords, so as to rule out chances of future build-up and improvement.

When an agreement is signed on medium-range missiles, and notwithstanding progress on shorter-range weapons, the Soviet Union will withdraw from Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic, after consulting

with their governments, the weapons deployed there to balance out Pershing-2s and cruises in Western Europe.

The implementation of an accord on shorter-range missiles should be effectively verified, just like agreements on medium-range and strategic nuclear weapons.

As long as we are talking about reductions, all the more so about elimination of whole classes of nuclear weapons in Europe, verification of pending agreements acquires new meaning.

Under such conditions verification would be one of the most crucial means to achieve security. We will therefore insist on tough verification measures to be able to effectively check and see if the sides are honouring their commitments at all stages of nuclear disarmament, rather than make verification an end in itself.

Adequate verification, including on-site inspections, should embrace the missiles and launchers remaining after the cuts, both the ones in combat service and at all other installations: test ranges, manufacturing plants, training centres and so forth. Inspectors should also be admitted to the military bases of the other side on the territories of third countries. This is indispensable if one is to really ascertain that the agreement is being observed strictly.

There is one more urgent issue directly related to European security — the concentration of an immense potential of armed forces and conventional armaments in that region.

Of course, the elimination of nuclear weapons — strategic, medium-range and shorter-range systems — is a top priority for Europe and the world as a whole for that matter. There is hardly anyone who would dispute that.

However, let us put the question the following way: does the huge concentration on the continent of tactical nuclear and non-nuclear weapons and of the armed forces opposing each other correspond to the idea of a secure world? I believe the answer to this question is plain.

Unfortunately, nothing whatsoever has been done thus far to remedy an extremely unsatisfactory situation. Things should be radically changed by measures to reduce and ultimately eliminate tactical nuclear weapons, to reduce armed forces and conventional armaments drastically so as to preclude any sudden attack.

The realisation of the Budapest programme of the Warsaw Treaty countries which suggests that issues of the reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments be resolved in package with tactical missiles, attack aviation, nuclear artillery and other tactical nuclear systems would be a leap in this direction.

The need for combined discussion is dictated by the fact that a majority of tactical nuclear weapons are dual purpose systems, that is, capable of carrying both conventional and nuclear warheads.

The efforts of all European countries, the US and Canada are required to reduce armed forces and armaments in Europe

Consultations between the Warsaw Treaty and Nato countries are now in progress in Vienna.

However, the question prompts itself: hasn't the time come for the ministers of foreign affairs of the states participating in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe to gather there and decide on a date for large-scale talks to radically reduce tactical nuclear weapons, armed forces and conventional armaments?

Such talks could discuss urgent measures to reduce military confrontation and avert the threat of a sudden attack and to withdraw on a mutual basis the more dangerous offensive armaments from the zone of direct contact of the two military alliances.

The ultimate aim of such talks would be major reductions of armed forces and armaments accompanied by the institution of international verification and on-site inspections. Last year's conference in Stockholm gave the sides experience in charting possible measures.

Of course, this would require an exchange of the pertinent data on the armed forces and armaments of the USSR, the US and other countries in that region.

The Western side is speaking of inequality and imbalance. Of course, asymmetry does exist in the armed forces of the two sides in Europe which is explained by historical, geographical and other factors.

We stand for rectifying the inequality in certain elements where it exists, only not through a build-up by the one who lags behind, but through reduction by the one who turns out to be ahead.

We see the process of lowering military confrontation in Europe as a stage-by-stage process with the balance maintained at every stage at a level of reasonable sufficiency. Such measures would make it possible to shift the entire mountain of European problems pertaining to the armed forces and armaments.

There exists now a truly unique chance and it would be unforgivable to miss it.

The establishment of non-nuclear zones and zones free from chemical weapons would also be in line with enhancing European security. I would like to state that we support the address of the governments of the GDR and Czechoslovakia to the government of West Germany proposing a non-nuclear corridor in Central Europe. The Social Democratic Party of Germany is known to have contributed to the drafting of the idea.

All nuclear munitions, including nuclear demolition charges, shorter-range and battlefield missiles, nuclear artillery, nuclear-capable planes of the tactical attack aviation and the anti-aircraft missile complexes capable of using nuclear weapons would be subject to withdrawal from that zone. Substantial numbers of those systems are dual purpose systems.

For our part we are prepared to withdraw all Soviet nuclear systems from such a corridor. We are prepared to guarantee and respect the non-nuclear

status of that zone.

Naturally enough, an agreement on such a corridor should presuppose that there will be no nuclear weapons on the Nato side of the corridor proposed by the governments of the GDR and Czechoslovakia.

