

Mikhail Gorbachev's speech at dinner for Nguyen Van Linh

Here follows the speech made by Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, at a Kremlin dinner for Nguyen Van Linh, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam:

Esteemed Comrade Nguyen Van Linh.
Esteemed Comrades.

We are really glad to greet the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the Vietnamese comrades accompanying him. The talks we have already had give every reason to say that your visit to the Soviet Union will constitute a further and important contribution to developing the inviolable fraternal relations between our parties, countries and peoples.

Soviet-Vietnamese friendship is deep rooted and has fine traditions. In 1923 a young Vietnamese revolutionary, Ho Chi Minh, stepped on Moscow soil for the first time. Awakened by the October Revolution, the Orient was looking to our country and Vladimir Lenin. The man who later founded the Communist Party of Indochina and then the socialist Vietnamese state found in Lenin's teachings the ideological weapon that helped the Vietnamese people break the chain of colonial slavers and embark on a socialist path.

Socialist path

Today is the anniversary of Ho Chi Minh's birth and I would like to tell you that the name of that remarkable Communist, fiery patriot and staunch internationalist is held here, in the Soviet Union, in the highest esteem.

Vietnam's road to freedom was long and difficult. Recalling the trials that fell to the lot of our Vietnamese comrades, we feel the deepest admiration again for their steadfastness and heroism.

This age is a stern age. Its history knows quite a few tragic events involving violence and bloodletting. But even against this background, the story of the Vietnamese people stands out for its drama.

For nearly three decades after the proclamation of their republic, they had to uphold their right to life and an independent existence in fierce battles against imperialist conquerors succeeding one another. The Vietnamese land was burned with napalm, poisoned with chemical toxins and showered with

more explosives than were used in the whole of the Second World War. But Vietnam held out and won.

The Soviet Communists and Soviet people can say with a clear conscience that they have always stood by the Vietnamese people's side and done everything possible to help their rightful struggle. That was the case during the years of the war and in the following period of economic rehabilitation. That will remain the case also in the future.

If we are to define the first and paramount result of the talks we held, it is the clearly expressed determination by both sides to continue strengthening the relationship of friendship and solidarity between our peoples and to carry forward and deepen advantageous Soviet-Vietnamese co-operation in every field.

Renewal and change

We told the Vietnamese friends about the way the reorganisation drive inspired by the decisions of the 27th Congress of the Party and the January plenum of its Central Committee is unfolding in our country, about the initial accomplishments on this revolutionary path and about the still formidable difficulties encountered there. Comrade Nguyen Van Linh, for his part, shared with us the concerns of the Vietnamese Communists and plans for realising the decisions of the 6th Congress of their Party.

The Soviet Communists and the Soviet people as a whole understand and approve the Vietnamese friends' desire to steer their country out of the economic difficulties and make decisive headway in fulfilling the food and other vital socio-economic programmes. We are convinced that the projected measures will help cope with the problems facing Vietnam and quicken the pace. We wish you success in these undertakings from the bottom of the heart.

It is known that our two countries are at different levels of development. Even so, the Soviet and Vietnamese Communists today have the same slogans — renewal and change. This is only understandable as, whatever its development level, a socialist state has only one effective way to expedite its progress. It is by decisively abandoning outdated work methods, bringing popular initiative and enterprise into play fully, and bringing out the potentialities of socialism.

Comrade Nguyen Van Linh and I thoroughly discussed the entire set of issues related to Soviet-Vietnamese co-operation. It has long acquired an all-round nature and impressive scale. But the weaker aspects of economic bonds and their failure to correspond to the new situation have also begun to show. We share the opinion that it is essential to make the machinery and forms of co-operation meet the requirements of the day more adequately and to increase the efficiency of this co-operation significantly.

The agreements that were signed today on specific areas of our co-operation will make it possible to use the possibilities of the socialist

division of labour to fuller advantage. We expect much from greater co-operation and specialisation in production, and from co-operation based on supply of initial products and conducted on a buy-back basis, as well as joint ventures in industry and agriculture.

More help will be given to Vietnam in training and re-training personnel. Thousands of Vietnamese young people are mastering trades at Soviet factories today. We believe that when they return home, they will not only join the advanced detachment of the builders of a new society but will also carry on the traditions of Soviet-Vietnamese brotherhood.

Comrades,

In the present-day world the fulfilment of national tasks depends on the international situation in vast measure. Quite understandably, an important place in our talks was given to discussing the situation in Southeast Asia which is of much significance to both the Vietnamese friends and the Soviet Union as a Euro-Asian power.

We hail the increasingly strong fraternal alliance of Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea and think highly of their efforts to improve the political climate in the region and turn it into a zone of peace, stability and good-neighbourly co-operation.

Internationalist assistance

The Kampuchean people have over recent years with the internationalist assistance of Vietnam, the Soviet Union and other socialist countries literally restored their homeland from ashes. The ancient land of Angkor, which was swept by a devastating tornado, is slowly but steadily recovering from the horrors of Pol Pot's genocide. But the normal development of that country is still being hindered by continued military activities and interference by outside forces.

Both our Vietnamese comrades and we share in full the opinion of the leadership of the People's Republic of Kampuchea that the Kampuchean problem calls for a political solution. It can only be solved proceeding from the highest interests of the Kampuchean people and their legitimate right to shape their destiny themselves, on the basis of the unification of all their national patriotic forces.

Comrades, the Soviet Union does not divide the principles of international policy into European and Asian ones, and proceeds from the premise that in the present-day interdependent world, the peoples of all continents share common concerns and hopes. We are for peace and good-neighbourliness, trust and mutual understanding, and mutually beneficial exchanges of technology, goods and cultural values to prevail in the relations between states of the Asia-Pacific region, which is acquiring an ever greater significance in international life. Herein lies the gist of the concept set forth in Vladivostok.

We are now completing work to elaborate the
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Soviet-Vietnamese talks

TALKS between Mikhail Gorbachev and Nguyen Van Linh opened in the Kremlin on May 18. The Vietnamese leader is now on an official friendly visit to the Soviet Union.

From the Soviet side the talks were attended by Nikolai Ryzhkov, Yegor Ligachev, Eduard Shevardnadze, Nikolai Talyzin, Vladimir Kamentsev and other officials.

The Vietnamese side was represented by Do Muoi, Member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Vietnam's Central Committee and Secretary of the CPV Central Committee, Nguyen Co Thach, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPV Central Committee, Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Foreign Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and other Vietnamese comrades.

Mikhail Gorbachev and Nguyen Van Linh expressed profound satisfaction with the dynamic development of relations between the CPSU and the Communist Party of Vietnam and between the Soviet Union and Vietnam, relations which are based on the principles of Marxism-Leninism and socialist internationalism and cemented by the Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation.

