

Conference at CPSU Central Committee

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV OPENS DISCUSSION

A CONFERENCE held at the CPSU Central Committee discussed the tasks of Party work to ensure the main directions of the new stage of perestroika — democratisation of the entire social life and a radical economic reform. The conference was attended by secretaries and heads of departments of the CPSU Central Committee, other senior officials of the apparatus of the CPSU Central Committee, of the Central Auditing Commission of the CPSU, the Party Control Committee under the CPSU Central Committee.

Opening the conference Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, briefly summed up its purpose:

"We have decided today to meet here, in our Party home — the leadership of the Central Committee, heads of departments, heads of the Party apparatus — to discuss the theme that is now in the order of the day in a real, fundamental way.

"The point of the matter is the Party's role in perestroika at its new, second stage. As a matter of fact, the theme of the Party's role has never been removed from the agenda and it assumes now greater practical importance than ever. It is perfectly clear that socialist construction cannot rapidly advance without the Party at this stage of perestroika, too.

"Summing up the first stage of perestroika, it can be said with confidence that the Central Committee, the Politburo and the Secretariat, the apparatus of the Central Committee, Party committees at republican and local levels have implemented it on the whole successfully. What complicated things was that everything at that stage was, essentially, for the first time — the quest of ways for restructuring, the choice of the directions, methods of work and numerous experiments. I believe that both from the viewpoint of theoretical and political work, and from the viewpoint of practical approaches to the matter the Party at this stage proved equal to the occasion.

"We have noted correctly at the June plenary meeting of the Central Committee that as soon as there is a lag somewhere, we are immediately aware of the loss of momentum, of skidding. And then some Party organisations again resort to old methods to check the manifestations of some negative tendencies by issuing strings of orders.

"But now such methods won't do. Once democratisation was brought into play and the potential of the people has been geared to all the processes of perestroika, matters cannot be

conducted in the old way. This will only bring society to a fever pitch, will unnerve people, bring nervousness into our political and ideological atmosphere and in public awareness.

"Now that we have approached a new and very complex stage of perestroika whose core is constituted by the line containing two inter-related, inter-dependent aspects — the further democratisation of society and a radical economic reform — our work is brought to a new plane, too. We have so far been, so to say, explaining, proving, substantiating the need for perestroika. We looked for new approaches, worked on documents for a radical economic reform. And the people have supported us, our quests, the decisions of the Party.

"Today, when the democratic processes will be deepening, when our programme for a radical economic reform will set entire society in motion, will have a bearing on the interests of millions, the Party will face still more complex tasks.

"We must thoroughly consider our work at the new stage. Impromptu actions will not be enough. To say that 'we shall be working the way we used to' would be wrong, since nothing would come of it now. To bring pressure, to issue commands, to call everyone to district Party committees are not a suitable method either, since by using cost-effectiveness we unleash the initiative of all sections of production and management — industries, amalgamations, work collectives, every worker. And we reveal the potential of the soviets, of public organisations. Hence, different approaches are needed.

"On a practical plane the question is posed in such a way that the Party at the present stage should somewhat reappraise its role of a political vanguard of society, should reappraise it so that its methods and modes of action were in keeping with new requirements. This must in turn apply to the work of the Politburo, the Secretariat, departments of the Central Committee, to the work of republican and local Party bodies as well.

"In new conditions the Party should find new approaches, new methods of tackling problems. Properly speaking, the purpose of today's conference is to discuss precisely this. I am not sure that we now clearly see all the details of future work. I am not sure since everything is clear only to the one who is not going to change anything and, hence, continues working as he has worked before. But this won't do. Since then people will not understand the Party, the more so that, during the democratisation, development of the new economic mechanism and cost-accounting, society is already changing and will be changing.

"The authority of the Party can be growing now first of all together with the ability to muster resources, with the ability to help people find their place in perestroika. This means that we must pursue the Party cause with greater profundity and forcefulness than before. In this connection it is necessary to consider how the Party is prepared for work in the new conditions.

"The Central Committee has decided to hold plenary meetings of Party committees and Party meetings that will hear reports of leading elective bodies. These meetings must be prepared in such a way that they could help bring the Party to the level from which it would be able to confidently

guide the second stage of our perestroika."

Secretaries of the CPSU Central Committee Alexandra Biryukova, Anatoli Dobrynin, Vladimir Dolgikh, Lev Zaikov, Yegor Ligachev, Vadim Medvedev, Viktor Nikonov, Georgi Razumovsky, Alexander Yakovlev and Mikhail Solomentsev, Chairman of the Control Party Commission at the CPSU Central Committee, spoke in the discussion of matters raised at the conference.

Speakers stressed that at the new stage of perestroika success will wholly depend on how much Party organisations will be able in their practical activity to expand and bring into play the human factor, its creative potential, to really ensure the vanguard role of the communists.

The entire preparation and effectiveness of a most important Party campaign — reports of elective Party bodies to plenary meetings of district committees, area committees, city committees, regional committees, territorial committees of the Party, central committees of the communist parties of the union republics and meetings of primary Party organisations — should be assessed from precisely these positions. The analysis of the style and methods of Party guidance of restructuring, principled discussion of the achievements and shortcomings in work are aimed at intensifying the activity of all elective Party activists, at jolting out of somnolence those who have not abandoned the old methods of work, at revealing our resources and raising the activity of all Party committees to a level required by the new stage of perestroika.

Participants in the conference said that Party functionaries should be most closely linked with life, should competently judge on the course of restructuring, should act not as inspectors but, above all, as organisers, consultants, advisers, assistants, should be less engaged in paperwork, should promptly translate into life the fundamental decisions made by the Party.

Questions of radical economic reform, of the introduction and upgrading of the new economic mechanism, prompt introduction of changes in the structure of central and local managerial bodies, planned implementation in the economic

Thatcher receives Aganbegyan

Margaret Thatcher, Prime Minister of Britain, received in London on November 20 Abel Aganbegyan, Academic Secretary of the Economic Department of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

During their conversation they exchanged views on a number of aspects of international economic problems.

The Soviet scientist told the British Prime Minister about the experience of the restructuring of the economic mechanism in the Soviet Union.

Margaret Thatcher expressed lively interest in the changes taking place in the Soviet economy and in the prospects for the restructuring processes.

The British Prime Minister requested Abel Aganbegyan to convey to the Soviet people wishes for success in the solution of the tasks connected with the acceleration of economic development. □

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life of the decisions taken by the June (1987) plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee "Fundamental Provisions for Radical Restructuring of Economic Management" require special attention. The emphasis in the development of new methods of economic management is now shifted to work collectives, on the implementation of the principles inherent in the Law on State Enterprise (Amalgamation).

The current economic plans should not be lost sight of, since the tasks of perestroika are materialised in their implementation, and real results in meeting vital requirements of people are achieved. The most pressing tasks, such as food supply, housing construction, increase in the output of consumer goods and widening of the sphere of services, require special consistency and persistence.