We think that the realisation of the proposals by Bulgaria, Romania, and Greece on a nuclear- and chemical-weapons-free zone in the Balkans would be of great importance.

Poland's active approach to greater confidence in Europe and the proposal by Finland and other Nordic countries of a nuclear-free zone for the area deserve attention.

And another issue of major significance: a ban on chemical weapons. We have consistently advocated early elaboration, this year, of an appropriate international convention, and active negotiations on that score.

I can inform you that the Soviet Union has terminated the production of chemical weapons. The other countries of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation are known to have never produced them and have never had them on their territory.

The USSR does not have chemical weapons outside its borders. As far as stocks of chemical weapons are concerned, I would like to inform you that we are constructing a special plant to destroy them. With such a plant operational we would be able to proceed rapidly to chemical disarmament following an international convention.

And returning to nuclear disarmament, I want to say that the issue of medium-range missiles in Europe is now the nearest to a possible solution. There have been increasing calls throughout the world for the United States to take this first and really major step in the field of disarmament and thereby contribute to a fundamentally new climate of mutual understanding between the West and East.

We consider it a factor of great political importance that Greece, Holland, Spain, Italy, Finland and many other European countries have raised a voice in favour of settling Euromissiles issues.

We are inviting Paris, London and Bonn, for their part, to contribute to ridding Europe of nuclear-tipped medium-range missiles, and to move on, at last, to nuclear disarmament.

Where better than Europe to advance the new mode of political thinking?

Allow me in this connection to speak of the role of Europe in the contemporary world. It is more than appropriate to share ideas on this score precisely here in Czechoslovakia where the geographical centre of Europe is located, and there is even a stone symbolising the point.

We attach paramount importance to the European direction of our foreign policy. Why so?

First and foremost our peoples live on this continent, and together with the other peoples are legitimate heirs to the civilisation which has arisen here, and are mak-

ing their inalienable contribution to its development.

Socialism has markedly changed the age-old history of this part of the world, too.

Wars were a major feature from ancient times. The defeat of fascism and the triumph of socialist revolutions in East European countries have brought about a continent-wide situation: a powerful force took shape with the target of breaking the endless chain of armed conflicts.

It is precisely to socialism that Europe owes the fact that the European peoples are in a fifth decade without war.

We continue today to resolutely oppose division of the continent into military blocs; the stockpiling of weapons there; and everything that produces a threat of war.

In the light of the new way of thinking we came forward with the idea of an "all-European home". This is no pipe-dream but the result of serious analysis of the situation on the continent.

The "all-European home" notion signifies, first of all, recognition of a certain integrity, although countries involved belong to different social systems and are members of opposing military and political blocs.

This concept couples urgent problems with real opportunities for solving them.

With a high density of population and level of urbanisation, Europe is oversaturated with weapons. Three-million-strong armies confront each other.

Even a 'conventional' war would be ruinous. And not only because the 'conventional' weapons are many times more destructive than those employed in the Second World War. But also because on its territory there are about 200 power units at nuclear power stations and a ramified network of high-capacity chemical plants, destruction of which would render the continent unfit for living.

Or take environmental pollution. The scope of industrialisation and the development of transport on our continent is such that the ecological danger has already approached the critical mark. The problem has gone far beyond national borders. This is an all-European problem.

It is time to think of how integration processes in both parts of Europe will proceed. World economic laws are objective. Scientific and technological progress, too, calls for a search for some forms of mutually beneficial co-operation.

The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance has given a signal for bridge-building in the interests of all European peoples. One can expect that the new processes in the economies of the countries of the socialist community will make possible greater and richer economic co-operation, with new content, between the two halves of Europe.

Europe "from the Atlantic to the Urals" is also a historico-cultural category in the high cultural and intellectual sense.

Europe gave world civilisation the ideas

of renaissance and enlightenment. The humanistic trend and the teaching of socialism received powerful development. Invaluable assets in all branches of scientific knowledge and artistic comprehension of the world have been established through the efforts of people of genius of all European nations.

So, instead of a nuclear crematorium for Europe we propose a peaceful development of European culture, which has many faces and yet is something integral.

Our notion of the "common European home" does not imply at all any intention to shut the doors on anyone. On the contrary, the progress of Europe would enable it to make an even greater contribution to the progress of the rest of the world. Europe should not evade participation in resolving the problems of hunger, debt, underdevelopment or promotion of settlement or armed conflicts.

There can be no doubt that the European peoples without exception stand for an atmosphere of goodneighbourly relations and trust, co-existence and co-operation on the continent. This would in a true sense be a triumph of the new mode of political thinking.

We should be moving toward that goal not only because of moral considerations. This comes in line with the vital interests of all European nations, for in this age of interdependence there appear more and more problems which can be resolved only by joint efforts of the European

and the entire international community.

