

## Question of the institution of a executive presidency LUKYANOV'S REPORT AT CONGRESS

*Addressing the morning sitting of the extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR which opened in Moscow on March 12, Anatoli Lukyanov, First Vice-President of the USSR Supreme Soviet, delivered a report on the main item of the agenda: Amendments to the Soviet Constitution and the Institution of a New Executive Presidency. He said, in part:*

"Soviet people have lately been concerned about the aggravation of the socio-economic situation, the poor results and even the slowing down of planned reforms, acute ethnic conflicts, mass disturbances and growing crime.

"The underlying causes of the current situation are directly linked with the fact that the outdated command methods and corresponding political structures are being dismantled, while new structures, meeting requirements of the times, are only beginning to take shape."

These circumstances, Lukyanov said, "highlight the need to examine, without delay, and adopt all possible measures in order to create a more adequate system of power relations, which shall be able to operate when the Party ceases to manage the state and economy directly. This management will have moved from Party structures to the structures of the state mechanism."

In this connection, the speaker went on to say: "It is proposed to introduce amendments to the nation's Constitution, which would legally endorse a president of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as the sole head of state.

"The institution of presidency – an organic part of efforts to perfect Soviet statehood at a time when perestroika has moved into its most crucial phase – should serve as a means to enhance the efficiency of the entire mechanism of power, of stability, of law and order in the country."

Lukyanov emphasised that "by all his practical work, the president of the USSR should create conditions for the development of mutual understanding and social dialogue between various socio-political movements, maintain civil peace and ethnic accord in the country, and act as an organiser and coordinator with supreme

powers in emergency situations – wars, conflicts, natural calamities, serious violations of social tranquility and public peace.

"The institution of presidency in the USSR should have a consistently democratic, Soviet character. It should rule out the possibility of the establishment of a personal dictatorship and also be a reliable defence of the Constitution's democratic principles," Lukyanov said.

*Moscow March 13 TASS:*

**THE extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies today created the post of Executive President of the Soviet Union.**

**The decision was taken by 1,817 votes to 133, with 61 abstentions.** □

"The bill, submitted for consideration to the Congress, proceeds from the premise that the Soviet state needs authoritative legislative bodies, a strong president, a vigorous government and an independent judiciary."

Lukyanov emphasised that "there are no grounds whatsoever for suspicions, kindled by some people, that the institution of the post of president allegedly leads to the establishment of authoritarian personal power.

"Moreover, the proposed bill contains a

whole system of guarantees against trends of this kind.

"It is proposed to determine that the president be elected by citizens of the USSR by universal, secret ballot," Lukyanov said.

"A candidate must win more than half of the votes of the electors who took part in the poll – not only in the Soviet Union as a whole, but also, as a minimum, in the majority of union republics.

"As to the election of the first president, it is proposed to elect him on an alternative basis at the Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR – the most representative democratic forum currently available."

In addition, "It should be said in the Constitution that one person cannot hold the post of president for more than two terms.

"It is proposed to limit the age of presidential candidates. The bill clearly defines that the president is accountable before Congress of People's Deputies, which has the right to recall the president before the expiry of his term in office, should he violate the Constitution and laws of the USSR."

Speaking of guarantees to the democratic nature of the presidency, Lukyanov stressed that the bill on amendments to the Constitution "proceeds from the fact that the president's powers are defined by the Constitution and laws, which, as is known, can only be adopted by the Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet. The President is bound to act on the basis and in pursuance of the laws. Finally,

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## Soviet Congress discusses constitutional amendments

AFTER Anatoli Lukyanov's report to Congress the Deputies debated the main item on the agenda – Amendments and Supplements to the Soviet Constitution and the Institution of a New Executive Presidency.

Eight deputies took the floor during the morning session. Most of them backed the presidency idea and agreed with the proposal of the Party's Central Committee to amend the article of the Soviet Constitution establishing the Communist Party's leading role.

The deliberations were opened by Sergei Alexeyev, Chairman of the Committee for Constitutional Compliance, who stressed the urgent need for the post of president, since there was a "paralysis of power" in the country. Political structures, he believes, have lost their previous power, while state bodies have still not acquired it. In these conditions the presidency is the only effective method to transfer the power from Party structures to state bodies, he believes.

President of the Supreme Soviet of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev regards presidential rule as an important guarantee of the federa-

tion's unity, particularly in the present tense situation. "Both the centre and the republics need a mechanism to strengthen law and order, to defend perestroika and ensure the implementation of laws," he said.

Several other deputies also called for presidential rule.

The idea of establishing the post of president was questioned by the opposition inter-regional group of deputies. Explaining the group's stand, one of its co-chairmen and Rector of the Moscow History Archive Institute Yuri Afanasiyev described the idea and the fact that the first president will be elected by the Congress as an "extremely gross and grave political mistake."

He wanted the presidency to be made conditional on a new allied treaty among the Soviet republics wishing to remain in the USSR, the existence of a strong parliament and the president's elections by general, direct and secret vote of the population in conditions of a real multi-party system, a prohibition precluding the president from holding this post along with an "office in the Party nomenclature."

The speaker implied that the inter-regional

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# Soviet Congress discusses constitutional amendments

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group believed that the purpose of presidency was to legislatively strengthen the extraordinary powers of one man – Mikhail Gorbachev. He claimed that current difficulties were not due to lack of power, but due to "lack of trust in it." According to Afanasiyev, the present leadership is "again relying on power." Many protested with indignation against his call to "renounce the Communist idea, to admit that the road traversed by the country had led to an impasse."

Rector of Moscow State Technological University Alexei Yeliseyev tabled several amendments to the bill, substantially limiting the president's powers. Agreeing to several arguments adduced by Afanasiyev, he stressed that the question of the presidency brooked no delay. "We must fill the vacuum which is bound to appear when Party bodies stop solving state problems."

President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation Vitali Vorotnikov disagreed with the view that presidential rule could be a "step towards dictatorship." He rejected several other arguments of Yuri Afanasiyev, and invited him and all those who share his views to "resign from the Communist Party and set up their own organisation."

★

Speeches delivered during the afternoon meeting of the extraordinary Congress of USSR People's Deputies have confirmed what became clear during the morning session: there are many more supporters of the institution of executive presidency among participants in the Congress than those who oppose this idea.

Member of the Politburo and Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee, Deputy Vadim Medvedev told the Congress that

## LUKYANOV'S REPORT

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the Congress will be entitled to repeal presidential decrees, and the constitutional compliance committee is bound to exercise control over their legality."