There was an exchange of information on the course of socialist construction in the USSR and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and on the implementation of the decisions of the 27th CPSU Congress and the Sixth Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the subsequent

plenums of the Central Committees of both parties.

Dwelling on the reorganisation, Mikhail Gorbachev noted that it is spreading wider and going deeper, involving every area of life and all segments of Soviet society. The atmosphere of greater openness, principledness, criticism and self-criticism has a positive effect on the solution of the national economic tasks and on the attitudes of people. It is planned to resolve major tasks in the social sphere, such as increasing the output of consumer goods, improving the health services and education, and stepping up the pace of housing and cultural construction. It was emphasised that the implementation of the tasks of the reorganisation, of the speeding up of the social and economic development and democratisation requires vast organising work of the Party. "What is important is not only to set the tasks correctly but also to achieve their implementation in which, it must be openly admitted, we were sometimes lacking."

Renovation and reorganisation

Nguyen Van Linh said that the Communist Party of Vietnam is also taking up the course of renovation and reorganisation, which is implemented on the basis of a correct analysis of the real state of affairs in the country. The Party's decisions enable the country to overcome its current difficulties, to consolidate Vietnam's ties with the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community and to contribute to the cause of peace in the Asia-Pacific region and the whole world. "We realise how difficult it will be to implement these tasks but we are confident of success since the Party's course meets with the complete support of the people."

Mikhail Gorbachev said that the Soviet leadership has understanding and complete support for the efforts of the Vietnamese Communists and the working people of fraternal Vietnam in the solution of the vast and complex social and economic tasks. "And though our countries are at different levels of development, at different stages, we are resolving similar tasks — implementing transformation and reorganisation. Their essence is to reveal socialism's potential in full measure, to ensure a better life for the peoples."

When key problems of world development were discussed, the sides confirmed the resolve of both parties and countries to continue

strengthening co-operation with other socialist states and with all progressive and peaceful forces in the effort to consolidate peace and security of peoples, to rid humanity of the threat of nuclear war, to end the arms race on Earth and prevent the militarisation of space.

Much attention was paid to the discussion of the situation in the Asia-Pacific region. Mikhail Gorbachev noted that a comprehensive programme for the consolidation of peace and security and the development of relations of good-neighbourliness and co-operation in that vast region, based on a new philosophical and political vision of the problems of war and peace, admitting and grasping the realities existing in the Asia-Pacific region, was advanced in Vladivostok.

Nguyen Van Linh spoke highly of the Leninist peaceful foreign policy of the CPSU and proclaimed the readiness of Socialist Vietnam to continue interacting closely with the USSR in the struggle for peace, against the menace of nuclear war, and for the creation of an all-embracing system of international security, in Asia as well. Mikhail Gorbachev's speech in Vladivostok set a good beginning to the present positive change of the political climate in the Asia-Pacific region.

The great importance of the strengthening of the fraternal union of the peoples of the three countries of Indo-China, which is an important factor for the defence of their revolutionary gains, was noted.

The Soviet side proclaimed invariable support for the efforts taken by the Socialist Republic of Vietnam jointly with the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the People's Republic of Kampuchea to improve the political climate in South East Asia and to step up a constructive dialogue with ASEAN countries.

There was also an exchange of opinions on the Kampuchean problem. It was emphasised that it can and must be resolved in the interests of the Kampuchean people, with regard for the realities that have formed in the region and on the basis of the policy of national reconciliation.

The leaders of the CPSU and the Communist Party of Vietnam confirmed the consistent course of the USSR and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam at the normalisation and improvement of relations with the People's Republic of China.

The talks were held in an atmosphere of friendship and complete mutual understanding. A joint Soviet-Vietnamese statement will be adopted on the results of the official friendly visit to the USSR by Nguyen Van Linh. □

Soviet-Vietnamese documents signed

Soviet-Vietnamese documents were signed in the Kremlin on May 19. These are an agreement between the governments of the USSR and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on co-operation in the production of light industry goods in 1987-1990 and in the period up to 2000, general agreements between the governments of the two countries on co-operation in tea growing and processing, on co-operation in coco oil production, an agreement in co-operation in manufacturing electrotechnical equipment, and other documents on economic co-operation.

Present at the signing ceremony were from the Soviet side: Mikhail Gorbachev, Andrei Gromyko, Nikolai Ryzhkov, and other Soviet leaders. From the Vietnamese side: Nguyen Van Linh and other officials. □

Mikhail Gorbachev

Speech in Vladivostok

July 1986

The above speech is available as a booklet from Soviet Booklets, 3 Rosary Gardens, London, SW7 4NW (01-373 7350).

Price 20p

Soviet Booklets

Addressing Asia. The Soviet Union Appeals for Peace and Co-operation in the Asia-Pacific Region 40p
Peace Option for Asia 40p

(theque postal order)

The above Novosti booklets are available from Soviet Booklets, 3 Rosary Gardens, London, SW7 4NW (01-373 7350).

Soviet-Spanish joint venture

THE Spanish firm Rua Papel y Servicios and the USSR State Committee for Material and Technical Supply intend to set up a joint venture, Boris Gutierrez Cimorra, head of Banco Central's Moscow office, said in a TASS interview last week. The Spanish bank took an active part in preparing this agreement.

The joint enterprise, processing 60,000 tons of waste paper a year to produce high-quality cardboard and paper, will be established on the basis of the Leningrad cardboard factory.

The joint factory will sell its output in the USSR, Spain and third countries.

Spain, which has no significant resources of raw materials for the paper industry, depends on secondary resources for most of the paper it produces, the Spanish businessman noted. Rua Papel y Servicios is one of Spain's main manufacturers of paper and cardboard from secondary raw materials.

This is the first time that a joint venture involving Spanish capital will be built on Soviet territory, Boris Cimorra stressed. For the Spanish business community, who have few firms accredited in the Soviet Union, participation in joint ventures on Soviet territory opens up especially favourable opportunities for establishing lasting business partnerships with Soviet organisations.

The contribution of the Spanish firm will consist in delivering technology and the main equipment, and in preparing a detail design. The Soviet side, the head of Banco Central's Moscow office said, will provide production buildings and structures, water, energy and other elements of the infrastructure, as well as manpower. The enterprise is expected to employ about 100 people.

The sides agreed to prepare basic instruments by the end of 1987, Boris Gutierrez Cimorra said. □

Mikhail Gorbachev's meeting with Jacques Chirac

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV met French Prime Minister Jacques Chirac on May 15.

The main part of the conversation centred on French-Soviet relations. They, Mikhail Gorbachev said, need considerable impulses in order to revive their former friendly character in full volume. We are against weakening them and believe that the USSR and France bear their share of great responsibility, especially at the present-day crucial stage of international development, and can do much positive. So far this is hampered by the hackneyed complexes and stereotypes of thinking. Jacques Chirac's attention was drawn to the fact that the Soviet public is following with perplexity and concern the increased manifestations of anti-Sovietism in France.

