

Mikhail Gorbachev's speech at Ukrainian Party plenum

The following is the full text of the address made by Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and President of the USSR Supreme Soviet, to the plenary meeting of the Ukrainian Communist Party's Central Committee at Kiev on September 28:

Dear Comrades,

First of all, I would like to express profound satisfaction with the results of the plenary meeting of the Ukrainian Communist Party's Central Committee.

Without making an in-depth analysis, I think that the plenum demonstrated by its work and decisions the immense potential of the Ukrainian Communist Party.

This fact reinforces my confidence that it is within the power of Ukrainian communists and the Ukrainian working people to cope with the tasks that have emerged at this crucial stage of perestroika.

I wish you all great success and congratulate you upon the results of the plenary meeting and the adoption of important decisions, following their careful consideration in a balanced and democratic discussion.

I congratulate Comrade Vladimir Antonovich Ivashko on his election to the post of First Secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party's Central Committee.

I would like to say once again that as the Ukraine is one of the biggest constituent republics, its significance to the country is great. Concentrated here are large numbers of workers, farmers and intellectuals. There is a lot of scientific work done and there is also a robust machine-building sector.

The results and the very process of perestroika in the country will in many ways depend on how things go in this republic. All of this determines the degree to which its communists are responsible for its further development and, in general, for the fate of perestroika.

All this is directly related to the highly important questions which we discussed from positions of principle at the plenum of the Soviet Communist Party's Central Committee earlier this month.

The results of the plenum have been discussed in a lively and most interested way in the Party, country and, let us say it bluntly, around the world ever since it ended.

With all the diversity of judgements and assess-

ments expressed, extensive public opinion unanimously acknowledges the exceptional importance of its decisions both on bringing forward the 28th Party Congress and on the Party's new nationalities policy.

The September plenum succeeded, thanks to collective efforts, in taking a new step in comprehending the dialectics of the revolutionary changes launched by the Party.

There was a substantive discussion on Party renovation at the plenum in the context of perestroika. This issue concerns many people, not just communists. On this issue various, at times opposite, judgements are being expressed.

Specifically, there is a persistent effort to place the Party and the state as well as the Party and the people in opposition to each other. The idea of taking political leadership away from the Party and denying it involvement in state and practically all other public affairs is being palmed off upon us.

One can even hear claims that decisions and resolutions by Party bodies – up to, and including, the Central Committee and congresses – are only of purely inter-Party significance and cannot influence the life of the country and society in any way.

This is the extreme version of placing the Party and its policy in opposition to everything in the nation. The arguments are usually as follows: the Party today cannot assume responsibility for the country and its future, as it is sagging under the burden of its past mistakes.

There certainly were mistakes, the Party accepts responsibility for them and nobody writes them off. But while stating this, we have no right – since this would be just another distortion, and a no less serious one at that – to cross out all the decades of struggle for socialism, for the cause of working people.

Most importantly, it is the Party that initiated the April (1985) turnaround, proposing a fundamentally new policy and taking the lead in perestroika.

Everyone can remember the policy that was pursued for a great many years, allowing a great many complicated problems of social development to pile up into a logjam. It was not easy to get over this logjam, but we have.

The Party's task was to pronounce a timely diagnosis and get down to treating the illness that had severely injured society.

This is why the Party told the people the truth about the state of affairs and offered a new policy – the realisation of which would pull the nation out of crisis. This is an arduous, difficult job. And we are now very well aware of this.

Many apparently can virtually feel the tension rising in society, the lightning flashing and the thunder claps reverberating.

In these conditions, I believe, we very badly need the reason and political will which can be ensured by such an organisation as the Party, acting, of course, together with the governing councils, mass organisations and movements, and all those who cherish perestroika.

A different approach today is out of the question. All of us can feel particularly keenly the

fairness of Lenin's warning about the unaffordable luxury of abstract debate at an hour of need when all forces should be united and directed to tackling practical matters.

The choice is as follows: either we push forward towards normal, effective political and economic structures, drawing on our newly-gained democratic experience, or we are thrown back to the old ways.

A return to the past cannot be allowed, just as any extremism or artificial rocking of our state cannot be tolerated.

We say this firmly, because the Party was and remains the main organising and coordinating force capable of leading the people along the path of in-depth socialist changes, of playing an integrating and rallying role in society and, let us be blunt about it, of preventing an undesirable, dramatic turn of events.

Without the Party, without its fundamental influence on every aspect of social life, perestroika won't succeed.

A conference at the Party Central Committee last July and this month's Central Committee plenum discussed critically and in detail the principal facets of the Party's work, its relationship with elected governing councils and other

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Gorbachev to visit the GDR and Japan

SOVIET President Mikhail Gorbachev will visit the German Democratic Republic on October 6-7 at the invitation of the German leadership, Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman Vadim Perfiliev said at a briefing in Moscow on September 28.

Gorbachev will take part in the celebrations of the 40th anniversary of the GDR's foundation to be marked on October 7.

The Soviet president will meet GDR's leader Erich Honecker and other German officials.

Meanwhile, Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze met with his Japanese counterpart Taro Nakayama and discussed a programme of Soviet-Japanese contacts and exchanges to be carried out as part of the preparations for Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to Japan, tentatively set for 1991.

Shevardnadze called Nakayama's attention to the Soviet Union's unilateral and far-reaching steps to reduce its armed forces and armaments, including those in the Asian part of the country.

But unfounded claims about a 'Soviet threat' are sometimes still to be heard in Japan. As a result, the Soviet foreign minister suggested that Soviet-Japanese talks should include the issue of how to remove the threat of military confrontation from relations between the USSR and Japan, both in practice and in public mentality.

The ministers will continue their dialogue when Shevardnadze visits Japan in March 1990. Nakayama will return the visit in late 1990 or early 1991. □

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components of the political system, and the concept of ideological work and intra-Party life.

The Party organisations were provided with perestroika guideposts, instilling them with confidence and impelling them to be more active in furthering the reform drive.

At this plenum of the Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee, I would like to stress once more that in an updated society, the course of events can really be influenced only by an updated Party which has decisively renounced everything that marred and deformed its Leninist image and the democratic methods of work.

The hour has come when no communist may any longer sit on the fence, evade taking an active social stand or succumb to pessimism and defeatism. Confusion is a characteristic of the weak. A true communist should know how to act in revolutionary manner in the most complicated conditions.

Speaking about the Party, I would like to single out the following few points:

Firstly, recent developments have made it particularly obvious how essential it is for the Party to declare itself, loud and clear, once again, as a Party which has set the course of thoroughly updating socialism, a Party of the working class that protects the interests of all people.

I trust that attempts by individual "theorists", groups and movements to drive a wedge between the workers and the Party have not gone unnoticed by you. There are forces which do not conceal their anti-socialist thrust.

In their bid to gain power, they seek backing from the working class. They are eager to pose as committed champions of its interests as a counter-balance to the Party and demand the latter's self-disbandment. There are people advocating these ideas also here, in the Ukraine.

The working class is also being appealed to by those increasingly vocal in their discontent with the very fact that the Party is renewing itself and abandoning some of its former functions and, most of all, with its having placed itself under the public control of the people, "permitted democracy" and with it allegedly losing its own vanguard role.

We can see attempts to create the impression that perestroika is based on departures from the bedrock of Marxist-Leninist thought and so is plunging the country into chaos.

All these are smears against the Party. If some people have the impression that one can put the situation under control by using former methods of force, they are, comrades, under a dangerous delusion.

The Party has proposed, and is following, a policy meeting the interests and aspirations of the people and it will uphold this policy, carrying it further and correcting it with full regard for realities. It will continue relying on the support of the working class, farmers and intellectuals and express the ideology of socialism. This is the Party's fundamental strategic course.

Secondly, I would like to stress another key matter of Party life: we are for a federal state, for a federation of peoples, but we also are for Party unity which is a pivot for consolidating society.

The Party embraces members of all social groups and all nationalities. The country today does not have any other forces that could match the Party in its ability to widely harmonise the goals of different republics and autonomous entities, iron out misunderstandings and disagreements, express common interests and actively search for nationwide consensus.

Thirdly, I would like to take up the following issue. Reorganising the work of Party bodies and their apparatus inevitably involves opening continuous and productive dialogue with social organisations and self-organised movements.

This is one of the indispensable conditions of the deepening of renewal processes, widening of the social base of perestroika, and, if I may say so, of the increase of the Party's authority as the

initiator and political guarantor of civil peace in the country.

Many party functionaries are embarrassed by the idea of co-operation with new social forces, embarrassed for the reason that some of these forces do not conceal their destructive and ambitious aspirations.

But it should also be taken into consideration that alongside views unacceptable to us, provisions and activity of some or other public movements include a great deal of aspects that should be supported and drawn into the mainstream of perestroika.

Comrades, let us get things straight. Either we recognise the right of others to independent thought and actions and engage in vigorous activities to win over public opinion and public sympathies, in other words, replenish the motive forces of perestroika, or we shall become an isolated organisation while claiming a leading role.

A political dialogue is not only a way of justifying one's leadership in conditions of political democracy, but also a sure way of winning assistants and allies.

Trade unions and the Komsomol are quickly coming to realise their new role, above all in work collectives. The Soviet Communist Party welcomes this and will be doing its utmost to promote this process.

Fourthly — the development of new forms and methods of political influence of the Party on the development of the economy and social sphere. Our stand regarding this is that the Party has not been shirking nor is shirking the responsibility for the solution of problems in these areas.

The principled line is clear: the Soviet Communist Party is pursuing its political course through communists working in bodies of power, in production, and so on. To fulfil this role, a Party committee should clearly determine its strategy of socio-economic development, be it in a republic, region, district or work collective, and discuss it on a broad democratic basis, analyse possible versions and offer an ideal solution.

A favourable atmosphere is taking shape for this work: the adoption by the USSR Supreme Soviet of new laws on property, on lease and relations of lease-holding, on land, on the single system of taxation and a number of others will make it possible to continue economic transformations more effectively and tap the huge potential inherent in socialist relations of production.

Approaches to practical activities should be changed. Many lessened effort and specific work to implement measures for the acceleration of scientific and technological progress, renewal of equipment, improvement of quality, lengthening service-life and enhancing the reliability of products, reducing the consumption of labour, energy and materials per unit of production, to implement a strict regime of technological discipline, economy and thrift, in other words, are giving less attention to the growth of productivity of labour and enhancement of the efficiency of production.

This state of affairs should be altered. Without these measures it will be difficult or, to be more exact, impossible to overcome a grave financial situation, a crisis phenomena in the economy. The way out is a consistent and steady implementation of the economic reform in all its aspects with simultaneous austerity measures for financial normalisation.

Fifthly, the present stage of the development of society requires the utmost effort of the Party, in particular of each Party organisation. Practical work and control over the implementation of decisions becomes extremely important.

