

## Joint Soviet-US statement on Gulf adopted

*DURING the last round of Soviet-US talks on Tuesday, January 29, US Secretary of State James Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh adopted a Soviet-US Statement on the Gulf. Here follows the full text of this statement.*

In the course of the discussions held in Washington on January 26-29, 1991, USSR Minister of Foreign Affairs Alexander Bessmertnykh and US Secretary of State James Baker devoted considerable attention to the situation in the Persian Gulf.

The ministers reiterated the commitment of their countries to the UN Security Council resolutions adopted in connection with Iraq's aggression against Kuwait.

They expressed regret that numerous efforts of the United Nations, other international organisations, individual countries, and envoys were all rebuffed by Iraq.

The military actions authorised by the United Nations have been provoked by the refusal of the Iraqi leadership to comply with the clear and lawful demands of the international community for withdrawal from Kuwait.

Secretary of State Baker emphasised that the United States and its coalition partners are seeking the liberation of Kuwait, not the destruction of Iraq.

He stressed that the United States has no quarrel with the people of Iraq, and poses no threat to Iraq's territorial integrity. Secretary Baker reiterated that the United States is doing its utmost to avoid casualties among the civilian population, and is not interested in expanding the conflict.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Bessmertnykh took note of the American position and agreed that Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait must remain the goal of the international community. Both sides believe that everything possible should be done to avoid further escalation of the war and expansion of its scale.

The ministers continue to believe that a cessation of hostilities would be possible if Iraq made an unequivocal commitment to withdraw from Kuwait. They also believe that such a commitment must be backed by immediate, concrete steps leading to full compliance with the Security Council resolutions.

The Iraq leadership has to respect the will of

the international community. By doing so, it has it within its powers to stop the violence and bloodshed.

The ministers agreed that established enduring stability and peace in the region after the conflict, on the basis of effective security arrangements, will be a high priority of our two governments.

Working to reduce the risk of war and miscalculation will be essential, particularly because a spiralling arms race in this volatile region can only generate greater violence and extremism.

In addition, dealing with the causes of instability and the sources of conflict, including the Arab-Israeli conflict, will be especially important. Indeed, both ministers agreed that without

a meaningful peace process – one which promotes a just peace, security, and real reconciliation for Israel, Arab states, and Palestinians – it will not be possible to deal with the sources of conflict and instability in the region.

Both ministers, therefore, agreed that in the aftermath of the crisis in the Persian Gulf, mutual US-Soviet efforts to promote Arab-Israeli peace and regional stability, in consultation with other parties in the region, will be greatly facilitated and enhanced.

The two ministers are confident that the United States and the Soviet Union, as demonstrated in various other regional conflicts, can make a substantial contribution to the achievement of a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East. □

## Gorbachev appoints delegations for Baltic talks

PRESIDENT Gorbachev issued decrees today on the composition of delegations "to discuss a package of political, social and economic issues" with representatives of the three Baltic republics, reports TASS correspondent Alexandras Bubris from Moscow on February 1.

A delegation to hold talks with Latvia will be led by USSR First Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Velichko, a delegation for Lithuania – by USSR First Deputy Prime Minister Vitali Doguzhiev and for Estonia – by USSR Deputy Prime Minister Nikolai Laverov. The delegations will include heads of committees and commissions of the Soviet Parliament, the State Planning Committee, the Defence Ministry, the Foreign Ministry, the Interior Ministry, and other Soviet ministries and institutions.

Up till now representatives of the Soviet Union had been preparing for talks with Lithuania and Estonia only. Consultative meetings with Lithuanian representatives had been held at the level of delegations, appointed by a

decree of the Soviet President and a resolution of the Lithuanian parliament accordingly.

They were led by former Soviet Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov and Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis. Meetings with Estonian representatives were held on the level of experts. The sides failed to agree on the date of the start of official talks with Lithuania and Estonia. Baltic leaders insist that their republics should be treated as "sovereign states" at the talks, while the centre continues to regard them as part of the Soviet Union.

After the January events in the Baltic region, Latvia and Estonia signed treaties with the largest union republic, the Russian Federation. A similar treaty is expected to be signed soon between Russia and Lithuania.

It is noteworthy that the word "talks" is not mentioned in today's Presidential decrees. They deal only with the "discussion of issues" with Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian representatives. The Baltic republics are mentioned as "Soviet Socialist" republics, although it is known that after proclaiming unilaterally their independence last spring they dropped those words from their names. □

## Soviet Vice President on situation in country

"ASIDE from the democratisation of society and the advance of new political thinking in our foreign policy course, we have attained none of the ambitious goals during five years of perestroika. We have failed to fulfil most of the social and economic tasks," Soviet Vice President Gennadi Yanaev believes. "We must urgently set things in order, so that people have confidence of the morrow," he said in an interview with the latest issue of the weekly *Glasnost*.

"We are working for the order which will make it possible to develop democratic processes. We want order at industrial enterprises

which will permit restoration of normal inter-branch links. Everyone should be well fed and should not have to spend hours in queues, which is so humiliating. People should not be afraid of going out into the street, like they are afraid today, when the crime situation is so appalling. Inter-ethnic clashes should be settled to everybody's benefit."

Yanaev believes that the combining of the posts of General Secretary of the CPSU and President by Mikhail Gorbachev is a "benefit both for the Party and the state." "The President needs the Soviet Communist Party, because it is the only powerful party, which has a realistic programme and enjoys peoples confidence. It was perceptibly shaken recently, but now its confidence is being regained. The Party needs the President too.