Jacques Chirac said that it is desirable to rectify French-Soviet relations through practical measures in economic ties and in the field of scientific and cultural co-operation, and expressed some proposals.

A detailed exchange of views was held on disarmament issues, on freeing Europe from nuclear weapons, and on the stand taken by the NATO member countries and the international

public as regards the Soviet Union's initiative on medium- and shorter-range missiles. Mikhail Gorbachev voiced the hope that the French leadership would make a constructive contribution to the search for agreements that will facilitate the first and decisive step towards real disarmament, which all peoples are looking forward to and which will facilitate the attainment of a radical positive turn in all world politics.

At the request of the French Prime Minister, Mikhail Gorbachev summarised the principles, aims and methods of implementation of the ideas of reorganisation, which will take socialism step-by-step to a qualitatively new level through democratising society. This is a difficult task, and the main effort still lies ahead. We have many things to do. Thus we have a lot of business to attend to at home, and the USSR's foreign policy will fully accord with the character of the internal processes and their creative aims and will mirror Soviet society's vital requirements.

Reorganisation is development in the new conditions of the socialist choice made by our people in 1917. New thinking includes the recognition of every people's right to its own independent choice. And history will make the judgement as to whose choice is better. It is good that all of them are different. This is even an

impulse for development and is fully in keeping with Marxist dialectics (the unity of opposites), on which the concept of coexistence and of peaceful competition is based.

Jacques Chirac wished every success to the reorganisation and described it as a striking and impressive phenomenon, which is seen as the most important event in the latter part of this century. He voiced the hope that it will bring about a bettering of East-West relations. He declared for a new climate in French-Soviet relations.

Other issues were touched upon, including that question of world-wide significance — eradicating poverty in a vast part of the world and the need for new "North-South" relations.

The conversation was straightforward and frank, which made it possible to compare views and stands. It was useful for the development of Soviet-French political dialogue, and, as Mikhail Gorbachev said in conclusion, both you and we have something to think about in connection with its results.

Taking part in the meeting were Eduard Shevardnadze, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, French Foreign Minister Jean-Bernard Raimond, Ambassadors Yakov Ryabov and Yves Pagniez, and advisor to the Prime Minister François Bujon de L'Estang. □

Nikolai Ryzhkov's speech at dinner for French Premier

RELATIONS with France are traditionally considered in the Soviet Union as a major link in European and world politics. This has been stated by Nikolai Ryzhkov, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee and Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR. He made a speech at a dinner given by the Soviet Government in honour of Jacques Chirac, last week.

The Soviet-French negotiations and conversations are being held at a crucial time in European and world history. Ryzhkov continued.

Confrontation, the policy of strength and militarism in all its manifestations block the solution also of regional conflicts — fraught with a constant threat to the whole world — and the global problems of the end of the second millennium — problems of wiping out poverty and starvation, preserving the environment and ensuring the possibility of befitting development for all nations.

Nikolai Ryzhkov said that the Soviet Union is ready to search for ways to peace which will rest not on nuclear force, not on egoism and hostility but on realisation of the community and interdependency of the destinies of the east and west, north and south of the world.

"Matching words with deeds, we persistently and honestly propose practical solutions of outstanding problems, well-balanced compromises through mutually taking into account each other's legitimate interests," Nikolai Ryzhkov said.

It is not without serious difficulties that accords on elimination of whole categories of nuclear

missiles in Europe are now being outlined, he pointed out.

Meanwhile we cannot but see that in some West European capitals, which only recently called upon us to display understanding of their concern about the presence of Soviet missiles in Europe, doubts and sometimes direct objections are now being voiced.

Reliable guarantees of security in all stages of advancement to a non-nuclear world are no less important to the Soviet Union than to the West. But we are convinced that the initial point here should be not fear of the future without nuclear weapons, but determination to build through joint efforts strong and comprehensive security in all its aspects — political, military, economic and humanitarian. Ryzhkov pointed out.

"To build a Europe which will never know wars is certainly extremely difficult. But there is no alternative to it. Nor is there any possibility of postponing such work to a later stage," the head of the Soviet Government said. "Our all-European home should and can become, instead of a military confrontation range, a university of new thinking, it should and can show to all others an example of an approach to solving problems without using force."

Unfortunately, we do not see France now among those who come out against nuclear intimidation of each other, who want to stop the escalation of the risk of war in Europe, to lessen the stakes on self-destruction. There are elements giving rise to anxiety in the policy of the French Government, particularly in nuclear missile questions.

He expressed anxiety over the fact that "the efficiency of the Soviet-French political dialogue, its direction at improving the situation, above all in the European continent, is receding somewhere to the background in the French Government's present-day priorities" and that "dents have again appeared recently and complexities started growing in bilateral

relations."

"The Soviet people cannot understand why manifestations of unfriendliness for our country and for our representatives are becoming a craze in France, to the people of which we wish only good."

"We feel, to put it mildly, the wary attitude of French representatives to our proposal that problems of humanitarian co-operation in all its aspects be openly and frankly discussed, and that a representative international conference be held in Moscow for the purpose. Is it just because this proposal comes from the Soviet Union? One should like to expect a broader outlook from France, a country which since the times of the great French Revolution has been taking pride in its devotion to humanitarian traditions and human rights," Nikolai Ryzhkov said.

"Soviet-French co-operation is now having the strictest examination — examination for the future, and one should like to hope that it will be befittingly passed. As to the Soviet Union, it is ready for the broadest and most constructive co-operation with France both bilaterally and internationally to promote consolidation of detente and peace in Europe and beyond its bounds, and to promote the solution of global problems facing humanity," the head of the Soviet Government said.

"The efforts to remove everything which hampers the normal development of our relations in trade, economy, science and technology will undoubtedly help further improve Soviet-French relations. We advocate broader traditional exchanges between our countries in culture.

"The restructuring, the profound revolutionary transformations in our country and the fresh and realistic approaches to international affairs," Nikolai Ryzhkov stressed, "are also opening up unprecedented possibilities for a new upward development of Soviet-French relations." □

Soviet-French talks end

TALKS ended in the Kremlin on May 16 between Nikolai Ryzhkov and Jacques Chirac. Also taking part in the talks were Eduard Shevardnadze and Jean-Bernard Raimond.

A number of important issues, as well as complications that have arisen in Soviet-French relations, were discussed in a frank, principled and concrete manner, in the spirit of last Friday's conversation between Mikhail Gorbachev and Jacques Chirac.

