

Soviet President awarded 1990 Nobel Peace Prize

THE Norwegian Nobel Committee announced on October 15 that Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev had been awarded the 1990 Nobel Peace Prize.

Here follows the citation:

The Norwegian Nobel Committee has decided to award the 1990 Nobel Peace Prize to Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev, President of the Soviet Union, for his leading role in the peace process which today characterises important parts of the international community.

During the past few years dramatic changes have taken place in the relationship between East and West. Confrontation has been replaced by negotiations. Old European nation states have regained freedom. The arms race is slowing down and we see a definite and active process in the direction of arms control and disarmament. Several regional conflicts have been solved or have at least come closer to a solution. The UN is beginning to play the role which was originally planned for it in an international community governed by law.

These historic changes spring from several factors, but in 1990 the Nobel Committee wants to honour Mikhail

Gorbachev for his many and decisive contributions. The greater openness he has brought about in Soviet society has also helped promote international trust.

In the opinion of the committee this peace process, which Gorbachev has contributed so significantly to, opens up new possibilities for the world community to solve its pressing problems across ideological, religious, historical and cultural dividing lines. □



PRESIDENT Gorbachev considers the fact that he has been awarded the 1990 Nobel Peace Prize to be an "important event."

In a conversation on October 15 with Norwegian Ambassador to the Soviet Union Dagfinn Stenseth, Gorbachev said the fact was important not only for him personally, but "it testifies to the assessment of the Soviet Union's policy and support for perestroika at its key moment, which is very important."

On behalf of the Nobel Committee, Stenseth officially informed Gorbachev that he had been awarded the prize.

The media were among the first who greeted Gorbachev. Answering questions from representatives of the world's four largest television companies, Gorbachev said he considered the event as an acknowledgement of the importance of perestroika for the fate of the whole world.

Gorbachev believes "perestroika and new thinking have received a powerful support in the world, because it was ripe for changes. The world has grown tired of the 'cold war', the arms race and hardships connected with the overburdening of the international community by ongoing problems. The world needs a new policy and a new course, and this is most important."

Gorbachev said he believed that the award will influence the situation in the country in an "emotional and intellectual respect." This is "support for our efforts," and it "gives us a feeling that we have chosen the right road."

A Soviet television correspondent noted that Gorbachev is the first communist and the first East European politician in power to receive a Nobel Peace Prize. Previously, it had been awarded to East European opposition politicians, such as Lech Walesa and Andrei Sakharov.

Gorbachev said he felt at ease in this circle, because the "awarding of the prize coincided with what is called a 'new Europe', a 'new Soviet Union' and a 'new world'. This event should be evaluated within the context of today's real world. Here I mean all-human changes and all that unites people in their striving to strengthen peace and co-operation," he said.

"But the main thing is the understanding that the changes should continue, negative trends should be done away with, positive ones should be supported and accord and consolidation should be strengthened," Gorbachev said.

"We will follow our own path. Today, I feel an even greater responsibility for perestroika in the country soon to be crowned with success," he said. □

Soviet delegation submits memorandum to UN

THE Soviet Union submitted to the United Nations on October 11 a memorandum entitled *The United Nations Organisation in the Post-confrontational World*. The document sums up the Soviet Union's views on the United Nations' changed role. The Soviet Union believes that the United Nations is the main mechanism in the construction of a new world order.

"This is a unique moment," said Vladimir Petrovsky, USSR Deputy Foreign Minister, deputy head of the Soviet delegation to the 45th session of the United Nations General Assembly, presenting the memorandum at the United Nations headquarters. "The replacement of rivalry with partnership and the assertion of the supremacy of law opened unprecedented prospects to the United Nations," he told a news conference.

Emphasising that the system of international peace, security and co-operation resting on the United Nations Charter should be used to the utmost, Petrovsky stressed several key points. He said that the Soviet Union attaches special importance to enhancing the Security Council's role. He said that the most recent Security Council meeting, in which foreign ministers of a

number of countries had participated, had been successful. This experience should be consolidated. "We believe that the Security Council should have a greater sense of responsibility," he said.

Petrovsky suggested that a meeting of the Military Staff Committee of the United Nations Security Council should be held at the level of chiefs of the general staffs of the five permanent members of the Security Council. The meeting should discuss the Gulf situation.

Petrovsky said that the General Assembly should attend to practical tasks and should enhance the role of the United Nations Secretary General, who is a prominent politician. He said that an integrated strategy for global partnership in the nineties and at the beginning of the new century should now be worked out. □

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Gorbachev sends greetings to Rome meeting

PRESIDENT Mikhail Gorbachev has sent the following greetings to a conference of authors and public figures from the Soviet Union and Russian communities abroad, which opened in Rome on October 15:

A meeting, which I believe is significant, opens today on the ancient soil of Italy, which

has given life to many achievements of world civilisation, in Rome, where outstanding Russian cultural figures have traditionally worked with inspiration.

It is a reunion of writers and public figures — both those living in the USSR now and those

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Gorbachev meets American financiers

PRESIDENT Mikhail Gorbachev met New York Stock Exchange President John Phelan and other leading US financiers, including John Chalstey, William Schreyer, James Bradford, David Shields, Aulana Peters and David Feldman, who were in Moscow for a New York Stock Exchange seminar, in the Kremlin on October 10.

The seminar was organised in line with agreements to promote economic reforms in the Soviet Union reached by Bush and Gorbachev in Malta.

Gorbachev told the visitors about the economic and political reforms taking place in the country.

The two processes are interconnected. A lasting union between Soviet republics is in their economic interests, Gorbachev said.

The President spoke about the efforts to stabilise the economy, saying that the time has come for decisive actions.

He then dwelt in detail on the transition to a market economy. This is a complex issue, the resolution of which requires a lot of effort and changes in people's psychology, he said.

Gorbachev spoke about plans to provide consumer goods on the market and measures to reduce the budget deficit.

Presidential decree

SOVIET President Mikhail Gorbachev signed a decree on October 13 on stopping the desecration of monuments, connected with the history and symbols of the state.

The decree says that "cases of the desecration of monuments to the founder of the Soviet State Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, other political and public figures, the memorial complexes devoted to the Civil War and the Great Patriotic War, other monuments connected with the history of the Soviet State, graves of soldiers who died defending their Motherland, as well as incidents of outrage upon the state symbols — the state emblem, the flag and the anthem have become more frequent of late."