(continued on page 36)

### IN THIS ISSUE

Soviet Foreign Minister interviewed by <i>Pravda</i> .....	p34
Soviet spokesman on talks with Baltic republics .....	p35
The USSR favours human rights priority in all states .....	p36
Central Committee on the CPSU plenum – Political Statement .....	p37
Committee on international relations discusses Gulf War .....	p38



# Soviet Foreign Minister interviewed by *Pravda*

*THERE follows the full text of an interview given by Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh to the newspaper Pravda and published on January 31.*

*Bessmertnykh gave the interview in Washington to Pravda correspondent Vitali Gan and TASS correspondent Vladimir Matyash.*

*Prominent Soviet diplomat Alexander Bessmertnykh became head of the Soviet Foreign Ministry at a turning point in international relations, when a new epoch of broad international co-operation and interaction came to replace the infamous 'cold war'.*

*Bessmertnykh, 57, has been a career diplomat for 34 years from a rank-and-file Foreign Ministry employee to the post of the head of the Soviet Foreign Political Department. After the talks in Washington, Bessmertnykh gave his first interview to us.*

**QUESTION:** Alexander Alexandrovich, you have come to this post in an extremely critical period. Could you share your opinion of events in the world?

**BESSMERTNYKH:** I believe that much of our foreign policy after World War II was determined by what I call a nuclear paradox. I mean that traditional political trends were somewhat distorted by the need to ensure security, taking into account the nuclear factor. That is why great attention was paid to relations with countries having nuclear potential.

It was absolutely necessary, but I believe that at the same time, traditional relations with neighbours were somewhat de-emphasised. I believe that now that we have entered a new stage of arms reductions, strategic balance of forces and parity, we should pay particular attention to neighbouring countries, at the same time, not depreciating our relations with the United States and other great countries.

In other words, it is necessary to broaden good-neighbourly relations focusing on economic, social and cultural tasks. This is one line that should be part of state and national interests. Our country should not be isolated.

There is also another line, concerning relations not only with neighbouring countries, but with other leading countries of the world. Many people say that because of domestic problems, it has become more difficult to pursue an active policy in such regions as Latin America, Africa and the Pacific, and it should be curtailed. I believe we should retain the current active and dynamic attitude in our foreign policy.

I have always believed that the connection between domestic and foreign policy is not merely philosophical. People justly say that politics is the concentrated expression of economy. This is right, and this is the philosophical side of the matter. But there is also a purely specific, everyday connection between domestic and foreign policy.

There are two aspects here. The first aspect is well known to everybody. Foreign policy helps domestic policy, creating favourable conditions for perestroika and all the reforms we are carrying out.

But we should not forget that domestic policy can also promote foreign policy, actively supporting it and being a firm and reliable rear or seriously deteriorate it.

Unfortunately, this situation exists. I mean that all our difficulties surely provoke an international response. Take, for example, the Baltics. It is easy to fall prey to emotions, which is happening in the West. But the West does not fully understand what is going on there or the Soviet leadership's real stand.

I will say sincerely that during my visit, the Baltics were discussed very keenly, along with other issues. And they were mainly discussed because the West does not fully understand events there. They are prone to look at events there superficially, without going into detail and sources, i.e. theirs is mostly an emotional response. I believe that such a response has the right to exist.

We also regret what is happening there, but it is necessary to gain an understanding of the reasons for such events. Why has President Mikhail Gorbachev's inclination for dialogue failed in Lithuanian, while it works in Latvia and Estonia? Why are republics that strive for independence not moving in constitutional ways?

Nobody is saying that independence is impossible. The West should be more attentive and cautious in its assessments. It is extremely easy in politics to mess things up. It is necessary to correlate everything with changes in Europe and with qualitative changes in the world. It is dangerous and inadmissible to expend effort expressing emotions about events. Especially as everything in these republics could take place in line with the Constitution.

Thus, in our foreign policy we should first and foremost focus on security issues, i.e. on our relations with nuclear countries having powerful military structures, and on the economic factor, as we are interested in our country being surrounded with partners, rather than opponents.

The world is interdependent. No single country can completely provide for itself, including the United States. Political contacts and friendliness should develop. By removing ideology from our relations, we do not mean that there should be no political ties. We simply should not perceive relations between countries through a stereotyped ideological prism, as we did previously.

We considered some countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America as close to us, because their leaders said things that sounded ideologically pleasant to us. The ideological factor was most important here. But later we discovered that we had a distorted impression of the real state of affairs.

Major large states wishing to develop relations with us remained on the side. Other countries, no less respected, suddenly received special status simply because their leaders made ideologically more pleasant statements. We have already removed all this form our diplomacy. Our relations with states are versatile.

Some people say that our activities in the disarmament field weakened us. This is certainly a nonprofessional point of view, although it sometimes comes from extremely professional spheres. Eliminating military-political opposition is the most important factor in ensuring security.

What is the sense in stockpiling more and more weapons and engendering new enemies? I believe that this variant is absolutely unacceptable and extremely dangerous. To remove Pershing missiles from the country's temple, to see inveterate enemies become opponents, then neutral entities and finally even partners – such as evolution is very useful.

**Let us return to the second part of the question. How would you assess the current state of Soviet-US relations?**

I have always believed that we should consider them as vitally important for several reasons. First, the United States is a superpower, on which the character of the world situation depends. It is leading in the Western world and,

naturally, our relations with it – to a great extent, but not 100 per cent – determine approaches of Soviet diplomacy with respect to other states.

It should certainly be a focus of our foreign policy, but it should not overshadow all other things. I believe the United States thinks about us in the same way and understands that we are also a focus of world politics.

My concept is that, admitting the key role of the United States in our relations, we should not consider it as a force prevailing over all the rest. All other regions should play their role and have their own significance. Relations with other countries should not develop in the shadow of Soviet-US relations.

With the United States we have reached a level of trust and openness that permits us to discuss things that we do not like or that we oppose. The very tone of our dialogue is conducive to the open discussion of mutual problems and even the most delicate issues.

**Alexander Alexandrovich, some people in the United States speak about a recession in Soviet-US relations and about the possibility of their return to positions of the second half of the 1970s, when the two countries deviated from 'detente'. What can you say about such opinions?**

Nothing can be excluded. We cannot guarantee the course of events. But I believe that we have reached a level of relations with the United States and the West as a whole that will guarantee qualitative changes and will be able to make the 21st Century a century of a completely new world community.

The period between the end of the 'cold war' and the current new stage has been very short. We are surrounded by people who still retain strong 'cold war' thinking. I believe we have wrongly spoken about the end of the 'cold war' and the transition to a period of a broad, active and even absolute partnership.