It was stressed from the Soviet side that political will and concrete actions from both sides are needed to put relations back on the road of mutual understanding, respect and mutually beneficial co-operation. The Soviet Union has this will, and Soviet policy vis-a-vis France is free from bias and time-serving considerations.

Soviet-French co-operation, which concerns both sides, depends to a large degree on how far the French Government's statements on its wish to open a new page in relations between the two countries will be backed by real deeds. This refers, first and foremost, to political contacts, mutual understanding and co-operation on the key issues of detente, disarmament and security, and to both countries' constructive contribution to improving the situation in Europe and worldwide.

This also applies to ways of overcoming difficulties that have arisen in the field of trade and the economy and to the drop in the volume of bilateral trade. Agreements exist between the two countries on making joint efforts to expand trade turnover. The Soviet side intends to stick to them and explore possibilities of increasing trade.

Nikolai Ryzhkov stressed that further development of trade and economic exchanges and improvement in their balance is possible only if the French side is prepared in earnest to expand equal and mutually beneficial ties. This presupposes the removal of all kinds of obstacles and restrictions on Soviet exports to France and on the purchase of French equipment.

The Soviet side reminded that during French President François Mitterrand's visit to the USSR in 1986, both sides expressed interest in using such advanced forms of business relations as jointly implementing economic projects, industrial co-operation and setting up joint ventures. One has to state, however, that in reality the position of the French side on these issues was marked by restraint.

Jacques Chirac stated readiness to render assistance in developing these new forms of co-operation. An agreement was reached on setting up an ad hoc working group for the purpose.

The sides discussed questions of international economic relations, and the development and expansion of economic ties and exchanges between states belonging to different social systems. The opinion was expressed from the Soviet side that deeper involvement by all

countries in the international division of labour on a just and equitable basis meets the interests of all countries of the international community. Establishment of normal relations between the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and the European Economic Community and the Soviet Union's joining the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade will serve these goals.

Note was taken of the positive experience of Soviet-French co-operation in some important areas of science and technology, including outer space, nuclear energy and medicine.

At the same time, it was stressed that the present-day rates of scientific and technological development call for further improvement of bilateral contacts and ties, and for the preparation of new proposals and the introduction of amendments to plans and programmes of co-operation. In this context, the sides favoured the adoption of concrete measures to expand co-operation aimed at enhancing the reliability and safety of nuclear power stations.

The sides expressed satisfaction with the agreement that was reached on signing a protocol on general terms of credit for machinery and equipment deliveries from France to the USSR between 1987 and 1990.

Nikolai Ryzhkov and Jacques Chirac noted the importance of traditional cultural ties between the USSR and France as an effective factor of improving mutual understanding and of bringing the peoples of the two countries closer together. They stated the determination of the two governments to promote the development of cultural co-operation and higher quality in it, and free and normal access in their countries to the cultural and information events and activities of the other side. With this aim in view, they have instructed relevant competent agencies to start talks on signing an intergovernmental agreement on cultural ties, in which new forms and areas of co-operation will be defined. The importance of extending the teaching of Russian in France was noted from the Soviet side.

Nikolai Ryzhkov stressed that the Soviet Union devotes much attention to strengthening ties with other countries in the humanitarian field. The French side's attention was drawn to the need for accelerating the resolution of a number of humanitarian issues concerning Soviet

citizens in France.

The Soviet side expressed the hope that France will support the USSR's proposal on the convocation in Moscow of a representative conference on the development of humanitarian co-operation, where states participating in the all-European process could discuss the whole package of these problems.

Nikolai Ryzhkov stressed that a correct and objective evaluation of the internal processes in our country is important for understanding the Soviet Union's approach to questions pertaining to relations with France and problems of international relations. The far-reaching, in fact revolutionary transformations being carried out in all fields of the life of Soviet society are opening up new possibilities for strengthening mutual understanding, building up confidence and creating conditions for even more active Soviet-French co-operation.

The Soviet side received with satisfaction the French Prime Minister's statement that they in France wish success to Soviet society in the renovation of all aspects of its life and in the important dynamic change taking place in the Soviet Union.

The sides voiced the hope that the talks and conversations held and a fair comparison of the views and stands of the sides would serve the improving of Soviet-French relations and the deepening of mutual understanding on the key issues of European and international security.

Jacques Chirac invited the Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers to pay a visit to France. The invitation was received with gratitude. The invitation was extended again to the Soviet Foreign Minister to pay a visit to France.

On the same day a protocol was signed at an official ceremony in the Kremlin on general terms of credit for the supply of machinery and equipment from France to the USSR over the period 1987-1990. Present at the ceremony were Nikolai Ryzhkov, Eduard Shevardnadze, Jacques Chirac, Jean-Bernard Raimond and other participants in the Soviet-French talks. □

Briefing on visit of French Prime Minister

"THE Soviet-French talks have ended in a candid, business-like atmosphere," Gennadi Gerasimov, head of the Soviet Foreign Ministry Information Department, said at a briefing on May 16.

The official visit to the USSR by Jacques Chirac covered several important issues as well as complications in some areas of Soviet-French co-operation.

"We believe," the Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman stressed, "that our policy *vis-a-vis* France rests on a permanent basis and is free from time-serving considerations and bias. It was pointed out during the talks that Soviet people are friendly towards the French people."

As for political contacts, he said, opinions were exchanged on a very wide range of issues.

"We noted that Soviet-French relations have good, even very good, periods: this is not the case at present. Today relations between our countries are neither what they have been nor what they should be. Both sides agreed with this assessment. The situation calls for a change. We must remove all causes leading to an aggravation of these relations. In this sense the situation

necessitates meetings between the leaders and discussion of arising problems; therefore we hope that the current visit has helped us better understand each other. We think that Franco-Soviet relations need to be restructured."

There was a keen discussion of disarmament issues. "We hope," Gerasimov stressed, "that France will make its contribution towards nuclear disarmament in Europe and disarmament as a whole. So far our hopes have not been justified."

Answering journalists' questions, the spokesman noted that the Soviet Union did not limit the human rights issue to the problem of free exit.

"We believe," he said, "that one should start with basic human rights, for example the right to work, social security in old age, and so on." The Soviet spokesman expressed the view that issues connected with human rights were specially fabricated to keep up an atmosphere of anti-Sovietism which is characteristic of the French mass media at present.

"This anti-Sovietism," Gennadi Gerasimov said, "is needed by those who are interested in increasing French military expenditure. They need an enemy. So we are being made into one." □

Soviet Booklets

The 21st Century Must Be an Age of Humanism, Dmitri Likhachev, Member of the USSR Academy of Sciences and Chairman of the Soviet Culture Fund	40p
Cultural Life in the Soviet Union ...	40p
People's Well-Being in Socialist Society	40p

The above Novosti booklets are available from Soviet Booklets, 3 Rosary Gardens, London, SW7 4NW (01-373 7350).