Lukyanov dismissed fears that the presidency will infringe on the role of elected governing councils. He emphasised that the bill "does not provide for any transfer to the president of powers currently in the hands of the Congress and the Supreme Soviet. The Congress can, as before, consider and resolve any issue within the competence of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Moreover, the presidency is being instituted above all to ensure that the decisions of the Congress and the Supreme Soviet be more actively translated into life.

"Presidential powers should play a positive, constructive role also in bolstering the independence of constituent republics and protecting their territorial integrity and constitutional rights. The president will apparently be the main initiator of the updating of the union treaty and the guarantor of its fulfilment. He will arbitrate ethnic disputes and assist the prompt settlement of conflicts and disagreements."

Lukyanov added that "closer interaction between constituent republics should be served by the formation under the president of the federation council. Each union republic will be represented on it by its top statesman.

"It is provided that the council concentrate on dealing with the problems of developing our federation, executing the nationalities policy of the Soviet State, and ensuring the republics'

there is a close and profound relationship between the discussion of the executive presidency and the change of the Constitution's articles registering the leading role of the Soviet Communist Party in society.

He said that, on the one hand, unless strong and effective presidential power is created, the Party's abrogation of its present functions may lead to anarchy. On the other, any decisions about presidential power become meaningless if the fundamental law retains the provision about the Party's leading role.

"The entire approach to the political reforms is based on the premise that the Party as a nucleus of a managerial structure and political system should not exist in a rule-of-law state," Medvedev noted. "But one cannot agree to having an inactive or disbanded Party or one that limits itself to parliamentary activity," he said.

Just as any political party, the Soviet Communist Party will offer the people a scientifically – substantiated programme of social development, will seek the people's support for its strategic aims and tasks and the election of its supporters to government bodies, the deputy said.

Regarding calls in some speeches to ensure the "non-party character of the presidency," Medvedev said that since the Party is currently discarding functions it should not discharge, there is hardly any room for fears that president will be shackled by Party discipline. "It is, ultimately, for the Party to decide who should head it. I personally am deeply convinced that the combination of the role of Party chief with the presidential post is not only expedient but necessary at present," he said.

Speaking on behalf of a large number of deputies from the Soviet Academy of Sciences, Academician Vitali Goldansky favoured the

involvement in deciding issues of nationwide importance.

"Important state functions are being vested in yet another agency to be formed under the president – the presidential council. Its prime mission will be to work out measures to achieve the basic goals of home and foreign policies of the USSR, and ensure national security. The Prime Minister will be a presidential council member automatically, while the other members will be appointed by the president."

Commenting on the Communist Party Central Committee's proposed changes to articles six and seven of the Constitution, Lukyanov said: "The basic idea is that all Party and social organisations and mass movements should be guaranteed equal possibilities to act within the framework of the Constitution and Soviet laws and actively participate, through their representatives elected to governing councils and in other ways, in shaping state policies and running state and public affairs."

He said a number of articles defining the key elements of the Soviet economic system need also to be re-written. "These new provisions are based on the law on ownership and the fundamentals of legislation on land, which were recently adopted in keeping with instructions from the Second Congress of People's Deputies. Their principal goal is to end the alienation of workers from the means of production, ensure the consolidation and encouragement of the diverse forms of ownership to the maximum, and enliven grassroots economic initiative."

The proposed changes to the constitutional articles on the Party, ownership and the presidency, according to Lukyanov, "pursue the common aim of advancing political and economic reform and the entire cause of revamping public affairs." □

institution of the presidential post, proposing to elect Mikhail Gorbachev president of the USSR.

The deputy refuted statements that the creation of the presidential post is explained by Gorbachev's striving for absolute personal authority. He said it would be absurd to surmise that Gorbachev, who has devoted himself for five years to disrupting the administrative-bureaucratic system, has now decided to seize power in a new role, with the presence of the deputies' corps and the Supreme Soviet and when occupying the presidential post means shouldering a very heavy burden.

Prominent economist Nikolai Shmelev, who is known as one of the most vigorous supporters of the market economy, favoured the idea of establishing the presidential post, and set out a sort of economic programme for the first president.

The complex of proposed measures includes the permission of private property and hired labour, the encouragement of co-operatives and drawing on foreign loans.

He suggested that these measures, although not favoured by the population, should not be feared, and that "ideological dogmata" should be discarded.

Givi Gumbaridze, the President of the Presidium of Georgia's Supreme Soviet, voiced concern that the presidency might limit the sovereignty of federal republics.

He said that if the presidential post is instituted, an effective mechanism of collective control should be created. He believes this control should be effected by parliament and by the new body, the federal council, particularly as regards "the observance of a federal agreement, which should be the sole legal basis for relations among federal republics and should not be replaced by the Constitution."

Eldar Salayev, President of Azerbaijan's Academy of Sciences, said that the establishment of the presidential post should be made conditional upon the adoption of a renewed federal agreement, and the new clear-cut formulation of functions of the federal union and federal republics.

Some 20 people spoke in the debate on March 12.

## Day two of the debate

THE discussion of the main item on the agenda – changes in the country's constitution and the institution of the office of an executive president – continued at the extraordinary Congress of USSR People's Deputies on March 13. The Congress opened in the Kremlin on March 12.

It is now clear already that not everyone who wanted to take the floor will be able to do so: the list of prospective speakers in the debate already included 288 people by the end of the first day. Only 19 speakers have so far taken the floor.

It was decided that a two-hour debate at today's morning session would be followed by a vote on the bill. The document combines both novelties connected with instituting the office of an executive president and the proposal of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee to change the Constitution's articles that ensured the leading role of the Communist Party.

The first day of the Congress proceedings showed that the majority of deputies supported the idea of the presidency. Arguments in favour of instituting presidential rule are primarily that the CPSU's departure from the administration of the state may produce a dangerous vacuum of power. The need to cardinaly improve the coordination of action between the legislative and executive power is pointed out and other

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# Mikhail Gorbachev's report to plenum of the Central Committee

THE draft platform of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party for the 28th Congress of the Party is viewed by the Party and the people as a serious document containing critical analysis of the state of affairs and suggesting solutions to acute socio-economic and political problems encountered by the country and fundamental goals of the renewal of our society; Mikhail Gorbachev said this in a report to the plenum of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party which opened in the Kremlin on March 11.

The Soviet leader dwelt in detail on questions of reforming the Party. He noted that the draft platform had formulated fundamental principles for restructuring the Soviet Communist Party and that they are being set out in detail in the draft rules.

He said that "a document is being worked out which is to become the fundamental law of the renewed Party to which we are advancing, a party of humane democratic socialism.