Participants in the conference stressed that the second stage of perestroika, the developing economic reform, the processes of democratisation in society make higher demands on the work of all cadres. After the January (1987) plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, there have been just signs of the changes in that area. No radical shifts have been made. Party organisations should take more vigorous actions to develop in leading cadres, all the working people, a high sense of responsibility for the task at hand, for the creation of conditions for their independence and for manifestations of initiative and socialist enterprise.

The coming switchover of work collectives everywhere to the work in conditions of the operation of a new economic mechanism necessitates wider mastering of economic knowledge, specifically on questions of cost-accounting and self-financing. The socio-political processes taking place in society necessitate increase of the level of mastering political knowledge and the entire complex of ideological sciences.

The organisation of education, training and re-training of cadres must be accompanied by a decisive turn to the democratisation of the work with personnel, to its careful selection and promotion. The control by the masses, accountability and replaceability of leaders, criticism and self-criticism must become indispensable standards of Party life everywhere. There must be one criterion in assessing the work of the personnel: concrete actions in perestroika, participants in the conference emphasised.

The further development and deepening of democratism are vitally needed for the Party and society as a whole. It was noted at the conference that a candid dialogue with people, competent discussion in the Party spirit of the problems of perestroika, of all acute problems of public life, all-out development of social creativity of the working people assume particular importance now that the 19th All-Union Party Conference is drawing nearer. It is necessary to give a fresh impetus to all democratic principles and standards recorded in the CPSU regulations, to improve substantially the practice of collective work, enhance the role of elective activists who must have a say in the solution of all questions of Party life.

Speakers said that glasnost, attention to public opinion, open and constructive criticism of the existing shortcomings, wide application of everything valuable that comes into being with perestroika are important at the new stage of perestroika as never before. The mass media need constant attention and assistance of the Party. At this stage, too, the media must actively spread the knowledge of the Party's policy in the masses, should ideologically ensure the solution of the tasks of perestroika.

In his final remarks at the conference Mikhail Gorbachev said:

The exchange of opinions we had here provided good impulses for further thinking and for looking for and finding answers to the main question: what are the ways of enhancing the role of the CPSU at this juncture in the perestroika effort?

Our discussion was marked by a desire of all comrades to further the cause of perestroika. And it seems to me that we made progress in understanding where we stand and how we should act further.

Summing up our discussion, I would like to voice several considerations.

First. The past days of revolution anniversary celebrations have given us a better idea of the path we have covered and the things we have achieved. This is immensely significant from the standpoint of both learning the lessons of history more profoundly and fostering throughout society a historical awareness based on a solid scientific foundation, objectivity and truth about the past.

A responsible, scientifically-grounded, Party-style analysis of our history has made it possible to objectively evaluate the place and significance of every period in our life and give its due to every generation of Soviet people in these difficult but great years which have taken this country to the forward edge of social progress.

We have been able to see also the roots of many of today's phenomena and the fundamental causes of both our achievements and of the losses we have incurred on our way. We have learnt a lot from analysing the period of building socialism when Vladimir Ilyich Lenin led the effort. It teaches us first of all to take an anti-dogmatic approach to the phenomena of life and to study and ponder life and take a creative look at it as a complex process of clashing contradictions to be resolved in the interest of the people, in the interest of socialism. This means giving the creative energies of the Party and the people a new scope and a new boost.

Analysing the ideological struggle waged by the Party after Lenin, we have been able to discern the very substance of that struggle and answer the question of what underlay it and what caused it. Along with the principal causes behind the ideological clashes then — and those were the interests of the revolution, the interests of socialism — we have seen also other factors and relationships, many of which are most instructive from the point of view of the present day as well. History teaches us that one should not rule out certain situations recurring or being similar at watershed stages in society's development.

We know that more than once in the past, too, the personal traits of individual leaders, their inability or insufficient maturity and responsibility, and their failure to realise the role of a leader resulted in serious contradictions and a conflict with the Party. In such cases personal ambitions, if they are inordinate and camouflaged with pseudo-revolutionary phrases and poses and with ostentatious concern for the higher goals and values, do much harm to the common cause.

Today we know also another thing, namely that conservatism and artificial avantgardism, no matter how different their rhetorics, in the long run inevitably hand together. This is the dialectics of politics. They band together on the basis of committing an outrage upon reality as they seek to push it into dead ends — those of old, outdated forms and dogmas, on the one hand, and those of abstract schemes which are dangerous for their demagogic aggressiveness or empty illusions, on the other.

Analysing the past is a real science. Our past also contains the roots of the heroic accomplishments of socialism, which were especially striking during the periods of industrialisation, the Great Patriotic War and post-war development. Reflecting on the tasks of perestroika today, we must see the main thing: the people are the motive force and the decisive force. Everything is done by the people. This is the only starting point we must proceed from in all our undertakings and plans.

An historical analysis has also helped us see more distinctly the roots of the phenomena covered by the notion of a deceleration mechanism. Many of these date from the past as

well. We have realised more clearly what is to be done to prevent the past from repeating itself and to buck negative trends in good time. We have drawn the exceptionally important conclusion that we have incurred many losses because our reforms in the past were not backed up with sweeping political changes in terms of democratising Soviet society.

An analysis of the past has furnished us with a good basis for really gaining — through experience and theoretical studies — a broader and more profound idea of socialism, of the new quality of society we are advancing to. We ponder the past in the interest of the present day and thereby we open up prospects for our advancement. This is very important. This must continue to be done.

Second. In the days of the anniversary celebrations we became aware perhaps more keenly than ever before not only of the constructive significance of analysing the path covered, but also of the strategic decisions taken at the current phase and of the entire significance of the perestroika policy. We came to feel more acutely that it is impossible to move forward successfully without bringing out the whole potential of socialism — and not only from the standpoint of home policy. By steering the perestroika course and following an active home policy we have come to a vigorous foreign policy as well and given a strong impulse to the entire world community for thinking over the future of the world, the social choice and the nature of international relations.

Why am I telling you this? To show the greatness of the CPSU's responsibility for the fate of perestroika both before the nation and before the whole world.

There is no doubt that the Party's role will keep growing only if all its activities, including policy-making, work with personnel, and organisational and ideological support, will measure up to the novelty and scope of the tasks of the period — the new, the second, phase of perestroika.

The changing tasks of the advancing perestroika effort make new demands on the political vanguard of Soviet society, without which these processes will either fail to get on or proceed in the wrong way.

The two and a half years since the April plenum of the CPSU Central Committee make it possible to conclude responsibly that the Party has been successfully performing the role of the political vanguard at the first phase of perestroika. But now we must go further and project our policy, our strategic line, in a concrete and practical fashion, into all spheres of public life. The question then arises: what is the role of the CPSU at the current stage in society's development? The Party's vanguard role is in its ability to arrange its work in keeping with the demands of life, to take the specific historical situation accurately into account and see further tasks. This is worth thinking over.