Mikhail Gorbachev's speech at Baikonur Cosmodrome

"OUR course towards peaceful outer space is not a manifestation of weakness. It is the expression of the peaceful foreign policy of the Soviet Union," Mikhail Gorbachev said at a meeting with representatives of labour collectives of the Baikonur Cosmodrome and the City of Leninsk, Kazakhstan, last week.

"We propose to the world community co-operation in peaceful space exploration. This is meeting with positive response throughout the world. We oppose the arms race, including in space."

The General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee drew attention to the fact that the US ruling circles are exerting frantic efforts to put up obstacles in the way of the progress that has taken shape in the quest for agreements. "Today we are living through an important moment in the development of the world situation. Our actions must be dynamic and well-thought-out. We shall do all that is necessary to achieve real changes. Here our interests coincide with the interests of the American people and with those of other peoples of the world. They do not coincide with the interests of those who are making a business out of the arms race and who wish to achieve military superiority by way of outer space," Mikhail Gorbachev said.

Recalling the latest Soviet peace proposals, including those for ridding Europe of nuclear arms, the General Secretary said: "It is now up to the United States and the NATO countries. They must now show the worth of the policy that they have been publicising for so many years, and what the value is of their statements on these matters. It is now important as never before that the world public and all progressive forces rise to the struggle against the forces that do not want disarmament. Everything that refers to questions of the arms race is now so serious that the world is as if at a crossroads. What road will the world take, this is the question."

The chance which is offered due to our policy full of initiative should not be lost. This policy is supported by broad circles in the world. We will be acting consistently to change international relations for the better.

Mikhail Gorbachev's meeting with Svyatoslav Rerich

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV and Raisa Gorbachev had a friendly meeting on May 14 with well-known artist and prominent public figure Svyatoslav Rerich, who is an honorary member of the Soviet Academy of Fine Arts, and his wife Devika Rani.

Svyatoslav Rerich, who lives and works in Bangalore in India, is staying in the Soviet Union as the Academy's guest.

During the meeting a wide-ranging and spirited conversation was held on the role and place of cultural workers in the present-day world and their influence on promoting the ideals of humanism, friendship and co-operation among nations.

Greeting Rerich warmly, Mikhail Gorbachev said: "Meeting you has long been our dream."

Speaking of the sources of Soviet-Indian relations, one should note that the first sprouts

All kind of talk about protection against nuclear arms is the greatest deception of peoples. It is precisely from these positions that we also evaluate the so-called Strategic Defense Initiative which the US Administration is trying to implement.

SDI means not only plundering the taxpayers. It is a senseless idea from the viewpoint of defence. What is the biggest danger presented by SDI that we should know? It destroys strategic stability, the arms race spreads to outer space and this will further intensify the arms race on Earth. But is this the world to which we are striving? This is a world in which something unpredictable might always happen, in which possibilities of dangerous situations resulting not from political decisions but from technical breakdowns will grow. We are categorically against spreading the arms race to outer space. We see our duty in showing the serious danger of SDI to the entire world.

We are convinced that by acting in this manner we act in the interests of the Soviet people and in the interests of other peoples. We are calling on everybody to act, Mikhail Gorbachev said.

The Soviet Union is acting hand in hand with other socialist countries, he pointed out. "I have no doubt that a conference of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty member states, to be held late in May, will have its say on this question."

"The people are worried by the situation in the world. The resistance to militarism is growing, and we highly appreciate the efforts of the international public in the struggle against the danger of war."

Addressing the meeting at the beginning of his speech, Mikhail Gorbachev stressed that the unique scientific-research test complex, the Baikonur Cosmodrome — the creation of the labour and talent of Soviet scientists, workers, engineers and military specialists — was "Lenin's dream of making our state a great industrial power come true."

"Concentrated here, in effect, is the potential of the intellect and the end result of the work of scores of research and design organisations and the country's biggest machine-building enterprises," Mikhail Gorbachev said. In this connection he remarked: "Everything here at the cosmodrome, from the sophisticated launching structures, testing stands and laboratories to the

powerful carrier rockets, space vehicles and their life-support systems fitted out with modern computers and highly sensitive instruments — all this is Soviet-made, everything is of a high quality and meets modern technological standards."

"Everything that I have seen here once again deeply convinces me that in this respect there is no need for us to go cap in hand to foreign lands. No embargoes, no bans on the sale of technology and equipment to us adopted by some foreign circles will slow down our country's development and the implementation of the big socio-economic plans connected with restructuring our economy and accelerating its growth."

"This convinces me again of the need to give every support to our science, scientific intelligentsia, engineers and designers," Mikhail Gorbachev stressed. "On the other hand, there must be greater requirements and an end must be put to a sort of 'inferiority complex': the vast scientific potential we have accumulated in 70 years of Soviet power should be brought fully into play. This is in our power, comrades. It is one of the main tasks of the reorganisation."

Touching upon this question, he noted that "the reorganisation is in progress, it is mounting with every day, assumes ever more concrete forms and is having a hearing on an ever wider range of problems and more profound strata of life."

"At the same time we see that the situation is not simple," Mikhail Gorbachev said. "But this must not make us nervous, must not make us lose confidence. We are on the right track, but much work is ahead."

"The reorganisation gave rise to vast hopes. And this is what I would like to say in this connection: the reorganisation is not a key to a full warehouse. The reorganisation is an invitation to all without exception to work better and by common efforts to make the life of Soviet people better still."

Mikhail Gorbachev emphasised that "the reorganisation is aimed at the solution of problems in the interests of man, and it is through man that these goals are attained. It is a great school for the whole of our society. If we go through this school properly, the changes will be enormous and of great and historic significance."

Mikhail Gorbachev drew attention to one more problem. He said: "The reorganisation is neither a design nor an ambition of a group of people. Our society came to the reorganisation through suffering. In the Political Bureau and in the Government we asked ourselves on many occasions (the same question used to arise during the trips about the country): is there a reasonable alternative to the reorganisation? Are there any other proposals on this subject? The answer is no. Everyone understands that the choice has been made correctly and that we have come to the reorganisation through suffering. There is only one way out: to follow the path outlined by the 27th CPSU Congress." Mikhail Gorbachev recalled that a regular plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee is to be held soon. "The main task of the plenary meeting is to complete the creation of an integrated system for the economic management of the country," he stressed.

In this connection Mikhail Gorbachev noted the partiality and scrupulousness with which they in the West are studying all that is now being done in the USSR. "Various sovietological centres have been assigned to study this," the General Secretary said. "They understand that things are fundamentally changing since the January plenary meeting. Serious work in accelerating the economic and social development of the country is unfolding." □

of friendship between the two countries are connected with the Rerichs.