Nothing can do more damage to the cause than a "wait-and-see" attitude and slack organising activity. This is why the September plenum of the Central Committee demanded that communists do not wait for directives from above, but act promptly and decisively. It is important to ease tension in society bit-by-bit, to ensure that the waiting list for housing is reduced,

to resolve burning ethnic problems.

In view of the tension and complexity of the pre-congress period, the Politburo of the Soviet Communist Party has revised its earlier decision, deciding not to hold reviews of Party committees and bureaus in the current year wherever it is not stipulated by the Party rules. This will make it possible to concentrate efforts on forthcoming political campaigns, on economic and political matters.

But this does not mean that everything should remain unchanged wherever perestroika has been stalled, where there have been no positive changes for a long time. In such cases the question of strengthening the leadership of a Party organisation should be decided without delay, in an open and democratic way.

Concern about the role of working people in perestroika has been voiced ever more often of late. A great deal of justifiable remarks and proposals, also regarding questions of representation in the Supreme bodies of authority and in elective Party bodies were made at a recent meeting of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party with workers and collective farmers, members of central elective bodies of the Soviet Communist Party.

The conclusion is that the revolutionary spirit and creative potential of the working class should be wholly involved in the interests of perestroika.

Comrades, I would like to dwell on another matter of fundamental importance. It is socialism, the kind of society we have built, the direction we are taking. In other words, we return to the question which we have been discussing constantly — about the meaning and purpose of perestroika.

Some may say: is it time for theorising when vital practical questions are acute? But these questions are constantly discussed at meetings, in letters to the Central Committee, in the press, on television. Besides that, as Lenin stressed, if we do not get our bearings in general matters, we shall come up against them at every step.

It must be said that the forces which launched an all-out attack on the Party now try to entangle these matters. The purpose of these attacks on the Party as regards theory is apparent. It is to present the Party to the people as a "failure" in respect of theory.

But it is precisely the Party that rejected many outdated dogmas, it is the Party that advanced new theoretical notions which formed the kernel of perestroika.

Its concept emerged and took hold during the work of the Party and was enriched with new ideas and realities. We learn from our mistakes, we are taught at times painful but very instructive lessons. And this cannot be otherwise for this is a living, creative cause.

I must mention here the 27th Party Congress, the January and June plenums of the Central Committee of 1987, the documents for the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution, the 19th Party Conference, the March plenum and the latest plenum of the Central Committee. These were serious and important steps for the realisation of the essence and purpose of perestroika and of what we wish to achieve during the renewal of socialist society.

Socialism is one of the most powerful ideas that ever existed in the minds of men. Paradoxical as it may seem, it is in our country that it is said that the socialist idea is a result of intellectual fantasy, an anomaly which does not accord with human nature and, hence, is devoid of substance and a future.

But it is not these voices that reflect the opinion of communists, working people and accord with historical trends. The Soviet Communist Party sticks firmly to its principled stand — it adheres to socialist ideals, socialist principles, resolutely opposes dogmatism and upholds a creative approach to the theory of socialism.

Our people made the choice in October 1917 and despite deformations of socialism, of Lenin's concept of it that took place in the past, we

shall firmly advance on that road.

We say that perestroika means renewal but not dismantling of socialism. We say that perestroika is a revolutionary transformation, remedying deformations of socialism but not amounting to a restoration of capitalism. We say that perestroika is the revival of creative Marxism, the fresh realisation of Lenin's ideas, the assertion of new approaches and methods of work when the main thing — the creative potential of working people — is revived.

Resolving vital problems — food, housing, and other problems, implementing a radical economic reform, political renewal of our system, the renewal of inter-ethnic relations, we also give thought to the theoretical foundations of our work.

We seek to determine the strategic objectives of socialist development and ways of reaching them as soon as possible. This will also be served by preparations for the 28th Party Congress and work to draw up a programme for the Party action in the near future.

It is important to stress that this multifaceted work, in which both practical workers and scientists are taking part, involves not inventing the future but investigating how it grows out of our present activities.

Not only the ideological and other theoretical fundamentals of socialism but also the lessons of the path covered by our country are now the focus of an active debate and different points of view are being expressed about the past.

But sometimes a nihilistic attitude is demonstrated in past events. The October Revolution and the country's subsequent history is represented as a mistake, a tragic fortuity which disrupted the natural course of events and did not bring anything to the people other than suffering.

What should our attitude be to all this?

The Party's standpoint on this score has been formulated in documents devoted to the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution. We do not disavow our history, we remember it every day and see both the good and the bad in the past, giving their due to both.

But life flies by so rapidly that now we view many events and historical periods with different eyes, interpreting them more definitely and specifically and going further in the analysis of the sources and trends of our society's historical development.

The road travelled by us is an invaluable, unique experience which should be the subject of an in-depth and interested and yet impartial study and analysis.

We will be able to move forward only by being clearly aware of what hazards may lie in store for us and what should be done to avert them.

This confirms Lenin's well-known idea that as the new social system is born in torment, we shall have — not just once or twice but many times — to rectify serious blunders and re-do everything from scratch. This will only be possible by shaking off the prejudice of both outdated dogmas and stillborn ideas.

The issue of new approaches to socialism and a new vision of its principal characteristics has assumed fundamental significance during revolutionary perestroika.

What were we usually guided by?

Let us remember the basic principles of Lenin's concept. The public ownership of the main means of production, ensuring the rapid growth of productive forces, distribution according to one's work, and the overcoming of social and ethnic antagonisms. Working for oneself rather than an exploiter. Not only formal but also real socialisation and the real turning of working people into the masters of all socialised production. Enterprise, emulation and daring initiative coupled with planning understood as conscious proportionality. The development of the public economy as a system of civilised co-operatives. The cultural revolution understood not as the rejection of the old culture but as the absorption of all the riches of world culture.

The power of the Soviets (elected governing councils) as the power of the people. Irreconcilable struggle against red tape. Collectivism, the subordination of production development to the interests of man, and the satisfaction of popular requirements. A society oriented at socialist democracy, self-administration by the masses, at the cultural progress of the people, and the creation of conditions for the all-round development of the individual.

Do these principles retain their significance? By all means, they do. Moreover, perestroika is translating them into reality, since in the past they were often merely proclaimed.

At the same time it has now been discovered beyond doubt that these principles by themselves, and the criteria of socialism based on them, demand to be specified and upgraded with due regard for the development of many countries.

Practical reforms not only revealed the shortcomings, primitivism and even utopian elements of existing socialism, but also demonstrated that it is essential to take an utterly new approach to shaping its future. What is required is, as Lenin put it, overhauling our entire view of socialism.

The renunciation of the authoritarian bureaucracy's administer-by-command approach to socialism sets the task of not creating some new and "ideal model" but defining the distinctive features of socialism that stem from perestroika practices, that are not grafted onto reality artificially but grow out of it organically.

At the centre of the revamped socialist idea is man, as the supreme value, and the tasks of renewing socialism by way of establishing such socio-economic and political structures as a means directed towards man as the goal, structures that effectively turn the entire social system towards man.

In the economic field, the change of our view of socialism is in the development of various forms of exercising socialist ownership and the creation of new economic mechanism that efficiently organise and stimulate people's work.

Politically, as perestroika develops, the renovation of socialism is following the path of the all-round development of democracy, ensuring genuine people's power and creating a state committed to the rule of law.

The process of democratisation includes the creation of corresponding political and legal mechanisms on the one hand, and the development of the political culture of the masses, shaping of traditions of respect for law that call for the solution of all emerging problems within the framework of law and in accordance with an elaborated democratic procedure, on the other.

The outlines of a renewal political system that is emerging in the course of perestroika are already visible, specifically thanks to the activity of the First Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet.

The second stage of political reform is connected with elections and the new work of local governing councils which involve millions of working people.

The process of renewing socialism in the social sphere is becoming increasingly deep and substantive.

Ever since the start of perestroika, the formulation and implementation of social programmes have become a priority direction in policy. But we are just starting to pursue it in accordance with the needs of man and the principles of socialism. We are just at the beginning of the road.

Qualitative changes must be made. They organically tally with our notions of the present and future of socialist society and its revolutionary renewal along the tracks of perestroika.

All aspects of our life are affected by processes in the sphere of ethnic relations. Perestroika has brought into the forefront of public life a great many accumulated problems and contradictions in this sphere.

It is no accident that in several parts of our country ethnic conflicts have emerged and nation-

nal movements have appeared in defence of sovereignty, economic independence and culture.

Of course, phenomena that have neither ethnic, nor social roots often taken the form of inter-ethnic contradictions. They are largely due to outstanding social and economic problems, violations of elementary human rights and resistance of corrupted elements.

The disputes and clashes of opinions that seem to have found an integral expression in the Party's platform on the nationalities policy in present-day conditions are beginning to shape a new image of our Soviet federation that harmoniously combines the interests of national sovereignty and development and the common interests of the union of peoples of our country.

Inter-ethnic relations should be based within its framework on principles of democracy and equality, mutual respect and free development of peoples.

What are probably the most radical changes leading to the renewal of socialism are taking place in the sphere of ideology, culture and education.

Perestroika is opening up great prospects for the spiritual development of the individual and the society in which he lives, the elaboration of an attitude to work that matches present-day tasks, the growth of professionalism and competence, and the moral purification and betterment of society.

We must build a society in which every individual is convinced that his abilities, work, knowledge and best moral properties will find support and conditions for their realisation for the benefit of both the individual and society.

We cannot fail to note that many processes of renewing socialism are in fact processes characteristic of all civilisation and that they are taking place in different social contexts.

The need for resolving universal, global problems is beginning to play an ever greater role in mankind's life. Mankind is threatened with formidable dangers, the elimination of which depends on the unification of efforts.

The interests of mankind as a whole are objectively becoming a substantial reference point in the life of each nation and state, since saving life and civilisation are the condition and prerequisite for mankind's further development and the solution of specific problems of all peoples and states.

The new concept of socialism gradually takes shape along with the deepening of perestroika, in the interaction of practice and theory that is casting off dogmatic stereotypes.

The Party is in the vanguard of this process, displaying practical political as well as theoretical initiative.

It is apparent that the development of the theory of scientific socialism at a modern level and the elaboration of the entire range of related problems are becoming a priority task of our social science, especially in the run up to the 28th Party Congress.

In concluding my speech.

I wish you success in the common effort of perestroika, solution of the people's vital problems and renewal of our Party and our society. □

The Problem of COMPROMISE in Politics

as seen by Lenin in the first
post-revolutionary years
(1918-1921)

By Alexander Lebedev

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The Nationalities Policy of the CPSU in present-day conditions

Moscow September 26 TASS — Here follows the full text of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) platform on nationalities policy adopted by the CPSU Central Committee plenary meeting on September 20, 1989.