"We regard the renewed Soviet Communist Party as a union of communists sharing the same views and basing their activity on the creative development of the ideas of Marx, Engels and Lenin, as a party of socialist choice reflecting the interests of the working class, of all the working people, a party which is working towards consolidating on its platform Soviet multi-ethnic society," Gorbachev noted.

"We declare that the Soviet Communist Party stands by its position of internationalism and is open to co-operation with communist and workers' parties, with socialist and social democratic, liberal and national democratic parties, with all public forces and movements that are for peace and social progress," Gorbachev said.

Gorbachev pointed out that the struggle for political leadership in the framework of democratic procedures and election campaigns will from now on be one of the most important functions of the Soviet Communist Party.

With regard to this function it is necessary to work out appropriate provisions in the Party rules and considerably change the methods and forms of Party work.

Gorbachev noted that the Soviet Communist Party, a ruling party, bears political responsibility to the people for the state of the country, of socialist federation, for the economic situation, citizens' security and the ensurance of their rights and freedoms, and for the observance of the country's international interests.

For these reasons, trivial parliamentary games are not for this Party. What is more, this demands that the Soviet Communist Party should not keep away from participation in the solution of vital problems of the country. It should conduct a serious policy enabling it to use effectively its mandate for political leadership.

"We see the main line for the renewal of the Soviet Communist Party in its vanguard role, which it should not lose. Quite the contrary, it should be turned from a formal declaration into a political reality effectively influencing various aspects of society's life."

Much is being said now, Gorbachev observed, about the Party having allegedly become basically obsolete and needing to be replaced by another party of an intrinsically different quali-

ty. It is being suggested in this connection that the Party should be renamed a social democratic, socialist or other party. The idea basically is to strip the Party's name of the word 'Communist', which stems from its ultimate ideal and long-term tasks.

I believe, Gorbachev continued, that this proposal must not be accepted. Its implementation will be a serious blow at the Party's ideological foundation and disappoint many Party members and non-party people that support the Communist Party as a party of lofty ideals.

Gorbachev drew attention also to the international implications of such a move. In his opinion, it would adversely affect the activities of parties that uphold the communist idea in difficult conditions.

The new understanding of the Party's role dictates the need to overhaul its rules as well as a number of state legal instruments, including the national constitution.

Gorbachev said it appears expedient in this connection that the Central Committee should take legislative initiative and propose changes to constitutional articles concerning the Party to the Congress of People's Deputies.

The thrust of the proposals can be described as excluding the provision about the Party's leading role and about the Party as the nucleus of the Soviet political system and constitutionally formalising equal opportunities for the Communist Party and other political and social organisations to take part in social and political affairs – naturally enough, in a legitimate and democratic way – and work towards their programmatic goals.

The rationale behind the revamping of the rules, Gorbachev said, is to make a Party member the focus of Party life, by ensuring him the broadest possibilities to share in charting and implementing Party policy, shaping higher Party bodies, and supervising their activities.

Party membership is an issue reflecting this best of all. A fundamentally new situation is being created here. All rights to admit new members, including the final say on the matter, are delegated to primary Party organisations. It is proposed abolishing the term of probation for aspiring members who should, however, necessarily have recommendations.

Another new provision gives members a possibility to voluntarily leave the Party, but this does not mean, of course, that Party organisations will be relieved of their duty to work to strengthen Party ranks and cleanse them of those whose conduct compromises the Party and contradicts its rules.

As new solutions are sought, the main concern is sometimes forgotten, and that is Party unity, Gorbachev said. Among other things, he mentioned proposals to base the Party on federalist principles – as an umbrella of the communist parties of constituent republics – and make the rules seal only rights that are voluntarily granted to the centre by the communist parties of constituent republics. It is also being suggested that the communist parties of constituent republics should have the right to quit the Communist Party of the Soviet Union through a referendum among their members.

Gorbachev said this would be a division of the Party along ethnic lines, which would make it impossible to hammer out and maintain a uniform Party policy, fulfil the Party's integrating and co-ordinating functions in society, and work together to enhance the Soviet federation, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

In connection with the principles on which the draft rules are based and with approaches to the solution of problems related communist parties of the republics, there is a highly important problem of creating the party of the Russian Federation.

Gorbachev pointed out it was agreed at the previous plenum that Party organisations in the Russian Federation discuss this matter at their meetings and conferences and that a Party conference of the Russian Federation should sum up the results of these debates by the 28th Party Congress. Gorbachev proposed that the conference be held on June 19 in Moscow.

Regarding provisions in the rules about supreme bodies of the Party, Gorbachev said that the novel feature in this section is the establishment of a broader executive body of the Party's Central Committee, the Presidium of the Central Committee, of the Soviet Communist Party. Representatives of workers, peasants, intelligentsia, servicemen and veterans of the Party are to be elected to the Presidium. It should also include leaders of communist parties of the union republics. The congress will decide of how many people the Presidium will consist.

It is also proposed to form permanent commissions of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party. They will analyse questions of the Party's activity in various directions. It is also intended to institute the posts of Party chairman and his deputies. They will exercise day-to-day guidance of the work of bodies of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party and will be ensuring its coordination and effectiveness.

In the context of democratic restructuring of the Party, the draft rules envisage substantial changes in the formation and expenditure of the Party budget.

The requirements of primary Party organisations will be implemented: they will keep up to 50 per cent of Party membership dues they collect. From now on the Party's budget will be discussed and endorsed at plenums of the Party's Central Committee and will be subsequently published.

Dwelling on some questions of preparation for the Congress, Gorbachev proposed to convene the Congress on July 2, 1990 in the Kremlin. He proposed to include in the earlier endorsed agenda the item about the platform of the Soviet Communist Party *For Humane, Democratic Socialism*.

Gorbachev said that with the increase in the Party's membership which reached 18.8 million on January 1, 1990, it is proposed to elect to the 28th Congress one delegate from every 4,000 members. It is calculated that there will be some 4,700 delegates to the Congress.

Regarding the procedure for the election of the delegates, Gorbachev said that Party organisations should be given greater freedom in deciding their problems, being guarded by democratic norms.

Gorbachev said that the present plenum is the landmark concluding the first stage of the preparation for the 28th Party Congress. The fundamental decisions have been made and the programme and rules are submitted for the discussion of the Party.