In point of fact, we are facing two interrelated, interconnected tasks forming the pivot of the second phase of perestroika — the continued democratisation of society and radical economic reform. These are the prime, key tasks at this juncture.

If we are to try to describe the scale of work to be done in the immediate future, in a foreseeable perspective, we can say that it will obviously be great. First of all because the concept for perestroika will begin to be practically translated into life.

Perestroika means millions of new apartments and thousands of new schools, hospitals, theatres and sport facilities, it means improved food supplies and product quality, it means democratisation of all public affairs. But all this can be achieved only through hard and highly efficient work, adequate organisation, discipline, responsibility, cohesion and concerted action. This means that perestroika will affect every collective and the whole of society. The CPSU,

the Party's cadres will have to shoulder the bulk of responsibility for the success of this new phase and the brunt of the work to organise the practical fulfilment of the new tasks.

We should tackle the tasks confronting society with the cadres that the Party and the country have today. This does not mean that all without exception should remain in their posts. Our cadre corps will be in continuous development, just as the Party itself. What I mean is something else. I mean that the CPSU is capable of working still harder and performing the role of the political vanguard at this phase in perestroika as well. Our society can give us the cadres worthy of this time. A significant part of our personnel has already joined actively in the work of perestroika.

But what is to be done and how for the contents and methods of work by the Party, Party bodies and our cadres to correspond to the level, nature and novelty of the tasks of perestroika? In other words, what is to be done for the democratisation process to make further headway and gain further ground, for the social activity of the working people to grow even further and for the goals of economic reform to be achieved successfully?

I am convinced that important as all the problems mentioned here are, it is crucial now to concentrate on increasing the role of the Party and every communist in carrying out perestroika and on stepping up the Party's political, organising and ideological activities and its work with personnel.

This is the pivotal issue which is connected to all the others. We don't have a tool more dependable at our disposal than the Party. The second phase of perestroika, whose meaning is in that it should involve millions of people in practical work, will not proceed as it should if the Party does not unfold the democratic process further. Who will be directing and stimulating all these efforts? The Party. It is the Party that is responsible for furthering the process of democratisation. But in order to be able to express the needs of the new phase, it should change itself.

Let us put it bluntly, we cannot be satisfied today with the level of activeness of the Party ranks, Party bodies and Party cadres. Even today, we can see there both a certain lag and a certain contradiction between the demands of life and the standard of Party work. I would analyse this contradiction not from the standpoint of charges against Party cadres, against communists, but from the standpoint of the demands made by the times. It is essential that review meetings on perestroika, which are under way in the Party organisations, should help us elevate the Party to a higher stage of activity.

The matter is not that we have a certain percentage of those who have been able to join the Party for selfish ends in the stagnation years or even lately. They are but a few. The matter ultimately is not in them. But there are members of the Party that have lost interest in Party affairs and attend Party meetings as a hard duty. Many communists must be brought out of a condition in which they move only too slowly to grasp the meaning of the processes under way.

They should be helped in understanding that democratisation and the economic reform presuppose certain changes in the functions of Party committees, in the work of Party organisations because the role of every person, of every industrial manager is changing. Now they will have an active, independent role and an enhanced responsibility: join the work, be a master, act.

Yet certain district committees continue to act in the old way and take upon themselves the solution of all questions. Including those which by law have already been handed over to enterprises and soviets. While the Komsomol, women's councils and councils of veterans are actively joining the solution of other matters.

The entire people is joining the movement for restructuring which reflects the interests of most diverse sections of the population and unites them in this struggle for a new society.

In these conditions the Party should not so much take upon itself the direct solution of questions as set before itself another, more difficult task — to direct, to coordinate, to unite, to give impulses to the social activity of the masses through Party organisations, cadres, through Party control, through the creation of a healthy, energy-charged atmosphere in the town, district or collective. It is for this that Party committees and the Party as a whole now bear responsibility.

We have already done much in this respect at the first stage. Now, at the second stage these processes should be deepened and advanced. That is why it is necessary to help our district, city and regional Party functionaries understand this new role of theirs. They must change their approaches and style of work. Thereby they will enhance their prestige still further. It is exactly such work that the Party, the entire society need.

But of course the following question arises in this connection: on what should the main emphasis be made? It is essential now to pay attention to primary Party organisations, to see to it that the elective bodies start working properly, as it was noted at the January 1987 plenary meeting of the Central Committee.

So far they are not fulfilling their role in full measure. Communists should bring the thoughts and sentiments of people to each plenum, to each meeting, bring everything that causes the concern of people. I must say with regret that the elective Party bodies have not yet ridden themselves of inertia, conservatism and over-organisation. And for as long as we do not change this, we will encounter a situation of which members of the City Party Committee Comrade A S Yeliseyev and others said the following at the plenary meeting of the Moscow City CPSU Committee when discussing the style and methods of work of Comrade B N Yeltsin: and where have we been, members of the bureau, members of the City Committee, for all this was happening before our eyes?

Indeed, how can one work in such a way when the City Committee studies the question of science without inviting a single academician or doctor of sciences from among the members of the City Committee to take part in preparing the question for discussion? It turns out, as Academician Semenikhin put it, that members of the City Committee are merely 'decorative figureheads'.

It should be borne in mind that such things exist also in many other regions.

Deplorably, there are still officials who do not know and do not understand new tasks, who fear the activity of communists, of the working people. Life should be bustling in every Party committee, so that people should regard that Party body their home and take their joys and cares there. But the main link now is a primary Party organisation. It is on it that all our attention should be concentrated now to make the communists most active. Such is the next major step we should take. This precisely must be the aim of the reports of elective Party bodies to plenums and meetings of communists.

Every communist, every Party organisation should take a serious test and pass it honestly and openly: the test of suiting the times and the demands of perestroika. There must be really hot discussions at meetings to report on the work done, and both those who criticise and who are being criticised should be engaged in them. The coming reports and elections are not a mere formality, not just another campaign. They must be effective in awakening the activity of all Party members, all its cadres, in jolting many out of the state of inertia, must be a moment of special exactingness and special confidence of

communists in one another. The sincerity and interest of everyone are the indispensable prerequisites for enhancing the activity of the Party, an important condition of success, of the Party's authority.

There will, probably, be communists, among them leaders, who will be taken to task at these meetings. There will, possibly, be attempts to bureaucratise the meetings, to prevent a serious talk on vital tasks of restructuring, there will also be attempts to suppress criticism under various pretexts. This is precluded now. But this depends on communists themselves. They should use in full measure the rights provided by the CPSU regulations. We greatly need principledness now. We need glasnost, honesty, true Party comradeship in the interests of the task at hand. And everything should be done to ensure that these reports set the beginning to a new stage of the invigoration of primary Party organisations.

It is particularly important now to appraise cadres on the basis of their attitude to perestroika. When perestroika passes widely through democratisation, through the economic reform, through a new economic mechanism, it will be clear what everyone is worth. It will be clear whether some or other leader, communist is capable to conduct matters, whether or not he accepts our policy.