THE NATIONALITIES question in the Soviet Union has of late assumed exceptional urgency. The party is aware that solution of the relevant problems will be crucial for the fate of perestroika and the future of the country. Such a solution can and must be found only through the revolutionary renovation of Soviet society. The changes being effected at the current stage of the reform in the economic and political system of socialism in the USSR will be of key significance in that respect. The fundamental approaches to this task were outlined in the resolution of the 19th All-Union CPSU Conference "On relations between Soviet nationalities".

Following the first session of the Congress of USSR People's Deputies and the subsequent establishment of new union, republican and local bodies of power, a political mechanism is emerging which offers a framework for resolving urgent matters for the development of all the peoples of our country and ethnic relations. These matters are to be the special concern of the Soviet of Nationalities of the USSR Supreme Soviet and its commissions.

The CPSU considers it necessary to define here, as one of the key components of the general concept of perestroika, the party's present-day policy on the nationalities question, a policy which, with due account taken of Soviet and world experience, could ensure conditions for the free development of all the peoples in our country, and for the strengthening of their friendship and co-operation on the principles of combining the equality of nations and equality of individuals regardless of their nationality.

The platform offered is the result of an analysis and comparison of views as expressed by party committees, local government bodies, scholarly institutions, the public at large and various public movements, academics and the press. It is the result of taking into account the new ideas advanced by the Congress of USSR People's Deputies. It also reflects the opinions of Soviet people of different nationalities contained in letters received by the CPSU Central Committee.

The legacy we inherited

IN ORDER to understand the scale and significance of what has been done in the Soviet years, one must recall our points of departure. Over vast expanses, and particularly in ethnic regions, there was practically no industry, and whole sections of national culture, the more so, world culture, remained inaccessible to the popular masses. Many people were at the feudal and even the patriarchal-tribal stage of social development. Social inequality was compounded by oppression of ethnic minorities.

After the victory of the October Revolution, the Soviet government embarked upon a social-

list programme on the nationalities question, elaborated by the party. Lenin's ideas of national self-determination and international-type co-operation between the working people formed its core.

The formation of the USSR proceeded amidst a bitter political struggle. This struggle revealed different approaches to the future national and political structure of the country. It is to Lenin's credit that extremes were avoided at that time: a proposal for a confederation, that is, a structure that was not expected to unite the efforts and potentials of the young Soviet republics for common goals, and an "autonomisation" project, which reduced the independence of national and political formations to a minimum and was aimed actually at the formation of a highly centralised unitary state.

The union of republics was achieved on the basis of a Soviet federation, which enabled the peoples, on the one hand, to exercise their right to self-determination and to statehood, and, on the other, to use the advantages stemming from their joining forces, from joint development along the socialist path.

Many nations revived or for the first time proclaimed their own statehood, and various forms of national-territorial autonomy. The formation of the federal socialist state on the basis of the 1922 Treaty and the 1924 Constitution of the USSR made it possible to jointly carry out the industrialisation of the country and the socialist restructuring of the countryside with an orientation towards elimination of the backwardness of outlying regions, and evening out the economic development and material wellbeing of the peoples. An integral national economic complex took shape. The social structure of Soviet nations began to change qualitatively. The spiritual sphere produced conditions for the preservation and development of their national identity. Simultaneously, there were integration processes under way, arising both from economic requirements and the unity of goals and ideals, which objectively led to the formation of a new social entity — the Soviet people.

All this laid the groundwork for a gradual overcoming of former strife and mistrust, led to the formation of friendship among the peoples. Its strength and vitality manifested itself in full during the Great Patriotic War, when the Soviet people rose to defend the freedom and independence of their multinational motherland and together achieved victory over fascism.

In spite of all contradictions in subsequent development, the economic, social and spiritual progress of the peoples was steady. Immense productive forces were formed in all regions of the country. The republics produced their own working class, and scientific, technological and artistic communities. On the basis of co-operation and mechanisation, the countryside changed in profile. Educational standards rose steeply among all Soviet peoples. As a result of the industrial and agricultural development of the North, Siberia and the Far East, and the establishment of new industrial, scientific and cultural centres, the map of the country's nationalities has changed. There is no territory today where people of various nationalities don't live and work side by side. The demographic situation is now different and is characterised by a rapid growth in urban population.

These fundamental changes produced new realities which must be taken into account both in order to create conditions for further development of each national community and in order to harmonise relations between nationalities.

Hence the objective need for a radical renewal of the nationalities policy.

At the same time, problems of national development and those bearing on relations between nationalities, problems now confronted by the country, are deeply rooted in the past. They must be looked into and resolute action taken against all that is at variance with socialist ideals and principles.

The impetus given by the proletarian revolution to the nationalities policy has reverberated throughout our entire history. However, deformations of social development that began soon after Lenin's death had a baneful effect also on relations between nationalities.

The command system of administration, which needed absolutely centralised and uniform structures, began to increasingly ignore the demands of national development. The approach that prevailed was a departmental and indifferently bureaucratic one which could be felt everywhere — from the siting of productive forces to the problems of language, education and culture. Under the pretext of protecting the interests of the state, the independence of republics was limited, and the trend towards unitarism gained in strength. Gradually this eroded the delimitation of functions, laid down by the 1924 Constitution, between the union and its component republics, whose sovereignty became largely formal.

One of the serious causes of aggravation of national problems was mass repression, particularly the resettlement of whole peoples from their traditional places of residence to other republics and regions. This fate befell Kalmyks, Karachayevs, Balkarians, Chechen, Ingush, Crimean Tatars, Meskhetian Turks, Germans, Koreans, Greeks and Kurds. Many party and government leaders of republics, and ethnic intellectuals were without reason accused of nationalism and persecuted. All peoples without exception sustained tragic losses during the period of the personality cult.

Although the appropriate decisions were condemned and revoked after the 20th CPSU Congress, the consequences of such lawlessness were not removed in all cases. This problem remains, and makes itself felt to this day.

Many dramatic problems of today are engendered by the contradictions of the extensive industrial and economic development itself, by ignoring its social and ecological consequences. Much damage to ethnic awareness has been done by the prevalence of the sectoral principle of management and departmentalism associated with it, with the result that ethnic conditions and traditions, ecological consequence, and interests of the integrated development of territories were not always taken into consideration. The republican, territorial and regional bodies themselves for a long time permitted a policy of unbalanced development of their industrial potentials.

Present-day problems in relations between nationalities are largely connected with a failure to evaluate social processes. Typical of the entire world, the objective dichotomy between the development of nations and their drawing closer together, between their desire to be independent and the need to deepen integration, manifested itself in our multinational country as well. But it was not duly analysed or taken into account in politics.

The growth of national self-awareness aroused interest in the history of one's people, its cultural traditions and values. However, satisfaction of these requirements was blocked by

theories on the speedy rapprochement of nations, claims that the nationalities question has been solved once and for all, which in practice led to the belittlement of ethnic diversity and specific features of spiritual life.

The demographic, economic and social processes that have been under way over the past few decades have substantially changed the ratio in some regions between the indigenous and the newly-settled population, a fact which has raised fears for the preservation of ethnic identity. Also, the rapid artificial growth of the population created additional difficulties of a social nature, adversely affecting the ethnic profile of the working class. In other regions, with a high rate of natural population growth, jobs became scarce. All this also generated tensions between nationalities.

All peoples of the country, including the Russian people, suffered from the harm done by breaches of Lenin's nationalities policy principles. Today even Russia, which has been and remains the consolidating factor of our entire union, and has made a decisive contribution to overcoming the backwardness of ethnic outlying regions, is also confronted by many acute social, economic and ecological problems, problems of saving and reviving historical monuments, and preservation of the values of ethnic culture.

Indifference to national identity and the fact that many social issues were left unresolved echoed painfully in the people's consciousness and bred resentment, which was often taken advantage of to whip up tensions and fuel nationalist extremism. All this has made ethnic issues in some regions of the country explosive, and added the contradictions accumulated there to the ongoing process of perestroika.

Soviet society, which has embarked upon the path of radical reforms, is now scrutinising its past. The task is, while preserving all that is valuable, to redress all inequities, to inject fresh energy into the economic, political and spiritual life of every people of our country, to give scope for untrammelled national development. And at the same time, to augment and increase the international unity of socialist society, to consolidate the multinational Soviet state. Harmonisation of relations between nationalities on a new basis is one of the main goals of the nationalities policy of the party.

How, in this connection, are the strategic objectives and basic guidelines of the nationalities policy to be seen?

Socialism, among its other key characteristics, means equality of the peoples, each of which must have the real possibility to preserve its independence and identity, its language, culture and traditions. Today's most crucial task is to create efficient state, social and economic mechanisms to ensure the organic combination of national and international values and interests.

This goal is inseparable from the restructuring of economic, social and political relations and can be resolved only through democratisation of Soviet society and socialist self-management by the people. The following aspects of the nationalities policy come to the fore:

- Perfecting the Soviet federation, and filling it with real political and economic content;
- Extending the rights and possibilities of all kinds of ethnic autonomy;
- Providing equal rights to every people, satisfying the specific interests of each nationality;
- Creating conditions for the free development of ethnic languages and cultures;
- Consolidating guarantees that exclude the infringement of citizens' rights on ethnic grounds;
- Renovating all ideological, political, research and educational work in the sphere of national relations;
- Asserting mutual respect for historical traditions and national identity in ethnic relations taking into account the economic and spiritual interests of each people.

How to perfect the Soviet federation and make it a fully-fledged entity

SINCE April 1985, we have been carrying out reforms in the economy, politics and other spheres of social life. The entire course of the country's development has been suggesting the need for radical change in the Soviet federation.

The guarantee of the strength of our federation is the voluntary nature of the joining together of the Soviet republics in a federal state, in which each republic retains its sovereignty and independence, and takes part in the elaboration and adoption of common decisions. Of exceptional importance is the position of the Congress of USSR People's Deputies, which has advocated the restoration of Lenin's principle of ethnic self-determination in its true form, which must be ensured by proper democratic legal guarantees.

It is utterly wrong to allege that the peoples of the USSR have no right to self-determination and to reduce self-determination merely to secession thereby impoverishing this universal principle of the solution of the nationality problem. The entire Soviet and world experience points to the need to regard self-determination not only as a one-time act connected with the exercise of the right to secession. It is a complex and many-faceted process of asserting national dignity, strengthening political and economic independence and developing language and culture.

In the present conditions, the optimal expression of this principle is self-government, which ensures the maintenance of national originality and the right of each people to use the benefits of sovereignty and decide questions of its development independently. At the same time, self-government means a voluntary unification of the republics and national formations for the solution of tasks that are common to all.