The next stage will be the debating of the projects for the Congress by the whole Party and people. Every communist should participate in deciding fundamental problems of the Party. □

# Mikhail Gorbachev gives interview to Soviet and German journalists

*MIKHAIL GORBACHEV received in the Kremlin on March 6 the visiting Prime Minister of the German Democratic Republic Hans Modrow and ministers of the coalition government who accompanied him. They discussed the principled aspects of the German problem and bilateral co-operation. After conversation, with the ministers accompanying Modrow present, Gorbachev gave an interview to correspondents of TASS and of the GDR and the FRG television.*

**QUESTION:** What is the Soviet Union's attitude to any form of a united Germany's participation in NATO?

**GORBACHEV:** We cannot agree to this. It is absolutely ruled out. We believe that the process of unification of the two German states is a natural process which fits in well with a concept I used to expound before as well: the shape of the reality that history has bequeathed us will be decided by history itself.

Now, as we say, history has begun to accelerate. And I think that in this case the interests of the Germans must, doubtless, be accommodated. We are prepared for this. But the Germans, too, and all those associated with this process, must take into account the natural interests of the neighbours of the two German states, of all Europeans. If we remember that the German question is one of the biggest in world politics, then the interests of the entire world community must be taken into account as well ...

And this problem cannot be simplified. On big and crucial questions, affecting such fundamental things as the interests of peoples, the Germans themselves, the Europeans, the whole world, it is inadmissible to act hastily, 'all of a rush', so to speak. This approach is not suitable for big politics. So a stage-by-stage approach is indispensable and I think the people of the German Democratic Republic are interested in it. They want to know what will happen to them, what their destiny will be and that of the generations that have lived and worked in the republic.

This is also in the interests of the Germans of the Federal Republic. They want to know what the unification will require of them and this, I think, is being seriously pondered over there by industrialists and by all business people. For this is a very big problem. This is why both from the domestic and foreign-policy viewpoints, from the viewpoint of real life of the two German states, I think that the stage-by-stage progress toward unification and a well-thought-out approach are good.

If this process becomes part of the process of the European rapprochement, then, incidental-

ly, we may do well to accelerate the latter. This means that both processes will be synchronised, and the anxiety which may arise if this is not done, will be removed. And anxiety there is. Now they are already talking a lot about frontiers.

The West German Chancellor in recent days has made certain adjustments to his position on this question and I make note of that and I welcome that, for 'manoeuvring' and vagueness on such fundamental issues is not serious politics. All people must have a clear notion of everything and know everything. This is in the first place. And in the second, where will the united Germany be? I think that, if the European and the Vienna processes go on, we shall reach the point of Helsinki-2, and NATO and the Warsaw Treaty will be changed from military-political into political organisations - this will be one situation and in this case there will be no need for bargaining on where the united Germany must be. In a recent conversation one of the representatives of the leadership of a Western power told me: well, strictly speaking, why are you, Mr Gorbachev, concerned over this issue, for the Germans are already not those Germans, they are other Germans! Yes, the Germans both in the East and in the West are committed to peace and they have achieved a lot. All this is true. But in this case, I answered him, let us agree this way: why should they enter NATO, let them join the Warsaw Treaty, if this is of no consequence whatsoever. Immediately this objection followed: well, no. Why? In this way, this counterproposal of mine made many things clear. Let us weigh everything seriously, make calculations, in short, pursue business seriously.

And now, and all the time, if you remember, I stress this - we are living through an evolutionary process in the world and in Europe, which will bring us profound changes - a new Europe, new relations between people, states and the peoples. It means we cannot miss this chance. But this also requires a great sense of responsibility. We cannot destroy something we have put so much effort into creating, for everything that is happening is the result of common efforts made over many decades. There are both positive and negative results, and we have drawn lessons from them. Now that a historic chance has presented itself, we must show great responsibility. So it is in this broad manner that I wanted to answer your brief question. All this is important for all of us.

We shall be vigorously and constructively participating in the process taking place, but we shall not allow that the emergent positive tendencies gaining strength in Europe be disrupted, that renewal of relations among European countries be halted. Such is our starting point.

**You said that the processes taking place in Germany are very complicated and require a responsible approach from everyone. Do you think that enough responsibility is shown now in Germany in the run-up to elections?**

You know, there are delicate areas. One should not interfere in internal affairs. Such is our firm position: not to interfere in internal affairs.

This, certainly, does not mean that we are indifferent. We solidarise with some processes and take a negative view of others.

But in the long run it is the people that makes its own choice. Therefore, following from Moscow the election campaign, I can see that some people are in a haste and wish to impose on others their own views and assessments.

I witness attempts to bring pressure on people in the German Democratic Republic in party interests, out of political calculations.

It is you who put this question and provoked my answer. I hope that in West Germany and in the GDR this will not be assessed as my interference in the election campaign.

I see how many visitors from West Germany there are now in the GDR and how they interfere in the GDR's affairs as if it has already lost sovereignty and is no longer an independent state recognised by the world community.

Such things do take place. But let the Germans themselves sort this out. I believe that people should think a lot to decide whom to prefer. At this stage it is particularly important that persons capable of a responsible attitude and interaction with all interested governments and nations be working in parliament, the cabinet and in all government bodies.

**How do you visualise future relations between the Soviet Union and a united Germany? Can relations different from those with West Germany and the German Democratic Republic emerge?**

I think that relations will be changing. I just spoke on this subject to members of the Modrow government. I think there are good prospects for these relations. But then, this depends on how we shall be interacting now.

If there is one approach, co-operation can be developed and strengthened. If there is another approach, distrust can be sown and negative attitudes develop.

I believe that in the interests of our bilateral relations and co-operation both sides should act with a sense of responsibility. Among the socialist countries, we have the broadest contacts with the German Democratic Republic. Among West European countries, we have the broadest ties with West Germany. This in itself is very important. When the process of unification develops and spreads to all areas, also the economy, we wish that these interests should not be affected adversely either as regards a united Germany or German people or our country.

Regarding relations between Germany and Russia, you know that they have a vast history. There were things in these relations from which lessons should be drawn. We must not forget what happened when Nazism came to power in Germany and what this caused to our peoples - to the Soviet people and to the Germans.

It is a very important achievement of our peoples and states that we have drawn the conclusions and taken a peaceful road, started to restructure relations on a new basis, to co-operate in bilateral interests and in the interests of peace. This should be preserved. We shall be doing everything that this should be so.

But this involves mutual interests and there is a need for reciprocity. There are good prospects. I see the interest shown by people from West Germany, by industrialists in combining intellectual and scientific efforts, the technological basis and resources of our countries. This could serve well our peoples and Europe. I am optimistic in this respect. □

## RELATIONS

### Problems and Prospects

Inter-ethnic conflicts in the Caucasus, the Baltic region and Central Asia have put perestroika to a serious test. A top item on the agenda is to further develop Soviet statehood on the basis of Lenin's principles of nationalities policy.