Soviet people preserve with profound gratitude the memory of Nikolai Rerich whose paintings and public enlightenment activities served the cause of bringing the spiritual cultures of the Soviet Union and India closer together and affirming humanism in world culture.

Carrying on these traditions selflessly for decades, Svyatoslav Rerich has made an invaluable contribution to developing Soviet-Indian cultural co-operation in the interests of mutual spiritual enrichment by the people of the two countries.

Svyatoslav Rerich said at the meeting that Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to India and his talks with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi have made a deep impression on broad political and public circles in India, including Indian intellectuals, and helped strengthen friendship and mutual understanding between the Indian and Soviet peoples. □

Nikolai Ryzhkov receives Chinese Vice-Premier

NIKOLAI RYZHKOV received in the Kremlin on May 13 Yao Yilin, Member of the Political Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee and Vice-Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China (PRC).

Yao Yilin is in Moscow in conjunction with the holding of the second meeting of the Soviet-Chinese Commission on Economic, Trade, Scientific and Technical Co-operation.

During the exchange of views on a wide range of issues of Soviet-Chinese relations both sides expressed satisfaction with the progressive development of contacts and positive shifts in economic ties between the USSR and the PRC in recent years, and expressed mutual interest in their further extension.

Nikolai Ryzhkov emphasised that in line with the course of the 27th CPSU Congress the Soviet leadership persistently comes out for an improvement of relations with socialist China, for moving them onto the tracks of good-neighbourliness and co-operation.

Co-operative ties

They examined in a business-like and concrete way matters of Soviet-Chinese co-operation in trade, economy, science and technology, and opportunities for advancing it on a mutually profitable basis having due regard for development of co-operative ties in industry, setting up of joint enterprises and participation of Soviet organisations in modernising the industry of the People's Republic of China.

They noted that Soviet-Chinese economic, scientific and technical co-operation has

immense potential reserves and stressed the role of the Soviet-Chinese inter-governmental commission in vigorously tapping them.

Nikolai Ryzhkov and Yao Yilin exchanged information on progress in the work to fulfil the socio-economic development plans of the USSR and the PRC, and declared for deeper mutual familiarisation with experience in socialist construction. Yao Yilin expressed confidence that the leadership and the people of the Soviet Union would successfully accomplish the tasks of the reorganisation and wished them success in this cause.

Nikolai Ryzhkov emphasised that the USSR's foreign policy course has as its principal goal to solve the urgent problems of disarmament, assert new principles in the life of the world community and assure relaxation of world tensions and lasting peace. The Soviet Union's concrete initiatives in the work for a nuclear-free world and the survival of humanity serve this goal. □

CMEA-EEC: business contacts

VYACHESLAV SYCHEV, Secretary of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, has declared for establishing official relations between the CMEA and the EEC at the earliest date.

Addressing a press conference in Moscow on May 18, he spoke on the prospects for establishing such relations. The lack of them is, in his view, an anachronism.

The progress which has manifested itself in establishing mutual relations between the CMEA and the EEC is predetermined, in his view, by a number of circumstances, above all by the fact that today the world as a whole and Europe in particular are more than ever interested in building up confidence between states with different social systems. Then, in the conditions of mutual interdependence in economic development growing world-wide, the objective need particularly manifests itself in Europe for a further deepening of the international division of labour on the scale of the whole continent.

At last, there is closeness in the understanding by the sides of the character of the document establishing the above-mentioned official relations. Its draft has been proposed and both sides are expressing preparedness to sign it after the final coordination.

East-West economic and scientific technical co-operation in Europe is a reality, which has taken shape, Vyacheslav Sychev noted. The establishment of relations between the CMEA and the EEC, he added, will make a positive impact on the further development of trade relations between the two parts of Europe. Besides, it will open a broad road towards developing co-operation in the scientific-technical field, the power industry, transport, environment protection, joint economic forecasting and statistics. Broad perspectives for all-European co-operation are opened up by joint enterprise in setting up joint ventures.

Vyacheslav Sychev stressed that the sides have practically reached agreement on the joint declaration on establishing official relations. Yet there are outstanding issues. The process of establishing official relations should be paralleled also with talks on establishing bilateral relations. The signing of a joint declaration is just a start in normalising relations between the two groups.

The task, in the opinion of the CMEA Secretary, is to implement in the practices of all-European co-operation the principles of peaceful coexistence of states with different socio-political systems. □

CMEA-ANGOLA: CO-OPERATION

THE Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) and the People's Republic of Angola have taken their first step in developing mutual co-operation on a multilateral basis. More than 20 major projects have been planned in that country. And the CMEA member-countries will take part in implementing them along the lines on which agreement was reached.

As a TASS correspondent was told by Leszek Konzela, Executive Secretary of the CMEA side in the Mixed Commission for Co-operation with Angola, who has just returned from Luanda, all projects are of great significance for Angola's socio-economic development. Among these projects is the creation of a fishing industry complex in Namib Province designed to improve food supplies for the population. The USSR, acting as a coordinator for that project, is now negotiating with other CMEA member-countries on the share of work in the construction of the complex and equipping it with the necessary technology each side will take upon itself. The pooling and coordination of efforts will make it possible to reduce the time of construction and make rational use of transport for the delivery of goods.

The CMEA member-countries will assist Angola on the basis of an agreement on building mining industry enterprises, in setting up stock-raising farms and equipping agricultural technical services. They will also assist in expanding and supplying three hospitals and a medical rehabilitation complex in Luanda with modern equipment. Aid is continuing in the training of personnel for the young republic.

By concluding an agreement on co-operation with the CMEA in October 1986, Angola has opened up for herself a way for broadening business relations with the member-countries of that international organisation. Until now they were maintained only on a bilateral basis. True, even that was of great significance for the newly independent state; thus more than 100 industrial and other projects have been built or are under construction in Angola with the assistance of the CMEA member-states. As a rule the projects are built with loans granted by the CMEA member-countries on easy terms. □

Soviet-Japanese contract signed

THE biggest contract of recent years, for about 600 million dollars, has been signed in Moscow between the Soviet Foreign Trade Association (Techmashimport) and a group of Japanese companies. The contract provides for the participation of Nisse Iwai, Kobe Steel, Mitsui and Co. and Mitsui Engineering and Shipbuilding Consortium in building a polyester complex in Blagoveshchensk (Amur oblast in the Russian Federation).

A licence for the synthetic product was granted by the American company Du Pont. Kobe Steel will be the general supplier. The project will be financed by the Export-Import Bank of Japan.

When the contract is put into operation in 1992, polyester production in the Soviet Union will grow by 40 per cent.