Consistently upholding the principle of ethnic self-determination, the CPSU sees its primary political task in satisfying, through a reformed federation filled with new political and economic content, the diverse requirements of all Soviet nations so that each of them may enjoy broad opportunities to invigorate its economy and culture, while relying on our country's national economic complex, scientific and cultural potential. So that this policy may lead to the ethnic cohesion of the Soviet peoples, to the strengthening of the USSR.

The Soviet federation has a tremendous inherent potential and it is important to put it to full use.

One condition for stability and successful development of our federation is to establish an optimum relationship between the rights of union republics and the USSR as a whole. This brings to the fore several focal questions on which a co-ordinated decision should be made.

First. The main idea underlying the Soviet federation is expressed by the generally accepted formula: without a strong union there can be no strong republics, without strong republics there can be no strong union.

In this connection, we should clearly define the terms of reference and mutual obligations of the union and the republics.

The union must be vested with legislative powers necessary to determine the foundations of and develop the political and economic system, to ensure the country's defence and security, to pursue foreign policy, to co-ordinate and fulfil common tasks in the spheres of the economy, science and culture, to ensure and safeguard the rights of the individual, to effectively use the integration processes, and organise mutual assistance. The union must also have the powers necessary to ensure the dynamic and steady development of the country's national economic complex. The list of powers of the USSR should be exhaustive. We should proceed from the following considerations:

— The union republics must be given all the rights that conform to their status as sovereign

socialist states and members of the federation. They must be entitled to decide all state and social matters, except those they voluntarily delegate to the union.

— The union republic participates in solving issues which are within the union's terms of reference. Such participation is ensured by the representation of each union republic in the bodies of the union and by the establishment of special procedures for the elaboration and adoption of union-wide decisions.

— The union publishes fundamental legislations and laws of the USSR, which have equal power throughout the territory of the USSR and are specified in the legislations of the republics.

— Should a union law transcend the powers of the union, the republics will be within their rights to raise the question of its repeal, likewise a republican law must be revoked if it goes beyond the republic's terms of reference, or contradicts a union law.

— Supreme representative organs of authority of union republics can protest and suspend the operation of a union government's decrees and instructions on their territories if they violate the constitutional rights of a union republic.

— Within its framework, the federal law-based state must set up mechanisms and establish clear procedures for resolving differences that might arise between bodies of authority and administration of the USSR and republics, as well as between union republics and other state-national and national-territorial formations. This function could be fulfilled above all by the USSR Committee for Constitutional Compliance and if necessary by the USSR Supreme Soviet and the Congress of USSR People's Deputies.

— An important role in perfecting our federation and expanding the rights of the union and autonomous republics is played by their constitutions, which are to reflect the social, economic, cultural and other specificities of these republics and their historically developed traditions and which should not contradict the Constitution of the USSR.

Second. The economic implications of self-determination and sovereignty today find their expression in the republics' transition to cost-accounting and self-financing. This requires the following:

— The union republics pass laws on the use of their natural resources, which are based on the federal fundamentals of corresponding legislation. In so doing, they proceed from the fact that the land, its entrails, forests, water and other natural resources are the property of the union republic and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

— A precise definition of the rights and responsibility concerning the ownership and management of property requires the establishment of the social property status of industrial, transport, agricultural, trading, service and other enterprises. It should be determined which are the property of the whole union, which are the property of the republics (union or autonomous), which constitute communal or co-operative property and which are the property of public organisations of the workforce, joint-stock companies and other economic associations.

— Alongside the property of the union of the republics, there may be enterprises owned jointly by the union and the republic as well as other joint forms of property, such as property involving foreign capital. The right to use, own and manage this property or alienate it is determined on a contractual basis. The use and management of the property of two or several republics is regulated in the same manner.

— The republics are free to choose the economic methods and forms of management on their territory, taking into account the real level of socialisation of production, the structure of the productive forces, the principles of economic efficiency and social justice and the need for the

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full employment of the population.

— The conditions of economic exchange between enterprises and organisations and between the republics within the framework of the development of a national market should be established on a contractual basis. The republics are free to choose the form of cost-accounting they like. It is advisable to examine the possibility of using several such forms, corresponding to the specific features of the union republics and differing from one another to the extent of their economic independence. The nature of forms of contribution to the national budget and mutual accounts should be determined in accordance with these differences.

— There should be a system of economic levers and incentives throughout the country to make it possible for the government of the USSR to carry out, on the basis of the effective use of the means from the state budget and jointly with the union republics, a purposeful line towards overcoming the backwardness of individual regions in economic development for some objective reasons and to create a national fund for helping regions hit by natural disasters or ecological catastrophes and assist in the development of new territories and for developing unused lands.

— The strengthening of economic independence of the republics, growth in their economic potential and well-being are inseparable from the process of further specialisation, economic integration, full use of the benefits of a single market and build-up of a common scientific and technological potential.

— A major task of the union bodies is to assist the republics in pooling efforts and resources, on a bilateral and multilateral basis, for the implementation of joint projects and in creating inter-republican commissions for economic, scientific, technological and cultural co-operation.

Third. The question of citizenship is closely linked with a republic's sovereignty. The principles of socialist federalism requires recognition of the fact that each union republic has its citizenship, which applies to all its residents. A citizen of a union republic is concurrently a citizen of the USSR. Any privileges for one group of Soviet people or infringement of the rights of another on grounds of nationality, religion, language, term of residence or on other grounds violating human rights are inadmissible.

Fourth. When entering the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the republics entrusted the central bodies with the implementation of the main tasks of the country's foreign policy. At the same time, they retain the right, inherent in sovereignty, to maintain relations with foreign states and international organisations.

We should implement as soon as possible the constitutional provision requiring that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics establish a general procedure for and co-ordinate the union republics' foreign policy and foreign economic activities, including the sending by the republics of their delegations and permanent representatives to the states with which they maintain economic and cultural ties. The republics' relations with foreign countries must not run counter to the interests of the federation as a whole.

Fifth. One of the main aims of the republics' unification within the union is to ensure the country's security and safeguard the peaceful work of the Soviet people. The republics should make their contribution to the union bodies' effort in solving these tasks. The armed forces of the USSR are formed on a multinational basis, all citizens regardless of their nationality must perform military service in accordance with federal legislation. The union bodies have the right, upon agreement with republic authorities, to build defence projects on the territory of the republics (airfields, training centres, testing rounds, etc.) and to use them.

Sixth. The restructuring of the Soviet federation raises the question of the status and activi-

ties of public organisations, which have a great role to play in the political system of the USSR.

The on-going process of democratisation in the country requires that the republican and union public organisations have the right to choose on their own the form of relations between themselves.

With regard to the party this problem acquires great political importance. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union emerged as an organisation uniting people committed to the same causes. It unites progressive representatives of the working class, all working people regardless of their nationality. Thanks to its international character, the party has been able to become a rallying and guiding force in society's development along the socialist path.

The CPSU emphatically condemns every manifestation of national seclusion, parochialism, corporatism and departmentalism. It is and will be an international party in composition, an ideologically and organisationally united party committed to the principles of democratic centralism, and have a common programme and common rules. The CPSU is opposed in principle to the idea of federalism in forming the structure of the party. All communists today should consider it their duty to prevent any division along ethnic lines in the party, at industrial and other enterprises or in public organisations, to fight against manifestations of nationalism and chauvinism, above all on the national scene. Nationalistic and chauvinistic attitudes and judgements are incompatible with membership of the CPSU.

At the same time, the need to create political and economic conditions for genuine federalism requires new attitudes to the development of the party. While preserving the present structure of the communist parties of the union republics, we should strengthen their independence. Granting the communist parties of the republics the right to decide all the main questions of party life themselves — organisational, structural, personnel, financial and other matters — and adopt, within the limits of the party programme and the party rules, their own political documents, reflecting their specific national requirements and the conditions of work for communists would help to achieve this.

Consideration of the national factor and an organic blend of national and international values and interests should become an inalienable element of all party work. It is expedient to set up a commission of the CPSU Central Committee for questions of the nationalities policy. Similar commissions could be created by the Central Committees of the communist parties of the union republics and, if necessary, by the territorial and regional committees of the party.

Seventh. The restructuring of the Soviet federation requires a solution to the problem of the state and legal status of the Russian Federation.

At the present time the implementation of a number of managerial functions in this republic is still entrusted to the all-union bodies. This has a negative effect on the interests of the Russian Federation and the union and often leads to overlapping and foot-dragging in tackling urgent problems.

There is a need to discuss the question of creating in the Russian Federation additional bodies of republican government, including administrative, economic, ideological, cultural, scientific and others.

Besides creating republican state bodies, we should discuss the possibility of co-ordinating the efforts of party organisations functioning on the territory of the Russian Federation through regularly holding Russian conferences of the CPSU, which will decide fundamental matters concerning the activities of the communists in the republic, and also creating within the structure of the Central Committee of the CPSU a bureau (secretariat) of the Central Committee for direct, effective guidance of the party organisations of the Russian Federation. The other public organisations could follow suit.

The Russian Federation is the biggest multi-ethnic Soviet republic, composed of 31 autonomous formations. In this context, the proposal to create a bicameral Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation to ensure better representation and consideration of the interests of the peoples of this republic deserves attention.

The size of the territory, scale of production, the population and other factors require in the future the transition of the Russian Federation to the management of vast regions and the creation there of appropriate bodies.

Eighth. What are the possible ways of making changes in the Soviet federation?

One of the possibilities being discussed now is drafting and signing a new union treaty to replace the 1922 Treaty on the Creation of the USSR and also drafting a new declaration on the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

As for a new treaty, the constitution of the Soviet federative state is actually a treaty, because it sets out the main rights and mutual obligations of the union and constituent republics. The 1922 Treaty is an open one and has retained its legal force to date.

The new declaration, as an organic part of the Constitution of the USSR, could become the fundamental political document, which will make it possible to codify measures towards the renewal of Soviet federalism and handle the problems that may arise.

Enhance the role and legal status of autonomous structures

A REHABILITATION in full measure, of the legitimate rights and interests of the peoples living in autonomous republics, regions and areas is an integral part of the restructuring of the Soviet federation and at the same time a separate issue of great political significance.

The dissimilar forms of national self-determination have reflected the fact of life that when the union was shaped, different nations were at different social and economic development levels, their populations varied greatly in number, far from all of them had passed the phases of national consolidation and had developed their own statehood or were prepared to develop it.

Many of these disparities have been overcome by now. Even so, the autonomous structures are still short of sufficient and realistic capabilities to meet their own national needs, feeling the strains of pressure from government departments and of petty tutelage by national, republican, territorial and regional authorities.

In this connection, it would be expedient to:

— Accelerate the renewal of constitutional and other legislative acts on the autonomous republics and autonomous regions and areas.