I believe there should be a transition period between the 'cold war' and the developed period of partnership. It is natural, because it is necessary to do away with 'cold war' stereotypes that still determine the positions of politicians, parliamentarians and the public. There is an absolute chance of moving relations in the world and our relations with the United States to a qualitatively new level.

There are dangers, especially if the other side is locked into a purely emotional response and into immediate political calculations, at the same time, overlooking the possibility of destroying the historic trend towards the positive development of the world. Unfortunately, all this exists.

That is why our diplomacy and our foreign policy should inspire vigilance and should be a dynamic force. Nothing can be guaranteed in this world. Our policy has a good chance and a sound basis and has created normal living conditions. But it is necessary to protect all this, and we are now busy with it.

**During talks at the US capital, we discussed finishing work on the treaty on strategic offensive weapons. There are reports saving that both sides are experiencing something like despair, because there has not been a breakthrough. What were the results of the discussion?**

There is no despair. On the contrary, I am deeply satisfied with what happened. It is better to postpone the summit, than to make a hash of such an important meeting. Circumstances, such as the Gulf War and problems with the START Treaty, impose certain obligations upon us.

I should note that when we, both sides, said it is necessary to continue work on the treaty, this

*(continued on next page)*



# Soviet spokesman on talks with Baltic republics

"THE Soviet Federation Council on Friday, February 1, discussed the situation in the Baltics. The discussion of recent events in Lithuania and Latvia was thorough and unbiased. The council analysed the reasons for the conflict," Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman Vitali Churkin told a briefing in Moscow on February 4.

At correspondents' request, Churkin spoke on President Mikhail Gorbachev's decision to set up a negotiation mechanism to discuss the whole range of political, social and economic issues with Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia.

Churkin said that First Deputy Prime Ministers Vladimir Velichko and Vitali Doguzhiyev and Deputy Prime Minister Nikolai Laverov had been appointed to head delegations comprising competent specialists from the Soviet Parliament, the State Planning Committee, the Defence Ministry, the Interior Ministry and the Foreign Ministry.

Speakers at the Federation Council session noted that anti-constitutional acts adopted in the Baltic republics and the violation of human rights of many citizens provoked confrontations and resulted in an explosion, Churkin said.

The Federation Council supported the Soviet President's statement of January 22 on absolute inadmissibility of the use of military force to resolve political problems and on the need to eliminate the sources of the conflict on a mutually acceptable basis and restore constitutional order, Churkin said.

A consensus has been reached, as this is the only way to eliminate the danger of sharpening disputes and outbursts of violence and ensure a return to normal life, he said.

Participants noted that the only right way is by means of talks, and it has not been studied sufficiently. Unfortunately, the dialogue with the Baltic republics was sporadic and was not carried through to a logical end. That is why the decision was taken to hold talks on a permanent basis, Churkin said.

Analysing the present situation, speakers stressed that the country is living through the difficult process of society's harmonisation, ethnic relations are being established with great difficulties against this background, and the sweeping transformation of the Soviet Federation is taking place.

It must be clear to all that no political or nationality changes in society will be successful if political, social and other rights of citizens are

trampled underfoot, and ethnic discrimination is practiced.

Speakers called on the leaders of the Baltic republics to responsibly analyse the present situation and to avoid statements which could fan up passions.

This is also true of the negative "internationalism" of events in the Baltics when foreign states are sometimes openly invited to interfere in the domestic affairs of the Soviet Union.

During the discussion, Federation Council members proposed several urgent measures to overcome the political and constitutional crisis, Churkin continued.

They include the establishment of conciliation commissions consisting of various political groups, roundtables with the participation of all interested parties and the thorough and unbiased legal examination of laws adopted in the Baltics.

It was stressed that all cases of the use of arms must be thoroughly investigated and assessed according to law. Law-breakers must be punished.

The Soviet President, the all-union parliament and the government are closely following developments in the Baltic republics and are doing their best to normalise the situation there as soon as possible, Churkin concluded. □

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by no means can be interpreted as some crisis in our efforts to finish work on it. We have few unresolved issues.

But when we counted the number of days before the summit and when we had taken into consideration the great amount of work to be done on the treaty, which textually has not been elaborated, not tidied up, we understood that although we can resolve all issues, we will not be ready by the summit.

Practically speaking, we can finish work on the treaty in two to three weeks. In other words there is some progress, and the delay was caused by purely technical reasons. There is not any crisis here. We will try to move things ahead.

Have you discussed the possibility of economic sanctions by the West in response to events in the Baltics?

I had read about this and heard it before I arrived here. However the issue of sanctions has

not been raised. The word itself was not pronounced. The West wanted to signal its dissatisfaction with events in the Baltics. It should be noted that emotions overshadowed the need to understand the course pursued by the Soviet Government.

Of course, events are occurring beyond the control of the President and local authorities themselves. The situation is heated, and some leaders who wish to profit personally by dramatising the situation are consciously aggravating it. Anything can happen in such conditions.

In short, we did discuss the issue. I believe the established level of relations permits discussing any issue.

What do you think about regional conflicts? The Gulf War is one of the planet's hot spots. Can Soviet-US interaction put out the flame of such conflicts.

I think it is impossible to pin all hopes on the Soviet Union and the United States and it is impossible to present things as if everything depends upon them. The conflicting states should resolve conflicts themselves, but our two countries are ready to help where it is possible. It is very important to strengthen the United Nations and give it priority in settling regional conflicts, rather than be drawn into conflicts ourselves.

The world is at the turn of the 21st Century. What can you say about our near future?

It is hard to predict, but I believe that the bipolar world is coming to an end, it is becoming multi-polar. It is a positive phenomenon. Stability has been reached in Soviet-US relations. We have reached a considerable level of understanding. Unfortunately, our interaction lacks a concrete foundation, so to speak. But there is a basis, and it is rather firm.

I would like to note that we are still moving away from the idea of having extreme arms potentials. The world is beginning to pay more attention to resolving social, economic and ecological problems. Political directions are changing, thank God our diplomacy understands this and is beginning to pay more attention to these issues.

