

Mikhail Gorbachev's meeting with Mieczyslaw Rakowski

ON October 11 President Mikhail Gorbachev met visiting leader of the Polish United Workers' Party Mieczyslaw Rakowski.

In a friendly conversation the two leaders discussed a wide range of issues connected with the social, economic and political processes in the USSR and Poland, with the development of co-operation of the two fraternal parties, with the prospects for Soviet-Polish relations.

Rakowski spoke about the situation in Poland following elections to the National Assembly and the formation of a new government. The main national task now is to lead the country out of the protracted socio-economic crisis. The PUWP intends to co-operate with the government and other political forces in Poland in a responsible and constructive way.

The PUWP itself, Rakowski said, is entering a complex period. Keen discussions on its role in society in the conditions of democratic parliamentarism are unfolding.

Gorbachev dwelled on large-scale and multi-faceted work to implement political, economic and legal reforms. Special significance is currently attached to the activity of the USSR Supreme Soviet, which plans to adopt a number of vital constitutional laws.

"We attach great significance to Party restructuring. As part of the preparations for the 28th Congress, its structure should be radically rene-

wed and the style of work changed," Gorbachev said.

Gorbachev and Rakowski exchanged views on major problems of modern social development.

Another topic raised in the conversation was connected with the need to be guided consistently by national interests while opposing any manifestations of nationalism.

Both sides paid much attention to the prospects for Soviet-Polish relations. The two leaders stressed that these relations are unaffected by ups and downs in the political situation. They are based on the similar destinies and deep geostrategic interests of the Soviet Union and Poland in the framework of the Warsaw Treaty is one of the main constituents of peace and stability in Europe, they agreed.

Rakowski stressed the significance of Polish co-operation with the USSR for the national interests of Poles, Poland's security and its development.

"We," Gorbachev said, "will seek to pursue diverse and reciprocal ties with Poland in all fields. We firmly hold the view that our relations can fruitfully develop with mutual respect for the sovereignty, equality and choice, made by people of each country."

They also exchanged views on international policy. The conversation was held in an atmosphere of comradeship and mutual understanding. □

Peace association founded in Soviet Union

A NEW new non-governmental organisation — the Peace Association — has been founded in the Soviet Union.

"The idea to set up an organisation of this kind arose as a result of the processes of deideologisation of international relations and the growth in activity of public movements," Svetlana Savitskaya, First Deputy Chairperson of the Soviet Peace Fund, told a news conference in Moscow on October 12.

She said that the Peace Association had been the foundation for co-operation between Soviet organisations and organisations in other coun-

tries in line with the decision of the USSR Council of Ministers and is a non-governmental organisation.

The organisation's founders comprise more than ten Soviet public organisations including the Soviet Peace Fund, the Committee of Soviet Women, the Soviet Committee for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

Savitskaya stressed that the activity of the association will aim at establishing broad international co-operation to realise peacemaking, social and humanitarian projects.

The projects in question include the construction in the Soviet Union of homes for the aged and disabled persons, health rehabilitation centres and new hotels.

The association will participate in establishing a free enterprise zone in the Vyborg region, in Russia's north-west and provide advisory services to joint ventures and foreign firms and encourage the involvement of foreign currency in its turnover.

Chairman of the board of the association Alexander Kiselyov said that the association's initial capital amounted to 100 million roubles, 51 million roubles of which were donated by the Soviet Peace Fund.

The association's turnover, he said, was expected to reach 80 million to 100 million foreign currency roubles in 1990 and 1991.

Within the same period the association hoped to make profits amounting to three to five million foreign currency roubles. The sum will help implement the association's peacemaking and social programmes. □

Soviet-British business discussions end

DOCUMENTS identifying high priority trends in Soviet-British co-operation were signed on October 16, the closing day of the round conference of representatives of the two countries business communities.

The three-day unofficial talks were held in a candid atmosphere and touched upon ways of developing co-operation in many areas of mutual interest.

These included joint ventures, consortiums, free enterprise zones, Soviet enterprise modernisation, manager training, the development of non-polluting technologies, banking and crediting.

In his concluding statement, Nikolai Laverov, Chairman of the USSR State Committee for Science and Engineering, noted the great usefulness of informal meetings and singled out some of the more important points.

The Soviet side sought to make clear to their British colleagues the latest changes in the Soviet Union and the new regulatory enactments concerning economic activity in the country.

He stressed that the Soviet side viewed all forms of trade and economic collaboration with Great Britain as promising. He said, among other things, that favourable conditions for promoting mutually advantageous business relations were created by the defence industry conversion.

At the same time, Laverov pointed out that the present level of relations, above all that of trade, is not satisfactory and the sides have a long way to go before achieving sufficient mutual understanding.

At the present gathering, he said, no such understanding was evident.

The leader of the British delegation Bryan Corby said that he was leaving the Soviet Union much better informed as a result of the meeting. He called it a positive factor as "information exchange promotes interaction which, in turn, results in better understanding of each other."

The usefulness of these kind of conferences in the development of direct production and commercial contacts was noted by other representatives of British business quarters, too.

Despite differences in their assessments of Soviet conditions for the development of trade and economic relations, the two sides agreed that the round table discussion was a success and marked an important step towards better mutual understanding.

They stressed the need to shift to direct contacts between producers of the two countries concerning concrete co-operation projects. □

Shimon-Peres — USSR

SHIMON PERES, Israeli Deputy Premier, Finance Minister and Chairman of the Israel Labour Party, gave an interview to Israeli Radio dealing with his forthcoming trip to the USSR.

The Deputy Premier promised to use this chance for the development of Soviet-Israeli relations in all spheres.

Touching on general political questions, Peres pointed to the great role played now by the Soviet Union in a peaceful settlement of the Mid-East conflict and expressed support for the Egyptian proposal to hold Israeli-Palestinian talks in Cairo. □

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Economic situation remains complex Soviet Premier says

THE economic situation in the country remains complex, complicated and contradictory, Soviet Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov told Soviet TV viewers on October 15.