— Substantially broaden the jurisdiction of the autonomous republics, taking into account their legal status as Soviet socialist states. The autonomous republics should have the right to decide all questions of administrative-territorial division on their territories, environmental protection, the development of their cultures and languages and conservation of historical monuments.

— Strengthen economic independence of the autonomous republics by making them self-supporting and self-financing, and by defining how enterprises and amalgamations under union and republican jurisdiction shall contribute to the budgets of the autonomous republics.

— Vest the bodies of power of the autonomous republics with the right to lodge protests against acts passed by the bodies of administration of the USSR and of the union republics, if those acts contradict the constitutional jurisdiction of the USSR or the union republic concerned.

— Enhance the legal status of the autonomous regions and areas by giving them the right to initiate legislation in the supreme bodies of state power of the USSR and the union republics, as well as the right to be represented not only in the Supreme Soviet of the USSR but also in the

supreme soviets of the union republics and the Soviets of People's Deputies of the respective territories and regions. Resolve that the bodies of power of an autonomous area may appeal to the ministries and government departments of the USSR and to the bodies of administration of the union republic directly, and also make it a rule that resolutions by an area Soviet of People's Deputies may be repealed only by the Supreme Soviet of a union republic. Ensure that the territory of an autonomous region or area cannot be changed without its consent.

— Consider the possibility of and the procedure for transition of the autonomous regions of the Russian Federation, should their people desire to do so, to the jurisdiction of the bodies of state power and administration of the Russian Federation.

— Always take into account the relationship not only between national structures within the union but also between the nations, nationalities and ethnic groups in the republics and regions.

— Ensure all the rights and conditions for preservation of ethnic traditions, development of the cultures and languages of the peoples living outside their national boundaries or having no national structures of their own within the USSR, and their representation in the bodies of power. Drawing on the accumulated experience, encourage the budding formation of ethnic cultural centres, societies and communities. These could work under the guidance and with the help of the respective Soviets of People's Deputies and have their spokesmen at these soviets.

— By a consent of the Supreme Soviets of the republics and the territorial and regional Soviets of People's Deputies, national districts and rural and village Soviets may be established in places densely populated by ethnic groups which have no national structure of their own, seal legislatively the right of such ethnic groups and communities to self-government. Envisage the possibility of creating all-union state-public bodies to represent nationalities that have no territorial autonomy.

— To promote contacts between minorities and citizens of other states, with whom they are linked through their common ethnic origin or cultural heritage, legislatively provide for the right of ethnic cultural centres and public organisations to maintain cultural links with similar cultural and educational organisations of these states, both through the Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries and directly.

The CPSU shares public concern over the situation of small ethnic groups of the North, Siberia and the Far East. Industrial development of the territories where they reside has proceeded without due consideration for their way of life and the social and ecological conse-

quences. These peoples are in need of special protection and help from the state.

The Soviets of People's Deputies on the aforesaid territories should be granted the exclusive right to their economic development, that is, to hunting grounds, pastures, inland water reservoirs, coastal waters, forests, and to the establishment of game preserves in order to rehabilitate and preserve the habitat of the peoples. To call soon a congress of representatives of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East and to set up an association to represent their interests at all levels of government.

All other small nations in our country also require just as much concern and care.

On ethnic cultures and languages

CULTURAL policies, in which a merger of ethnic and inter-ethnic aspects acquires a special importance, shall be elevated to an entirely new level corresponding to the current phase of socialist society's development.

The CPSU proceeds from the recognition of the distinctive nature and unique value of ethnic cultures. This originality shall be ensured by an appropriate legislative framework to rule out any discrimination and disrespect.

While strongly condemning any forms of infringement on ethnic cultures, the party sees its mission in ensuring a free development of cultural pursuits for all peoples of the USSR. The forms of cultural development shall be determined independently by each ethnic group without any restrictions and limitations. Similar democratic conditions shall be provided for the encouragement of cultural co-operation country-wide and internationally.

Questions of the ethnic language policy in the USSR acquire a special importance. Its main principles were and are free development and equality of all languages and a free choice of the medium of instruction. At the same time, there is a need to legislatively regulate these issues. Whether the language of the nation which has given the union or autonomous republic concerned its name is to be made the state language shall remain within the jurisdiction of the republics. The status of the state language should not lead to language discrimination, it implies the expansion of its social and cultural functions, resolution of material, technical, personnel, educational and other matters essential to this, and encouragement and help for other nations trying to learn that language.

Historically, Russian has always been the common language of the peoples of the USSR. Therefore, it is expedient in all respects to encourage non-Russian ethnic groups to study Russian and Russians to study ethnic languages. It would be in the interest of all Soviet peoples if the Russian language were legally made an official language used throughout the territory of the country and functioning on an equal basis with the official languages of the republics.

It is important to encourage the public and the state to show more concern about preserving and developing the languages of small nations, as they are most fragile values.

All these questions might find their expression in a special law of the USSR on free and equal use of the languages of the peoples of the USSR, which might be passed after nationwide debate.

The nationalities question and the rights of citizens

TO PUT into effect fully and consistently the constitutional principle of citizens' equality, without distinction of race, religion or nationality, is a major task in strengthening co-operation between the Soviet peoples and simultaneously building a socialist law-based state.

Any attempts at infringing upon the rights of citizens on grounds of nationality should be considered to be inadmissible and at variance with the principles of Soviet statehood.

Soviet citizens should feel at home in any part of the country — that is how one can describe the supreme and ultimate goal of all the work to

harmonise inter-ethnic relations.

In this connection, the following, among other things, is advisable:

— To pass a law on guarantees of the rights of citizens of the USSR residing outside their national structures or belonging to ethnic groups having no such structures on Soviet territory. To have similar laws in the union and autonomous republics.

— To guarantee the right to study at school through the medium of one's mother tongue and to use it in public life, to keep up and develop the national traditions and to protect the habitat.

— To provide legal guarantees for the judicial protection of the Soviet citizen's honour and dignity as a member of any ethnic group. Our legal arsenal should include the duty to make up for moral and material damage caused by insult to a person's ethnic origin or by an attack on a person's pride of ethnic descent, actions aimed at fanning ethnic strife should be prevented and cut short as stipulated by Soviet laws.

— To define legal conditions under which nationalistic or chauvinistic organisations and groups must be dissolved and banned.

— Conflicts that have emerged for various reasons in ethnic relations require an especially careful and tactful approach and must be tackled democratically on the basis of the constitution and other laws, publicly and strictly with the participation of representatives of all parties concerned. The same attitude should be assumed in tackling the problems relating to the conflict about Nagorno-Karabakh.

— To take all measures to resolve the problem of the Crimean Tatars, ethnic Germans, Greeks, Kurds, Koreans, Meskhetian Turks and other Soviet nationalities. Questions of this kind should be decided with due consideration for the interests of all nations involved in this situation, existing realities and likely implications for the people.

— The events in a number of republics and regions have brought to the forefront the question of guarantees of people's security, respect for their civil rights, law and order and confidence in their future.

— A legislative act is needed to ensure the full political rehabilitation of the peoples who were subjected to repression and deportation, and to create guarantees that nothing of the kind will ever happen again. This should be done for the sake of the truth of history and justice, for the sake of our moral ideals.

The Commission for the Central Committee's Politburo for Political Rehabilitation should specially examine questions connected with accusations of so-called 'national-deviationism', assess them and clear the names of those party and government leaders who were politically blackguarded and subjected to repression for that reason.

Personnel policy should be pursued with due observance of the constitutional guarantees and rights of Soviet citizens. It is essential to work to ensure that all peoples inhabiting the country, each of its republics, are represented in bodies of power, administration, courts and the procurator's office, in the management of economic, social and cultural institutions and public organisations, naturally, with due account taken of the business ability and professional qualities of persons involved, to expand their participation in USSR state and public bodies.

In view of the possibility of the current transition to the multi-candidate system of deputies' nomination and election leading to the loss or narrowing of the representation of some ethnic groups in the republican bodies of power, thought should be given to developing a special mechanism capable of offsetting such phenomena. This could be achieved by creating a second chamber in the Supreme Soviets of the union and autonomous republics or councils of representatives of ethnic groups living in the republics

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PERESTROIKA

What's new in legislation

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in the Supreme Soviets of these republics and granting them the right to initiate legislation.

The resolution of the 19th Party Conference "On relations between Soviet nationalities" recommended that the question of creating, alongside the Soviet of Nationalities of the USSR Supreme Soviet and its commissions, a state body for nationalities and ethnic relations should be discussed. A special division within the government of the USSR might be set up for this purpose.

The ideological and theoretical aspect of nationalities question

POINTING out the principled importance of the development of the Soviet federation, enhancement of the role of ethnic autonomy, and solutions to the urgent economic and social problems of all peoples inhabiting the country, the party deems it necessary to energetically revive ideological and theoretical work in this sphere.

Friendship between the nations, which was born of the October Revolution and withstood the test of the Great Patriotic War, was a vital cause to many generations of Soviet people, and this served as a major guarantee of the normal development of inter-ethnic relations in the country. Everything should be done to prevent the seeds of ethnic strife, which have lately been planted in the social medium, for sprouting in the future and ruining the lives of our children and grandchildren. Internationalist and patriotic education of young people should become a priority for the party, the Soviets, trade unions, work collectives, the Komsomol, the family and the schools.

What is needed is a radically change the very methods and content of work to inculcate in people the ideas of internationalism. High-flown phrases on unity, detached from reality, have long proved ineffective, as have lectures, talks and articles in the press not backed with convincing arguments. The new political thinking, which does not accept dogmatism, is needed here, too. It is essential to proceed from the premise that internationalism is not a denial of the right to things ethnic, but, on the contrary, increased attention for the ethnic interests of the

peoples and simultaneously the protection of values common to all mankind, and consideration of the tendencies towards integration gaining momentum all over the world. It is important that internationalism is perceived as one's own want realised, not as something forced on one from outside.

The noble humanitarian meaning of internationalism lies in that it is irreconcilable with nationalism and chauvinism. As recent events have shown, there are nationalistic, chauvinistic and extremist elements within society, which, cashing in on economic and social difficulties, deliberately aggravate the situation in a number of regions of the country, fanning ethnic controversies, which has led to loss of life, the flight of refugees, great material losses and might have unpredictable consequences. Irresponsible politickers, a type of ethnic self-seeker, speculating on the ideas and slogans of renewal and passing narrow group interests off as ethnic, have reared their heads.

Such actions should be resolutely rebuffed. Anarchy and violence must not be substituted for freedom. It would be disastrous for our peoples to lose the values uniting them. We cannot put up either with those who have taken the criminal road, or those who assist them in that.

It is essential to draw a clear-cut dividing-line between the growth of ethnic awareness and nationalism. Countering any manifestations of nationalism, it is important to be considerate of, and responsive to, all the legitimate demands and aspirations of an ethnic nature.