Will there be conflicts in the future? Probably, yes. But we are now involved in a very important issue, creating precedents for dealing

with them. The situation in the Gulf is contradictory. It was hard for us to choose such conduct, but it is necessary to behave this way, as we are creating a precedent for dealing with aggression.

The fact that the international community has united against the aggression, shows that such conduct has prospects. Security should include not only factors such as the number of weapons, missiles or artillery, but the whole complex of state power, including the economy and social stability of society.

I would like to note that the Soviet foreign political course aims fully at peaceful development, along peaceful channels. This will help us concentrate on resolving our own complicated domestic tasks. □

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# The USSR favours human rights priority in all states

THE 47th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights began under conditions which considerably differ from the international atmosphere of optimism and hopes in recent years. "But in this field as well, our country firmly supports international efforts towards the exercise of human rights," chief Soviet delegate at the session Yuri Reshetov told a news conference in Geneva on January 30.

"We proceed from the possibility and the need to deepen constructive co-operation in the field of human rights which, as it seems to us, increasingly supersedes confrontational attitudes in this sphere," he said.

The recently adopted Soviet laws on citizenship, the freedom of conscience, the freedom of the press, on public and trade union organisations are intended to contribute to broadening democracy, Reshetov said.

One can now say that law-making in the humanitarian sphere is practised in accordance with the Soviet Union's commitment under the international covenants on human rights and the Final Document of the Vienna follow-up meeting on the Conference of Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE).

"We also consider this work as a certain stage on the way to a Moscow humanitarian conference – the third and concluding phase, after the Paris and Copenhagen sessions, of the Conference on Human Dimension within the framework of the CSCE Process.

"At the same time movement in this direction takes place under conditions of an aggravated situation in the socio-economic field, which inevitably brings about tension and tells on the atmosphere in society as a whole.

"The latest events in the Baltic republics took a tragic turn and led to loss of life. Competent bodies are engaged in work to establish the guilt of people involved in acts of violence. The

circumstances connected with the use of weapons are being thoroughly investigated.

"The events developed in an atmosphere of the deepest crisis and the overall atmosphere of lawlessness that took place there. The adoption of a whole series of normative laws that are a violation of basic internationally recognised rights of the individual became one of the most dangerous manifestations of that.

"Statements by the leadership of the Baltic republics about their commitment to the lofty international norms concerning human rights appear in actual fact to be only declarations.

"Overt discrimination against the so-called non-indigenous, or the Russian-speaking population, as well as against their own indigenous population from political motives is practised in their legislative policy.

"This discrimination is practised on the strength of the laws on the language, citizenship, the introduction of residential qualification for participation in elections, property, the introduction of the death penalty for dissent, and brings about tension and instability in the Baltic republics.

"The Baltic republics' problems, of course, should be tackled by the Soviet people themselves and only by political means," Reshetov emphasised.

He also drew the attention of numerous journalists and human rights experts who attended the news conference to President Mikhail Gorbachev's statement dated January 22 this year, in connection with issues raised in the Western media.

The presidential statement said that "neither domestic nor foreign policy has undergone changes" and that the Soviet Union consistently carries on the policy of deepening perestroika.

"Our country," Reshetov said, "is for human rights to be the focus of both foreign and domestic policies of all states and for appropriate norms and principles of contemporary international law to be engaged a genuinely universal character." □



## USSR to promote resumption of Middle East settlement

THE Soviet Union has repeatedly stated that it opposes the accommodation of immigrants going to Israel on occupied Arab lands, because this runs counter to the standards of the international law, Yuri Reshetov, head of a Soviet delegation, said at a session of the UN Commission for Human Rights at Geneva, reports TASS correspondent Vitali Makarchev on February 1.

The agenda of the session includes the item on human rights violations on occupied Arab lands, including Palestine. In the course of the discussion some Arab delegations brought up the problem of Jewish immigration to Israel from East European countries, specifically the Soviet Union.

According to the Soviet representative, Soviet citizens emigrate from the Soviet Union to take permanent residence abroad in conformity with provisions of the universal declaration of human rights and the international pact on civil and political rights. This emigration can be restricted only for the reasons, envisaged by those documents.

Touching upon the situation on Israeli-occupied Arab lands, the Soviet representative said it was "explosive" and "fraught with new human tragedies." The reason for the incessant violation of rights of the Arab population is the refusal of the Israeli authorities to abide by generally recognised standards in the sphere of human rights, as well as the fact that the Palestinian people have been denied the inalienable right to self-determination.

A peaceful settlement in the region should be based on a political dialogue, the taking into account of security interests of all countries, the strict observance of human rights and the exercise by Palestinians of the right to self-determination. An international conference on the Middle East with the participation of five permanent members of the UN Security Council and all parties concerned, including Palestine, could be a concluding stage of this process. The Soviet Union is ready to promote the resumption of settlement processes in every way, the head of the Soviet delegation said. □

## SOVIET VICE PRESIDENT ON SITUATION IN COUNTRY

(continued from page 33)

"I should like to stress, however, that the Party is alive not because Gorbachev is General Secretary of its Central Committee. If he ceases to be General Secretary, another leader will appear. But the ideals and goals of the Party, if cleared of the distortions that appeared in various periods of our history, will remain alive."

The Vice President expressed emphatic dis-

agreement with Boris Yeltsin's statement that the course of the country is allegedly changing toward command-administrative ways in economy and a unitarian state in politics. "This statement is the result of the policy pursued by Yeltsin for a long time. The essence of this policy is as follows: all that is done by the centre is bad, all that is done by Russia is good. It is unworthy of a politician to use such methods, in order to put into practice his political ambitions of their basis."

Speaking about the situation in the Baltic region, the Vice President pointed out that "the sooner parliaments of the Baltic republics realise that they should repeal anti-constitutional resolutions infringing upon the rights of citizens and social or national groups of the population – the quicker we shall be able to work out political solutions." Commenting on the appeals of some political scientists to reduce aid to the Soviet Union following the developments in the Baltic region, Yanaev stressed that "any attempt to talk with the Soviet Union – a great power, although living through tremendous hardships – in the language of diktat is doomed to failure. I do not believe that it is the best form of international relations – to try to exert economic or other pressure because of some problems, which are the domestic affair of the Soviet Union." □

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## Central Committee of the CPSU plenum

# POLITICAL STATEMENT

A JOINT plenary meeting of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission of the CPSU has expressed "deep concern over the dangerous development of events in the Gulf."