Two aspects should be taken into account in the work with personnel. On the one hand, it is necessary to help people learn the requirements of the new stage. On the other hand, if you got convinced that a person does not accept new things, rejects democratisation and a new economic mechanism, it is necessary to part company with him, and decisively so. Promises that are not borne up by actions should not be taken into account.

And one more thing related to the appraisal of cadres. Everybody should embark now on the solution of pressing vital tasks which have a direct bearing on the daily living, create a desire for work, provide opportunities for normal rest, enable people to use their spare time instead of wasting it on trying experiences. Unless people feel that the situation is improving, they will not support wholeheartedly the solution of new tasks. Words and calls alone cannot achieve anything.

People will not follow those leaders whose promises are many but deeds are few, who act in an old way, cling to parasitic attitudes, to the principles of devoting to social affairs whatever resources are left. The Party must control all these matters and demand performance. It is only then that people will feel the vanguard role of the Party in perestroika.

And a few concrete matters. There is need for organisational and ideological ensurance of the implementation of the plans to conclude this year successfully. This is what the unity of words and deeds is all about. Concrete work is needed to conclude the year, organising and controlling work. This is one thing.

Another thing is that collectives should be prepared for cost-accounting. I believe this question is vastly underrated in the Party, in the economic management and work collectives. Some people treat this matter really seriously and work soundly. But to this day not everyone has grasped the importance and seriousness of the matter. Some people think that everything will proceed smoothly, as if of one's own accord, while others think that the leadership can do nothing and will have again to pay for any kind of performance, for shoddy goods. No, comrades, this is intolerable now and this will not be so.

It is necessary to conduct economic training in every work collective, to teach workers labour organisation in conditions of the new economic mechanism. These matters must be in the focus of attention of every Party organisation, of all personnel.

How is a collective preparing for cost-

accounting? This theme should be constantly discussed on television, over the radio, in the press, at studies in the system of economic education. Let workers, collective farmers, managers of enterprises, ministers, other workers — everyone on whom the success of the economic reform depends — express their opinion.

Special attention should be paid to the Law on State Enterprise (Amalgamation) which comes into effect as of January 1, 1988. We must not allow it being emasculated out of departmental or other interests. For the point of the matter is not just enterprises, but also the work of industries, the quest for structures of management, the creation of new amalgamations, questions of technological progress, working out and application of economic norms. These are all most important questions. To put it in a nutshell, our national economy must be prepared for the economic reform.

As for the press at the present stage, its role can hardly be overestimated. It is called upon to promote the processes of democratisation, to promote solutions of problems connected with the development of the economic reform. So far journalists do not provide sufficient coverage for either of the problems. I would like to emphasise that the work of the press in these directions should not be weakened, it should remain at a high level. Just as at the first stage of perestroika, the mass media should be in the front ranks, should help resolve new tasks. But their materials should now be more competent, more profound and analytical. Readers and viewers now expect from newspapers and journals, from television programmes serious and intensive thinking, the clash of different approaches, the showing of everything valuable that has already been accumulated in the practice of perestroika. The ability or inability to work, the wish or unwillingness to reorganise — these are the themes that require analysis.

Economists should be given room in the press. Take the 'round table conferences' where scientists and practical workers could exchange opinion. For some reason they have become rare in the newspapers, on television. And there is a need for them. Rank-and-file toilers, managers of enterprises, chairmen of collective farms, scientists, specialists, Party and government officials should sum up experience and criticise errors and shortcomings. There is a need for knowledgeable writing also about Party work. Sometimes a journalist undertakes giving a

description of the work of a district Party committee, but everything boils down to the journalist writing about how he arrived in the district and how together with the secretary he took a stroll in the fields, and then he embarks on a description of a landscape; there was a greyish hue here and whitish there, there was a birch tree here and a spring there, and so the reader cannot take his bearing as to what this is all about. There is no analysis, no problem is raised, so there is nothing of what is now vital for the country.

In principle, the press has enhanced its militancy, but it should also get second wind, just as the entire Party, the entire country. It should advance, and not get stuck at yesterday's landmarks.

We must work with journalists more. It was simpler in the past, since it is easier to ban than to allow. But every journalist, every editor should be an active person and should bear civic responsibility for his activity. Party officials should communicate with journalists more, through collective meetings and on an individual basis, should visit editorial boards. And secretaries of the central committee, of regional and territorial committees, members of government should meet and converse with journalists more often. Let us work together. The press is part of the cause of the Party, of the whole people, so let us treat it accordingly.

And a few words about glasnost. Glasnost and democracy should serve socialism reliably and in full measure. Questions of glasnost and democracy are the questions of the people's participation in management and they should not boil down to television programmes and newspaper articles. It was said more than once that we shall not be depicting any of our major tasks without consulting the people. Hence it is necessary to develop glasnost, to develop the process of democratisation in the interests of consolidating socialist values. Any slowing down of the process of democratisation is, essentially, the slowing down of the development of society, of perestroika.

Everybody knows that the practice of bans characteristic of the period of stagnation has been discarded, that we have firmly embarked on the road of widening democracy. And we shall continue to advance along the road of socialist democracy, consolidation of socialist values, freedom of thought and creativity. The Soviet people is a highly cultured and educated people.

It will always see what is good and what is bad.

The assertion of our moral values, the elevation of man, the rejection of everything that is alien to socialism, the freedom of creativity in all its various aspects — such is our road in culture.

As to touring the country and meeting people, I must say honestly that I do not manage to make trips as frequently as earlier. We must visit those places where there are economic difficulties, where some major knot in economic activity should be untied. A Party functionary should always feel where unresolved problems accumulated and there is need for his help, where tension arose. And it is necessary to relieve that tension, to help clarify some or other situation.

And, certainly, the main thing in every trip is talking with people, discussing the vital problems and the way they are solved.

In short, comrades, concrete deeds come to the fore now. The emphasis in our activity is shifted toward constructive work for organisational, ideological, political and moral ensurance of the tasks of the second, decisive stage of perestroika. □

Agri-Industrial sector reform of pricing system

IT is planned to raise state procurement prices of agricultural produce by 30 billion roubles as part of the current economic restructuring in the country, Leon Aivazov, a Deputy Chairman of the USSR State Committee for Prices, told a TASS correspondent.

A portion of that sum, 11.7 billion roubles, to be precise, is linked with an increase in the wholesale prices of manufactured goods. The other — with the lifting of state subsidies granted earlier to collective and state farms for the purchase of machines, fertilizers and mixed fodder.

In previous years wholesale price increases in industry, as a rule, directly caused produce procurement prices to grow. The latest such increase came in 1983 when agriculture received an additional 21 billion roubles through price increases and extra charges.

Last year the state allocated 5 billion roubles in subsidies for the purchase of machines by collective farms. In addition to that agriculture is buying electricity, gas, mixed fodder and other goods at preferential tariffs. In the 13th five-year plan (1991-1995) the double price system on all means of production will no longer exist. All kinds of subsidies as well as preferences in tariffs and prices of manufactured goods delivered to the agri-industrial sector will be cancelled to be replaced with standard wholesale prices.