Soviet economic reforms began two years ago, Ryzhkov reminded the viewers saying that the reform's groundwork creates a good basis for further development of the Soviet economy.

The solution of social problems becomes an economic priority, he said.

Ryzhkov said he was optimistic about developments in the economy.

"I am convinced that the illness which is now plaguing the economy can be cured.

"We have everything to overcome the current difficulties."

The Soviet Prime Minister quoted figures to illustrate changes in the economy, in housing and social construction, in the first place. An average of 110 million square metres of floor space was built annually in the last five years, compared with 129 million in the current five-year plan, he said.

Twenty-three per cent more pre-school institutions, 20 per cent more hospitals and 41 per cent polyclinics more were being commissioned every year.

The Soviet people were allocated 6.5 million individual plots of land in the last four years, which is more than in all the years of Soviet power, Ryzhkov said.

Speaking about food shortages, Ryzhkov said that the Soviet Government until recently pursued a traditional way of tackling it by increasing agricultural production.

"However, there are certain limits to this. Moreover, this way requires a lot of spending.

"We have now embarked on another way. It consists in adequately processing, storing and transporting what has been produced. We can provide food for the people and at considerably lower costs and prices," he said.

It requires the solution of many organisational and technical problems. Military industries have been converted to help ease the shortage of necessary machines.

They will put out equipment for the agro-industrial complex. A total of 176 defence enterprises are now producing processing equipment, and there will be 233 such enterprises next year.

A total of 135 research institutes and design bureaux are involved in the effort.

The problem of supplying processing equipment for the agro-industrial complex can be solved by 1990-1991, Ryzhkov said.

"It will be the happiest day of my life when we

stop purchasing food abroad," the Prime Minister said.

The key task for the next five years is to ensure economic revival in the country, he emphasises. The primary aim is to maximally reduce current social tensions in society. This can be achieved through an increase in the production of consumer goods, by providing more services and generally improving living standards.

"Our second aim is to improve the financial situation. The budget deficit shall be considerably reduced. This will immediately revitalise the entire economy. Radical measures will be taken in this respect.

"This year's planned budget deficit amounts to 120 billion roubles. The task is to maximally reduce the maximum allowed deficit, which shall not exceed 70 billion roubles," he went on.

"Third, we have to move forward and shall think of future development. The basis for the future is being created today.

"There will be no price increases for basic consumer goods," Ryzhkov assured the viewers.

He admitted that some economists and journalists advocate an end to state-controlled prices by calling for market regulation of prices.

"I think this is inadmissible at present. If we take this way, inflation will soar. This will be a snowballing process that will be hard to stop. What is most important, it will concern the broadest layers of society, low-income families, in the first place, pensioners and people with fixed incomes and wages."

Commenting on the possibility of a price reform, Ryzhkov said that it requires corresponding economic, social and political conditions.

There are no such conditions at present, he said.

"This is why the government is not discussing price reform at present."

Commenting on strikes Ryzhkov said it was an extreme measure to defend the interests of the workers. They have the right to strike, but one has to be very careful in using this right. Our economy is interdependent and strikes punish not only those immediately involved with the strike but also associated plants, consumers, and finally all society. □

Ryzhkov meets chairman of US Federal Reserve System

SOVIET Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov on October 11 received Alan Greenspan, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the US Federal Reserve System, who is in Moscow on an unofficial visit.

Having noted that relations between the Soviet Union and the US have improved thanks to the efforts of the two countries, Ryzhkov stressed the importance of the recent agreement on holding a Soviet-US summit meeting in late spring-early summer.

In this connection a lot has to be done in the intervening period to advance the solution of many outstanding issues. This also applies to improving economic relations with the United States on an equal and mutually advantageous basis, he said.

Ryzhkov expressed conviction that discussing trade and economic co-operation at the forthcoming summit would further promote the constructive development of Soviet-US relations, and ease the transition from understanding to interaction. The time has come to remove political obstacles in the US hampering the development of Soviet-US trade.

Greenspan showed understanding for the approach and reacted positively to the announcement that a draft law "on procedure governing the entry into and exit from the USSR of Soviet citizens" was to be considered by the USSR Supreme Soviet, which is in full compliance with Soviet international obligations, including the Vienna agreements.

The conversation also focused on the comparatively little studied sphere of bilateral relations - contacts and co-operation on the issues of financial, credit and monetary system. As Ryzhkov said, in conditions of perestroika and economic reform the use of relevant regulators in the sphere of monetary circulation, credit and state finances, including American experience, can help normalise economic processes and im-

prove the socio-economic situation in the country.

Greenspan made some practical proposals regarding the problem. □

★ Ryzhkov receives Netherlands delegation

NIKOLAI RYZHKOV, Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, received Johannes Lamers, Royal Commissioner of Friesland province of the Netherlands, entrepreneur Ernst van Eigen and Franc Holstein, representative of the Agrico agro-industrial co-operative, who are in Moscow to discuss Soviet-Netherlands economic ties.

The guests from the Netherlands said they visited the Soviet Union because there is much interest in their country for the development of mutually-advantageous co-operation with the USSR.

The sides discussed the creation of an agro-industrial complex in one of the central districts in the USSR which could become a base for training leaseholders and developing advanced technology for agricultural production.

Ryzhkov emphasised that the Soviet side, on the basis of intergovernmental contacts and long-term programmes for the development of co-operation between the USSR and the Netherlands is striving to deepen Soviet-Netherlands business ties, particularly in the area of agro-industrial complex.

The experience of co-operation in this area is positively appraised in the Soviet Union, and it is held that there is a good prospect for its widening.

Of much interest is the development of non-traditional forms of co-operation with use of new possibilities which open due to the economic reform and development of leaseholding. □

Plenary meeting of the CPSU Central committee

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Soviet Defence Minister on Soviet-US military contacts

"BORN from the objective realities of the present age, new political thinking is making headway in the traditionally complex and contradictory military field," Soviet Defence Minister Dmitri Yazov said in an interview with the newspaper *Izvestia*.