The plenum urged the country's state leadership "to take the necessary additional steps before the international community and the United Nations to end the bloodshed, to preclude an irretrievable damage to the environment and direct the military conflict into the channel of political solution in the spirit of the UN Security Council resolution."

A political statement of the plenum, which was held in Moscow on January 31, is published in *Pravda* dated February 4. The seven-page document entitled *On the Present Situation and Tasks of the Party* deals mainly with internal political problems.

"The social crisis in the country has reached the danger limit, beyond which destructive social upheavals are possible," the statement says.

Participants in the plenum draw attention to a growing number of regions where the situation is getting out of the authorities' control and results in "manifestations of anarchy and bloodshed."

The plenum stated that forces that chose it as an object to change the social system of the USSR have already identified themselves and try to unite in the Soviet Union's political arena.

The document points out that "nationalist totalitarian regimes proclaiming a mythical supremacy of the nation's rights over the world's universally recognised rights of the individual and citizens are taking shape in some regions."

Having expressed sorrow in view of the death of people as a result of the tragic events in the Baltic republics and Transcaucasia, the plenum declared for "abrogation, without delay, of anti-constitutional acts and resolutions that violate human rights" and for "immediate res-

toration of the constitutional order in the country."

"Civil peace and countrywide concord are what the country is now in need of most of all," the document states.

The plenum called on the communists and all citizens to declare for the preservation of the USSR during the forthcoming referendum. Participants in the plenum supported the policy of carrying on radical economic reforms. □

### ★ Ukrainian Communist Party Chief calls for stronger politics

THE polarisation of political forces is now complete in the Soviet Union, Politburo member Stanislav Gurenko, who is also the Ukrainian Communist Party chief, told last week's Soviet Communist Party plenum in Moscow. His speech at the plenum is published by *Pravda* on February 4.

"Opposition forces are uniting and acting from anti-communist positions," he said. "In the Ukraine, you can hear people say there are only two parties - communist and anti-communist."

"In people's minds their domestic hardships are closely linked with dangerous developments in other republics, above all the Baltics, and the war in the Middle East," Gurenko said. "The reaction of the centre to these developments is often late and not always clear to the population. People often reject it because of its vagueness and uncertainty. The resulting vacuum is filled with tendentious one-sided information."

According to Gurenko, "the federal government should pursue a more consistent policy in ruling the state, ensure guaranteed observance of constitutional rights of citizens of all nationalities, all civilians and servicemen. Procrastination and inconsistency are inadmissible, espe-

cially now that the union referendum to decide the fate of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is approaching."

Gurenko was critical of the state of the media in the country, the inability of the Party press to respond promptly to attacks by the opposition press. "Our central publications," he said, "must be more active in exposing the true face of politicians of doubtful reputation and their supporters." □

### ★ Russian Communist Party leader on Party tasks

SOVIET communists should support the Soviet state leadership's measures aimed at stabilising the situation in the country, and invigorate their work in the Soviets, Russian Communist Party chief Ivan Polozkov said on February 4.

Addressing Party activists at Moscow's Dynamo plant, Polozkov spoke about the results of the recent plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party. He said the meeting was a turning point in the Soviet Communist Party's activities and signalled an offensive in the political struggle.

It is necessary to put perestroika back on its correct road, Polozkov said. He said the "so called democrats managed to substitute the aims of perestroika." He criticised attempts to convince the Soviet people that the return to capitalism was the best way for them.

At the same time, he denied statements that the country is reverting to dictatorship.

Speaking about the situation in the Baltics, Polozkov said there was an attempt to "stage some political play there." He believes that the conflict in the Baltics was caused by the fact that "totalitarian nationalist regimes are being formed there, oriented to the West." □

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## Committee to co-ordinate work of law enforcement agencies

SOVIET Interior Minister Boris Pugo told TASS on February 4 that the establishment of a committee to co-ordinate the activities of law enforcement bodies (set up at the President's office) is a "very important step" in the fight against crime.

"The coordination of the work of all bodies waging war on crime is an urgent issue," he added. "This concerns, above all, Interior Ministry bodies, the KGB and the Procurator's Office."

The key task of the new body, which Pugo called "not an executive body but a coordinating structure", is to work out general approaches to and methods of crime control.

"Good documents have recently been drafted, above all an extensive programme for crime control," he continued. "However, it was compiled by various departments and ministries, and a coordinating body is necessary to carry on this struggle."

Asked whether law enforcement had suffered as a result of uncoordinated measures, Pugo said: "It is difficult for me to speak about the past, I have been working as Interior Minister for only two months. But it is clear that we lack coordination."

"Now that the KGB has assumed new functions in the struggle against economic crime,

practical activities have put this issue on the agenda."

In Pugo's view, the establishment of the coordinating committee "is not directly linked with the split in Interior Ministry bodies in some union republics, including the Baltics."

The minister stressed at the same time that "the operation of two interior ministries in some republics or territories is inadmissible," while the operation of two separately controlled armed forces "is even dangerous, since this could lead to an armed clash."

"We have taken a clear-cut position on this issue: we should do our utmost to do away with the split and return unity to law enforcement," Pugo said. □

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# Committee on international relations discusses Gulf War

THE USSR Supreme Soviet Committee on International Affairs discussed the Gulf War at their meeting on February 4.

The threat of the war's escalation in the region, fraught with unpredictable and possibly irreparable consequences, provokes serious concern among Soviet legislators.

In their opinion, combat operations are even now exceeding the mandate given by the UN Security Council. Missiles and bombs are destroying whole residential areas and killing civilians.

The combatants are concealing the real number of casualties among the civilian population.

The anxiety of the committee over an alarm-

ing, although every hypothetical, prospect for the use of mass destructive weapons not far from Soviet borders is quite understandable.