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# Eduard Shevardnadze's interview with the weekly *Ogonyok*

SOVIET Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, who is also a member of the Politburo of the CPSU, has described the Soviet Union as one of the pillars of the modern world's stability.

In an interview with the popular weekly *Ogonyok*, Shevardnadze said that instability in the Soviet Union was fraught with destabilisation of the entire world situation.

Clever people in the West, the minister noted, understand that the failure of perestroika would unleash a reign of anarchy in the country and that would lead to the complete disintegration of the state. Or else — which is more feasible — a dictator will usurp power.

Shevardnadze said that these variants are not ruled out in East European countries or a unified Germany. In order to preclude this, he said, it is necessary to speed up the process of reaching an agreement on security in Europe. But to do this, he said, the Soviet Union needs internal stability.

Shevardnadze said that the way out consisted in strengthening democratic institutes in the Soviet Union and creating a strong administrative and executive powers capable of defending democracy and perestroika.

The need for such power, he further noted, is also prompted by outbursts of anger and the

irreconcilability in inter-ethnic relations. The Soviet Union needs a president endowed with considerable powers but leaning for support on democratic institutes.

Speaking about developments in Eastern Europe, the minister stressed that the interests of the Soviet Union were best served by a situation, in which it neighboured on free, democratic and prosperous states, open both to the West and to the East, and not the situation in which a sanitary cordon of dubious and shaky regimes is artificially created around the country. The Soviet Union's interests are best met by the democratic nature of social and political transformations in those countries, not by the preservation in them of power structures relying on their own and foreign bayonets for survival.

Shevardnadze then focused on the issue of German unification. He recalled that this century's two most scourging wars were begun from German territory and stressed the need to do everything possible to prevent the presently obvious signs of German national chauvinism from becoming a thing of flesh and blood so as to preclude a united Germany from posing a threat to the world now or at some point in the future.

The foreign minister said that the Soviet approach regarded the right of Germans to self-determination as indisputable, the striving of a split nation for unification as a natural process, and, at the same time, the right of other Euro-

pean nations, which have suffered much from German militarism, to secure their future just as natural and indisputable.

Shevardnadze expressed confidence that the way out can be found with the help of the recently established 2 plus 4 mechanism, envisaging the responsibility of the four great powers — the Soviet Union, the United States, Great Britain and France — for the solution of the German issue.

He also said that the Soviet Government intended to publish soon its principles views on problems of German unification.

In discussing the internal situation in the Soviet Union, Shevardnadze said that the point in question now was the creation of a new union, a treaty-based community of republics and peoples, whose national sovereignty can be ensured by really-existing political, legal and economic institutes.

The present international situation is such that even the most powerful states cannot afford the 'luxury' of standing aside. Any disunity is fraught with destabilisation, equally pernicious both for individual countries and the world as a whole, he said.

The minister also expressed hope for a better economic situation in the Soviet Union in the perspective. The mechanism now being created by the Supreme Soviet, will make it possible to find solutions and normalise the economy, he said. □

## Soviet Foreign Ministry briefing

ADDRESSING a briefing on March 12, Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman Gennadi Gerasimov was asked to comment on the adoption by the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet of a declaration empowering the deputies of the Lithuanian Parliament to restore the Lithuanian state.

The spokesman said, among other things, that the Congress of People's Deputies at its meeting on March 12 "set up a commission to look into the decision's implications, which may be serious.

Gerasimov said that the decision posed a host of difficult legal, economic and national problems.

Asked to comment on the statement by the US Administration in connection with the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet's decision, Gerasi-

(continued from page 86)

mov said that, for the moment, would leave "this statement to the conscience of the US Administration."

Touching upon some Western reports on the Soviet decision to transfer all nuclear tests from the Semipalatinsk nuclear test range to Novaya Zemlya, Gerasimov said that "the Soviet Union has not yet passed any final decision on where and what nuclear tests to conduct over the next few years."

The proposal by the Soviet Government on a programme for nuclear tests over the next few years, as well as the location of the test ranges are currently being discussed by the USSR Supreme Soviet.

Gerasimov expressed the Soviet Union's indignation over the US Administration's intentions to use force against a Libyan pharmaceutical firm in Rabat that is allegedly manufacturing chemical weapons. He said that such a position contradicted the current international trend towards a peace settlement of conflicts and respect for the sovereignty of states.

Gerasimov also said that leader of the Israeli consulate group in Moscow Arieh Levin was summoned to the Soviet Foreign Ministry today, where he was given a presentation in connection with Israel's intention to settle immigrants, including many from the Soviet Union, on occupied Arab territories.

Gerasimov said that the presentation contained a call on the Israeli Government to immediately stop settling occupied Arab territories, including East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, and to give clear-cut assurances that it will not use arriving immigrants for this purpose.

that the GDR has no Soviet chemical weapons on its territory," he said.

Gerasimov also described as groundless the allegations that the Soviet Union intended to deploy its troops withdrawn from Czechoslovakia in the Soviet Baltic Republics. He said that the USSR had decided not to station these troops in the Soviet Baltic region. □

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### Soviet Union begins pull-out from Hungary

AN infantry battalion will be the first to leave Hungary as the Soviet Union begins the withdrawal of its forces from Hungary today.

The first military vehicles will be loaded onto railway wagons at Hajmasker rail station today, in accordance with a Soviet-Hungarian intergovernmental agreement for the complete withdraw of Soviet forces by July 31, 1991. □

(Budapest, March 12)

### Expert Opinion

## The Supreme Goal of the Soviet Armed Forces is to Prevent War

by  
Dmitri Yazov

at 40p from:  
Soviet Booklets (SN),  
3 Rosary Gardens,  
London SW7 4NW.

# Nuclear tests – a legacy too dreadful to leave

*"It is high time to revive the anti-test campaign,"  
Says Yevgeni Chazov, USSR Minister of Health.*

NEW political thinking is becoming a tangible force. Nuclear disarmament has become a world practice as the Soviet Union and the United States have disposed of their INFs. In Geneva, diplomats are working on a draft treaty to halve strategic offensive arms. Leaders of the largest nuclear countries say that nuclear war is inadmissible. At this time, nuclear tests still proceed underground in both hemispheres — a tragic paradox.