He said that the visit of the Soviet delegation he led to the United States was made possible by positive shifts caused by new political thinking in international relations as a whole and Soviet-US relations in particular.

The significance of the visit was determined by the fact, Yazov stressed, that it, in the opinion of both parties, facilitated the further development of political dialogue, including discussion of military issues, between the two countries.

These aspects were of particular importance as they were pivotal in identifying approaches to the resolution of the most acute and intricate issues of the times concerning national and universal security, the prevention of war, and the preservation and strengthening of peace.

Speaking about his impressions of the US military bases and training centres he visited, Yazov noted the high standards of both the technical equipment of the US Armed Forces and the professionalism, morale and physical training of the personnel.

The Soviet delegation satisfied itself, he said,

that great importance was attached, both by state and public organisations, to inculcating the spirit of patriotism and respect for the national flag and military rituals in the population, especially the younger generation.

Intensive work is being carried out to maintain and consolidate the high prestige of the armed forces and national duty and popularise their history and combat traditions.

Recalling past Soviet-US military contacts, Yazov referred to the visit to the Soviet Union of a delegation of US Congressmen, members of the Armed Services Committee, led by its Chairman Les Aspin.

"Members of the USSR Supreme Soviet's Committee for Defence and State Security are now planning a visit in return," Yazov said.

Substantial changes in the range of military contacts were introduced by the signing in September of an agreement on averting dangerous military activities and the attainment of understanding concerning the announcement of major strategic force manoeuvres.

Military contacts between the two countries will be strengthened by the agreement in principle, reached during the visit of the Soviet military delegation to the United States, to draft a new plan of military contacts for the next few years.

The plan is due for endorsement during the 1990 official visit to the Soviet Union of US Secretary of Defense, Richard Cheney. □

(Moscow, October 11).

Leonid Abalkin's interview with Soviet weekly

THE draft plan for 1990, submitted by the government for consideration by the USSR Supreme Soviet, provides for a 10 per cent rise in monetary incomes, including a 5.7 per cent rise in wages, Deputy Prime Minister Academician Leonid Abalkin told the weekly *Argumenty i Fakty* (Arguments and Facts). There are no plans to freeze incomes and wages. People who talk about it either do not understand the problem or deliberately misinform public opinion.

As for the concept of progressive taxing of growing incomes, its main aim is to curb inflation, keep the growth of incomes within the planned limits (attempts have so far failed) and thus stabilise the consumer market.

No taxes will be levied on wage increases if they come from higher production of consumer goods and services, construction and repair of

housing, social services facilities, the academician pointed out.

The peculiarity of the current taxing system is that it is an extraordinary measure of limited duration — 15 months.

Inflation has two components: the growth of prices and the growth of incomes not matched by goods. Today the rates of inflation are largely affected by the growth of incomes unmatched by goods. The level of prices in this case is a derivative and reflects market imbalances which will force prices up in hidden and open forms. This happens all over the world. The more money in circulation the higher prices. Not vice versa.

"Therefore we are trying to address the cause rather than the consequence," Abalkin said.

"We tried in deed rather than in word to engage economic levers, like taxes, in order to make enterprises satisfy people's needs: increase the production of food, clothes, footwear, furniture, housing, cinemas, hospitals and schools. Producers of these goods and services are exempt from paying taxes on the increment of the wage fund.

"Another fund which many opponents do not take into account is that the law affects only a small portion of the population. A great number of people have fixed incomes, which do not rise. They include pensioners, scholarship holders, medical staff, teachers, office employees and workers, who are paid by the hour. The unprotected groups are affected worst by the consequences of inflation. Curbing the growth of incomes (except those connected with the production of consumer goods and services) will help check inflation in the country which should have a favourable effect on the entire population of the country," Abalkin said. □

(Moscow, October 14)

Briefing at Soviet Foreign Ministry

A RESOLUTION on Palestine, passed by a majority at the 44th session of the UN General Assembly, is evidence of the serious worldwide concern over the situation on the Israeli-occupied territories, a Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman said on October 12.

The Soviet Union believes that the chances of establishing peace in the Middle East has not yet been lost, Gennadi Gerasimov told a regular news briefing. He pointed out that the world community has a general consensus on the need for a political settlement of the conflict and an international conference involving all interested parties, including Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

In reply to a question on the time of the possible visit to the Soviet Union of President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, Gerasimov reminded the reporters that the invitation was conveyed to the Egyptian leader by Soviet Foreign Minister Edward Shevardnadze in February. As for specific dates, the visit is likely to take place at a time convenient to both sides, he replied. The Soviet Union and Egypt believe that the Soviet-Egyptian dialogue at summit level will help develop friendship and co-operation between the two countries in various fields and reflects the sides' intention to work in this direction.

On behalf of the Soviet Foreign Ministry, Gerasimov expressed condolences to the Philippines Foreign Ministry and the entire people of the Philippines over the heavy loss of life following the severe typhoons in that country.

The Soviet Spokesman also reported that a 54-wagon train with food and building materials, sent from Finland to Afghanistan as part of the humanitarian and economic assistance programme relating to Afghanistan, is passing through Soviet territory according to schedule. In the next few days it will arrive in Termez (on the Soviet-Afghan border) and travel on to the Afghan city of Khayraton. The cost of transporting these supplies through Soviet territory is covered by the Soviet contribution to the UN aid programme relating to Afghanistan.

General Jaakko Valtanen, the commander-in-chief of the Finnish defence forces, who arrived in the Soviet Union on an official visit, met Soviet Defence Minister Dmitri Yazov and Chief of General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces Mikhail Moiseyev, Gerasimov said. The sides signed a plan of measures aimed at developing ties between the USSR Armed Forces and Finland's defence forces for 1990-1991. During the visit General Valtanen will meet officers of the General Staff of the Soviet Armed Forces and visit the cosmonauts' training centre.

Gerasimov commented on the recent statement by West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, who urged the GDR government to carry out political and economic reforms. He stressed that such statements run counter to generally accepted norms of relationships between the two sovereign states. □

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Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee meet

AS ITS meeting on October 12, the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee heard Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov's report on the work of the USSR Council of Ministers on the draft state plan for economic and social development and state budget of the USSR for 1990.