It is only natural that changes in the wholesale and procurement prices will demand a review of retail prices of foodstuffs, Leon Aivazov emphasised. Although today it is still impossible to say what will become more expensive and what — cheaper. This much is clear — retail prices will have to come in line with the social prices of production and market demands. But at any rate this will not result in any decrease in the consumption of foodstuffs or a decline in the living standards.

All changes in the system of pricing which have even the slightest bearing on the interests of the population will become a subject of a broad public discussion, Leon Aivazov said. □

Peace and Co-operation in the Seas and Oceans

THE public commission Peace and Co-operation in the Seas and Oceans was set up on November 19 at the Soviet Peace Committee. It rallied well-known navigators, lawyers, oceanographers, ecologists, representatives of public and state organisations and cultural personalities.

Pyotr Barabolya, member of the Executive Committee of the USSR Association on the Law of the Sea who headed the commission, spoke at the inaugural conference. He pointed out that "peace needs to be protected not only on the ground, but also in the oceans, because the naval arms race has been dramatically intensified of late".

He said that an enormous amount of strategic nuclear armaments was concentrated in the world's oceans and deployed on board submarines, aircraft-carriers and cruisers. Acts of aggression and the threat of force coming from the sea have become more frequent. "Gunboat diplomacy" was replaced in a number of regions by "aircraft-carrier diplomacy", which

aggravates world tension and can bring about new military conflicts in some parts of the world's oceans, especially in the Persian Gulf.

In these conditions, Barabolya continued, the public comes to realise more and more clearly that new approaches are needed for the solution of problems of the world's oceans, that scientists and workers in the field should work together for the sake of peace and international security on the seas.

Vladimir Oryol, Deputy Chairman of the Soviet Peace Committee, pointed out that the task of the new commission was to analyse the situation in the world's oceans, to exchange experiences with similar foreign associations and to sponsor the holding of conferences and scientific symposiums on topical problems of the Law of the Sea.

The commission has not drawn up its programme yet. However, a lot of constructive proposals were made at the conference that dealt with the organisation of studies, discussions and expeditions, with the creation of a bank of ideas and with publications on the problems of the world's oceans. □

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Mikhail Gorbachev receives Mario Soares

On November 24 Mikhail Gorbachev had a meeting in the Kremlin with Mario Soares, President of the Portuguese Republic. When welcoming the guest Mikhail Gorbachev described his visit as a major event capable of imparting a significant impulse to the development of Soviet-Portuguese relations. It is believed in the Soviet Union that there are no obstacles to this and it is hoped that the Portuguese leadership representing the people who discovered in the past the roads to the remotest parts of the globe will be promoting and blazing trails to mutual understanding and co-operation between the two countries.

Mikhail Gorbachev pointed to vast interest and solidarity of the Soviet people with the 1974 April Revolution which took Portugal to the road of democracy and progress and opened to it an opportunity of vigorous participation in international affairs. On behalf of the Soviet

people he expressed respect for the Portuguese people, for its history and contribution to world culture, for the socio-political choice that it made by overthrowing fascism.

The conversation was conducted in a free, wideranging and understanding manner. It was a conversation of two statesmen who are aware of a transitional, landmark nature of the situation in the world of today and realise their responsibility for their countries to take part in the solution of world problems in accordance with their abilities.

Developing countries

The conversation dealt with overcoming the confrontational or semi-confrontational situation in inter-state relations on a basis of equality and balance of interests, European security and the priority importance of Europe in the policy of the two states, the role of Europe in world affairs and such an interaction of developed countries, also in the framework of the United Nations, as it would make it easier to overcome the huge problems of developing countries on the basis of respect for their independent choice. The interlocutors agreed that an end to the arms

race, the implementation of the concept of "disarmament for development" and the settlement of regional conflicts would be a decisive step in this direction.

The situation in Angola was touched upon in this connection. Mario Soares set out his view of Angola's problems on the basis of Portugal's long-standing and close ties with that country.

The interlocutors exchanged views on the state of the Soviet-American talks on nuclear arms in the light of Mikhail Gorbachev's forthcoming visit to the United States and highly evaluated the possibility of concluding a treaty on medium- and shorter-range missiles. Mikhail Gorbachev informed Mario Soares of his readiness to also solve with President Ronald Ragan other questions of lessening the nuclear threat, first of all the problem of reducing strategic arms.

The interlocutors held a useful discussion about technological modernisation of production with the emphasis on its social consequences in conditions of different systems. Mikhail Gorbachev noted that the socialist system is ready to compete with the capitalist system in the way human interests will be protected at the new stage of technological transformations. □

Draft resolutions on security systems submitted to UN

A DRAFT resolution on an all-embracing system of international peace and security was submitted on November 23 for the consideration of the First Committee of the UN General Assembly by the delegations of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Bulgaria, Hungary, the GDR, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, the USSR, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and Czechoslovakia.

In the nuclear-space era states need a new way of political thinking and a new mode of action in

order to fully implement the aims and principles of the United Nations Charter, preserve civilisation and ensure its progress and build a nuclear weapons-free and non-violent world, the draft resolution says.

Its authors urged all states to concentrate their efforts on the ensurance of universal security by political means on the basis of equality in every area of international relations.

They noted that universal and all-embracing security requires the efforts of all participants in international relations without exception in vitally important and interrelated questions of disarmament, peaceful settlement of crises and conflicts, economic development and co-operation, environmental protection, the protection of human rights and fundamental liberties. The road to this is through practical steps for the strengthening of confidence among states on the basis of democratisation, establishment in the minds of people of the idea of living in conditions of peace, the impermissibility of wars and violence, steps for overcoming confrontational approaches, assertion of openness in international relations.

All states are addressed with the call to redouble their efforts to curb the arms race, to adopt and implement a complex of measures with a view to reduction and elimination of nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction, prevention of an arms race in space and considerable reduction of armed forces, conventional armaments and military expenditures. The authors of the document note that this would be an important part of the all-embracing system of international peace and security. □

Telegram of condolence

Mikhail Gorbachev has sent a telegram to Margaret Thatcher. The telegram says: "Accept deep condolences on behalf of the people and leadership of the Soviet Union in connection with the considerable loss of life as a result of the fire in the London Underground. Please convey our heartfelt sympathy to the families of the victims." □

USSR-New Zealand trade — Aristov meets Woodfield

THERE is a real possibility to develop trade and economic relations between the Soviet Union and New Zealand, Boris Aristov, Foreign Trade Minister of the USSR, and Edward Woodfield, Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry of New Zealand, agreed at their meeting in Moscow on November 23.

It was noted there that increased trade would be facilitated by a wider range of mutually supplied goods and broader direct contacts between organisations and firms from the two countries.