On New Year's eve, Yevgeni Chazov, USSR Minister of Health, addressed Louis Sullivan, US Secretary of Health and Human Services, Kenneth Clarke, British Minister of State, Department of Health, and Claude Evin, French Minister of Social Affairs, National Solidarity and Health. He appealed to them to demand an immediate stop to nuclear tests. "Let us be consistent and recognise the absurdity of nuclear tests," Chazov wrote and asked his Western colleagues to make the proposal to their governments and explain the importance of this

## Termination of nuclear tests discussed

TERMINATION of nuclear tests on the Semipalatinsk test range in Kazakhstan was discussed on March 7 at a joint meeting of the USSR Supreme Soviet committees on Defence and State Security, and on Ecology.

Speaking at the meeting, Colonel-General Vladimir Gerasimov, a representative of the Defence Ministry, said the ministry was ready to end tests by 1993, making 27 more tests before that.

All nuclear tests will then be concentrated on the Novaya Zemlya range (in the Arctic Ocean). The Soviet Union is ready to end nuclear tests immediately the United States does, Gerasimov said.

The American side conducted 26 tests, many of them intended for the period of more than 18 months when the Soviet Union observed a unilateral moratorium on nuclear explosions (from August 1985). A new moratorium, which many people's deputies insist on, Gerasimov said, would mean unilateral disarmament.

Deputies from Kazakhstan, who agreed with the need to maintain the country's defence capacity at a proper level, nevertheless demanded an immediate end to nuclear tests that have been held the Semipalatinsk range since 1949. Until 1963 explosions were conducted in the atmosphere, which led, according to the deputies, to radioactive radiation of a considerable number of local residents.

Underground tests have given rise to other problems: the seismic impact and the discharge of radioactive inert gases to the surface. That triggered off a mass public campaign in Kazakhstan for an end to tests.

"The socio-psychological atmosphere in the Semipalatinsk region is red hot," Yuri Shcherbak (Ukraine), a member of the Parliamentary Committee on Ecology, said. He led a commission of deputies, who visited the test range last January.

The transfer of tests to Novaya Zemlya is  
(continued on page 92)

decision for the global present and future to all physicians of the world.

The answers – disappointing ones – came only two months later. Mr Clarke described the official British viewpoint, saying that nuclear arms had supported European peace for forty years and were sure to do it in the future. Thus, we cannot see the total nuclear test ban as beneficial to all sides. Mr Sullivan said that he shared his Soviet colleague's hope for a peaceful world community free of nuclear threat, but that the test ban initiative was outside the competence of his office. Mr Evin is still silent.

By contrast, rank-and-file physicians from all over the world shower enthusiastic letters on Academician Chazov.

Novosti asked the Soviet minister to comment on official and unofficial responses to his appeal.

★

**NOVOSTI: How did you arrive at the idea to address your colleagues on a matter clearly in the competence of heads of state and government?**

**CHAZOV:** In the early 1980s, when I didn't then occupy a ministerial post and was at the centre of the movement International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War with Professor Lown, we came to the common conclusion that the total test ban was among the essential factors to put an end to the nuclear arms race. In 1982, Moscow staged TV debates for Soviet and American experts. It was the first time that the ban demand was presented to the world. We again posed it in December 1985, when Mikhail Gorbachev received us.

Now I see that the issue needs a new impetus. The international climate has certainly improved. New thinking is here for all to see. But we have not yet seen major cuts in nuclear arsenals. We have to ring the alarm, not to say soothing words to the world nations. That was why I wrote my letter, both as a doctor and health minister. I don't think I'd have written it if I were a defence minister – but my duty is to think about people's health.

**Did you hope for positive answers? Or was it purely propaganda?**

I thought my colleagues would pose the question to their governments. It would also be very important to attract public and parliamentary attention to the issue. As I see it, it is a health ministries' duty.

**But the answers came more than eight weeks later. Am I right?**

Yes. It took my colleagues rather long to think over their replies.

**But these replies were disappointing. The ministers behaved as officials, and they substantiated their refusals with their governments' official viewpoints. Have you ever talked the matter over with them as private persons? What were their private stances?**

We are on friendly terms, and I have every respect for them. I think, they merely weren't bold enough to express their personal opinions, while I was. I expressed my personal view within my country in my letter to Prime Minister Ryzhkov, and on a global scale in my letters to my colleagues in America, Britain and France. **You haven't yet received an answer from France?**

I think Mr Evin will reply in person when he comes to the Soviet Union at the end of March. **The views that nuclear arms as a factor for peace and deterrence is widespread in the West. It's like saying that disease helps one to keep fit. Do**

**you, a doctor share my point?**

Sure. It's like strengthening one's immunity without treating a serious disorder – really, difficult to understand.

I was disappointed with my American and British colleagues' answers. They came in sharp contrast to the letters of support, which I received from all over the world as soon as the public learned about my appeal. Medical societies of many countries asked their health ministries to support me.

The world is in an absurd situation. We are building confidence and making negotiations – and at the same time building up nuclear potentials. I wanted to emphasise the absurdity of it all, and I was glad to have the support of physicians in America, Finland, West Germany and many other countries. We can't afford to say complacently that all problems are over and done with. We can't rest on our laurels for so long as at least one nuclear bomb stays in an arsenal. We doctors shall feel calm only when the last of the nuclear weapons has been destroyed.

It is high time to revive the sweeping public campaign against nuclear arms. The change that we have seen is really wonderful, with the world going over to the new thinking, and nuclear arsenals shrinking. But it is too early to ease the anti-nuke effort: the arsenals are still big enough to overkill the world. We have the coming generations to think of. Nuclear bombs are too dreadful a legacy to leave them.

*Interview by Felix Platte  
(Novosti)*

## Parliamentary defence committee discuss conversion plan

THE Supreme Soviet Defence and State Security Committee discussed on March 7 the state programme for defence industry conversion for the period up to 1995 and approved its main provisions.

The programme, envisages a considerable increase in the production of consumer goods and equipment for their production at the expense of reduced supplies of armaments and combat equipment.

Presenting the programme, Valentin Smyslov, First Deputy Chairman of the State Planning Committee, told the deputies that conversion will embrace more than 400 defence enterprises, or 40 per cent of their total number. The conversion of the present and the creation of new facilities for civilian production needs around 40 billion roubles in investments.

The programme focuses on social protection of workers at converted enterprises. It envisages subsidies to bolster wages, pensions and other allowances at levels prior to conversion.

These measures are designed to prevent possible work force fluctuations and retain highly skilled and qualified people in the industry, to preserve the unique industrial and potential and use it to create high-quality civilian products.

During the debate, many deputies favoured more intensive exports of hi-tech products, including civil aircraft. Many questions were evoked by the proposals for balancing the programme with respect to material resources and for forecasting demand for certain groups of commodities.