The President stressed that such actions "are incompatible with popular traditions, respect for the history of the Motherland and generally recognised moral standards, are unworthy of civilised society and impermissible in a law-governed state." He enacted to "expand criminal, administrative and other responsibility for the violation of laws on the protection of historical monuments of the state, as well as state symbols."

It has been recommended to the Soviet Parliament and supreme authorities to make the necessary changes and amendments to the corresponding laws, and to the state executive authorities — to take additional measures to ensure the safety of the monuments.

The President suspended the implementation of resolutions, taken by republican and local authorities, about the pulling down, moving or changing memorial structures.

The decree came into effect immediately on its publication. □

The End of Ideology?

by
Konstantin Nikolayev

price 60p from
Soviet Booklets (SN),
3 Rosary Gardens,
London SW7 4NW.

A most important task now is to put finances in order, shore up the rouble and make it convertible in the future. The people should seek the rouble rather than shun it, he said.

Our Western partners could help stabilise the Soviet economy. There is an understanding in this sphere, which should be translated into concrete agreements, especially since large joint projects are now in the works, including in the oil and gas and aviation industries, Gorbachev said.

US business circles are impressed by Soviet economic reforms, Phelan said, and hoped the Soviet Union will succeed in transforming itself into a market economy.

Before coming to the Soviet Union, the visitors doubted the Soviet determination to carry through the reforms, he said.

Upon leaving the country, the financiers are much more optimistic and are certain that the reforms can be implemented, he said.

The course of action charted by Gorbachev could put him in control of the situation and enable further progress, he said.

Both sides then expressed hope that Soviet and US financial circles will pursue mutually beneficial co-operation. □



SOVIET Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov on October 11 received a

Turkmenian president to be elected

THE elections of a Turkmenian president are planned for Saturday, October 27. The president of this Soviet Central Asian republic will be elected by universal suffrage, direct and secret ballot. This has been decided by Turkmenian People's Deputies at the third session of the Turkmenian Parliament which resumed on October 11 after a recess.

The session discussed the establishment of presidential rule in Turkmenia and making amendments to the republic's constitution. October 27 is, symbolically, the anniversary of the Turkmenian Soviet Socialist Republic which was formed 66 years ago.

Saparmurad Niyazov, 50, was unanimously nominated Turkmenian president. Niyazov is President of Turkmenian Parliament, chief of the Turkmenian Communist Party. Deputies speaking at the session noted that he was highly respected among various sections of the population, shows political consistency and has organising talent. He aims to achieve civic accord in the republic.

The concept of Turkmenia's economic sovereignty was also discussed.

The session will be continued on October 12. □



Baskiria proclaims sovereignty

A session of the Supreme Soviet of the Bashkirian Autonomous Republic on October 11 unanimously approved the declaration of Bashkiria's state sovereignty. The republic will henceforth be called the Bashkirian Soviet Socialist Republic, or Bashkortostan, for short.

The parliament resolved that the document it approved will form the basis for working out the republican constitution, elaborating republican legislation, renewing state structures and preparing and signing the new union treaty and treaties with Russia and other union republics.

One of the most acute problems — the problem of the state language — was not discussed when proclaiming the republic's sovereignty. The Bashkirs, the indigenous population of the republic, object to making the Tatar language — the language of the second large population group in Bas-

group of leading American financiers, led by the President of the New York Stock Exchange John Phelan.

Greeting the financiers, Ryzhkov expressed satisfaction that the meeting signified the start of co-operation between the USSR and the United States in a new sphere: the use of a financial market and stock exchanges for the balance and stable development of the national economy.

Phelan noted that the American participants in a Soviet-American seminar on this topic, which was held in Moscow, were impressed by this forum.

The seminar strengthened their readiness to assist Soviet partners organise stock exchanges in the USSR as an important factor of a financial market.

The importance of the financial market is great, since it enables all participants in economic activities to draw necessary funds for expanding production, raising competitiveness of products and overcoming difficulties.

The American side proposed assistance in resolving organisational issues to establish a stock exchange in the USSR and obtaining the necessary technical equipment. The financiers also promised to help train Soviet specialists.

The sides discussed other matters to improve relations between the two nations. □

hkortostan — a state language together with the Bashkiri and Russian languages. The Tatar population, however, favour the sovereignty of their own language.

In order to avoid exacerbating the situation still further, the parliament included the following provision in its declaration of sovereignty: "The Bashkirian Soviet Socialist Republic ensures the conservation, equitable functioning and comprehensive development of the languages and cultural views of all people's inhabiting it." □

Soviet lawmakers approve employment Bill

THE Soviet Parliament passed the first reading of a new employment bill on October 10.

The bill envisages the creation of a large state employment service. Vladimir Shcherbakov, Chairman of the State Committee on Labour and Social Issues told Deputies.

The service will help people find jobs, analyse and forecast employment needs and supervise training programmes, he said.

Many deputies, however, expressed doubt over whether the bill contains a well-balanced mechanism to protect citizens.

The bill simply makes local councils responsible for social protection without specifying concrete measures to support the unemployed, deputy Vladimir Desyatov from Komsomolsk-on-Amur said.

The draft is far-sighted, Deputy Alexei Levashev of Leningrad said.

Several speakers said it failed to consider the social consequences of mass unemployment. During the transition to a market economy, up to 35 million Soviet citizens could become unemployed, they said.

If the bill is passed in its current form "both those who lost jobs and those who do not want to work at all will get unemployment benefits," Yuri Krasilnikov of Kazan said.

"This is a very serious flaw," he stressed.

"The term 'unemployed' requires a very strict definition," Shcherbakov agreed.

Deputies will continue their work in committees and commissions. □

Gorbachev confers with heads of republics

SOVIET President Mikhail Gorbachev conferred with heads of union republics on October 13. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Russian Federation, the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Moldavia, Kirghizia, Tadzhikistan, Armenia and Turkmenia.

They exchanged views on the situation in the country, as well as on the need for the consolidation of all sections of society and the stabilisation of the national economy during the transition to a market-orientated system. Participants in the meeting stressed the need for co-ordinating actions by republics and regions, for maintaining the development and improvement of relations between enterprises in order to normalise the situation, for preventing negative processes on the consumer market and strengthening the monetary-financial system.