Examples of such co-operation include business relations between the USSR Agri-Industrial Committee and New Zealand's Milk Committee and growing regional trade between the USSR and New Zealand. With a view to involving Soviet far eastern regions into the latter process, the foreign trade association Dalintorg has been granted the right to engage in transactions with New Zealand firms.

Co-operation between the two countries holds promise in such areas as the joint tapping of natural resources, the use of geothermal energy sources, the building materials industry, agriculture, aquaculture, and shipping.

Woodfield yesterday also met Soviet Deputy Foreign Trade Minister Vladimir Pavlov. The two men are the co-chairmen of the Soviet-New Zealand Mixed Commission for Trade.

It was pointed out at their meeting that reform in the system of this country's foreign trade relations aims to strengthen its export base and improve the pattern of exports. Co-operative production arrangements in industry and joint ventures involving New Zealand firms provide an extra channel for broadening bilateral trade. □

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Nikolai Ryzhkov in New Delhi

Here follows the full text of the remarks made by Nikolai Ryzhkov, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee and Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, at a dinner given in his honour in New Delhi on November 20 by Rajiv Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India:

LET me thank you for the hearty welcome, the words of friendship and well-wishes addressed to our country and the Soviet people and for the high appraisal of its work in the name of peace on Earth.

I am gratified to convey to you, esteemed Mr Prime Minister, and to all citizens of India cordial greetings and good wishes from Mikhail Gorbachev, who recalls with invariably warm feelings his visit to India one year ago.

We hold dear the bonds of friendship with India and are doing everything to make them stronger still. We hold dear the historical and spiritual affinity of our two great nations.

It is especially appropriate to speak about that today, in this remarkable year for our two states. This is the year of the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution and of the 40th anniversary of India's Independence. The socialist revolution in Russia and the national liberation revolution in India were born out of the world-wide process that is common to all humankind—the process of social development. Both in Russia and India the new burgeoning world stood in opposition to the world of economic and national oppression, political diktat and expansionist wars.

We regard the intensifying co-operation between our states in resolving key world problems as a natural extension of that historical logic.

The October Revolution has become the hour of triumph of our people which gained the right to be the master of its destiny in a strenuous struggle. Since the October Revolution we have made notable headway over the years of building socialism. Our country is free from exploitation of man by man. There is no poverty and illiteracy. All working people enjoy social protection and have a feeling of confidence in the future.

However, the time is hurling a new challenge at us, as at everyone else. Our society is being tested for strength, for its ability to scale the ladder of progress rapidly. Our economy is being tested for efficiency. Our morality and our entire way of life—for the ability to develop and enrich the values of socialist democracy, social justice and humanism.

We have accepted the challenge of the time. And we have done so in a revolutionary manner and in the spirit of the October Revolution. The restructuring drive is gathering momentum in the country. Its goal is to speed up the progress of socialist society and make socialism more efficient. We believe that the road to it lies primarily through an all-round development of democratization and through the implementation of a radical economic reform.

The Indian people, too, has traversed a long road over the years of independence. Your successes in the industrialisation of the country and ensuring a steady increase in agricultural output are indisputable and give rise to a feeling of respect. The same is true of your achievements in the sphere of education, science and culture. Today free India is setting itself the task of entering the 21st century as a mighty and modern nation.

Peace is an indispensable condition for constructive work. It is not accidental that the October Revolution brought forth Lenin's Decree on Peace. From the very first days of freedom peace has become the principle of India's foreign policy as well.

At present the task of ensuring peace has acquired a new content and significance. A nuclear war would no longer be a continuation of political intercourse with the admixture of different means. It would be a global holocaust for human civilisation.

This is why disarmament is a vital imperative of the present day. To be able to bury weapons we must bury mistrust, ossified stereotypes of enemy and the tyranny of fear. Life imperatively demands new approaches to world affairs, and a new thinking in politics.

Today we are gratified to say here, in New Delhi, that our two states, the Soviet Union and India, are in the front ranks of those who are aware of the fact that the current moment is a crucial one and who are making practical efforts to ensure peace, security, justice and development for the living and succeeding generations.

The mutual allegiance of the Soviet Union and India to these lofty aims has been embodied in the Delhi Declaration on the principles of a nuclear weapon-free and non-violent world. One of the ten principles of that document is the recognition of peaceful coexistence as the universal norm of international relations, of human life as the supreme value and of non-violence as the basis of community life. Having absorbed the age-old wisdom of our nations and permeated with the new political thinking, the Delhi Declaration is charting ways not simply for the survival of the human race, but also for an all-round perfection of the individual and for the rise of civilisation to new heights. In my opinion, the entire profundity of that historic document is still to be brought out. But even today the ideas set forth in the Delhi Declaration have a very positive effect on the world moral and political climate, and are actively promoting an improvement of international relations.

The meeting between Mikhail Gorbachev and US President Ronald Reagan will open in Washington on December 7. A Soviet-American treaty on the abolition of medium- and shorter-range missiles is to be signed during it. It is impossible to overestimate the significance of that event.

It will be the first step along the agonizingly difficult path to real reduction of nuclear weapons. The Soviet leadership regards it as a point of departure on the way towards a solution to the strategic offensive arms issue, and in advance towards full deliverance of the entire world from nuclear and other types of weapons of mass destruction.

I want to emphasise: the Soviet Union does not look at the world in the light of Soviet-US relations. Just as the Volga and the Ganges, the two great rivers of Russia and India, gain strength only by absorbing the waters of hundreds of rivers and streams feeding them, a fundamental change for the better in world development can be ensured only through combining in the common channel of detente the peaceful constructive efforts of all members of the international community irrespective of their political systems, size of territory, and geographical position. This is precisely the goal of the concept of a comprehensive system of international security, which the Soviet Union and other socialist countries have submitted to the United Nations Organisation for consideration. We also welcome the constructive initiatives in the spirit of the new thinking, which were put forward by India at the United Nations, within the framework of the Non-Aligned Movement and the group of six countries of four continents.

They have earned India well-deserved prestige in the international community.

Speaking in Delhi on Asian soil, I cannot but point out that the tendency in favour of freeing the world from nuclear weapons and from violence is gaining in strength on the vast Asian continent as well. The People's Republic of China declares for nuclear disarmament. Just as the Soviet Union, it has undertaken not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, and urged other nuclear powers to follow suit. The idea of freeing the Korean peninsula from nuclear weapons gets increasingly broad recognition. The ASEAN and Indochinese countries come out in favour of a nuclear-free zone in South-East Asia.

Favourable prerequisites for resolving a number of acute regional issues have begun to show. The ideas of national reconciliation in Afghanistan and Kampuchea win over an increasing number of supporters. India's peacemaking efforts which are aimed at settling the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka have been highly evaluated by the international community.

Together with India we persistently come out in favour of restoring peace and tranquillity in the Indian Ocean area as soon as possible and for making it a zone of peace.

To strengthen peace in Asia is one of the main obligations which the Soviet Union and India took upon themselves under the 1971 treaty. The community or proximity of the two countries' approaches furnishes a good foundation for our co-operation in accomplishing this important task.