The committee formed a specialised group to finalise the programme. □

# Soviet economist on German unification

By Dr. Vladimir Gutnik

THE Oder-Neisse border, Berlin, participation in NATO and the presence of foreign troops are the questions that seem particularly important and cause heated debate when the problem of German unity is discussed. Some say that the questions of economic unity will be quite easy to resolve after the achievement of political unity and the creation of a united Germany. I think it is a delusion. I believe that economic problems may not only hamper but undermine the mechanism of a German unification.

Political problems involved with unification, including the country's membership in NATO, are not difficult to resolve. There is a ramified and time-tested system of negotiations for this and with goodwill a compromise is quite possible. However, negotiations and agreements can hardly transform the administrative-command system and centrally controlled economy into a market economy.

The economic face of a future united Germany (unification is now a foregone conclusion) will largely depend on how this transition to a market economy will be implemented. It should be noted that economic reforms in East Germany have not begun yet and, paradoxically, in terms of market-oriented reforms East Germany is lagging behind not only Hungary or Poland but also the Soviet Union. Unlike these countries, East Germany until recently checked the development of small and medium-size co-operative businesses and joint companies and its economy was characterised by a high level of concentration in both production and management. Nevertheless, East Germany has the best chance to develop a market economy. I mean it: to develop rather than create.

Practically all West German economists and politicians agree that East Germany has no need to invent anything in this sense: there is an effective and time-honoured mechanism, such as the social market economy.

I shall not discuss here the merits and shortcomings of the social market economy. Its merits undoubtedly outnumber its shortcomings and West Germany's post-war development bears this out. The question is, however, whether East Germany is capable of implementing the principles of Erhard model of neo-liberalism as effectively. Won't the attempts at working a German 'economic miracle' provoke a series of drawn-out crises?

Such misgivings arise because there is no

coherent concept of economic reforms in East Germany. As a former East German leader said, "the worst thing is that we have promised reform but have absolutely no time to formulate its concept." West Germans also seem to be bent on improvising in the hope that the solution of individual problems will automatically bring about changes in the other sectors of the social and economic system.

At first it was believed that the economic reform should begin with the convertibility of the East German mark, though it is clear that no separate financial measures and government decisions will solve this problem. Having realised this, the West German 'reformists' probably decided that it would be cheaper and faster to cut off the head than try to cure it, that is abolish the East German mark and replace it with the West German mark. I think there is logic in this decision: success is possible if you replace a silly head with a clever one. The question is how the other parts of the body, that is the other elements of the social and economic system, will react. Won't they reject the new healthy organ?

I think West Germany is well aware of many other problems in East Germany, such as its irrational and ineffective pricing system, heavy subsidies of food prices and utility service charges, which amount to 50,000 million East German marks or 20 per cent of budget expenditures, and disastrous economic imbalances. Convertibility alone can hardly solve these problems. There is a need for a wide range of measures.

I think that the most important task in the field of economic reforms is that of economic restructuring. At the present time the structures at all levels are so different in the two states that an economic unification without preliminary shifts in the East German economy is impossible. It is necessary, first of all, to change the correlation between three sectors of the economy: increase the share of the service industry, including the credit system, as well as trade, communications and transport and reduce the share of the service industry, including the credit system, as well as trade, communications and transport and reduce the share of industry and agriculture.

There is also a need to deconcentrate and decentralise production in East Germany, especially to de-monopolise combines, legalise free enterprise and create many new enterprises, particularly small and medium ones.

It is important to re-orient production towards the end product, reduce excessive intermediate production and sharply increase the output of consumer goods, even at the expense of the production of basic materials and semi-manufactured and investment goods.

Even this list of problems that are to be solved shows that an economic unification of the two ethnically homogeneous but economically absolutely different countries is difficult and will take a lot of time. In any case, given the most favourable conditions, a restructuring will take several years. True, this process can be accelerated by an influx of foreign capital to the East German market (not only West German but also Japanese, American and Swiss capital). I don't think the phrase "a sell-off of Germany" is quite appropriate in this case. Joint enterprises and subsidiaries of Western companies will not 'enslave' East Germany but infuse it with new technology, new methods of management and marketing, a new system of economic relations and, lastly, market experience which East Germany has neglected. However, foreign

investors need incentives. One of them today is low wages and high skills and there is reason to believe that wage differences will remain for some time.

Social tensions are not ruled out however. There is reason to believe that a large number of East German citizens, especially young people, will not tolerate social discrimination in a united state and continue to move to its western regions. It won't be easy to stem this movement because West Germans, who actively support the idea of creating a common social space within a single Europe, will not want to be accused of social segregation in their own country. On the other hand, it is unreasonable and expensive to pay East German citizens the same wages as West Germans whose productivity is twice as high as that of their eastern neighbours. In any case, political and social tensions may require a review of the principles of economic efficiency.

The requirements of profitability and efficiency may lead to the closure of many factories and plants in East Germany and this may result in prolonged structural unemployment, because most of the jobs that will be closed no longer exist anywhere in Europe. To cushion the effect of this measure the state will have sharply to increase expenditures on social support for the unemployed and on the expansion of training and re-training facilities. Increased expenditures on social programmes in the eastern part of the country may force the government to postpone a second and, possibly, third phase of the tax reform aimed at cutting taxes and this may have a negative effect on business activity.

A number of East German scientists believe that a radical implementation of the principle of pay in accordance with one's input will provoke workers' strikes.

If all the difficulties involved in the restructuring are overcome, if financial and social problems are resolved and if the principles of the social market economy are implemented throughout the territory of a united Germany (all this will be accomplished sooner or later), an economically powerful state will emerge and become an indisputable leader in Europe.

From the economic point of view, German unification will not slow down the process of creation of a single European market, though it will require additional expenditures on aid to East Germany.

As for the Soviet Union, I don't think there are any reasons for it to worry that a united Germany will become its economic rival on the world market. On the contrary, the USSR will have a strong partner interested in using its increased economic potential on the vast Soviet market. Co-operation between the two countries will grow and improve in quality. □

(Novosti press agency)

Plenum of the CPSU  
Central Committee

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Report by Mikhail Gorbachev

The Platform of the CPSU  
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for the 28th Party Congress

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# New legislation on land is passed in the USSR

By Alexei Dumov, *Novosti* commentator

THE Soviet State has officially abandoned its monopoly of land under a new law on land ownership which took effect from March 15, 1990.

For many decades, land in the country has been in the exclusive ownership of the state, but, in actual fact, belonged to no one, in most cases. Thousands upon thousands of impoverished villages and tens of millions of hectares of farmland rendered unfit for cultivation, overgrown by shrubs and suffering from erosion is the price society has to pay for the neglect of national wealth. There are grounds to see the state monopoly of land as one of the causes behind the country's dependence on imported food.