On the other hand, damage from the use of ecological weapons – fires at oilfields and the oil slicks in the Gulf – is quite tangible.

Summing up the discussion, committee chairman Alexander Dzasokhov pointed to the need to give every assistance, including that under the UN auspices, to attempts to find a political solution to the conflict and to achieve a ceasefire in the Gulf in the interests of implementing the Security Council decisions.

International parliamentary quarters are called upon to prevent the international community from rolling back from the present positions to the cold war, Dzasokhov said.

The committee decided to recommend that the Soviet government set up an expert group to monitor the situation in the Gulf.

The committee also called on the international community to outlaw ecological weapons.

In compliance with a decision made by the Soviet Parliament, the committee chose deputies for a special parliamentary group to monitor developments in the Gulf.

The meeting also examined the response abroad to developments in the Soviet Baltic republics.

The committee approved newly appointed Soviet ambassadors to foreign countries, who had been nominated by the Foreign Ministry. While discussing this issue, the committee gave some recommendations to the ambassadors. □

## Soviet-US talks prove specific and constructive

By TASS political news analyst Askold Biryukov:

DESPITE a sceptical attitude manifested in certain circles, the talks between Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh and US Secretary of State James Baker proved specific and constructive.

A wide range of matters concerning bilateral relations, global and regional issues were touched upon during the talks that ended in Washington on January 29. Most importantly, they broadened the basis of mutual understanding between Moscow and Washington and made it possible to map out prospects for further co-operation.

Among the results of the talks, I would like to single out a joint US Statement on the Gulf.

Anxious voices have been growing louder in recent days in various countries, including the United States and the Soviet Union. The fear is that the actions of the multinational forces, of which American Armed Forces constitute the backbone, go further and further beyond the framework of talks determined for them by the UN mandate and that those forces, instead of liberating Kuwait from Iraqi occupation, are being increasingly drawn into a war on Iraqi territory, bringing massive destruction and civilian casualties to that country.

Participants in the anti-war demonstrations that are gathering momentum recently raise questions as to what goals the United States seeks to attain in the Gulf? Is it, maybe, that the goal is that the United States, upon destroying

Iraq, would establish its domination over world reserves of oil and thereby over the whole world?

It is gratifying that, as the US side emphasises during the recently ended talks, the United States and its partners seek the liberation of Kuwait, not the destruction of Iraq, and are doing everything to avoid casualties among the civilian population and are not interested in broadening the conflict.

The Soviet Union and the United States expressed an opinion that everything possible must be done to avoid further escalation of the war and the broadening of its scope.

Particular gratification is aroused by a statement by the foreign ministers of the two powers about the possibility of ending military operations against Iraq altogether if the latter pledges unambiguously to withdraw from Kuwait and immediately backs the pledge up by specific moves leading to full compliance with the UN Security Council resolutions.

To my mind, such a statement is a step forward in the position held by the US Administration so far and it would be regrettable if the Iraqi leadership does not use the chance to end the war.

Another provision of the joint statement is noteworthy.

Towards establishing lasting peace and stability in the region after the end of the Gulf conflict, the two foreign ministers pointed out that to remove the sources of conflicts and instability, including those of the Arab-Israeli conflict, would be of special importance.

The statement says that the two ministers agreed that this is impossible without a full-scale peace process promoting a just peace, security and genuine reconciliation between Israel, Arab states and Palestinians.

They expressed an opinion that overcoming the Gulf crisis would also considerably facilitate and would make it possible to give a boost to the joint efforts being made by the Soviet Union and the United States, in contact with the other sides in the region, to promote peace between the Arabs and Israel and regional security.

It seems to me that such a statement is yet another shift in the US previous stand and it makes it easier to achieve lasting peace and stability.

I think such an approach by the Soviet Union and the United States to a peaceful settlement of the conflict in the Gulf and throughout the region would be welcomed by all members of the international community. □

## Arguments in favour of naval reduction talks

By Major-General Yuri Lebedev,  
Novosti political analyst

NAVAL forces remain outside the framework of disarmament talks, though their destabilising influence on international security in conditions when other forces are being reduced has been growing.

The first days of the Gulf War showed that naval forces are an all-purpose component in the package of warfare means capable of eliminating strategic targets, cities and industrial centres on land.

The US alone has more than 100 warships with over 80,000 personnel in the Gulf. The US mailed-fist there consists of naval groups led by the aircraft-carriers *Independence*, *Saratoga* and *Midway*. Aircraft-carriers *Ranger*, *America* and *Theodore Roosevelt* are heading towards the Gulf. Each carrier has up to 80 combat aircraft, nearly half of which are designed to hit targets on land. Besides, it is reported that about 20 submarines armed with Tomahawk missiles, which have been used to attack Iraq and Kuwait, are deployed there.

The coalition forces in the Gulf also include naval formations from other countries, in particular NATO members.

Developments in the Gulf have reaffirmed the high mobility of naval forces, which can be

quickly moved to any part of the world's oceans and used in all kinds of combat operations. Since the high seas do not belong to any country, naval forces can pressure any state, even if they are deployed outside their territorial waters.

I would like to point out that Western strategists presented the actions of naval and air forces of the coalition army in the Gulf as a new strategy of warfare. Experts believe that this strategy guarantees victory with the minimum use of ground forces.

I think that time will show who is right. But one thing is clear now, exactly, that when other types of weapons are reduced the influence of naval forces increases immeasurably. Is this why the US and NATO in general refuse to discuss naval reductions?

Another alarming element is the deployment of powerful US naval task groups in advance positions. Now that Soviet-US relations are becoming warmer, it is difficult to justify the quick build-up of the US naval forces, including the mass deployment of long-range sea-launched cruise missiles and the construction of modern ships of the main classes, in particular multi-purpose aircraft-carriers.

Since the East and the West are eliminating imbalances and asymmetries in many types of armaments, it would seem proper to settle the problem of naval forces, too. This argument has been reaffirmed by the hostilities in the Gulf. □



**PRAVDA:**

# Soviet Foreign Minister's speech at Party plenum

IMMEDIATELY after Iraq invaded Kuwait, the Soviet Union took steps to avert the conflict from spreading further and promote an Iraqi withdrawal, Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh told the plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party and the Central Control Commission last week.