There is a need to re-think the role and place of religion in ethnic relations and its influence on ethnic awareness. Dividing people, let alone inciting ethnic strife on religious grounds, is impermissible.

What is needed above all is the whole truth about the real processes of development of inter-ethnic relations in the USSR, about the causes for the emergence of friction in ethnic affairs. There should be no 'blank spaces' remaining here, either. All this is necessary for building confidence and mutual understanding. In those instances where there are disputes and doubts, one should not spare efforts to establish the truth on a collective basis.

The mass media has to play a special role in pursuing the party's nationalities policy. Hence the growing responsibility of communists employed on radio and television and in the central and local press. It is only deep respect for the ethnic pride of every people and, at the same time, adherence to principle and truthfulness in assessing events taking place that can help set people's minds at rest and settle conflicts.

The party's policy on nationalities requires a new attitude to organising comprehensive theoretical and ethnic-sociological research into objective processes of development of nationalities and ethnic relations in the country, ridding theory and practice of dogmatism and stereotypes, using the world's experience in tackling the nationalities issue and working out scientifically sound recommendations. To this end, we must broaden research and information facilities, discuss ways to set up a research centre for the study of ethnic relations, and take some other measures.

The experience of both the world and this country shows that the nationalities question has always had specific historical content. There are no recipes for its solution in all cases, at every stage in socialist development, in every region of the country, nor can there be any. The nationalities policy means constant creativity, an ability to respond promptly to problems arising in the sphere of inter-ethnic relations, to find effective mechanisms for settling conflicts and to take into consideration the real dialectics of vital processes.

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THE above are the proposals of the CPSU on improving inter-ethnic relations in the USSR, renewing the nationalities policy. Their examination by the Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the adoption on this political basis of the necessary legislative acts will impart a new quality to the Soviet federative state and ensure conditions for the free development of all nations and nationalities of the USSR, for their further drawing together and for the promotion of friendship, mutual assistance and co-operation between them. □

Cuts in Soviet Armed Forces to save 30 billion roubles

PROJECTED cuts in Soviet arms and armed forces will save the country some 30 billion roubles, Army General Anatoli Shabanov, Deputy Defence Minister for Armaments, told Tass on September 28.

In an interview dealing with the conversion of

defence industries and military hardware to meet civilian purposes, he predicted that if the process continues under favourable international conditions, the share of defence spending in the national income will decrease by an even greater margin by 1995.

Currently, civilian products account for 40 per cent of the output of defence factories.

"Thanks to continued diversification, that is partial conversion, the share is to top 46 per cent in 1990 and 60 per cent in 1995. This is going to do a lot towards balancing the domestic market," General Shabanov said.

Work is underway to completely convert three defence factories, which will make it possible to try out different conversion methods, he disclosed.

Apart from financial and material resources released as a result of the reduction of the armed forces and defence spending, the national economy will also receive substantial amounts of equipment.

"This will probably involve the handing over in 1989 and 1990 of over 45,000 lorries and chassis, crawler prime movers, transporters, engineering equipment, radio and telephone facilities, refuelling systems and fuel tank trucks," the general said.

He added that some categories of aircraft and ancillary naval ships will also be put to civilian use.

This year alone, Shabanov said, the army will transfer motor vehicles, equipment, materials and other property worth up to 500 million roubles in wholesale prices to the state supply agency. The armed forces will also make available nearly ten million roubles worth of fuel and lubricants.

Visit of Mikhail Gorbachev to INDIA

November 18-20, 1988

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Eduard Shevardnadze's statement at the United Nations General Assembly

NEW YORK September 26, TASS. Here follows the full text of the statement made by Eduard Shevardnadze, member of the Politburo of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Central Committee and Foreign Minister of the USSR, at the 44th Session of the United Nations General Assembly:

Mr President.

Distinguished delegates.

The task I have as head of the Soviet Union's delegation to the 44th Session of the United Nations General Assembly has been substantially facilitated by two fundamental statements made by Mikhail Gorbachev concerning the place and role of the United Nations in building new international relations at this crucial stage in world development – a time when it is moving out of the cold war into a period of peace in its development and asserting a new political order which rests on a comprehensive approach to security.

The profound analytical report of Mr Perez de Cuellar on the activities of this organisation over the past year impresses us with its convincing evidence of the United Nations' expanding mission as a global peacemaker.

Addressing the assembly, its new President, the representative of Nigeria Mr Garba, also spoke of that. The heads of many delegations have put forth wide-ranging and unorthodox concepts at this session. Yesterday we listened with close attention to the speech by President George Bush of the United States of America, which, in our view, contained a number of interesting ideas.

As always during these days of the General Assembly's regular session, representatives of the world community together have been recreating a panorama of the past year in the life of mankind.

Its overriding idea is peace and security. Its ideal composition is a harmony of universal human values and national interests.

In contributing our own national segment to this grand mural, each of us, I am sure, wants it to become a part of an organic and inseparable whole. Unfortunately, in some places the overall composition is still ruptured by gaps that break its integrity.

Over the past twelve months we have seen a rather contradictory picture of the state of the world.

Of course, the central concept is still the same and the theme, a product of mankind's thought and suffering, as we have been appropriately reminded by the fiftieth anniversary of the outbreak of the World War II, has not changed: it is the journey of our common Ark to a new shore and our shared desire to chart its course so as to avoid a storm that would destroy it.

Nevertheless, there have been some new developments which give rise to concern. It is not just that the ship of our world has not yet cleared the dangerous straits, it is coming up against new threats that could give it a critical lurch.

The 20th Century has released the tremendous energy of nations and peoples, which has

become a major factor in the development of universal civilisation. It is capable of, and has been working miracles by extricating entire national communities from backwardness and poverty in what is historically an amazingly short time. It is adding to the mosaic of the world more and more bright and wholesome elements of progress and prosperity.

However, the same national energy, assuming the exaggerated forms of egotism and self-interest, often tends to produce aggression and expansion, a quest for one's own wellbeing at the expense of others.

This poses the problem of the self-defence of nations, the problem of their physical survival and of preserving their unique historical and cultural identities. Action provokes counteraction, which assumes highly ambivalent forms. Centrifugal tendencies prevail over centripetal ones, thus upsetting the balance of world relationships which are so hard to build.

So, instead of traditional international issues, this makes us focus on domestic and inter-ethnic conflicts. It has now become perfectly clear that internal strife in some countries extends the process of their destabilisation to vast areas, and that regional upheavals shake up the whole world. Lebanon is a case in point. It is often much easier to resolve the external issues in a settlement than work out its internal conditions, as may be clearly seen in Afghanistan and Cambodia.

Today the notion of "within the country" is often relevant to that of "outside". The trouble is, however, that those who form part of the world and yearn for a better life fail to see, behind mountain ridges, jungles, dunes and other features of their national landscapes, threats to their own existence which could objectively result from their possible isolation.

Equally, those who want to prosper at the expense of others do not see that their own existence is also threatened.

This makes us raise the question of the responsibility of a part vis-a-vis the whole, and of nations vis-a-vis mankind.

This places on our agenda the problem of harmonising universal and national interests.

Some clarifications and explanations are in order here.

The supremacy of universal human values and the observance of the universal rules of the world community are the imperatives of our times. The objective requirements of the age we live in, its trends, character and circumstances leave mankind no other choice but to reject the traditional polarisation.

The axiom underlies both the concept and the practical policies of new thinking.

Of course, it cannot resolve the existing contradictions overnight. But, for a start, it can alleviate them.

Speaking of the primacy of universal human values, we also imply a mature readiness of nations to accept it.

Where that maturity has not yet been attained and where the national idea is being opposed to the common interest, domestic conflicts directly complement and impel global destructive processes.

Now let me underscore this: freedom of choice continued to crown the hierarchy of a nation's supreme values. Every nation is free to choose the ways and means of its own development – but to do so in a responsible manner. It must not lock itself in the dark rooms of national selfishness or ignore the interests of other

peoples and of the entire community of nations. Freedom does not mean irresponsibility towards others, for, in the final analysis, it is irresponsibility toward oneself.

The time has come finally to realise that not all means are good for attaining even the most noble ends.

The international community has become aware of the danger of narcobusiness and terrorism. It condemns and outlaws them.

We need equally determined action against any kind of violence, whatever the motives or excuses for it.

Violence by the state against its own people must be ruled out altogether. Violence on national, ethnic or religious grounds must no longer be tolerated.

To repeat, we advocate freedom of choice. However, we reject its interpretation as a license to use any means, to commit any violence or to shed blood.

Freedom must not be sought at the expense of others.

No support or sympathy should be extended to the so-called movements that allow actions humiliating other nations, or use terrorist, barbaric and inhuman methods in waging their struggle.

It is to be deplored that fifty years after World War II some politicians have begun to forget its lessons.

Let us remember that political and ideological differences did not prevent governments and nations from joining forces to defend universal human values from nazism and fascism.

The dividing line in that battle was drawn not by ideology, but by the rules of, and attitudes toward, morality. The Soviet Union, the United States, Great Britain and other countries and peoples found themselves in one camp and, fighting together, saved civilisation.

Fascism, which started the war, is the extreme and the ugliest form of nationalism. German nazism marched under the standards of revanchism. Now that the forces of revanchism are again becoming active and are seeking to revise and destroy the postwar realities in Europe, it is our duty to warn those who, willingly or unwillingly, encourage those forces.

The revanchist movement is dangerous and hostile to the march of peace to which President Bush referred here yesterday.

While expressing respect for healthy national movements, let me mention one modern concept of nationhood. It defines a nation as a collective personality endowed with certain rights quite similar to, and even identical with, individual human rights. But there are no rights without responsibilities – either for the individual or for the state.

The mission of the United Nations is to promote among the world public the idea of the interdependence of national aspirations and the common good of mankind, and to encourage nations to behave responsibly.

This fundamental position of the Soviet Union is clearly reflected in our bilateral contracts. Relations between the Soviet Union and the United States provide the best illustration of that.

I will permit myself to touch upon the US-Soviet dialogue only because I am convinced that its importance goes far beyond the frontiers of the two States.

In the view of the Soviet leadership, this is not some kind of privilege, but a clearly understood

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responsibility vis-a-vis the world community. Therefore my account of the results of our talks with President Bush and Secretary of State Baker is my report to you.

These talks have demonstrated the increasing awareness by both sides of the need to cooperate for the benefit of mankind and the growing confidence that such co-operation is possible.

Agreement to hold a meeting of the top leaders of the Soviet Union and the United States shows that we have moved quite far ahead in solving a number of major bilateral and international problems. Extraordinary efforts at the highest level will be needed to attain the goal of concluding the treaties.