The draft plan pays special attention to urgent measures for economic improvement, including measures to halve the state budget deficit and ensure high rates of growth of consumer goods to meet growing demands.

The meeting discussed the results of Mikhail Gorbachev's trip to Berlin for the celebrations of the 40th anniversary of the founding of the German Democratic Republic and the results of the meetings and conversations held here. The solidarity of the Soviet people with the country was reaffirmed.

The Politburo discussed and endorsed the results of Gorbachev's meeting with visiting Polish party chief Mieczyslaw Rakowski. The Politburo expressed the conviction that the development of Soviet-Polish relations in various areas meets the interests of the two countries and promotes

stability and peace in Europe.

The Politburo heard Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze's report about his talks with US President George Bush and Secretary of State James Baker held on September 21-23. The basis for the development of constructive relations between the USSR and the US broadened as a result of conversations on bilateral relations and topical international problems in Washington and Wyoming.

An agreement to hold another official Soviet-American summit in late spring — early summer next year is of such importance, the meeting noted. New ideas and proposals in Gorbachev's message to President Bush opened a real opportunity to conclude work on the drafting of a treaty on 50 per cent cuts in strategic offensive arms, as well as of verification protocols to the 1974 and 1976 treaties on underground nuclear explosions.

Discussing Shevardnadze's talks with President Daniel Ortega of Nicaragua and other members of the Sandinista leadership during a working visit to Nicaragua, the Politburo noted with satisfaction the constructive nature of interaction of the USSR and Nicaragua in the international arena and in a peaceful settlement in Central America.

The Soviet side confirmed its solidarity with the Nicaraguan people's struggle for independence and the right to choose its own road of development, with its efforts to resolve the country's complex social and economic problems.

The Politburo noted that Shevardnadze's conversations with Fidel Castro and other Cuban leaders, in a spirit of comradely mutual understanding, helped co-ordinate positions with regard to global and regional problems, including those in Central America.

Yegor Ligachev's working visit to the German Democratic Republic was discussed. It was noted that the deepening of co-operation with the German Democratic Republic in the production of machinery and equipment for agriculture, and effective use of the German Democratic Republic's experience in the development of the agro-industrial complex and village economies, is very important.

The Politburo heard Soviet Defence Minister Dmitri Yazov's report about his visit to the USA and noted its importance in the consolidation of mutual understanding and enhancement of stability and dynamism in Soviet-American relations. □

CMEA-EEC conference ends in Moscow

By Georgi Meizerov TASS:

MORE than 160 representatives from the CMEA, Soviet ministries and departments, EEC, the European Parliament, large Western firms, and scientists from socialist and capitalist countries attended an international conference on promoting economic co-operation between the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and the European Economic Community

CPSU commission meet

THE TWO commissions of the CPSU Central Committee dealing with Party development, personnel issues, legal policy and ideology, held a joint meeting in Moscow on October 11. They discussed preparations for elections in republican and local bodies of power.

Politburo member Vadim Medvedev and alternate member of the Politburo Georgi Razumovsky spoke at the meeting. Razumovsky delivered a report on the issue under discussion.

During the discussion it was noted that this spring's elections of USSR people's deputies reflected the fundamental changes which had taken place in the social, economic, political and spiritual life of society, the complexity of the modern stage of perestroika.

While resolutely supporting perestroika, voters favoured speeding it up in order to achieve practical results more rapidly, erratic supplies of necessary goods, poor organisation of the work of trade and services, urban transport, the insanitary state of cities and villages, inadequate struggles against mismanagement, breaches of law, economic problems and neglected cultural landmarks have all acquired political urgency, the meeting heard. □

which ended in Moscow on October 15.

The meeting was also attended by delegations from other international organisations and countries outside the CMEA and the EEC.

The participants agreed that the meeting achieved what it aimed for, CMEA Secretary Vyacheslav Sychev told reporters.

A business-like, scientifically substantiated discussion of the state of and prospects for expanding co-operation between the CMEA and EEC on multilateral and bilateral levels was held.

The meeting discussed issues of common European co-operation and economic relations between East and West.

According to Sychev the participants said that while co-operation between the EEC and individual CMEA member-countries was expanding, the CMEA and the EEC were marking time in relations between each other since the signing of the joint declaration on co-operation more than a year ago.

This is partly explained by the mistrust which the two alliances feel toward each other, but is mostly due to differences in varying powers and authority, he said.

If the EEC can take decisions in foreign trade, the CMEA cannot. At the same time, while the CMEA Executive Council has authorised the CMEA Secretariat to conduct talks in such spheres of co-operation as environment, energy, transport, statistics, standardisation, science and technology, and economic forecasting, the EEC does not enjoy such a right, Sychev explained.

It looks as if the parallel approach toward bilateral and multilateral co-operation on the part of the EEC is not as straightforward as has been previously declared, he said.

However, participants in the conference, including members of the European Parliament and Western businessmen, called for a more active co-operation between the CMEA and EEC, Sychev commented, explaining that there is good ground for this.

In mid-November, the CMEA and EEC will start talks on specific proposals for co-operation in environmental protection. □

Soviet Union and the European Community hold talks

THE Soviet Union and the European Community held a second round of talks on a trade and co-operation agreement at the EC headquarters on October 9 and 10.

The delegations, led by Ivan Ivanov, Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers' State Foreign Economic Commission, and Gianluigi Giola, Deputy Director-General of the External Relations Department of the European Commission, have now started to discuss in detail the draft of a future agreement, which will be the broadest ever concluded by the European Community.

The sides agreed in principle to grant the most favoured nation status to one another in trade and to establish mutual co-operation in statistics, standardisation, power engineering, investments, science, technology, transport, the environment, and in other areas.

They co-ordinated arrangements for arbitration and the protection of intellectual property, and the development of bilateral contacts between the Soviet Union and individual EC countries, bypassing supranational common market bodies.