The contract is a major milestone in the development of trade and economic relations between the USSR and Japan, the Kobe Steel board chairman Yugoro Tomatsu said at the contract signing ceremony. □

The Prospects for our Co-operation Are Good

Vyacheslav Sychev,
Secretary of the CMEA

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PRAVDA:

Geneva: A Time to Take Decisions

THE proposals on a separate settlement on medium-range missiles in Europe spelled out in Mikhail Gorbachev's Statement of February 28 this year have shed new light on the state of things at the Soviet-American talks in Geneva. Viktor Karpov points out in the newspaper *Pravda* on May 19. The main issue has now been put on a practical plane — whether there is going to be an agreement or not that will lead to the elimination in Europe of American and Soviet medium-range missiles, limit them to a minimum level outside Europe and thus make possible a real breakthrough in the field of nuclear disarmament.

We are convinced, Viktor Karpov stresses, that the Soviet draft agreement is the basis which will make it possible to prepare a joint Soviet-American draft and submit it for endorsement by the governments of the USSR and the USA. Yet it is still too early to say that all obstacles in the way of the attainment of that result have been eliminated. There are still some points in the US stand objectively preventing the attainment of an agreement and not according with the task of lowering the level of nuclear confrontation, but rather designed to preserve US nuclear presence in Europe under a new signboard.

The character of the current discussions in NATO is indicative of the fact that the Soviet initiative has taken American and other figures of the NATO member-countries unawares. Viktor Karpov points out. Paradoxically, those who were quite recently trying to convince the public that they favoured a zero option on medium-range missiles in Europe and that, allegedly, by linking that problem into a single package with other questions of nuclear weapons and outer space, the Soviet Union did not give an outlet to an agreement, those very same statesmen and politicians are now feverishly looking for a pretext which can be used for at least protracting the attainment of an agreement.

As far as the European nations are concerned, the time has come for them to take a serious, well considered decision. It is precisely now that Western Europe should decide whether it will proceed along the road of real disarmament by starting with the elimination of Soviet and American medium- and shorter-range missiles, or whether it will, as before, remain captive of the obsolete nuclear deterrence doctrines.

The Soviet Union does not propose simply "cancelling" nuclear weapons in Europe. It proposes that a comprehensive European security system be created by eliminating nuclear weapons, a system that will also exclude the possibility of warfare with conventional weapons.

Although the problem of medium-range missiles is now in the focus of world public

attention, it is necessary not to lose sight also of other nuclear and space weapon problems. The Soviet Union, Viktor Karpov stresses, has tabled at the Geneva talks a proposal on drawing up "key provisions of agreements", which provide for the attainment of a basic agreement on strengthening the regime of the ABM Treaty (so as to exclude the spreading of the arms race into outer space), a 50 per cent cut in the strategic offensive weapons of the USSR and the USA, and also the start of talks on stage-by-stage termination of nuclear tests. The USSR does not make an agreement on medium-range missiles dependent on the resolution of the problem of space and strategic offensive weapons.

And the US side knows that if an agreement is reached on the "key provisions" along with the drafting of a treaty on medium-range missiles, this would lay the groundwork for the next Soviet-American summit meeting.

The USSR's policy of reaching agreement on the whole range of nuclear and space weapons remains in force. The Soviet proposals ensure the necessary conditions for preparing mutually acceptable decisions. If the United States really has a stake in lowering the level of nuclear confrontation with the Soviet Union, if it is prepared not in words but in action to move along the path of cutting strategic offensive weapons and resolving the problem of medium-range missiles, it can reach that in co-operation with the USSR. Yet to that end the United States should give up its policy of the arms race and of trying to ensure unilateral advantages. Viktor Karpov emphasises. □

Briefing at USSR Foreign Ministry

"THE President of the United States is in favour of implementing plans aimed at developing anti-satellite weapon systems and seeks the lifting of the ban on an ASAT weapon which already exists in the United States," Gennadi Gerasimov, head of the Information Department of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, stated at a briefing for Soviet and foreign journalists on May 14.

"Only yesterday," he pointed out, "President Reagan came forward with a statement that the Soviet Union was ostensibly conducting ASAT tests while the United States was sitting idle, and that the USA, too, was in need of testing its ASAT systems."

"This is disinformation," Gerasimov emphasised. "In 1983 the Soviet Union announced a unilateral moratorium on the testing of anti-satellite systems. We have been observing this moratorium. Moreover, the Soviet Union consistently comes out in favour of banning ASAT systems."

"An ASAT weapon is not only defensive. It is a weapon for preparing for a sudden attack."

"To knock out enemy satellites by means of ASAT systems is to blind them, make them deaf and deprive them of the possibility of repulsing a sudden attack."

"This is why we are for a ban on ASAT systems. We hold that the attempts by the US Administration to secure a Congressional decision to resume testing ASAT systems are aimed at implementing the plans to develop such space weapons and at undermining the Soviet-US talks on nuclear and space arms."

Touching on yesterday's speech by US Secretary of Defence Caspar Weinberger to journalists in Oslo on his way to a session of NATO's military committee, Gennadi Gerasimov quoted him as saying that it would be rather difficult to verify an agreement on the elimination of shorter-range missiles because the Russians could ostensibly hide them somewhere, in a taxi for example, and in general in anything moving.

The USSR Foreign Ministry spokesman refuted the remark, emphasising that pronouncements of that kind would not promote progress at the talks on concluding an agreement on shorter-range missiles.

At the briefing Gerasimov referred to repeated reports in the US and Japanese press citing facts about secret accords between the two countries' governments regarding introduction of US nuclear weapons into Japan.

As to the official quarters of both countries, he said, the reaction to these reports is always one and the same: no comment in Washington and in Tokyo, they refer to the three non-nuclear principles. On the whole, allegedly, the point at issue is a misunderstanding.

Attempts are made to list new facts, too — disclosed by the research group of the Japanese Communist Party — among the "misunderstandings". Gerasimov went on. The names of the personnel of a special unit on the aircraft carrier *Midway*, which is based in Japan and engaged in the assembling, equipment and storage of secret ammunition, have been found in the Pentagon Library.

The US side and the Japanese authorities refer

to the arrangement under which the United States should, if it intends to introduce nuclear weapons into Japanese territory or its territorial waters, approach Japan for preliminary consultations. But the Americans do not do this. They in Japan say that they do not have any grounds for raising the issue of the presence of nuclear weapons on US ships.

The Japanese Government follows the American principle in this case: neither to confirm nor deny whether Japan does or does not have nuclear weapons. The clarifications by the US and Japanese sides on this point cannot be regarded as satisfactory. Therefore there are grounds to believe that secret accords on this score really exist. □

The Meeting in the Kremlin

Speech by Mikhail Gorbachev
at the International Forum
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for the Survival of Humanity"

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Moscow, February 16, 1987

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MIKHAIL GORBACHEV'S SPEECH AT DINNER FOR NGUYEN VAN LINH

(from front page)

programme of development of the Far East, whose aim is to create there a highly effective national economic complex incorporated into the system not only of the national but also the international division of labour. The Soviet Union is interested in broad trade and economic exchanges both with socialist countries and such partners as Japan, Australia, Indonesia, Thailand and other Asian and Pacific nations.