In this connection they pointed to a special significance of union and republican budgets for 1991.

The meeting discussed a draft programme for the stabilisation of the national economy and the transition to a market-based system. They supported, on the whole, the orientation of the programme and made some observations and suggestions.

As a result of a comprehensive discussion, participants in the meeting came to the unanimous conclusion that on the union level, within

the framework of the Soviet Parliament, it was necessary to adopt the guidelines of the transition to a market-orientated system, which will be specified in the process of the implementation by the union authorities and by the authorities of union and autonomous republics, as well as regions.

The document, supplemented with those co-ordinated ideas, will be submitted to the Soviet Parliament, its committees and permanent commission of the chambers.

All speakers at the meeting stressed that the urgent need for the improvement of a socio-economic situation in the country and the transition to a market-based system call for significant consolidation of all links of the representative and executive authorities, the enhancing of the role of the Soviet President's Federal Council and active measures to strengthen law and order.

In the long run, this should ensure a prompt co-ordination of all matters of principle and the working out of a single economic policy on the transition stage. The republics should retain broad independence in choosing specific ways and forms of the implementation of the transition to an effective market-oriented economy.

The meeting was attended by Anatoli Lukyanov, Chairman of the Soviet Parliament, Nikolai Ryzhkov, Soviet Prime Minister, Ivan Silaev, Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, chairman of the Moscow and Leningrad city councils of people's deputies and a group of scholars and specialists, who took part in studying problems dealing with the economic reform. □

Trade and industry exhibition ends in Vladivostok

TWENTY Japanese and South Korean firms displayed their goods at a trade and industry exhibition that closed in Vladivostok on October 11.

The exhibition featured various consumer goods: sweaters made from Australian and British wool and other textile goods, video appliances, footwear and toys.

The exhibition was sponsored by the Vostokremstroimash production amalgamation and the Red Pine Association of Industrial Enterprises.

The Director General of the Soviet production amalgamation Yuri Kostyukov told a news conference that the first deliveries of Japanese and South Korean consumer goods that were obtained as a result of direct contacts are already on sale at Far Eastern enterprises.

Soviet enterprises are using new forms of business co-operation. For the first time Japanese-

made sewing machines, which were on display at the exhibition, had parts manufactured by Soviet Far Eastern engineering factories.

The volume of trade turnover between the Soviet Union and South Korea jumped by over 70 per cent as compared with last year. Trade and economic relations with Japan are also on the rise.

In its preparations for operations in the free economic zone in the maritime territory, the Red Pine Association plans to organise regular charter air flights between Vladivostok-Toyko and Vladivostok-Seoul.

Exhibition participants favoured the earliest possible establishment of foreign firms' offices, not only in Khabarovsk and Nakhodka but also in Vladivostok, where business delegations from Asia-Pacific countries arrive almost every day. □

Stock Exchange

THE Soviet far eastern city of Vladivostok is planning to set up a stock exchange.

Local state and commercial banks and the regional financial department have pooled efforts to create the initial structure of the stock exchange within a year.

The Vladivostok branch of the Soviet Informves Association invited representatives of banks from Hong Kong, London and Tokyo, who for ten days acquainted themselves with the region's economy and gave advice to Soviet financiers.

Valeri Lozovoi, deputy chairman of the regional executive committee who is in charge of foreign economic ties, said that the information provided by the banks' representatives was "valuable."

He said the banks expressed their wish to co-operate with the Soviet side.

The meetings were held with the assistance of the Soviet Chamber of Commerce and Industry. □

Gorbachev urges market 'within socialist choice'

SOVIET Communist Party leader Mikhail Gorbachev has called for the nation's transfer to a market "within the framework of the socialist choice and our allegiance to the socialist idea."

In his closing remarks at the plenum of the Party's Central Committee plenum on Tuesday, October 9, he strongly denied that the creation of a market-driven economy was a "restoration of capitalism."

The two-day plenum was called to discuss the Party's tasks during the changeover to a market system.

Gorbachev insisted on popular involvement in the denationalisation of property. "We need a mechanism that will help us eventually create diverse forms of collective, leasehold and joint-stock ownership, but everything should be in the hands of the people," he said.

Gorbachev stressed the need to protect worker interests legislatively. He revealed that the government will submit a package of proposals for a crackdown on speculation and black marketeering to parliament later this week.

"These will be tough measures that will represent a powerful weapon in the hands of law enforcers and authorities" in the anti-crime drive, Gorbachev said.

He said that despite the diversity of views expressed at the plenum, it agreed on the Party's responsibility for the destiny of perestroika and the future of the country.

"It is very important for this understanding to transform itself into a Party initiative to pool the efforts of all patriotic forces in society. This is nothing less than a challenge, the call of the times, our main task," Gorbachev said. □

Foreign minister for Russia

RUSSIA'S diplomacy must abandon the "ideology-based, global schemes that still dominate our mentality," says Andrei Kozyrev, who was elected Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation by the republican parliament on October 11.

The new minister pointed out in a TASS interview, given immediately after the vote, that it was necessary to work out a concept of Russia's national-state interests, without which "it will be difficult to pursue a systematic and consistent foreign policy." He believes that not only the Foreign Ministry, but also all institutions concerned and the public of the Russian Federation should take part in working out the concept.

Speaking about prospects for developing relations between Russia and other states, Kozyrev stressed the importance of maintaining normal, friendly relations with East European countries on an ideology-free basis and establishing "entirely new relations with West European countries." He said that in relations with some countries it is necessary to "clear obstructions." For instance, it is possible to "search for ways to resolve problems in our relations with Japan." According to Kozyrev, emphasis should be laid not on "all sorts of claims, but on the interests of the economic revival of Siberia and Russia's eastern regions."

Union republics, which he regards as sovereign states, hold a special place in Kozyrev's foreign policy concept. Asked about the character of future relations with the Soviet Foreign Ministry, he said that before his candidature had been approved by the parliament, he had had a conversation with Eduard Shevardnadze. "I got the impression that the necessary conditions exist for tackling problems on the basis of co-operation . . . The underestimation of Russia's sovereignty and its revival process would be a serious political miscalculation," he stressed. □

Soviet car plant to sell shares

THE newspaper *Trud* reports on October 13 that the Kamaz automobile plant has started to sell its shares. It says dozens of Soviet enterprises and organisations have expressed the wish to buy shares worth more than 1.5 billion roubles.