The sides agreed to set up a mixed commission to monitor the fulfilment of the agreement, expected to be in effect for 10 years.

At the same time, some issues remain unresolved and will need additional discussions.

The third round of the talks has been scheduled to be held before the end of the year. □

(Brussels, October 11, TASS)

POLITICS AND POWER

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By Daniil Proektor

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Soviet, American lawyers conclude meeting on arms control

SOVIET and American lawyers and arms control and disarmament experts concluded their 7th conference in Moscow on October 16 with the adoption of a joint statement on prospects for deep cuts in strategic nuclear arsenals.

The lawyers also adopted an address to the governments of the USSR and the United States. It urges them to refrain from testing anti-satellite weapons and to consider banning these weapons on a top-priority basis after the conclusion of talks on a 50 per cent reduction of strategic offensive arms.

Commenting on the forum's results at a news conference today, Vadim Sobakin, Vice-President of the Association of Soviet Lawyers, stressed the importance of the form in the elaboration of new constructive proposals in the disarmament field, that can be used by Soviet and US officials.

"Cuts in strategic offensive weapons in excess of the 50 per cent limit is no fiction. It is a realistic issue that we may consider already today," said the Soviet lawyer.

"We have agreed to discuss with our American partners prospects for deep cuts in strategic offensive arms within the framework of 'minimum nuclear deterrence'.

"Unlike some of our American colleagues, we do not think that a nuclear-free world is a utopia.

"At the same time, we see rational elements in the concept of a 'minimum nuclear deterrence' that envisages the balance at a lower, agreed upon level," Sobakin stated.

"This is a step in the right direction, bringing us closer to a nuclear-free world," he added.

Conferences of Soviet and American lawyers and arms control experts have been held since 1983. They are sponsored by the Association of Soviet Lawyers and the US Lawyers Alliance for Nuclear Arms Control (LANAC).

Ralph Earle, former head of the US delegation to the SALT-2 talks and one of the LANAC leaders, believes that the Moscow meeting was marked by an optimal combination of theory and practice.

"Our lawyers had a chance not only to familiarise themselves with the stance of their Soviet counterparts but also to visit Soviet military facilities," Earle told TASS.

"I was impressed by a visit to a facility eliminating SS-23 (OTR-23) missile launchers in keeping with the INF Treaty," he said.

"It is useful for experts and theorists to see what encouraging, practical results their work may lead to, Earle said.

(TASS October 16)



American lawyers visit Soviet missile base

JOHN RHINELANDER, member of a delegation of prominent American lawyers, gave an interview to TASS at a Soviet missile base near the Byelorussian capital Minsk, close to a launcher of shorter-range missiles that was to be dismantled in about several hours.

The American lawyer said that when he was drafting documents of the SALT-1 Treaty in 1971, he did not expect to see the results of his work at a Soviet missile base, that was formerly a secret facility. He said that the lack of information about such facilities complicated the talks and jeopardised detente, but glasnost proved to be the Soviet Union's most powerful 'secret' weapon in the struggle for detente.

Under the Soviet-American treaty on intermediate and shorter-range missiles, more than 350 launchers for shorter-range missiles were destroyed at this base 50 kilometres from Minsk on August 1, 1988.

The American lawyers applauded when the chief of the centre for the elimination of shorter-range missiles said that what they see is the last batch of launchers and that their dismantling will be completed by October 27.

This unusual trip was part of an extensive programme of the visit to the USSR of representatives of the American Lawyers' Alliance for Nuclear Arms Control. They took part in the seventh Soviet-American Conference of Lawyers and Experts on Arms Control and Disarmament.

Soviet memorandum on international law

THE Soviet Union's memorandum On Raising the Role of International Law was circulated at the UN Headquarters in New York on October 12 as an official document of the General Assembly.

By submitting this document, the Soviet Union is trying to draw the international community's attention to the need to elaborate a comprehensive international strategy to establish the primacy of law in inter-state relations.

"The philosophy of Soviet Foreign policy proceeds from the need to ensure the law's priority

in politics and international practice, and the universal applicability of generally recognised principles of international law in order to prevent any actions that could be taken in circumvention of these principles," the memorandum notes. "Elevation of the role of international law will help consolidate the foundation on which creative interaction in this interdependent world rests."

"It is now high time to draw up and adopt a universal and comprehensive international legal act which would be an effective instrument to strengthen international law and order — a general act on settling disputes by peaceful means," the memorandum stresses. The document contains concrete proposals for strengthening and streamlining the procedure and mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of disputes.

Pointing out that the current 44th session of the UN General Assembly could discuss the question of setting up a special preparatory mechanism for the elaboration of corresponding agreements, the Soviet Union notes that these agreements could be adopted at a plenipotentiary conference. "The USSR is ready to host such a conference in Moscow," the document says in conclusion.

USSR Prosecutor-General meets US Secretary of Justice

THE visit to the USSR by a delegation of the US Department of Justice headed by Secretary of Justice Richard Thornburgh is a remarkable step in the development of relations between the two countries, a step that is of special importance now that legal reform is being implemented in the USSR.

Alexander Sukharev, Soviet Prosecutor-General, said this on October 16 at a meeting with the US Secretary of Justice.

Sukharev noted that the reform presupposes the study and use of everything valuable that has been accumulated by the world civilisation in the area of law. He said the experience of the United States is of much interest.

Sukharev spoke about the history and present-day activities of the Public Prosecutor's Office in the USSR. He said that many fundamental principles of its activity laid down by Lenin were seriously distorted in the post-revolutionary years.

The USSR Prosecutor-General said that intensive work is now being conducted in the USSR to adjust the activity of the Public Prosecutor's Office to the tasks set by perestroika.

The Prosecutor-General said that problems of human rights and freedoms are priority problems. The problem of combating crime is acute, too.

US Secretary of Justice Richard Thornburgh described the meeting as a historic one. He said he highly appreciated the opportunity to get first-hand knowledge about the activity of law enforcement bodies in the Soviet Union.