Don't efforts to combat such threats to civilisation as terrorism, crime and drug addiction call for unity? Isn't it plain that if we do not work together to combat AIDS, a new trouble that has befallen the world, it may well be too late tomorrow?

The list could be extended. Literally dozens of very complicated problems are becoming global which means that only a united international community is capable of solving them. Europe can set a worthy example and our countries are determined to make a worthy contribution to that cause.

It is in this context that we view Czechoslovakia's call for an economic forum. We are sure that it can play a major role in enhancing the economic security of states and developing mutually beneficial co-operation.

Our proposal to hold a meeting on humanitarian co-operation in Moscow, to be attended by the European conference states, is dictated by the same desire.

We believe that it is worth putting forward and discussing any idea that contributes at least to some extent to lessening the tension of confrontation.

Much has already been done to give the notion of a common European home rights of citizenship. The post-war European arrangement has been generally recognised. The Helsinki process lives on and makes it possible to build up trust

among all European countries step by step.

Working in that key, seeking common interests, lowering the level of military confrontation and striving for a nuclear weapon-free world — this is how we would like to run affairs in Europe.

Dear comrades, at the end of the current year we will mark the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution and early next year the 40th anniversary of the February Revolution in Czechoslovakia. These events are closely connected, they show that the transition to socialism is a natural phenomenon and demonstrate the wealth and diversity of its forms.

We have traversed a long path and we have achieved much together. No matter how great the tasks set before the socialist countries by history, we are sure that we will be able to accomplish them. A guarantee of that is the will of our parties, the inexhaustible possibilities inherent in the socialist system of organisation of society, friendship and comradely relations between our peoples.

Long live our alliance.

Let friendship and fraternity between the Soviet and Czechoslovak peoples grow stronger by the year.

Let the choice for socialism by our peoples, and their close co-operation and interaction bear them fresh and bountiful fruit.

Let there be peace on Earth.

## Joint Soviet-Czechoslovak Communiqué

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV, general secretary of the CPSU central committee, paid an official visit of friendship to the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic from April 9 to 11, 1987, at the invitation of the central committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia.

Talks were held between Mikhail Gorbachev and Gustav Husak, general secretary of the central committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, and meetings with other Czechoslovak leaders took place.

Mikhail Gorbachev addressed a rally in the palace of culture in Prague and visited the CKD Kompresory factory in Prague and the integrated farming co-operative *Mir*, named after Czechoslovak-Soviet friendship. The general secretary of the CPSU central committee also went out to the national monument on Vitkov Hill, the Olsansky Cemetery in Prague, the

Slavin monument and the monument to the Slovak national uprising in Bratislava, and paid tribute to the memory of the heroes of the two fraternal countries.

In the talks and conversations, which passed in an atmosphere of cordiality and comradely frankness, Mikhail Gorbachev briefed the hosts on progress in the fulfilment of the resolutions of the 27th CPSU Congress and the January 1987 plenary meeting of the CPSU central committee, aimed at drastically broadening democracy and reorganising Soviet society and at realising the potentialities of socialism.

Gustav Husak described the implementation of the resolutions of the 17th Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, chief ways of improving the economic machinery and the party's activities in the political, social and ideological fields.

He stressed that the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and the working people of the republic fully supported the Soviet communists' innovative course of reorganising society and accelerating its progress and that the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia was making good use of the CPSU's experience.

The two sides believe that the new tasks facing socialism call for a qualitatively higher level of political co-operation among fraternal countries, including their co-operation in the Warsaw Treaty Organisation.

There is a need for reorganising the forms and methods of co-operation within the framework of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance so as to make progress to new frontiers of socio-economic, scientific and technological progress.

The sides expressed their profound satisfaction with the condition of relations between the CPSU and the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, resting on the foundation of their common views and actions in accordance with the principles of Marxism-Leninism and socialist internationalism.

The accords reached at summit level in 1985 and subsequent comradely contacts between the general secretaries and other members of the leadership of both parties have contributed to strengthening their relationship as allies and to the for-

mulation of concerted positions on the key issues of building socialism, of the international working-class and communist movement and of the world situation.

The leaders of the CPSU and the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia consider it necessary to invigorate the potential of political co-operation and to broaden party contacts at every level, from the central bodies to primary organisations, and make them more efficient.

They called for the further promotion of contacts between governmental, public, trade union, youth, women's and other organisations. More diversified co-operation in ideology, the development of contacts between the mass media, scientific, cultural, health care and educational institutions, broader direct ties between the working people of both countries and youth exchanges are called upon to give a fresh impetus to the cultural and intellectual rapprochement of the peoples of the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia.