Kamaz plans to sell more than two billion roubles worth of shares before the end of 1991.

Foreign companies are also interested in the plant. More than ten major truck producers in the world are negotiating the purchase and exchange of Kamaz shares and the establishment of joint ventures.

The US firm General Motors has also displayed interest in Kamaz shares.

The plant is planning to sell more than 200 million roubles worth of shares to its personnel.

Eduard Shevardnadze reports to Soviet Parliament

THE following is an edited version of Eduard Shevardnadze's report to the Soviet Parliament on current international events and the work of the USSR Foreign Ministry to ensure the country's interests and security at a joint sitting of the Soviet Parliament on October 15:

"The German settlement could be and has been achieved in accordance with the transition to a new model for a European set-up that differs significantly from the post-war set-up," Eduard Shevardnadze said in his report.

Shevardnadze noted that the European set-up was previously based on Europe's division and military confrontation. "Forces possessing tactical nuclear weapons were squarely facing each other," he continued.

"Until recently, European security was based on nuclear brinkmanship."

He said that over the next few days the Soviet Government will submit a package of agreements on the unification of the two Germanys to the Supreme Soviet for ratification.

On the question of arms reduction the Soviet Foreign Minister reported "substantial headway" towards ironing out remaining differences on the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) during his recent talks with US Secretary of State James Baker in New York.

He went on to say both sides believed it would be possible at November's meeting with Baker in Washington "to resolve all the basic problems connected with the treaty."

After that, he said, "some time" would be needed to work out for the finer points to prepare the treaty for signature in time for the US President's forthcoming visit to the Soviet Union.

Progress at the Vienna talks on conventional armed forces, achieved over the past few days, is a "firm foundation" for the European home, he said.

Dealing with this topic in his speech on the activities of the Soviet Foreign Ministry, he said: "This is a real breakthrough achieved thanks to Soviet-American interaction and interaction with all our partners."

Shevardnadze said that the sides "overcame the last major obstacles towards the conclusion of a treaty" during his recent talks with US Secretary of State James Baker in New York.

He added that the sides "set levels for major cuts in tanks, artillery systems, armoured carriers, warplanes and helicopters."

In other words, "a firm foundation has been laid for what we have strived since 1986 when Mikhail Gorbachev voiced the idea of a European home," he stressed.

Shevardnadze noted that the success of the construction of a European home will depend, to a great extent, on how the Soviet Union will tackle its domestic problems.

A European home "is being built and will be built if we resolve our domestic difficulties and remain good partners with other countries in this truly historic work," he emphasised.

Describing the bilateral intergovernmental agreement with Germany Shevardnadze pointed out that Germany will provide a total of 15 billion Deutschmarks to cover the withdrawal of Soviet troops for what was formerly East Germany and related expenses.

The funds will finance the temporary stationing of Soviet troops in what was formerly East Germany, their transportation home and the construction of housing for them in the Soviet Union, he said.

Twelve billion marks, according to Shevar-

dnadze, will be an outright grant and the other three billion – an interest-free credit to be repaid over five years.

A total of 7.8 billion marks will be spent to build homes and construction-industry facilities, Shevardnadze said. He added that the Defence Ministry and the Ministry of External Economic Relations have already begun to consider house building offers from foreign firms.

Part of the remaining money will go to retrain demobbed servicemen for civilian jobs, Shevardnadze said.

He urged the Deputies to judge the German settlement "not only in terms of the achieved accords' merits but also in the context of changes under way in Europe as a whole, within the framework of the Helsinki Process and relations between the two alliances."

The endorsement of the treaties with Germany, he said, "can only be seen as an endorsement of our overall policy in European and world affairs."

The Soviet Union could renounce the peacetime deployment of nuclear weapons on its ships and warplanes in the Baltic Sea and the air space over it "on a permanent or temporary basis," he said explaining Soviet proposals for a nuclear-free Baltic Sea, he also suggested that Western countries, for their part, renounce "without any exception" visits by surface ships and submarines with nuclear weapons on board to the Baltic Sea and flights by air force planes with such weapons over it.

"We are convinced that such a decision would help further increase stability in Europe as a whole, especially in the north," Shevardnadze said.

He recalled that as a first unilateral step in this direction, the Soviet Union has pledged to destroy all ballistic nuclear missile submarines known in the West as Golf's, which are deployed in the Baltic Sea, by the end of 1990.

"We have fulfilled this commitment: the last of such submarines was destroyed several days ago," Shevardnadze said.

Referring to Japanese demands for the 'return' of some islands in the Far East, Shevardnadze said, there are neither legal nor historical grounds for transferring the four Soviet islands in the smaller Kurile chain to Japan.

The four islands are Khabomai, Iturup, Kunashir and Shikotan.

Answering questions four members of parliament, Shevardnadze said that talks are under way on a peace treaty between the Soviet Union and Japan, which cover the issue of the location of the border.

"As far as these islands are concerned, the issue of their transfer does not stand. We are not considering such an option," he said.

Reminding the deputies of President Mikhail Gorbachev's forthcoming visit to Japan, Shevardnadze said that the programme of the visit, which is currently being prepared, "does not include this issue because we believe that there are neither legal nor historical or any other grounds for laying claims to the Soviet Union."

On the joint exploitation of these islands with Japan and the creation of joint ventures there, Shevardnadze said: "This is another matter."

"Such issues can be considered in relation to these islands and other territories of the Soviet Union," he said.

Regarding the question of Soviet citizens in Iraq: Throughout the Gulf crisis, the Soviet Government has continuously sought to provide reliable protection to Soviet citizens, Shevardnadze told parliament.

The minister noted that the Soviet leadership uses "every possible means, political and diplomatic, direct talks with the representatives of

Iraq and contacts in 'third' countries to get this problem solved."

He emphasised that "the visit to Baghdad by presidential envoy, Yevgeni Primakov, has yielded an important result."