Thornburgh said that law enforcement bodies of the two countries should co-operate. This would help them tackle more effectively the problems that face the two countries and that become more numerous.

Thornburgh said the USSR and the US had already earmarked a number of priority areas of interaction, the most important of which are the problems of combating narcotics traffic and international terrorism and co-operating in environmental protection.

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV

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Willy Brandt meets scientists in Moscow

SOCIAL democrats and communists can and should pool their efforts to tackle many problems in Europe and the world, Socialist International Chairman Willy Brandt said in Moscow on October 16.

Speaking to Soviet scientists concerned with the social democratic movement, Brandt began the business part of his visit here at the invitation of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party.

He touched on a whole range of issues, including the correlation of economic and social efficiency in the development of capitalist, socialist and Third World states and differing social democrat attitudes in different countries to issues of social progress. He also spoke of his understanding of a modern model of socialism.

Brandt said that the world social democratic movement offers diverse models of development and refuses to regard any of them as dominant. He described the socialist international as a community of independent, sovereign parties, none of which imposes its will upon others.

Soviet scientists at the meeting said that

communists and social democrats are united by a common attitude to such universal values as world peace and ecological security.

Brandt and his counterparts in the lively, thorough exchange were unanimous that the long period of ideological confrontation between the social democrats and the communists cannot be forgotten overnight. It is important to meet more frequently and take steps towards each other.

Professor Alexander Galkin, who chaired the meeting, said Soviet political scientists are determined to study the history of all currents in the international working-class movement without being handicapped by outdated dogmas.

"We shall act in the spirit of perestroika. It presupposes the movement of parties towards each other and Willy Brandt's visit is one more proof of this," he said.

The hosts told Brandt that Soviet society is looking for the most effective model of political democratisation. Asked what the Social Democratic Party of Germany thinks on this score, he stressed the need to ensure the pluralism of opinions and the completeness of the individual's rights in society. This standpoint was shared by the Soviet participants in the meeting. □

The first ever Soviet-Italian trade union meeting

By Igor Agabekov, TASS correspondent:

THE first ever one-week-conference of Soviet and Italian trade unions on cultural and social relations is under way in Moscow under the slogan: From Balance of Fear to Balance of Trust, for a New System of International Relations.

The conference, called by the USSR-Italy and Italy-USSR friendship societies in connection with President Gorbachev's forthcoming visit to Italy this November, is being attended by 120 Italian guests — political leaders and scientists, representatives of three Italian trade union centres of different political affiliation — the General Italian Confederation of Labour, the Italian Confederation of Worker's Unions and the Italian Labour Union.

The conference will discuss a wide range of problems, including the tasks and functions of trade unions, their independence and role in new production relations, and questions of international trade union solidarity.

"This is the first meeting of this kind," Valentin Makeyev, Secretary of the Central Council of Soviet Trade Unions, told TASS. "Leaders of three major Italian trade unions of different political affiliation have met with representatives of Soviet Trade Unions for the first time."

"We hope that such meetings will allow us to get a clearer idea of the prospects of Soviet-

Italian trade union co-operation with due account for the latest developments in Soviet and Italian domestic life and in the international arena."

"We have come here to see how the Soviet trade unions can contribute to Soviet reforms which have been received with great interest in Italy," Enzo Cheremignia, Secretary of the General Italian Confederation of Labour, revealed. "We believe that trade unions, being as they are defenders of workers' interests, can make a decisive contribution to perestroika's success."

"President Gorbachev's forthcoming visit to Italy," Enzo Cheremignia believes, "will help expand bilateral Soviet-Italian relations. Being an active member of the European community, Italy which always had good relations with the socialist countries, could increase its contribution to the expansion of bilateral contacts." □

Gorbachev's greetings to international conference in Rimini

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV sent on October 14 a message of greetings to a major international forum on topical political and economic problems, which opened in the Italian town of Rimini on October 14.

The Soviet leader stressed that "the future of civilisation depends on whether responsible representatives of various nations and states will be able already now to start joint discussion and interaction in solving universal human problems."

Gorbachev expressed the conviction that today "the world community is capable of entering a new peaceful period of its development, to react adequately to the challenges of time — to remove the threat of nuclear war, to overcome underdevelopment and poverty, to cope with ecological and other crises, to foster new economic and intellectual links on the basis of a new balance of interests and freedom of choice."

He wished the participants in the conference success in bringing closer together the positions of the West and East, the North and South on improving people's life. □

Soviet public opinion on Party's role in perestroika

MOST Soviet people pin their hopes for higher living standards on the Party and on its policy. This was revealed by a nation-wide sociological survey carried out this June by the Academy of Social Sciences under the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party.

Analysing the results of the poll, *Pravda* points out, nevertheless, that this vote of confidence is diminishing due to the latest developments. There is mounting criticism of Party organisations, of their leading bodies and of communists in general. Very disturbing, the paper believes, is the fact that more than a third of those polled doubted the Party's ability to reform and to perform its vanguard role effectively. This view is shared by one out of every four Party members polled. Most of them, as seen from their answers, support perestroika, regard it as the only means of implementing socialism's fundamental principles and as a guarantee of renovation. "This means that pessimism is engendered not by the belief that the Party's leading role is unnecessary, but, on the contrary, by the way it is now performed," the newspaper concludes.

Thirty-nine per cent of those polled believe that the prestige of primary Party organisation has dropped noticeably.

A poll of more than one thousand urban, rural and primary Party functionaries confirmed the view that it would be advisable to be more exacting in granting Party membership and to get rid of people who have grown indifferent to their Party affiliation.

The wrongly interpreted principle of 'driving belts' has done a poor service to the Party. It served as a pseudo-theoretical foundation for the political guidance of trade unions, the Komsomol and other public organisations, as well as of state organs. Enjoying practically no independence, these organisations lost much more prestige than the Party organisations.

To raise the standards for Party functionaries and overcome their unpopularity among the population, the newspaper continues, it is necessary to drop the practice of appointment. We must elect them democratically.