I am referring above all to the preparation of the agreement on 50 per cent reductions in strategic offensive arms. We have proposed to the US side options for resolving the key issues in that agreement – the ABM Treaty and space, and long-range sea-launched cruise missiles. Our partners have accommodated us one mobile ICBMs. Positions on other outstanding problems have become closer to each other.

In our view, by the time the summit is held next year in late Spring/early Summer, we may have passed the last turn on the road toward a treaty reducing strategic offensive arms. The protocols to the 1974 and 1976 treaties on nuclear explosions could also be signed at the summit so that they could enter into force shortly.

We are confident that the summit will give a powerful impetus to the talks on major reductions in the armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe.

We welcome the proposal concerning chemical weapons put forward yesterday by President Bush. Generally consistent with the well-known initiatives of the Soviet leadership, it indicates to us that we share the desire to rid mankind of those barbaric weapons.

The Soviet Union is ready, together with the United States, to go further and assume mutual obligations prior to the conclusion of a multilateral convention:

— Cease the production of chemical weapons, as we have done already (I am referring also to binary weapons);

— On a bilateral basis, radically reduce or completely destroy Soviet and US chemical weapons, regarding it as a step toward the global destruction of chemical weapons;

— Renounce the use of chemical weapons under any circumstances;

— Institute rigorous verification of the cessation of production of chemical warfare agents.

I think that there is no need to say how beneficial that would be for the overall climate in the world.

In addition to the problems of security, the Soviet-American agenda encompasses the issues of humanitarian co-operation, regional topics and joint efforts in the fields of the environment and economic development, reflecting the process that brings together national and universal concerns.

More than ever before, we are clearly aware that Soviet-US relations today cannot be built outside the global context, divorced from the problems common to all mankind.

Our discussions in Washington and Wyoming have moved us ahead in our efforts to bridge the continuing gap between the attitudes to one's own and the common good. Much remains to be done, however, to alleviate the disparities of political objectives, for such disparities endanger all of us.

Let us examine the situation taking nuclear weapons as an example.

Why are they dangerous? Not only because of their sheer destructive power. They are unacceptable because they widen the chasm between national and universal interests. The equality of nations and the unity of the world become empty talk when someone's national selfishness is driven by the idea of nuclear supremacy over the

world, camouflaged as national security interests.

I would say that the world community has as yet no reason for complacency or euphoria. The nuclear threat has only been reduced by the Soviet-US treaty eliminating intermediate-and shorter-range missiles.

We believe that reliance on nuclear weapons does not serve anyone's national interests. It is also an obstacle in the way of more democratic international relations. Only the complete elimination of nuclear capabilities would help to attain real security.

The advocates of nuclear deterrence do not believe this will be possible in the foreseeable future. They respond with concepts of the so-called minimum nuclear deterrence. In our view, that is a step forward, if only a timid one, a step that can be made. But first we must define what we mean by minimum nuclear deterrence and what capabilities should be considered sufficient.

The Soviet Union proposes that those questions be discussed at a meeting of representatives of the nuclear powers and the states on whose territories nuclear weapons are stationed.

Of course, the persistence of the concepts of nuclear deterrence is due not only to the exaggerated emphasis on national rights and interests at the expense of obligations but also to the lack of trust. The problem should not be easily dismissed.

What is the way out of these vicious circles? It lies in asserting glasnost and openness and building a wide-ranging infrastructure of pervasive verification. If we do need to deter each other, let deterrence be transparent and verifiable.

To that end, the Soviet Union is proposing that all nuclear powers conclude multilateral agreements on measures to reduce the risk of outbreak of nuclear war. Detailed discussions to work out such an agreement could be held in consultations among the Permanent Members of the Security Council.

Also in this context we wish to raise once again the problem of the cessation and prohibition of nuclear tests.

Why are we still unable to put an end to them despite the express will of the overwhelming majority of nations? Because there are those who want to maintain their superiority at any cost.

Guided by its obligations to the world community, the Soviet Union has revised its nuclear testing programme by reducing the number and yield of explosions.

Let me point out, however, that the efforts of one state are not sufficient for a comprehensive solution to this problem. We see a number of possibilities here. First of all, the USSR is ready to reinstate its moratorium on all nuclear explosions any day and hour, if the United States reciprocates.

Secondly, it is time finally to end the procedural impasse at the conference on disarmament and start concrete discussions there on the problem of a complete test ban.

Thirdly, as one possible way toward such a ban, we are now considering the possibility of extending the 1963 treaty to cover underground nuclear explosions.

There is an urgent need for a verifiable cessation of the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes. We have declared that this year we will cease the production of enriched uranium, that in 1987 we closed down one reactor producing weapons-grade plutonium and that we plan to close down 1989 and 1990 a few more such reactors. By the year 2000 all the remaining reactors will have been shut down.

In addition, the Soviet Union is proposing that all nuclear powers should begin preparing to conclude an agreement on the cessation and prohibition of the production of such material. We believe that in verifying compliance with it the vast experience of applying IAEA safeguards could prove useful.

It would seem that even the way World War II

began ought to have made clear that weapons do not guarantee security – the more weapons there are, the greater the danger of aggression. And yet, for the forty-five post-war years security was sought in the arms race. It is only today that the need is being understood for a fundamentally different concept of security in Europe, a security that relies increasingly on political means and, only as insurance, on a necessary minimum of armaments.

The Vienna Accord heralded a new European situation, opening broad vistas for humanitarian cooperation and exchanges of people, ideas and information. It holds out the prospect that the European idea will assert itself on a foundation of trust and openness. But a groundwork has to be prepared for that by clearing the continent of excess quantities of arms.

That work has begun.

And, whenever the negotiators do not consign their responsibilities to the backrooms, whenever they sincerely want to strike a balance between their interests and those of their partners, progress is always achieved. One example is the Vienna talks between countries of the Warsaw Treaty and NATO on reducing armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe.

In response to our alliance's initiative the NATO countries have made meaningful proposals which substantially accommodate the positions of the Warsaw Treaty countries.

In parallel talks between the CSCE participating countries to develop a qualitatively new generation of confidence and security-building measures the Warsaw treaty member countries have proposed a far-reaching approach calling for a comprehensive set of confidence – and security-building measures, and extending them to air force and naval activities.

Going back to the topic of individual countries' obligations to the community, I feel it my duty to emphasise that unwillingness to engage in active talks on reducing naval forces is a sign of neglecting those obligations. Leaving naval forces outside the process of reducing armed forces and armaments would be harmful to universal security.

The problem of naval forces could be examined, for example, at special consultations to be attended by all states concerned, and, above all, by major naval powers. They would discuss mutual concerns in this sphere and exchange views on the mechanism and ultimate objectives of the future negotiations and on how to move towards them step by step.

The dialectic of developments in the European continent calls urgently for starting talks on tactical nuclear weapons. The situation does not appear to be deadlocked. Mutually acceptable solutions could be sought in an in-depth discussion of this whole set of issues between the USSR, the United States, Great Britain, France and the states where those weapons are stationed.

If NATO countries agree to start talks on tactical nuclear weapons, the USSR will respond by further unilateral cuts in its tactical nuclear missiles in Europe.

The problem of missile proliferation is also ripe for multilateral discussions. The number of countries that possess such weapons approaches twenty while the tendency toward its further geographical spread is still strong.

The approach to this issue could be two-fronted. Barriers could be put up which, on the one hand, would preclude the proliferation of combat missiles and associated technology across the globe, and, on the other, would not impinge on the legitimate interest of countries in gaining peaceful access to outer space.

No one in the world can as yet bid a farewell to arms. But we can abandon, once and for all – and do it now, the practice of unconstrained and uncontrolled international weapons transfers.

To that end the principles of glasnost and openness should be asserted here as well. The USSR reaffirms its willingness to participate in the establishment of a United Nations register of

sales and transfers of weapons, including work on its parameters.

The time has come when the idea of preventing war is being given material expression in relations between the armed forces of a number of countries. A new peace-making instrument is being shaped by the Soviet-US agreement on preventing dangerous military activities and a series of agreements with the United States, Great Britain, West Germany and France on the prevention of incidents on the high seas.

Along the same lines, the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China have agreed to start talks shortly on putting an end to their military stand-off.

The Soviet Union expresses the hope that other states, too, will engage in this process.

A civilised world is an open world. Breaking the seals on many secrets, the Soviet Union has revealed to the international community detailed data about all reductions in its armed forces and armaments, their strength, and the size of its military budget.

We reaffirm here the position of the Soviet Union: our ultimate goal is not to have a single Soviet soldier outside the country. But, speaking of equal responsibilities, let us roundly condemn the continuing encirclement of our country, and not only our's, with military bases.

The Soviet Union attaches fundamental importance to a transition from individual measures of confidence-building, openness and glasnost in international affairs to a global policy of openness which would become an integral part of comprehensive security and international peace. President Bush has proposed the idea of open skies. We like it. In welcoming and supporting this initiative, the Soviet Union calls for opening up the lands, the waters, and outer space. Let us have open lands, open seas, and open space. Only then shall we attain absolute transparency and the necessary level of confidence.

While we duly include in the records of foreign policy such accomplishments as the Geneva accords on Afghanistan, the process of granting independence to Namibia, the termination of hostilities on the Iran-Iraq front, and the constructive dynamics in the dialogue on the problem of Cambodia, we are not yet able to say that the positive trends have become irreversible.

Let us pay grateful tribute to this organisation's peace-keeping operations. Let us recognise their unique role that goes beyond simply localising conflicts and attains a qualitatively new level of ensuring stability of the world order.

But today's world order is a far broader category. Our time has firmly established economic security as one of its pillars.

The Soviet Union shares the justified concern about and supports measures to overcome the crisis situation in the world economy proposed at the Belgrade summit of the Non-Aligned Movement. A few continue to dictate to many the terms of their economic existence. Those who insist on diktat should understand that the perpetuation of the current situation is fraught with a catastrophe that would spare no one.

It would seem that the world of the rich has nothing to worry about since its economy is in good shape. It would also seem that the rich are beyond reproach since, ostensibly, their wealth breeds generosity – in 1988 the aggregate amount of the developed nations' assistance to the developing countries was 90 billion dollars. But in the same year, 1988, the developed nations received 50 billion dollars more from the developing world in debt servicing and interest payment. That was the largest flow of capital from the poor to the rich man's pocket in history.

Thus, the prosperity of the rich is achieved not without help from the poor. There is more to it, however, than this obvious injustice. Such disparities cannot forever keep testing the strength of the world economy and world politics.

Its health is also being undermined by the enormous cost of military production, which siphons vast materials and intellectual resources from the civilian sector. Now that there is a prospect of limiting the military-industrial complexes, the problem of conversion has to be addressed. This can only be done working together and relying on the experience of all states.