The Iraqi side is displaying certain understanding for our concerns and anxieties, Shevardnadze stressed, adding that "we will continue to take effective and substantive measures."

The minister noted that the Soviet side "neither sees nor draws a direct relationship between the crisis, following Iraq's aggression, and other seats of conflict in the Middle East."

"The Soviet Union acted and will act for the earliest settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the situation in the Lebanon," he declared. "This is our principled position."

At the same time the minister said that the Gulf crisis compounds the search for the comprehensive Middle Eastern settlement.

"A concentration of international efforts in order to attain a decisive turn towards peace in the Middle East will undoubtedly promote the settlement of the crisis," he added.

Shevardnadze said the possibility for the peaceful solution to the Gulf conflict "still remains" and added that "high diplomatic activity" is needed for the purpose.

The decision to send Soviet troops abroad is a prerogative of Parliament, Shevardnadze told the deputies in explaining his earlier remarks on the possibility "in principle" of the use of Soviet troops as part of a UN multinational force.

As a permanent member of the Security Council and in keeping with the UN Charter, the Soviet Union, he said, "bears special responsibility for maintaining international peace and security."

"The same responsibility lies with the other members of this international body, but none of them, us included, can operate outside national legal practices," Shevardnadze said.

Speaking of the possible use of Soviet troops in the Gulf, he added: "Today is not 1979 – the year of a great tragedy, when it was decided to send our troops into Afghanistan, and any use of Soviet troops abroad will require a relevant decision by the Supreme Soviet."

Shevardnadze stressed that the "Soviet leadership has no plans or intentions to get involved in military operations."

He said that "as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, the USSR has the right of veto and can block any use of force" by the international organisation.

Shevardnadze described the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait as "a lesson too harsh to let the present peace-keeping structures remain intact."

"We should decide what is more sensible and reliable – collective action within the framework of the UN Security Council or unilateral measures, which are resented by many."

"Our principled policy line is that, from any point of view, it is preferable to maintain a fair legal order in the world by collective efforts on the solid legal basis of the UN Charter," Shevardnadze said.

"Whether we want it or not, in some situations the use of strength based on law may be required to maintain law and order in the world ... But at least an internationally legal mechanism for using force and coercion should be employed," he said. □

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the above are obtainable at the prices indicated from:

*Soviet Booklets (SN),
 3 Rosary Gardens,
 London SW7 4NW.*

Party appeals for help in drafting new programme

By Ivan Ivanov, TASS parliamentary correspondent:

THE commission, set up by the Soviet Communist Party's recent congress to prepare the Party's new programme, has appealed for help to communists and other Soviet citizens. The appeal released in Moscow on October 14 says:

Dear Comrades,

The 28th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union adopted a policy statement *Towards a Humane, Democratic Socialism*. The statement sets out the ideological and theoretical positions and political aims, by which communists, Party organisations and Party bodies are to be guided until the new CPSU programme is adopted.

The Congress set up a commission to work out the new programme and have it published in the first half of 1991 for discussion within the Party. Following the all-Party discussion, the programme is due to be considered at an all-union conference or a Party congress to be held not later than the first half of 1992.

The 28th Congress determined that the Party's main goal is the transition to a humane, democratic socialist traditions.

The country is now entering a period of radical changes that will determine the development of society for years and decades.

The commission created by the Party Congress to prepare the new programme addresses to all communists and other citizens of the Soviet Union the proposal to contribute actively and with interest to the creation of our Party's

new programme.

We invite everyone to participate and cooperate with us in dialogue – workers and peasants, scientists and engineers, teachers and cultural workers, representatives of trade unions, and all those who are prepared to contribute to the common cause.

The commission will be grateful for proposals by various movements and organisations orientated towards socialism and public associations in this and other countries.

We believe and hope that no one will be indifferent to the accomplishment of the task of preparing the programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. □



Ownership of plants

THE recent plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party concentrated on elaborating decisions taken by the 28th Party Congress, which set the task of switching to a market orientated economy and modernising the country as a whole, ranking Party officials told a news conference in Moscow on October 10.

Party deputy leader Vladimir Ivashko and Politburo member Alexander Dzasokhov said the plenum had focused on the Party's role in achieving these goals.

Speaking about the Party's economic policies, Ivashko said it "does not reject the private ownership of producer goods," most notably small enterprises.

But he voiced opposition to the private ownership of land, saying that the final decision on the issue should be taken through a nationwide referendum.

Ivashko declined to answer a question about which of the competing economic reform programmes was preferred by the Party, explaining that he was "against turning a Party plenum into a offshoot of the Supreme Soviet."

"The Party's task is to define the political aspects" of the transition to a market economy, he said.

Asked to comment on the Party's attitude to the Ryzhkov Government, Ivashko replied as follows: "In cases where we agree with the government, we shall back it, while opposing it in other cases." He cited the uncontrolled emission of money as one instance where the Party disagreed with the government.

Dzasokhov admitted that the plenum "touch-ed upon the expediency of continuing to combine the posts of Party leader and president" but decided that "such a combination is, at this juncture, essential."

Speakers at the news conference denied rumours about Ivashko stepping down.

Commenting on claims about *Pravda* editor Ivan Frolov's forthcoming resignation, Ivashko said the issue had been raised at a meeting of the newspaper's Party organisation and would be taken up by the Politburo. □

TASS COMMENT:

Results of the Communist Party plenary meeting

By Ivan Ivanov, TASS parliamentary correspondent:

ALTHOUGH most of the numerous political parties that have emerged recently in the Soviet Union are not represented in the Soviet Parliament, they have been given an opportunity to take part in the law-making process.

Representatives of some 20 new political parties and movements were invited to the parliament on October 11 to discuss a draft concept of the new union treaty.

The meeting, the second one of its kind, "is neither a tactical move, nor a game," deputy head of the Council of Nationalities Boris Olei-

nik, who chaired the meeting, told TASS. He said that concluding the treaty "without due consideration of the opinion of new political parties and public movements, even if plenipotentiary representatives of the union republics sign it, will not bring consensus and the reconciliation of nations."

Grigori Atamanchuk, expert from the department for inter-ethnic relations of the USSR Supreme Soviet, said that after the first meeting in September representatives of the parties had prepared their own version of the draft treaty. So far, they only agree on one item – all agree is that union relations should be based, above all, on the observance of human rights and the

equality of all nations. The future setup of the country – a federation or a confederation – is the subject of especially heated discussions.