Pravda reports that the results of this sociological poll were discussed by the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee's Commission on Party Construction and Personnel Policy. It considered practical measures to dismantle the personnel policy's 'nomenclature' mechanism and called for the further development of alternative principles in personnel promotion. □

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Georgi Tarazevich: national interests should be legally protected

Soviet society is increasingly concerned over the tangle of inter-ethnic relations. The USSR Supreme Soviet (Parliament) has instituted a commission on the nationalities policy and international relations. Novosti's Yelena Afanasyena has been talking to Georgi Tarazevich, the commission's chairman.

Tarazevich stated: The drive for national rejuvenation can only be welcomed. But it is not free from contradictions and conflicts. I believe that the state and society should strive to develop the national interests of every ethnic group and build legal machinery to preclude violations of other nationalities' rights.

As far as I understand it, it would take a whole package of legal acts. What is your commission doing in this respect?

It is too early yet to speak of any practical results. We are working on three bills. One of them, the bill of citizenship, is too raw. So I will describe the other two.

One provides for the free development of languages. Some republics — the Baltic and Transcaucasian, and Moldavia — have made the language of the indigenous population the state language. Central Asian republics will probably

follow suit. Yet many people demand that Russian should be made the legal language of inter-ethnic intercourse. This demand forms the core of our bill. It may also make Russian the language of government throughout the Soviet Union. Our proposals will be published for nationwide consideration and endorsement by the Supreme Soviet and the next congress of People's Deputies, who are backed by their constituencies.

The other bill will seal the right to free development of those citizens who are living outside their national boundaries. I think this bill is a must today, for it will protect the rights and interests of ethnic minorities. This task is crucial, especially in Armenia and Azerbaijan where the number of refugees, i.e. those who cannot live where they have been living prior to the ethnic unrest, is hundreds of thousands on both sides.

What mechanism is capable of defending the rights of ethnic minorities? Paradoxically, Russians, the most numerous Soviet nation, are among the minorities in all Soviet republics with the exception of the Russian Federation?

The interests of all nations, big or small, should have dependable legal protection. One of the ways is to make all local soviets, from area soviets up, two-chamber institutions. A chamber

of nationalities will largely heed the interests of ethnic minorities living in the region. As far as I know, the idea to establish a two-chamber parliament of the Russian Federation in the run-up to the forthcoming elections has been received positively.

Also, it seems expedient to elaborate an array of bills on legal measures to be taken against those officials, whose actions or lack of actions harm the rights of ethnic minorities.

Today's trend in the republics is to be less dependent on the centre, including in law-making. Can republican laws conflict with the union legislation:?

The commission think that all measures should be taken to preclude such contradictions. Mutual compromise is what we'll be needing in conflict situations. On the other hand, deputies to both chambers of the USSR Supreme Soviet, which will adopt union laws, represent all union republics and by voting for a union law they 'try it out' in their republic. As a Byelorussian, I will not vote for a law which tramples in any way on the interests of my republic and my constituency. Clearly, all my colleagues will do the same. I think there are ways to balance out federal and republican interests in the process of law making. □

Kashpirovsky ready to treat Aids patients

**By TASS correspondent
Rena Kuznetsova:**

AIDS, this plague of the twentieth century, can be overcome by psychotherapy, the 50-year-old psychotherapist Anatoli Kashpirovsky thinks. Addressing Soviet and foreign journalists on October 11, he said he was ready to apply his physical and professional abilities to combating the disease.

He said some Aids patients will be cured. He also said that the blood serum taken from these people may become an effective medicine for many other aids patients. The press-centre hall was packed to capacity, attesting to the immense interest in Kashpirovsky's outstanding personality.

Journalists tried to see Kashpirovsky in per-

son to understand his phenomenon: whether he is the man he professes to be or a quack.

His enormous popularity in the Soviet Union vies with that of famous politicians. He is in excellent shape, brimming with energy, resolve and the desire to make people healthy, energetic and optimistic. Risk plus experiment plus permanent contact with people is his formula for success.

"'Belief works miracles' is the cornerstone of my personal philosophy," Kashpirovsky says. Himself a workaholic, he reserves unflattering comments for those who have succumbed to *dolce far niente*.

Sometimes, though, his speech betrays fatigue caused by frustrating struggles with bureaucrats in medicine. He complains that up till now no one at official level has seriously studied the results of his practical work or how the health of his patients is restored.

Journalists heard well-nigh incredible stories of terminal patients getting well, stitches vanishing and saw a film showing two women in Tbilisi (capital of Georgia) being operated on without anaesthetic.

The women had been made numb to pain by Kashpirovsky watching the operation from the Ukrainian capital Kiev some 2,000km away. The journalists also saw on the screen a West German girl who in the course of two hours had lost her hair for some mysterious reason. One meeting with Kashpirovsky and her hair growth resumed.

Even sceptics cannot present any valid objections against such facts.

But how does one account for all this? "It is most difficult to see what you have before your very eyes," Kashpirovsky quoted Goethe in answering the question.

He is himself looking for an answer in trying to get help from major scientists and specialists. Laboratories are being set up on his initiative in Yalta (the Crimea) and Leningrad to study the influence he exerts on the patients, and a psychotherapeutic centre is being set up in Kiev.

Among other things he has proposed the crea-

tion of a psychotherapists association. Kashpirovsky engages in important charity activity, especially among Soviet Afghan-war veterans. Examples are known of his quite appreciable assistance to the needy.

And one more point was raised at the press conference, which is this: scheduled for October 10 was a communication session between Kashpirovsky and Alexander Viktorenko and Alexander Serebrov, the crew of the *Mir* orbital complex who have regularly expressed a wish to meet interesting people.

At the eleventh hour, however, the space-earth TV bridge was cancelled by a health ministry official under the pretext that such a meeting could cast doubts on the health of the cosmonauts who do not complain of anything to doctors at the flight control centre. However, Kashpirovsky is optimistic, hoping that the bureaucratic mechanism would backpedal and a direct dialogue with the cosmonauts in orbit will take place. □

Mikhail MOISEYEV

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MIKHAIL GORBACHEV

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'Open Skies' concept and Wyoming agreements

By Col. Vladimir Nazarenko, *Novosti* military observer

THE 'open skies' plan was first offered in the declaration of the NATO summit in Brussels, May 29-30, 1989.