In realistically evaluating the current situation, it is apt to mention both the broad interest in the ideas expressed in Vladivostok and the difficulties that the progress of our initiatives is encountering.

But not all are obviously ready for a joint quest to tackle the issues affecting the interests of countries of the region. But our times command the need for joint work to create an Asia-Pacific security system.

Of key significance in this respect is the nuclear problem. We cannot help being concerned about the fact that work is continuing in some Asian countries to create nuclear weapons. The ambition to join the nuclear club, while intensive talks are under way to get rid of such weapons, is an obvious recurrence of obsolete political thinking.

In this connection I would like to mention also nuclear disarmament in Asia. We are now pursuing an active policy of ridding Europe of nuclear weapons. Yet we are not doing so in order to transfer the nuclear danger to other areas of the world. Our aim, by starting with Europe, where the largest arsenals of nuclear weapons are stockpiled, is to lead things to freeing all continents from nuclear weapons by the year 2000 in accordance with the Programme announced by us on January 15, 1986, and create on that basis an all-embracing international peace and security system.

We are asked why the Soviet Union agreed in Reykjavik to preserve 100 warheads on Soviet and US medium-range missiles on each side. I will answer. This is a certain compromise. The US Administration seeks to leave in Asia the nuclear weapons deployed there against the Soviet Union, and this makes us search for a reply, to keep there a balance of forces. For the United States has massed in the Asia-Pacific region a powerful nuclear force, and is

replenishing the nuclear arsenals on board its ships and at military bases in foreign territories.

At the same time we have more than once declared our preparedness to resolve the problem of medium-range missiles on a global basis. There would be no obstacles to such a settlement, if the USA agreed to eliminate its nuclear weapons in Japan, South Korea and the Philippines, and also to withdraw its aircraft carrier flotilla beyond agreed lines. And in so doing, of course, the USA would not have medium-range missiles on its territory.

We propose that advance be started already now on the routes leading to the elimination of nuclear weapons in Asia. An important step in that direction would be, for example, the creation of nuclear-free zones. The Soviet Union is known to have signed appropriate protocols to the Rarotonga Treaty on the creation of such a zone in the South Pacific. We support the proposals of other countries on the creation of zones free from nuclear weapons in Southeast Asia and the Korean peninsula. An international conference on the Indian Ocean, at which it would be possible to examine and decide the question of declaring that area a zone of peace, would also serve the aims of nuclear disarmament.

In Asia, as in Europe, our methods and our approach to nuclear disarmament are the same. We propose that this process be implemented under stringent international control that would consist of three components: national means, international verification methods and on-site inspection.

Such on the whole is our perception of untying the Asian nuclear knot. By taking it up, the states of that area would be able to start building a regional security system. The efforts in that direction by the countries of the two continents — Europe and Asia — could blend together into a single Euro-Asian process that would give a powerful impetus to the creation of an all-embracing international security system.

We have recently had quite a number of meetings with the leaders of the states of the region, which make it possible to understand each other's stand better.

The Soviet Union's relations with India have

assumed a unique character. The Delhi Declaration on principles for a nuclear-weapon-free and non-violent world signed by the two countries in November 1986 expresses, we are convinced, the interests of the whole world community and is based on common human values.

The recent tour of Asian-Pacific countries by Eduard Shevardnadze, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, has been useful in this respect. We highly appreciate the constructive approach of the DPRK and Mongolia to the solution of international problems and to co-operation with them.

Progress towards improvement is noticeable in Soviet-Chinese relations. Along with the development of trade, economic and cultural ties, our views have become closer on a number of topical international issues, though disputable issues remain. We are for normalising relations with the PRC in full volume. This would accord with the interests of both peoples, the interests of peace and socialism.

In a word, it can be confidently said that quite a good groundwork has already been laid by the efforts to create a new political climate in the region, to create an Asia-Pacific security system. We understand that the resolution of that topical problem necessitates coordinated actions by all states of the region, hence any positive initiative on that score will find a response from the Soviet Union.

Comrades, allow me in conclusion to wish the Communists and all the working people of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam successes in the great and noble cause of turning their homeland into the prosperous socialist state that Ho Chi Minh dreamt of seeing.

We are confident that the industrious Vietnamese people guided by their spirited vanguard will implement these tasks and further strengthen their homeland's prestige in South-east Asia and all over the world, and will contribute towards strengthening the positions of socialism.

We wish health and every success to Comrade Nguyen Van Linh and other Vietnamese comrades.

Long live the indestructible Soviet-Vietnamese friendship! □

Mikhail Gorbachev

Restructuring — a Vital Concern of the People

Speech at the 18th Congress
of the Trade Unions of the USSR
February 25, 1987.

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Flight test of multi-purpose launch vehicle

FLIGHT and design tests have been started in the Soviet Union of the new powerful multi-purpose launch vehicle Energia intended to put into near-Earth orbits both reusable orbital spaceships and large-size space vehicles for use in science and in the economy.

The two-stage multi-purpose launch vehicle has a launching mass of more than 2,000 tons and is capable of putting into orbit more than 100 tons of payload.

The first launching of that delivery vehicle was made from Baikonur Cosmodrome at 21 hours 30 minutes Moscow time on May 15.

After the engines of the first stage ended operation, it separated and landed in a pre-set area in the Soviet Union's territory.

The second stage of the launch vehicle continued operation in strict conformity with the flight mission and placed at an estimated point a full-size full-weight mock-up of a satellite. After separation from the mock-up, the second stage splashed down in a pre-set area of the Pacific.

The mock-up was to have been put into a round-the-Earth orbit by means of its own engine. But because of a faulty operation of its onboard systems the mock-up was not put

into the pre-set orbit and splashed down in the Pacific.

In the process of the launching and flight of the launch vehicle the correctness was borne out of the design and technology, as was the high reliability of its design, the engines of both stages and the control systems. The equipment and apparatus of the automated control of the launching complex functioned normally. The aims and objectives of the first launching have been fully met.

Personnel of many research, design, production, building and assembly organisations and plants as well as military experts took part in creating and testing the new generation multi-purpose heavy launch vehicle and the unique launching complex.

The successful start of the flight and design testing of the launch vehicle Energia is a major achievement of Soviet science and technology in the year marking the 70th anniversary of the Great October Revolution. It opens up a new stage in the development of Soviet space rocket engineering and broad prospects for the peaceful exploration of outer space. □

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