Before the eyes of just one generation the sphere of politics has linked up with environmental conservation to give mankind the science of political ecology. No one can master it alone, entangled in the fetters of narrow national interests.

Political ecology requires urgent planetary decisions at the highest political level and an internationalisation of national efforts through the United Nations, by consolidating its leading environmental branch, the appropriate agency of this organisation. And since we are speaking of a major component of international security, political ecology requires the involvement of the Security Council in solving problems and activating such tools as transparency and strict international monitoring.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to be held in 1992 will undoubtedly become a watershed in establishing universal co-operation and working out a code of civilised ecological behaviour. We call for holding this conference at the level of heads of state and government.

Defining for itself the main principles of the concept of ecological security, the USSR considers disarmament, the economy and ecology as an integral whole. While participating in implementing conservation strategies, the Soviet Union has programmes for speeding up the integration of its economy, on an equal and mutually beneficial basis, into the world economy, modern international division of labour and international exchanges in science and technology.

To that end we would like to participate actively in the work of international economic organisations and to establish contacts with the IMF and the World Bank, being convinced that our co-operation with them, as well as with GATT and FAO, will be useful for us and the community as a whole.

In building new international relations our foreign policy looks ahead to a positive evolution of today's world and to its stability. That orientation remains unchanged even in the face of certain changes which affect our immediate interests and the interests of the community to which we have the honour to belong.

Still, we are faithful to our avowed principles and continue to affirm that the nations' choice cannot and should not be overridden by force and that stability cannot be achieved by threatening its use, by interventions, blockades or other sanctions.

It is no secret that we were not enthusiastic about the Polish communists' election setback. Nor should it be a secret that we wish them to overcome the crisis. Nevertheless, we see nothing threatening in the fact that a coalition government has been formed in accordance with the will of the Polish people.

We are in no way prejudiced against that government. We wish it every success and are ready to co-operate with it.

Tolerance is the norm of civilised political behaviour. But if it is mandatory for us in our attitude towards the current government of Poland, why are others so intolerant as regards, say, Cuba? And if a non-communist prime minister is possible in a socialist country, why should the appearance of a communist as head of a Western government be perceived as heresy?

The days of traditional demarcation lines are numbered. Only one line remains, to be pursued by all of us together moving to a common goal.

It is not the expressions of popular will that threatens countries but rather political and ideological intolerance, chauvinism and the extre-

mist excesses of imperial or nationalist mentality. It is only when they engender violence and destabilise the life of countries and peoples that the machinery of legitimate defence must be activated.

However different are our ideas of preferable ways of social development, we also have an overriding understanding of our common responsibility for the future of mankind and for the survival of civilisation. We know that only together can we step back from the brink, because an isolated island of development and prosperity would inevitably sink in the ocean of backwardness and poverty, because peoples and nations cannot be well when mankind is sick.

Similarly, mankind cannot survive and avoid devastating consequences if individual nations deplete their resources of vitality in troubles and disputes with others.

There is but one way out of those fateful correlations. As we see it, it is for the world community to move consciously towards a harmony between universal and national principles.

It is difficult to attain. But it is possible.

It is possible because the collapse of the world is unthinkable.

It is possible because we all share a place where individual national efforts unite into a single energy field.

The United Nations is that place. It offers a forum for everybody to talk about one's own country and its links with the rest of the world. I will take this opportunity to say a few words about my country.

We are building a new model of society, a new model of relations among people and nations, a new model of socialism. As a great concept, socialism is by no means a spent force, indeed, it is revealing its humanistic potential in the bitter and often dramatic confrontation with the forces and vices that are organically alien to it.

We in our country are not just repainting the facade but rebuilding the entire structure, in which the rules of living together must and will be based on the supremacy of law, people's power, openness to the outside world, inter-ethnic harmony and friendship.

In every sphere of the common life of our state and our people – the national economy, the political system and the people's intellectual endeavour – rejection of the ossified relics of the past goes hand in hand with the enthusiasm of new construction. And even though, in the words of a poet, we may have a gloomy day or two, we are confident that perestroika, which began as a revolution of hopes, will keep those hopes alive.

Our people, the nation, will keep perestroika going, for it embodies the aspirations that they cherish.

Today, when some Cassandras hasten to make gloomy predictions, we come up with our own forecast. We want its historical optimism to be shared by all those who understand that the destinies of the world are inseparable from the future of our perestroika.

So we are saying to them: our determination to make it irreversible is matched by our belief in victory, a confidence grounded in the democratic institutions which are ready to assert their genuine and full authority.

We are moving along that path guided, among other things, by our awareness of the historic nature and magnitude of the goal which we must attain ourselves while not rejecting the support of the world community.

Believe me, we feel it not only during the tragic days of natural disasters and national misfortunes. It has been voiced in your statements at this assembly, it manifests itself every day in your compatriots' heartfelt gestures, in their deeds and actions. So I am asking you, the envoys of your governments and nations, to convey to them our warm gratitude for that.

I also thank you. □

Soviet Government submits five-bill package to Supreme Soviet

SOVIET Premier Nikolai Ryzhkov on October 2 presented five bills which, he said, should usher in a new phase in economic reform and set the stage for dramatically overhauling relations of production.

The package includes draft laws on property, on a single taxation system, and on socialist enterprises, as well as the draft fundamentals of federal and republican legislation on land and on leaseholding.

Proposing them to the Supreme Soviet, Ryzhkov said they take into account the present condition of society and its preparedness for legal norms that will radically change ways of building socialism, while not amounting to the renunciation of socialism in its truly human and democratic form.

Ryzhkov described the bill on property as central to the entire package. He said that in drawing it up, the government proceeded from the premise that it is possible to increase the motivation of enterprises and individuals only through the 'destatisation' of the economy and making it really mixed.

The bill formalises the diversity of forms of socialist property as well as individual property ruling out the exploitation of man by man. It offers equal rights and possibilities for developing different forms of property — state, co-operative and personal — and this should bring about appreciable gains in production efficiency.

Ryzhkov said that the bill envisages four kinds of public property — federal, federal-republican, republican and communal — and that it provides for the federal-republican ownership of land, the depths of the earth, woods, water and off-shore natural resources.

The union will retain the possibility of creating uniform standards for the use of land and

natural resources with due regard for the interests and requirements of the federation, while the constituent republics will get the right to own and manage natural resources on their own territories.

Describing the draft fundamentals of federal and republican legislation on land, Ryzhkov said land should remain public property which may not be sold or mortgaged. The draft gives elected local governing councils full powers to manage land. They are entitled to confiscate inefficiently used lands and turn them over to another user.

Interference by state and economic agencies in the use of land is prohibited. Land fees should become an important lever stimulating the rational use of land.

The bill on socialist enterprises proclaims the equality of all enterprises regardless of the form of property they represent, and increases the role of economic regulators — such as taxes, interest on loans and securities, and social, ecological and other factors — in relations between the state and the enterprises, Ryzhkov said.

The bill lifts restrictions on enterprises' rights to distribute and use their earnings, while also increasing their accountability. For example, it makes them fully answerable with their property for failures to meet contractual commitments. The property of bankrupt enterprises may be auctioned off.

Workers pay will have no limit and will hinge only on their enterprise's and their own performance. Interest paid on the enterprise's bonds and shares can form a tangible addition to their earnings.

Ryzhkov described the bill on a single national taxation system, which, he said, should stimulate economic activity, give firm guarantees to socialist enterprises and ensure an economically warranted and socially fair income redistri-

bution. He said the bill is a key element of economic reform.

The bill also envisages a profit tax consisting of two parts, one — a fixed 35 per cent of the profits — going straight to the federal budget and the other — to be determined by constituent republics — contributing to their budgets. The total amount of the deductions, however, may not exceed 60 per cent of the profits.

The bill also provides to introduce a special regulating tax on the growth of the wage fund. In the case of co-operative enterprises, including collective farms, taxes will be deducted from net earnings minus all production expenses.

Ryzhkov stressed the need to introduce a phased but drastic income tax reform, including uniform taxation principles for all categories of incomes, a single non-taxable minimum income, and transition to a mandatory declaration of incomes by the population.

The government's objective in this reform is to promote social justice rather than attracting any extra revenue, the premier stressed.

The draft fundamentals of legislation on leaseholding markedly simplify procedures for leasing enterprises and stipulate the right to collective ownership, including buy-outs. Leaseholder enterprises will use their own funds to form a stock of shares making every worker a co-owner of the enterprise.

Noting diverse forms of relating of leaseholding, Ryzhkov said that each constituent republic will adopt its own law on leaseholding, based on the basic principles of the submitted bill and on local conditions.

Ryzhkov concluded by saying the package is geared towards forging a 'new-look' socialist economy and developing market-oriented relations as long-term and stable factors for increasing production efficiency. □

Soviet Parliament discusses law on strikes

A DRAFT law on the settlement of collective labour disputes (conflicts), currently under discussion by the Supreme Soviet, is designed to protect workers' interests and create better conditions for dialogue with the management.

The deputies approved the main provisions of the draft in the first reading last summer. The document was then submitted for editing to the Parliament's standing bodies.

In presenting the draft to the deputies today, Nikolai Gritsenko, Chairman of the Standing Commission of the Council of the Union for Labour, Prices and Social Policy, stated that the bill proposes a five-day period for dispute to be studied by a conciliatory commission set up on a parity basis by the conflicting parties.

If both parties fail to reach agreement, they have the right to apply to labour arbitration which is to give a ruling within seven days. If the differences are not settled at this level, the work collective may resort to a strike as the ultimate measure.

Commenting on the draft, Gritsenko pointed out that it raises the level of responsibility of all managerial bodies and officials and will, therefore, strengthen production discipline.

Its application will help overcome impulsive

actions by work collectives, he believes.

Yuri Kalmykov, deputy chairman of another parliamentary committee, that deals with issues of legislation and law-and-order, drew attention to the importance of changes made to the text of the draft law on strikes.

The bill says that the interests of a work collective may be represented by any body (a trade union committee, a council of the work collective and so on), rather than by the trade union alone, as stipulated in the first version of the document.

The draft law describes as unlawful strikes connected with demands for the violent overthrow or change of the state and social system or demands leading to violations of ethnic and racial equality.

The document envisages material and juridical guarantees for workers who use legal means to resolve labour disputes. Only the Supreme Soviet of the USSR or of a union republic would have the right to put off the strike or suspend it for a period of up to two months.

Strikes are banned if they jeopardise the life or health of people. No strikes are allowed at railway and city public transport enterprises, in civil aviation, communications, power engineering, defence industries and state bodies.

At the proposal of the chairman of the sitting, the deputies put off the discussion of the draft

law until afternoon and started debates on the governments draft resolution on measures to ensure the normal functioning of the railway transport and key branches of the national economy. □

(Moscow, October 3)

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