Dear Friends,

Soviet-Indian accords of recent times have given new dimension to the many-faceted co-operation between our two countries. I think I would not err from the truth if I say that thereby the Soviet Union and India show a good example in the international community. This applies to co-operation both in the field of politics and economics and—this should be particularly emphasised now—in the field of culture.

The Festival of India, which was declared open with the participation of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, has been in progress in the Soviet Union for almost five months now. The history of Soviet-Indian relations and, probably, international relations in general, did not know so massive, large-scale activities before. Millions of people in the Soviet Union and India have got an opportunity to come into direct contact with the cultural wealth of the two great nations and to become acquainted with their present-day life.

The culture of each people is an asset of the whole world. The best minds of mankind have always rejected the blinkers of religious, national or class narrow-mindedness. In the mutual enrichment of the cultures of nearby and far-off countries and continents, they saw the way to the development and perfection of a single world civilisation.

The father of the Indian nation, Mahatma Gandhi, dreamed of the days when "the winds of the cultures of all countries" would breathe in his home. The founder of the Soviet State, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin called on the young people to enrich their mind "with a knowledge of all the treasures created by mankind". Let our festivals serve to bring people closer together and to strengthen their mutual understanding.

Our joint efforts in any sphere where we act together, share each other's experience and exchange material and spiritual values are ultimately subordinated to this lofty goal. Soviet-

(continued on next page)

Meeting of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee

THE Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee at its regular meeting considered and on the whole endorsed the proposals of the USSR Council of Ministers and the Central Council of Soviet Trade Unions for ensuring effective employment of the population, upgrading the system of job placement and enhancement of social guarantees for the working people.

It is planned to implement a complex of organisational, socio-economic and legal measures to create an integral state system of job placement for the population ensuring the right of citizens to work guaranteed by the USSR Constitution. The existing benefits and compensation for workers displaced in the new conditions of economic management are expanded and additional ones are introduced.

Measures for drawing them into work activity have been outlined.

The Political Bureau endorsed "the main directions for developing the protection of the population's health and restructuring of the USSR health services in the 12th five-year period and for the period up to the year 2000" with taking into account supplements and amendments introduced on the results of their nationwide discussion. Over 13,000 proposals aimed at the elimination of shortcomings in the activity of institutions of the health services were made during the discussion of the draft of the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers.

Co-operation

The Political Bureau endorsed the proposal for urgent measures to restore the tea plantations and improve the quality of tea.

The Political Bureau approved of the results of Mikhail Gorbachev's conversation and Nikolai

Ryzhkov's talks with Lubomir Strougal, Member of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and Chairman of the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, who was staying in the USSR on a working visit. The Political Bureau emphasised the importance of the arrangements reached on further enhancing the effectiveness of all-round co-operation, a fuller tapping of the reserves of economic integration inherent in production, scientific and technological potentials of both countries.

Information was discussed on the results of Vitali Vorotnikov's visit to Czechoslovakia with a delegation of the Russian Federation that took part in the functions of the Days of the USSR based on the example of the Russian Federation and devoted to the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

The meeting of the Political Bureau also discussed some other questions of the implementation of the home and foreign policy of the Communist Party and the Soviet State. □

Ryzhkov-Gandhi — concluding meeting

NIKOLAI RYZHKOV had a concluding meeting with the Prime Minister of India Rajiv Gandhi on November 24.

They continued their detailed exchange of views on pressing problems of the international situation and a wide range of questions of Soviet-Indian relations. They confirmed that the Soviet Union and India attach special importance to questions of removing the nuclear threat, curbing the arms race, for disarmament and the attainment of the tasks set by the Delhi Declaration. This historic document has defined the joint long-term aims of the two countries in the struggle to create a nuclear-weapons-free and non-violent world. The coincidence or closeness of the views of the Soviet Union and India on cardinal problems of world politics is an important factor in the cause of improving the international situation.

The exchange of views revealed the high extent of accord also on questions of Soviet-Indian

bilateral co-operation and the interest of both countries in consistently working for further expanding it and raising its quality. In this context they stressed again the fundamental importance of the accords reached in 1985-1987 during the Soviet-Indian summit meetings. Confidence was expressed that the agreements and documents which it is intended to sign in conclusion of the present visit will serve the further strengthening of the ties between the two countries in the field of economy, trade, tourism, higher education and in other spheres.

The heads of government of the two countries noted the successful beginning of the Festival of the USSR in India devoted to the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. Like the Festival of India in the Soviet Union, it is called upon to play an important role in bringing the Soviet and Indian peoples spiritually closer.

Nikolai Ryzhkov and Rajiv Gandhi expressed confidence that the successful development of the friendly Soviet-Indian relations in all fields

will further fruitfully serve the cardinal interests of the peoples of both countries, the cause of strengthening peace and universal security.

Nikolai Ryzhkov expressed his sincere gratitude to the government and people of India for the warm and heartfelt reception accorded the Soviet delegation in India.

The conversation passed in a warm atmosphere of mutual understanding.

Then a number of Soviet-Indian documents were signed.

Nikolai Ryzhkov and Rajiv Gandhi signed an agreement on economic and technical co-operation.

An agreement on new forms of economic co-operation between the USSR and India was signed by Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers Vladimir Kamentsev and India's Minister of Finance and Trade Narayan Dutt Tiwari.

An agreement on co-operation in the field of higher education and the training of highly qualified specialists was signed by Gennadi Yagodin, USSR Minister of Higher and Secondary Specialised Education and P V Narasimha Rao, Indian Minister of Human Resources Development and Health and Family Welfare.

An agreement on co-operation in the field of tourism was signed by Yuli Vorontsov, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR and India's Minister of State for Civil Aviation and Tourism Jagdish Tytler.

Also signed were a protocol on trade turnover between the USSR and India in 1988 and a protocol on the equivalence of higher education diplomas.

NIKOLAI RYZHKOV IN NEW DELHI

(continued from previous page)

Indian economic co-operation has long become a matter of every-day concern of the two countries' governments.

The co-operation beacons that have sprung up at Bhilai, Bokaro, Ranchi and many other places are known not only in India and the Soviet Union. Our economic co-operation becomes an increasingly weighty factor of internationalist importance. It carries a good deal of elements of a new international economic order. It is equal, mutually beneficial, and in line with the long-term priorities of the two countries.

A whole number of big long-term programmes were signed between our two countries over the past year. They envisage the development of coordination of production, the establishment of direct contacts between Soviet and Indian amalgamations and firms, joint enterprises, and common development efforts in the most promising directions of science and technology.

The implementation of such programmes will undoubtedly promote acceleration of the socio-economic development of the Soviet Union and India and, consequently, will expand our

resources in matters concerning participation in the international division of labour, in the transfer of advanced technology and the rendering of other assistance not only to each other, but to third countries as well.

Dear Friends,

We know well about the great tasks which are being tackled by the Indian people now. The people of India have to overcome considerable difficulties on their way — be it the heavy consequences of natural calamities or hostile intrigues of forces which do not like the united, independent and peace-loving India.