Land needs an owner this demand was central to the long-running debates preceding the passing of the new legislation, yet views on the issue varied widely – both in the Supreme Soviet and among the general public. Proposals ranged from cosmetic innovations to the turning of land into private property.

It was not easy to harmonise diametrically opposite views. It turned out, for instance, that most of the collective and state farm managers were not keen on the idea sharing their land with independent farmers, co-operatives and leaseholders.

For all that, consensus was finally reached, with progress on the issue quite obvious. Indeed, the new law spells the end of the state monopoly on land.

Now land will be considered the property of the peoples living on it. Each Soviet citizen, i.e. urban dweller, will have the right to a plot of

land. The terms and procedure of allotting land are laid down in this law and in the legislation of each constituent republic which are expected to be drafted within the next few months.

All powers regarding land management are devolving to the soviets of people's deputies, thereby ending the sway of all-powerful ministries and other government departments, which previously undertook many big projects which turned land into practically lifeless desert.

It is the soviets of people's deputies that will allot land to citizens for agricultural use in perpetuity. The law allows land to be inherited but forbids its sale. Collective and state farms and other public sector entities shall have permanent land tenure.

So, the new legislation provides the framework for the development of family farms, co-operatives and other types of independent producers, which will be allowed to compete on an equal footing with collective and state farms. This opens up the prospect of a switch to market principles in the farm sector.

A great deal of emphasis is on the environmental aspect. The law seeks subsidies, tax rebates and soft loans as incentives for careful land management, conservation measures, and 'clean' produce and, at the same time, provides for sanctions against those acting contrary to existing regulations.

The law, entitled *The Fundamentals of USSR and Union Republics Legislation on Land*, provides important pre-requisites for further progress on the road of political and economic reform. Yet, for all its significance, this development does not warrant euphoria or high praise. There seems to be no grounds for being overly optimistic. The law is still to be tried and tested in practice. And, as the past few years bear

witness, far from all new ideas of law-makers have proved workable. There is a possibility that the law may yet require major changes.

But, at this juncture, this is not the issue. In fact, the law is not likely to work at all before the necessary spadework is done, including the 'listing' of all land and even land reform.

With these caveats in mind, Deputy Anatoli Sobchak, once the law had been passed, proposed that the Supreme Soviet resolution to this effect have the following three provisions added to it: (A) that all existing patterns of land use should be declared temporary and subject to reform within 1990-1991 under the new legislation, (B) that land reform committees should be set up at all district, city, town and village soviets of people's deputies, and (C) that all persons allotted land for farming purposes should be exempt from land tax for the first three years of the acquisition of the land.

Seeing that action on these proposals was bound to call for major organisational efforts and financial outlays, the Supreme Soviet found it necessary for its committees and commissions to thoroughly consider all the relevant matters before the final decision was taken. So, the country is beginning to develop ways of enforcing the new legislation on land. □

## On Vienna conventional arms talks

"WE have reached agreement at the Vienna talks to reduce initially armed personnel and five classes of conventional armaments: aircraft, helicopters, tanks, armoured cars and heavy artillery," Colonel-General Nikolai Chervov, department chief of the Soviet General Staff, said on March 12 in connection with the regular round of talks on conventional armaments in Europe, which will open in Vienna on March 15.

The general believes progress has also been made in determining the ceilings of these weapons: "each alliance will have not more than 20,000 tanks, 28,000-30,000 armoured cars, 20,000 artillery systems (NATO suggests 16,500), 4,700 combat aircraft and 1,900 combat helicopters."

"At the same time," Chervov stressed, "there are differences on a whole range of basically important issues."

The general believes the Soviet side has displayed flexibility and constructiveness when it agreed to postpone its proposal to restrict the numerical strength of Warsaw Treaty and NATO troops to 1,350,000 men each to the next phase of the negotiations.

Chervov noted that the talks would now focus on the problem of cutting the troops deployed beyond national territories. Noting the particular importance of Central Europe (Warsaw Treaty – Poland, the GDR, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, NATO – FRG, Denmark, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg), Chervov said it was important to reduce the numerical strength of the two alliances precisely in this area.

The general said the Soviet side had agreed with the American proposal to cut the numerical strength of Soviet and American troops in Central Europe to 195,000 men each and fix a ceiling for US forces in the rest of Europe at 30,000 men. Chervov believes this issue was, in fact, settled on the basis of asymmetry in the light of changes in Eastern Europe. "This is proof of our constructive approach to the search for solutions to the deadlocked issue at the Vienna talks," Chervov stressed. □

## How did people vote in the Russian elections?

ON Sunday, March 4, more than 100 million voters of Russia, the largest of the 15 republics of the Soviet Union, had to choose 1,068 deputies from almost 7,000 candidates.

A battle was launched among candidates in the majority of constituencies. In some the number of contenders for a seat in parliament exceeded 20. In 33 electoral districts voters were offered only a single candidate.

Slightly more than 110 people are now known to have won the election battle. About 30 are senior executives of regional government agencies figures, there are only two workers among the elected deputies. But the number of the elected senior managers is large. Three high-ranking military leaders and four expert lawyers won seats.

(continued from page 90)

also giving rise to protests from the population of nearby territories. Deputies of northern regions categorically objected to such tests as long ago as last autumn, when pressing ecological improvement measures were discussed in parliament.

The parliamentary committees will continue the discussion on this topic after the extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies of the Soviet Union due to open on March 12. □

The winners confirmed so far include Russian Federation President Vitali Vorotnikov, Russian Prime Minister Alexander Vlasov, and Soviet Communist Party Central Committee Secretary Yuri Manayenkov. Boris Yeltsin, a candidate for a seat in the Russian Federation Parliament in Sverdlovsk, was also elected.

For the overwhelming majority of candidates, however, the election race is far from over. A run-off will be held in 893 constituencies, as none of the contenders there won a majority of votes – 50 per cent of the vote is necessary to ensure election. New elections will be called in 24 districts.

The four-month election campaign was marked by high emotions and fiery debates, especially in its final stage. Although only one party – the Soviet Communist Party – exists in the USSR at present, candidates represented a great many diverse political associations.

The main plank in the election programme of many candidates was the rebirth of Russia.

Once elected, the majority of candidates promised to do away with what they view as an infringement upon Russia's sovereignty. The range of 'recipes' to pull the republic out of crisis is very broad. But the first results of the elections demonstrate that voters have not decided as yet to whom they give preference. The battle continues. □