Janis Bremzis, representative of the Russian People's Democratic Front 'Pamyat', a section of the notorious patriotic society of the same name, said that "at present the Soviet Union is moving towards disintegration and possible civil wars between separate republics. Perhaps, even nuclear weapons will be used. Naturally, the republics will claim them when dividing the all-union potential between themselves." Bremzis strongly opposed the transformation of the Soviet Union into a confederation of states and suggested creating a "union of sovereign and democratic republics."

Sergei Skripnikov, a representative of the Democratic Union, did not agree with Bremzis. He said that "the disintegration of the last colonial empire" is actually taking place and that "the least painful way out of the existing situation is the creation of a confederation of independent states on Soviet territory," which could fulfil common tasks.

Of course, it is impossible to find in two hours the answer to the question, what kind of country the new union will be? The Parliamentary Council of Nationalities intends to continue meeting with new political parties and public organisations in order to work out a concept for the new draft treaty. □

(Continued from page 345)

who have emigrated but have not forgotten their Motherland, its pains and joys, even in the remotest corners of the world.

It is a get-together of those whose moving, anxious words evoke a response in the hearts of millions of their compatriots on either side of the borders.

Your decision to meet reflects a keen desire to bring together and unite our long-suffering people and facilitate a civic and national reconciliation in the country, which is essential at all times but especially at the current, diffi-

cult, watershed transition to new forms of life worthier of people.

It is known that not only a civil war but also a civil peace first originates in the mind, including the creative imagination of an artist, which can give people both an impulse towards evil and an impulse towards good.

One would like to believe that your meeting, overcoming all the prejudices and obstacles, will provide a kind of moral guide for many people, our compatriots, and help rally all healthy, sound popular forces and promote the cause of good and accord.

Wishing you fruitful work,
Mikhail Gorbachev. □

USSR tells UN of its military potential

THE Soviet Union submitted to the United Nations two major documents setting out a detailed account of the Soviet military potential.

This is the realisation of President Gorbachev's promise to publish, in a comparable form, data about Soviet military spending. Figures characterising the Soviet military budget for 1989 have been transferred to the UN standardised accounting system containing information about military spending. They will be published.

At last year's 44th session of the UN General Assembly, the Soviet Union announced its intention to make known to the United Nations, on an annual basis, the number and the main types of armaments at the disposal of the Soviet Armed Forces.

Figures characterising the state of the Soviet Armed Forces on January 1, 1990 were transferred to the United Nations on October 15, pending publication.

While presenting the documents, deputy head of the Soviet delegation to the 45th session of the UN General Assembly Vladimir Petrovsky told a news conference in New York on October 15: "The documents will make clear to you that the Soviet Union adheres to high international standards of openness."

"The data we are submitting to the United Nations is comparable to the degree of precision with the data submitted to the United Na-

tions by the United States and other leading countries in the military field.

"For the first time, the documents reveal the earlier classified information about the cost of the Soviet Union of the upkeep of land forces, the Navy, the Air Force and other military forces, the cost of management and free aid to other countries, as well as of the supplies of aircraft, missiles, nuclear warheads, ships, artillery pieces, armoured vehicles and tanks to the Soviet Armed Forces.

"The Soviet Union's total budgetary outlay for military purposes in 1989 reached 77.9 billion roubles," Petrovsky said: "The Soviet military budget for 1990 was cut by eight per cent - to 71 billion roubles," he recalled. This step by the Soviet Union, apart from facilitating greater openness and trust, opens the possibility for further internationally agreed military cuts.

"With this in mind, we propose to hold consultations under UN aegis to work out methods making comparable military spending by different countries.

"The Soviet Union has illustrated by action its readiness to promote openness as a universal norm of international life.

"We hope that other states will soon submit to the United Nations complete information about international arms sales. We are confident that in its entirety this information will enhance the role of the United Nations as guarantor of stability in the post-confrontational world," Petrovsky stressed. □

USSR urges moves to ensure priority of international law

THE concluding decade of the Twentieth Century should become a period of joint creative activity, the co-development of states, and consensus on the key issues problems of our time, a decade of law and order and joint efforts to ensure its stability, Vladimir Petrovsky, Soviet deputy chief delegate and Deputy Foreign Minister, told the Sixth Committee (legal) of the 45th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

"The events of the past year, which finally buried the cold war and drew a line under the Second World War, convincingly showed that new political thinking, which is the basis of all foreign policy initiatives and actions by the Soviet Union in the age of perestroika, has become firmly established in the fabric of international politics," he said.

"What happened in the Persian Gulf is a serious warning to civilisation," Petrovsky said. "At the same time this is an indicator of new political thinking's margin of safety.

"Suffice it to imagine what would have been the outcome if this had taken place during the cold war, when confrontational logic would have been applied.

"The Gulf crisis has become a sort of watershed in mankind's recent history: only yesterday, an aggression would have had the potential of splitting the world into opposite ideologically-oriented camps and putting it on the brink of a new world war. Today it has only united mankind further on the basis of a commitment to international law and the goals and principles of the United Nations," Petrovsky said.

On behalf of the Soviet delegation Petrovsky proposed instituting a UN control authority that would monitor the implementation of agreements to ease international tension, to reduce

arms and would follow the military situation in conflict-ridden areas.

"Such an authority, with space-based monitoring facilities at its disposal, could be set up as an auxiliary agency of the UN Security Council. It should be vested with the right to carry out on-site inspections," Petrovsky went on.

"This authority's conclusions would be brought to the notice of main UN agencies. In certain cases, the authority's conclusions could be used by the world court, the importance of which should be sharply raised as one of key components in the strategy for a peaceful resolution of disputes.

"Openness and international control are the mainstays of the new peace structures that are being built," Petrovsky said. "At the same time, and this has been vividly shown by the latest development, the United Nations Organisation, in order to be effective in the maintenance of peace, should also have at its disposal means to suppress aggression."

"This taken into account, the UN Military Staff Committee should be transformed into an effective agency for co-operation. The Soviet Union suggested holding a committee meeting at the level of the chiefs of the general staff of the permanent members of the UN Security Council, as is directly stipulated by the UN Charter, and discussing an entire range of organisational matters aimed at countering acts of aggression.