Allow me to say in all sincerity: we are friends of India in days of joy and in days of ordeals. Soviet people wish their southern neighbour successes in the realisation of the plans for the renewal of the country and for the strengthening of its statehood.

We are convinced that under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, our close and good neighbour, India, will reach new heights worthy of its great people. □

Realities and Guarantees for a Secure World

Mikhail Gorbachev's article published in *Pravda* on September 17.

Price 30p from:
Soviet Booklets (SN),
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Eduard Shevardnadze's press conference at Geneva

THE agreed-upon draft of the Soviet-US treaty on complete elimination of medium- and shorter-range missiles has become an accomplished fact, Eduard Shevardnadze, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, said in Geneva on November 24.

Speaking at a press conference held late on Tuesday on completion of the talks with US Secretary of State George Shultz, the Soviet Minister stressed that it was the first major agreement in the field of real disarmament, concluded between the USSR and USA over the past eight years. At the same time it has a truly international dimension because nuclear weapons are removed from the territory of nine states. This is the first agreement which asserts reality and the possibility of a nuclear-free, more secure world. It seems that an insurmountable psychological barrier has been overcome in the relations between the two nuclear powers with the attainment of a qualitatively new level of co-operation in solving the urgent task of paramount significance.

Eduard Shevardnadze specially noted that the treaty materialised the concept of equality and reciprocity in the field of security. If there were difficulties in drafting verification and inspection procedures they arose when attempts were made to solve something on an unequal basis.

Now some people willingly speak about our concessions, the Soviet Minister said. But elementary justice calls for acknowledging both one's own and counter-concessions. Here, at Geneva, each side covered its own part of the road and adding up mutual concessions gave excellent results. It does not matter that the USSR is eliminating more warheads. The point at issue must be not the balance of forces but the balance of interests. It has been fully observed. The interests of the defence of the Soviet Union are not infringed. Neither are infringed the interests of the USA. In the final analysis peace has triumphed.

Questions concerning the programme of the summit meeting in December have been discussed in a constructive way in the past two days. The main priority here is the success of the business part of Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to the USA, the signing of an agreement on medium- and shorter-range missiles, modelling conditions which might promote the attainment of new major agreements during the reply visit by President Reagan to Moscow. The planning of the summit meeting has been successful.

Now, Eduard Shevardnadze said, we stop the Geneva stopwatch which counted months and years of difficult talks on medium- and shorter-range missiles and set the clock for the preparation for Mikhail Gorbachev's meeting with Ronald Reagan to Washington time. The importance of this meeting is immense.

The elaborate preparations for the forthcoming summit between Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan are reaching a climax in Moscow, Washington and Geneva as the last remaining details of the projected INF (Intermediate Nuclear Forces) Treaty are cleared up and the problems of strategic offensive arms, the ABM Treaty and other important issues of Soviet-American relations are scrutinised in an all-round way, a Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman said.

Speaking at a briefing in Moscow on November 24, Gennadi Gerasimov, head of the ministry's Information Directorate, pointed also to the sides' business-like and constructive mood.

"However — and this is certainly no surprise to those familiar with America's political scene — the sufficiently influential forces opposed to any change for the better in US—Soviet relations have become visibly more active as well," he added.

"These forces have mounted their own preparations for the summit and been issuing all manner of 'reports' and 'studies', rehashing myths of a 'Soviet threat' and palming off

provocative falsehoods and rumours to the mass media.

"The anti-Soviet forces have not bypassed the issue of Mikhail Gorbachev's expected speech in Congress either. The fact is that invitations addressed to the Soviet leader have come from dozens of senators and congressmen, including the leaders of both the Senate and the House of Representatives, who are willing to take advantage of a unique opportunity for a substantive and constructive conversation.

"This natural desire for direct communication, for contacts at political leadership level has caused a veritable panic among the ultras attempting to complicate such dialogue in every way," Gerasimov said.

"But it is, of course, not this sentiment of blind hostility that makes the dominant feeling of Americans. Most of them are looking forward to the forthcoming Soviet-American summit talks with approval and hope," he said.

Answering questions, Gennadi Gerasimov said the delegation that would accompany Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, on his forthcoming official visit to the United States would include:

Eduard Shevardnadze, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee and Foreign Minister of the USSR; Alexander Yakovlev, Member of the Political Bureau and Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee; Anatoli Dobrynin, Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee; Vladimir Kamentsev, Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR; Marshal of the Soviet Union Sergei Akhromeyev, Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the USSR and First Deputy Defence Minister of the USSR; Anatoli Chernyayev, an aide to the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, and Yuri Dubinin, Member of the Central Auditing Commission of the CPSU and Ambassador of the USSR to the United States. □

General Razuvanov's visit to American chemical facility

GENERAL Robert Razuvanov, who is in charge of the Soviet chemical facility at Shikhany, has returned from a visit to his colleagues in Tooele, Utah, USA, with mixed feelings. "On the whole, we assess our visit positively," he told a TASS diplomatic correspondent in an interview at the airport. "Undoubtedly, this marks

another step towards openness and trust. However, the striving of the USA to go ahead with its binary programme makes one doubt the sincerity of the intentions of the American side to do away with chemical weapons."

General Razuvanov's doubts were prompted by the US Ambassador at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament, Max Friedersdorf, who believes that the convention on the complete prohibition of chemical weapons must not cover the most advanced and, perhaps, most sophisticated type of these weapons, binary munitions. The USA displayed in Tooele a 155-mm binary shell, GB-2. "One does not need to be a specialist," General Razuvanov continued, "to understand that the binary programme will hardly be limited to the development of this shell alone. Other types are obviously under development in the USA. This weapon can also be used as a warhead for missiles and as an aerial bomb."

"We were also surprised," he went on, "that in Tooele, when showing the facility for the destruction of chemical weapons, the American side used neutral liquids and the gas masks

handed out to us were for show. At Shikhany we demonstrated a real process in which a real chemical projectile was destroyed."

"The typical storage of American chemical munitions shown to us," the general said, "will make it possible to judge the system of chemical munitions in the US Army. However, we could ask why the American side had failed to show chemical warheads for missiles and chemical munitions for naval artillery."

"One can spend a lot of time arguing about who has showed more and who has concealed less. Such discussions, however, are pointless," General Razuvanov said. "It is necessary to advance towards the convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons. The concrete Soviet proposals to jointly disclose the stocks and location of chemical weapons stocks has been tabled at the talks. Then the fabrications about multiple Soviet superiority in chemical weapons stocks will disappear and the world will move even closer to the complete prohibition of this most barbarous type of weapon of mass destruction." □

(N.B. The cross-heads in this bulletin were inserted by Soviet News—Ed.)

A Real Step Towards Disarmament

Mikhail Gorbachyov's meeting with representatives of the International Forum of Scientists for a Nuclear Test Ban, Moscow, July 14, 1986

Price 20p

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