Extracts from his speech are published in *Pravda* on February 5.

"After the military operation had begun against Iraq Soviet policy aimed to localise, limit and end the conflict," the minister stressed.

"One of the concerns was to avert the destruction of Iraq itself and not to inflict casualties on the Iraqi people. The entire world

soon began to use the same language, although before the Soviet Union began doing this energetically, the world community largely kept silent," Bessmertnykh said.

A big campaign to safeguard the Iraqi infrastructure, the Iraqi people and Iraq as a state began after President Mikhail Gorbachev's statement of January 22.

"It was said then and later developed in diplomatic work, that Security Council resolutions did not sanction the liquidation of Iraq as a country," he said.

"They (the resolutions) did not envisage damage to the Iraqi people, who are in fact victims of the unwise behaviour of their own leadership," he said.

According to the minister these positions were presented in the latest joint Soviet-US statement.

Bessmertnykh also spoke about his concern for the possible danger to Soviet southern areas from leaks from destroyed nuclear installations and chemical laboratories.

"On presidential orders, I put the question directly to the Americans when in Washington. Their answer conforms with reports by our military and other intelligence. There isn't such a threat now - neither radiation, chemical nor biological.

"However, there is a threat of chemical arms in the region if someone, and Iraq maintains chemical potentials, chooses to use them," he said.

"Our policy thus remains to stop the conflict, ensure and restore Kuwait's independence," the minister said.

"To this end, we are working to limit the intensity of the conflict, using all means, political in the first hand," he concluded. □

## Breathing new life into the cold war?

By Vladimir Markov

THE postponement of the USSR-USA Moscow summit, originally planned for February, has not come as a surprise to Moscow. Isn't it an indication that the sides have taken a break in their co-operation and partnership?

The new relationship between Moscow and Washington is still young and has not struck deep roots. The complications which arose from the tragic events in Vilnius and Riga have proved that it is still too early to regard the time of the cold war as gone for ever.

Among the most disquieting signs are the decisions by the European communities and the international monetary fund to shelve the question of earlier planned rapprochement and co-operation with the Soviet Union. It took a lot of time and effort to launch a dialogue with such agencies as the IMF and the World Bank. Will this rocky path have to be covered once again?

Meanwhile, collaboration with the EC, IMF and other international organisations, as well as other Western countries, can ease the Soviet Union's advance towards a market economy and, consequently, to further democratisation. The suspension of promised Western co-operation is counter productive and fraught with the "closed circle" effect.

First, technical and other Western assistance to Soviet reforms is particularly important now that the crisis in the Soviet Union has reached a crescendo. Without the help, the situation would obviously become even more complicated and unstable at a time when there is still a chance for putting the Soviet economy on a market footing.

Second, a tougher Western policy with regard to the USSR would obviously give a pretext to the right-wing forces in the country to assert that they were right in criticising the Soviet foreign policy dictated by new thinking as allegedly allowing the West "to interfere in internal affairs." This may strengthen the positions of the right-wingers inside the country and, consequently, increase their pressure on Soviet diplomacy.

Apart from such economic "sanctions" against the USSR, concern is mounting over NATO's

deliberations about cuts in contacts with Moscow, which have become possible thanks to the end of the cold war. Here, too, the effect would be counter productive: the recently proclaimed relations of partnership would be eclipsed by old-time mistrust, something that the right-wing circles in the USSR would be happy to use to their advantage. The next step could be questioning the entire Paris Charter for a new Europe.

Some may argue: the real reason is different, the whole thing stems from the tragic events in the Baltics. Yes, it's a tough lesson for the fate of Soviet perestroika. But one ought to take into account the fact that the Soviet side, while contacting the USA at different levels, has explained:

- The centre and the President personally have denounced violence as a means of solving domestic problems,

- They are not implicated in the events in Vilnius and Riga, what has happened is being painstakingly investigated and those to blame will be punished according to law,

- There exists no plan devised by the President or the centre to settle internal conflicts by unconstitutional methods.

For all the differences in the evaluations of the recent presidential decrees (and the joint order by the ministers of Internal Affairs and Defence to patrol major cities), Western experts and representatives should understand: in the complicated situation obtaining in the USSR, the escalation of confrontation between different forces and the disintegration of the rule of law in society must be stopped and at least rudimentary order must be ensured.

What the best ways of stabilising the situation are is a difficult question, as we have discovered. Blunders have proved unavoidable and a democratic consensus is yet to be achieved.

Meanwhile, the West must be aware of the inadmissibility of double standards: on the one hand, to advocate stabilisation of the situation in the USSR, which is in the interests of the entire world community, and on the other, to blame Gorbachev for all earthly sins and by so doing to weaken his positions in resolving this task.

Undoubtedly, one cannot deny the West the

right to react to events in the USSR in the way its governments deem fit. But no matter how critical its attitude to the uneven progress and ups and downs of Soviet perestroika may be, it must be admitted: disruption of dialogue and co-operation with Moscow, more so attempts to bring pressure to bear on it, will not only fail to help Gorbachev and promote the Soviet reforms but will also finally go against the interests of the West. A vicious circle would close.

International politics and the West's relations with Moscow must be a constant value helping to stabilise Soviet progress towards the goal set by perestroika - a modern, free and democratic society. The ghosts of the cold war will only impede such progress. □

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# A slick on the ocean of madness

By Vitali Kobysh

AFTER two weeks of war in the Persian Gulf, people around the world have lost a degree of the former intent concentration on the number of allied sorties and missile attacks from Iraq against Saudi Arabia and Israel. For two weeks people have been trying to separate the grains of truth from the flood of reports on the developments in the Gulf. However, we have to follow the news and incoming reports. Often cheating, television still covers the warfare. Recently, this coverage revealed something curious and scaring.