"At the previous session of the UN General Assembly, the international community designated the 1990s as the decade of international law.

"During the coming decade," Petrovsky emphasised, "the United Nations Organisation is called upon to take the central place befitting it as a 'university of co-operation' and a unique equitable mechanism for post-confrontation actions." □

(New York, October 16)

TASS COMMENT:

Israel's reaction to UN resolution

By Yuri Tyssovsky, TASS political observer:

TEL AVIV's reaction to UN Security Council resolution 672, which denounced the killing of Palestinians in Jerusalem, and the council's decision to send a UN mission there to investigate the circumstances of this incident, was Israeli-style.

Israeli officials said no assistance would be given to the UN envoys, who would be regarded as "tourists".

The Israeli leadership has challenged UN resolutions for more than 25 years. However, this time Tel Aviv has chosen a very inopportune moment.

The world press accuses Israel of "playing into the hands" of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and "adding fuel to the Middle East fire."

Israeli politicians are promoting in every way, by word and deed, the implementation of Baghdad's thesis intended to justify its aggression against the neighbouring peaceful country, namely that this aggression stemmed from a profound deadlock, at which the Middle East has been for years.

Tel Aviv's actions undermine diplomatic efforts to settle the acute Persian Gulf crisis, make Arab "hawks" toughen their stands and increase the international isolation of Israel.

However, this does not stop Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir. He and the Iraqi dictator continue to rock the "Middle East boat", each pursuing his own aims.

Both of them seek to earn as many dividends as possible by exploiting the "the worse, the better" situation.

Saddam's popularity among Arab extremists is based on his ability to convince them that he is a "staunch fighter against Israeli expansionism and the occupation of Arab lands."

The Jerusalem massacre and Tel Aviv's reaction to the Security Council's resolution have only added to this image of Saddam. But who stands to benefit from this? □

DOCUMENTS AND MATERIALS

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Military budget and the market

By Vladimir Serov

THE three draft programmes of transition to market relations, which are being discussed by the USSR and republican parliaments, provide for the reduction of defence spending. Shatalin's and Aganbegyan's groups suggest slashing the military budget by 7,000 million roubles, and Abalkin's group think a 5,000 million rouble reduction will suffice.

All the three drafts regard this as a key way of balancing the budget, and suggest beginning by making public the structure of the military budget in order to determine its real size and later establish a new method of drawing it up.

Soviet and foreign scientists doubt that the Soviet military budget amounts to 70,000 million roubles, and obviously do not like its structure. Vladimir Lopatin, a member of the USSR Parliament, says that a group of independent experts used the table of defence spending approved by the UN in 1987 to reveal at least ten previously unknown items of military spending. In particular, it turns out that civilian organisations in this country finance recruiting offices, military training in educational establishments, and the use of land by the army.

The military budget can be reduced above all by bringing down allocations on the purchase of armaments and military construction. Members of the Russian Council of Ministers believe that the interests of economic stabilisation call for halting the purchase of armaments for a certain period, with the staff of defence plants and mili-

tary construction sites paid their average monthly wages for a period of one year.

The introduction of market relations will change both the size and the system of drawing up the military budget. The draft suggested by Ryzhkov's cabinet provides for drawing up the federal budget on the basis of federal taxes. This budget will include allocations for defences, with the amount and spheres of spending to be approved by the USSR Parliament on the basis of proposals of the union government.

According to the Shatalin-Yavlinsky programme, defence spending should be determined by the USSR Parliament by agreement with republican authorities. Each republic will be expected to voluntarily donate the necessary amount of money to the USSR budget (the share of their donations depending on their income). Refusal to finance military spending will deprive the republic in question of the right to be a fully-fledged member of the USSR, up to expulsion.

The difference between the first and the second drafts is not great, but in the second case the republican government will get a practical possibility to influence military expenditures.

The military budget will be drawn up on the basis of both political and economic factors, above all the satisfaction of the needs of the armed forces on the basis of state contracts. This method is practised now but it does not give any advantages to the contractor while the demands to the quality of military items are higher than in civilian industries.

In the future the military budget should be big enough to make it possible to pay more for military contracts than for civilian ones. This will create conditions for choosing contractors on the basis of competition, including the cost and

quality of their goods. In this way the reduction of armaments will be compensated for with the higher quality of military hardware and equipment.

To cushion the negative consequences of inflation, some military items (in particular, spending on the upkeep of servicemen and pensions to them) will be socially insured. This means that if inflation increases spending under the above items, allocations will be automatically geared to the indexation. For example, the growth of prices of basic necessities will automatically lead to the increase in allocations on the upkeep of servicemen. The difference will be paid from the military budget, though additional resources will come from the republics, territories and regions where the prices were raised. The indexation of the incomes of servicemen, as well as changes in it, should be the responsibility of the USSR Parliament.

Besides, it is suggested that at least 30 per cent of the money released by the reduction of the defence budget should be used to raise the salaries of officers and to build more housing.

The structure of the future military budget is barely outlined, and the work on it will continue after the programme of transition to market relations is approved. The Defence Ministry must be involved in this work. With this aim in view the ministry is establishing a group of experts who will work on the details of all problems concerned with transition to market relations.

A clever financial policy will enable our military department not only to provide social guarantees to its personnel but to become a more profitable contractor in conditions of market relations. □

(Novosti)

TASS analyst on Galvin's statement

By Vladimir Bogachev, TASS military analyst:

NATO Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, US General John Galvin announced on October 9 that West European countries are unable, under present conditions, to ensure their security on their own. He demanded that the US retain its mighty military presence in Turkey and the Mediterranean.

Galvin told a news conference in Istanbul that plans to build up NATO forces on the southern flank were prompted by the lessons of the Gulf crisis in a region where new complications might arise in the future.

At the end of September, Galvin proposed stationing special rapid deployment forces as close as 5,000 kilometres to the Middle East and the Mediterranean, leaving no doubts as to who he aimed to go to war against there.

The beefing up of NATO's northern and southern flanks by building up the US military presence there and the proposed expansion of the Western military alliance's "zone of responsibility" beyond the boundaries of its 16 member-countries calls into question the actual objectives of the new US military strategy. It aims at shifting the emphasis from a global war against the Soviet Union to so-called regional variants.