The sides expressed the conviction that the need to accelerate socio-economic development on the basis of economic integration made it imperative to promote the initiative and activity of ministries, departments, enterprises and amalgamations in the fulfilment of the programme for long-term economic, scientific and technological co-operation between the USSR and Czechoslovakia and the comprehensive programme for the scientific and technological progress of the CMEA member countries through the year 2000.

The planning and economic management bodies should direct their efforts at broadening in every way specialisation and co-production, extensively developing direct ties between industrial, farming and other enterprises and collectives, and pursuing a course of setting up joint enterprises and amalgamations.

Special emphasis was laid on the importance of further extending co-operation in engineering, which plays the key role in economic, scientific and technological progress. Every opportunity arising in the process of the reorganisation of economic mechanisms in both countries must be used to improve the efficiency of co-operation.

The sides exchanged information on the development of a concept of co-operation for 15-20 years. They reiterated its fundamental importance to a qualitatively new approach to the further development of economic contacts between the USSR and Czechoslovakia.

Exchanging views on the basic issues of the present-day international situation, Mikhail Gorbachev and Gustav Husak stressed the need for a new outlook and

a constructive approach to complex and interdependent realities of today's world in the interest of strengthening security for all.

The Czechoslovak side spoke highly of the steps taken by the USSR to improve the world situation, especially the programme for the elimination of nuclear and other weapons of mass annihilation by the end of the century. An exceptional role is played by the proposal to conclude without delay a separate agreement on the elimination of the Soviet and American medium-range missiles in Europe.

As soon as it is signed, the longer-range INF missile systems deployed in Czechoslovakia as a counter-measure to the deployment of new American missiles in Western Europe will be dismantled and removed. The Soviet Union's readiness to immediately enter talks with a view to reducing and totally eliminating shorter range missiles deployed in the European continent was highly appreciated.

The implementation of the proposal of Czechoslovakia and the GDR for the establishment in Central Europe of a chemical weapon-free zone and a nuclear-free corridor along the line of contact between the Warsaw Treaty and Nato countries would contribute towards stronger European security. The Soviet Union is ready to withdraw from such a corridor, on a reciprocal basis, all the Soviet nuclear systems and to guarantee and respect its non-nuclear status.

Broad prospects for improving the atmosphere in the European continent are offered by the proposal put forward by the Warsaw Treaty member countries in Budapest for substantial cuts in the armed forces, tactical nuclear systems and conventional armaments in Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals.

The sides consider it important in the context of lowering the level of armed confrontation to take measures which would make it possible to lessen or remove altogether the risk of a surprise attack through reducing primarily tactical nuclear weapons and the strike air force, scaling down troop concentrations along the line of contact between the military-political alliances in Europe and removing from that zone the more dangerous, offensive types of weapons.

Firm respect for the principle of the inviolability of the borders which resulted from the Second World War and post-war development is essential to the maintenance of a lasting peace in Europe. Any attempt of the revanchist forces to wreck that principle causes grave damage to relations of trust and goodneighbourliness.

The Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia,

calling for broader co-operation among European states in every field, will seek to ensure that the Vienna meeting makes a substantial contribution towards stronger security in the continent, arms reductions and the build-up of trust among states.

Equitable and mutually beneficial economic co-operation that is free from any form of discrimination constitutes one of the pillars of the all-European process.

The USSR strongly supports Czechoslovakia's initiative for the convocation in Prague of an economic forum, which could help broaden contacts between European states and restructure the entire system of international economic relations on a fair and democratic basis.

The convocation in Moscow of a conference of representatives of the states participating in the European Conference to thoroughly review the entire complex of relationships in the humanitarian field would promote European and international co-operation.

The sides noted with satisfaction the growing unity and cohesion of the Warsaw Treaty member countries and the increasing role of the military-political alliance of socialist countries in the formulation and pursuit of a concerted policy for stronger peace and security and broader international co-operation. The sides reaffirmed the defensive nature of their military doctrine.

The imperative of the early suppression of centres of international tension by peaceful means was noted in the talks. The sides called for the overall, fair and ultimate settlement of the conflicts in the near and Middle East, the south of Africa and Central America, and for the relaxation of tensions in the Korean peninsula and in South-east Asia.

They spoke highly of the national reconciliation policy pursued by the government of democratic Afghanistan.

The CPSU and the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia are consistently and unflinchingly standing for co-operation among all the communist and workers' parties and the progressive and democratic forces in the efforts for social progress, disarmament and peace.

Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to Czechoslovakia became a vivid demonstration of the strength and inviolability of Soviet-Czechoslovak friendship.

The agreements reached by the sides are providing real preconditions for raising the entire complex of Soviet-Czechoslovak relations to a qualitatively new level.