The United States, like the United Kingdom, has turned Iraq into a testing range for their advanced weapons systems. In these combat tests, the Patriot anti-missile missiles have proved so effective that Washington is reportedly reviewing its notorious SDI project. This revision involves enormous sums of money — hundreds of billions of dollars, if we keep it in mind that the SDI is scheduled for the 21st Century. Whatever the Soviet Union thinks about the SDI, it is another piece of strategic information for us, if we have not been misinformed.

Still, the attention of the world has focused on something else: the movement of a huge oil spillage across the Persian Gulf. Understandably, people are concerned over the details — the size of the slick, its possible route, and the speed and direction of winds.

Much has already been revealed, so I will elaborate only on the latter question. Pessimistic experts (which are jokingly referred to as the well-informed optimists) believe that the oil may float out of the Persian Gulf and pollute the Gulf of Oman, the Arabian Sea and further on, affecting the entire world ocean. In other words, it may become a real disaster for all.

The current war is entering its next phase. The US leaders announced that they are planning a surprise strike of their ground forces against Iraq (and surprises are a serious business in a modern war). Allegedly, these ground forces will be far stronger than those amassed in Vietnam. So, the war is going to be protracted for an unknown term.

War in the Gulf has already surpassed the Vietnam war in many instances, but not for the benefit of the United States or its allies. In the Vietnam war, only one side had nuclear weapons, while today, both parties at war are de-facto nuclear powers. In the modern world, anything but friendship and honesty can be bought for money. As is generally known,

Saddam Hussein and his apparent or hidden supporters, have enough money.

It would appear that in this situation the Soviet-US summit in Moscow planned for February is absolutely necessary. As it has already been announced, there won't be any summit on February 11. It has been postponed.

It is very good that in the course of the visit of Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh to Washington the two sides managed to work out a weighed-up, balanced and generally serious Soviet-US statement.

The statement names two reasons for the postponement of the summit. The main one is that in connection with the war, George Bush as President and the supreme commander of the US Armed Forces cannot come to Moscow at the moment. The other quoted reason is that the work on the Strategic Offensive Weapons Treaty has not been completed. In a TV interview Bessmertnykh explained that the treaty was 98 per cent ready but that there were 2 per cent still to be harmonized. Besides, for purely technical reasons, the preparation of the treaty, which means 500 pages of text, cannot be completed by February 11, the date scheduled for the beginning of the summit.

I don't have information on which side found the technical problems insurmountable. I can conclude from previous experience that there was enough time for harmonising the 2 per cent of uncoordinated points and for finalising the 500 pages. This has happened before, notably with the SALT-1 and SALT-2 treaties. People worked through the nights (Bessmertnykh did, too) and almost did not sleep at all, but they did finalise the texts of the treaties. Washington must have "saved" these two per cent "for a rainy day", as a bargaining factor.

All this has created perfect conditions for all sorts of speculations in the US and other Western mass media and, what is particularly annoying, in the media of the so-called Third

World. The meaning has been another deal between the two military superpowers. The USSR does not insist on strict observance of Resolution 678, while the US ignores the appeals of certain representatives of the Baltic republics for the recognition of their independence. It is a shoddy but also subtle speculation: as commonly known, Washington has never intended to react to the appeals from the Baltics. As for the USSR, its position regarding strict observance of Resolution 678 is immutable. This has been clearly reaffirmed by both the President and the Foreign Minister of the USSR. There has been no deal, but only politics.

Let us turn now to the first and main reason for the postponement of the summit. It does not look particularly convincing to me either. Yes, George Bush is the supreme commander, indeed, but, as I have already said, the war is dragging on. I am convinced that a timely visit by the US President to Moscow would have helped bring closer an end to this madness which is threatening life on Earth.

Being the supreme commander means not only power but also responsibility. I wouldn't suspect a man like George Bush of irresponsibility. The logical conclusion then is that even the protracted war apparently suits certain people in the US. I dearly want to believe that the US President is not one of them, although it is known now that on the eve of his decision to begin operation Desert Storm his national security adviser B. Scowcroft, a highly knowledgeable and extremely decent person, said that peaceful means of settlement of the conflict had not been exhausted. George Bush ignored that view as well as the similar view of his other advisers. This as well as many other details which, for some reason, have not been given proper attention in our country, were disclosed by *Time* magazine in one of its January issues.

Nor has anyone, especially in the Arab and the whole of the Third World, forgotten the very clear statements by such well-known politicians as, say, Henry Kissinger or Margaret Thatcher. Still before the beginning of hostilities in the Gulf by the coalition's armed forces they called for the destruction of Iraq's military potential regardless of Saddam Hussein's further behaviour, because otherwise it would supposedly remain a permanent threat to Israel and to Western interests in the region. What is happening now in the imagination of many analysts is the destruction of the military potential and, at the same time, of the whole of Iraq as a powerful state. This, however, cannot possibly suit either Iraq itself or most of its neighbours.

In the meantime, the oil slick continues its southward drift along the Persian Gulf, from the ocean of politico-military madness towards the real World Ocean.

(*Izvestia*, February 1, Abridged.)

## Siberia offers help to clean-up Gulf slick

SCIENTISTS in Siberia have offered to help clean-up the oil slick threatening extensive areas in the Gulf.

"We are ready to help curb the international ecological disaster and have contacted both Gorbachev and Yeltsin, proposing a specific plan of actions," President of the Ecogeos Association Ivan Nesterov told TASS.

Tyumen scientists developed an ecologically clean biological preparation to clean-up oil spills seven years ago. It is called Putidoil. It has been used on land and at sea, to clean up industrial waste in rivers and has proved an excellent detergent irrespective of the thickness of the slick.

"Oil slicks have been effectively eliminated with its help in the Caspian Sea, Lake Onega and in oil fields in the north of the Tyumen region, on Spitzbergen Island, in Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria.

"However, we do not produce large amounts of the preparation," Nesterov said. "Our estimates show that more than 200 tonnes of the powder will be needed within two or three months to eliminate the Gulf slick completely.

"The domestic industry can produce not more than twenty tonnes within the same period. Additional costs will run into ten million roubles and two million dollars.

"If we get the go-ahead, we are prepared to make the necessary documentation and calculations freely available and get down to business straight away." □

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