Without going into detail, the declaration called to permit unarmed surveillance flights as a means to strengthen trust between nations and encourage frankness and better information of the public.

Some sources say this plan was the brainchild of the US President, George Bush, others give credit to the Canadian Prime Minister, Brian Mulroney. In any case, this idea sounds very attractive as a component of a global system to promote trust and less military threat.

Of course, it will take time and negotiating effort to make this plan more specific. Incidentally, during a recent meeting in Wyoming, Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and US Secretary of State James Baker reached an agreement in principle on the general concept of 'open skies', stressing the Soviet and American rediness to take part in an international conference on this issue.

Basically, this plan provides for unarmed surveillance flights over the territories of the Uni-

ted States, the Soviet Union, NATO, and the Warsaw Treaty member states to monitor the military activities of the sides. Clearly, this can be qualified as a large-scale effort to carry out mutual control and confidence-building measures.

Under the proposed plan, the sides will permit unarmed surveillance flights over their territories. Besides the parties to the agreement should grant each other the right of collecting intelligence on their troops and armament necessary to verify compliance with the negotiated armed control agreement. Apparently, it was this interpretation of the concept that found understanding in Wyoming.

Also, the sides agreed to identify special airfields in Canada, the United States, and the Soviet Far East to be used for reconnaissance planes.

Yet this is only part of the issue. The parties will have to negotiate routes, altitudes, the length and frequency of flights and their quotas, as well as the types of aircraft and unified equipment. Secondly, an international centre should train international (joint) crews to fly reconnaissance aircraft.

Apparently, the idea offered by the socialist countries in Vienna to set up a military-risk reduction centre in Europe can be very instrumental in co-ordinating and organising the exchange of information gathered under the 'open skies' agreement.

As for equality, the Soviet Union insists on equal rights for all participating countries.

It is necessary to ensure that the information obtained is not used to the detriment of any side and each side has a guaranteed access to the required information irrespective of the available national surveillance means, geography, or any other factor.

Also, the 'open skies' regime should embrace the sides' military bases and testing grounds situated in third countries.

Addressing the 44th session of the UN General Assembly, Eduard Shevardnadze suggested extending the 'open skies' concept to the seas, oceans, and space.

Clearly, glasnost and openness can not be confined to the sky alone. A comprehensive approach is needed to prevent reliably the threat of war. □

Soviet Premier on economic situation: Concern mixed with optimism

By Alexander Voznesensky

SOVIET political leaders' TV addresses to the nation have become customary for Soviet viewers. Still, for some, Nikolai Ryzhkov's interview for Soviet radio and television on October 15 was a revelation. Why?

He defined the present economic situation in the USSR as complicated and contradictory. The growing budget deficit, persisting inflation and consumer market imbalances are among the nation's primary concerns. For most Soviet producers a switch-over to self-financing and cost-accounting has resulted in a steep rise of their wage bills not being backed by a requisite surplus of goods and services. Between July and September the people's incomes had grown by 13 per cent, while production growth rates averaged only 1 per cent. The figures speak for themselves, noted Ryzhkov.

The Soviet Premier voiced serious concern over inexpensive goods being ousted from the market and prices going up for quite a few products. He said that the monopoly practices of many Soviet producers and absence of control over their increased autonomy are to blame in the obtaining situation.

The situation is so complex that many observers, both in this country and abroad, have the impression that the Soviet economy has found itself in an impasse. But Ryzhkov said he was quite optimistic about the current processes. "I am convinced that our economic ills can be cured," he declared.

Apparently, his optimism is not unfounded. The country has scored noticeable successes in housing and social construction, building annually 129 million square meters of floor space in the 1986-1989 period, almost a 12 per cent rise

on the previous five-year period. Twenty per cent more hospitals and 41 per cent more polyclinics are being commissioned every year, and 6.5 million Soviet people have received individual plots of land in the past three and a half years, which is much more than in all the preceding years of Soviet Government.

Economic reforms are forging on. Command and administrative methods of management have been gradually, though sometimes painstakingly, replaced with new economic ones. In short, the package of perestroika measures has been edging forward.

But when are the Soviet people to expect a cardinal change and tangible economic pick-up? Does the Soviet Government have a programme of short and long-term action?

There is such a programme for 1990 and 1991-1995, the next five-year period, most items on it providing for extraordinary measures. The key tasks for 1990 are to halve the 120 billion roubles budget deficit and boost consumer goods output by 20 per cent. The government plan does not, however, envisage either a monetary reform or a revision of retail prices, the steps much feared by the public.

The package of urgent measures met with a contradictory response on the part of Soviet MPs. Some consider it not to be feasible, others say it is not radical enough. Some are calling for the dismantling of the existing economic set-up and for an immediate introduction of market relations. Others are advocating 'a strong fist policy' with regard to economic problems. Anyway, the government's economic programme is under cross-fire of heated debates at the second session of the Supreme Soviet, the USSR's Parliament, and in the press. Generally speaking, the plan is an attempt for a realistic assess-

ment of the present and future state of the Soviet economy. Its concept is based on the emphasis of a gradual rather than decelerated development of the economic reform and on a firm resolve to make it irreversible while curbing the market anarchy.

"I know of no historical precedent where a government found itself in such a difficult situation," Academician Leonid Abalkin, Soviet Vice-Premier, told a press conference at the USSR Academy of Sciences' Institute of Economics. "Give the government a year and a half to work in peace, and then ask for results."

Ryzhkov called on millions of Soviets to be realists. "Our economy is enormous and consequently has a fair degree of inertia. For decades, thousands of enterprises have worked in conditions which were strictly prescribed 'from above'. And now we need to switch over to entirely new principles. It will take much time though. But I'm sure that we have embarked on the right road," Ryzhkov said in conclusion. □

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