Tempestuous political changes, unprecedented in their scale, are now taking place in the world. Earlier views on methods to ensure the security of individual countries and the tasks and functions of military alliances are also undergoing changes.

The Warsaw Treaty is being radically transformed and assuming the character of a

political, consultative organisation. The Soviet Union is withdrawing troops from Eastern Europe and considerably cutting troops and arms, including nuclear.

New trends are becoming pronounced in the West as well. Many politicians are increasingly aware that stability in Europe can be ensured only by political means.

"The era of confrontation is over," NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner said "and we are now trying to lay the foundation for co-operation with the Soviet Union." The heads of states and governments of the NATO member countries declared at the NATO session that the North Atlantic Alliance should extend the hand of friendship to East European nations. And those were not mere words.

The United States, for instance, has renounced the modernisation of short range missiles in Western Europe and announced that it would withdraw nuclear artillery ammunition from the European continent. NATO recognised the need to correct its flexible response strategy and cancelled the resolution about the three per cent annual increase of military budgets.

These moves by the West can only be welcomed. But the adaptation by the United States and other NATO member-countries to new realities must proceed at a higher rate.

Apprehension is caused by Washington's statements about continuing commitments to the 'Star War' plans. Plans are being hatched in the United States to deploy new air-to-surface nuclear missiles in Europe.

US plans to build up NATO flank forces in close proximity to Soviet borders also appear to be relics of the past cold war. □

Shevardnadze meets mothers

SOVIET Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze received on Saturday, October 13 a group of mothers of Soviet soldiers missing in Afghanistan. At their request he told them about the comprehensive work carried out by the Soviet Foreign Ministry together with other Soviet institutions and organisations in order to find and secure the release of our soldiers, taken prisoner in Afghanistan.

It was pointed out at the meeting that the Soviet side through its diplomatic channels is using every possible opportunity to speed up the return home of the Soviet citizens, who remain in captivity. Soviet officials meet with senior executives from various countries, primarily with those who can influence the Afghan opposition, or on whose territory the former Soviet servicemen may be kept. Various international organisations, specifically, the United Nations, prominent political and public figures are also taking part in this work. Direct contacts with the mojahed were established. The Afghan Government and President Najibullah are helping a great deal in these humane activities.

Shevardnadze and the mothers of the missing soldiers discussed possibilities for expanding the forms and methods of work, aimed at saving Soviet prisoners of war in Afghanistan.

Shevardnadze expressed profound sympathy for the relatives of the missing soldiers and assured them that the Soviet Foreign Ministry would continue to exert every effort to speed up the settlement of the problem. □

On the threshold of the market: hopes and concerns

By Professor V. Boikov, Ph.d. Deputy Director, Sociological Research Centre, Academy of Social Sciences at the CPSU Central Committee.

NATIONAL sociological research carried out in 1986, 1988, 1989 and 1990 portray the socio-economic situation from the point of view of workers, collective farmers, economists and other social sections and groups. Over 18,000 people, including blue- and white-collar workers, have been polled.

To begin with, the research indicates that the public no longer has faith in the competence of economic management bodies and enterprise managers to solve economic problems. Their disapproval ratings are substantially higher (1.5, 2 times and more) than approval.

The research has also revealed sharply increasing tension in society due to the worsening shortage of consumer goods. Eighty-two per cent of those polled have difficulties in buying manufactured goods and 70 per cent in buying food. Over 80 per cent have to buy goods and services at prices higher than those set by the state.

The standard of living is declining rapidly. Only 11 per cent are well-off, 65 per cent earn enough to live to the next pay day, 16 per cent can hardly make ends meet and 8 per cent are unable to repay their debts. Comparison of this data and the analysis of family budgets carried out by the State Committee for Statistics shows growing stratification of the public according to income.

Enterprises are switching to self-financing and leasehold while all resources remain in the hands of the state and the command system still prevails. Consequently labour incentives remain unchanged, forming a vicious circle. The quasi-military ways used to tie workers to property, and egalitarianism in income distribution are damaging to labour incentives and consequently to the economy as a whole. To the question "If you work more, will your wages increase?" 40 per cent said "Yes" in 1986, 34 per cent in 1988, 12 per cent in 1989 and 6 per cent in 1990. At the same time, more and more people are positive that if their work deteriorates, they will be paid for it. Seven per cent expressed this certainty in 1986, 9 per cent in 1988, 18 per cent in 1989 and 46 per cent in 1990.

The public is particularly concerned over the development of the "shadow economy", which, being beyond the scope of the law, dictates its prices and terms for satisfying essential needs.

A typical manifestation of the shadow economy, corruption, is widespread due to the total dependence of the absolute majority of consumers on the faulty system of distributing goods and on those who have access to them and regulate the distribution of commodities that are in short supply. Asked whether they ever gave gifts or money in return for some services, 62 per cent of those polled said that they had given gifts, and 42 per cent money.

Sixty-eight per cent of the economists and inspectors polled said that more and more goods that are in short supply go to the black market, making relations between people more tense and social injustice more flagrant. This fact was noted by eight out of 10 economic executives and rank-and-file workers. The development of the shadow economic sector leads to the appearance of rich and poor people contrary to the principle of distribution according to the work done: this was recognised by 70 per cent of those polled.

Sick and tired of the black market and economic difficulties, the public has begun to demand more of the bodies of economic management, particularly the government.

The free market had more supporters than opponents in summer 1990. When a national poll was conducted in June this year, nearly half of those polled hoped that the transition to a market economy would put an end to the shortages of goods and services, one-third that there would be no egalitarianism in wages, and one in every five that the living standards would be improved.

During the last six months of this year the percentage of supporters of radicalisation of the economic reform has declined, though this decline is being accompanied by the growth in the number of those who doubt (not oppose) the reform, which is evidence of the difficulty in forming an attitude to the new forms of economic management.

Many fear possible adverse consequences of the transition to a market economy. Every other person polled in June 1990 expressed concern over possible price rises, and 27 per cent are sure that only the cunning and underground millionaires will gain. While advocating a free market, some would not give up the idea of ratio distribution of goods at stable prices. Strict control over distribution is particularly favoured by the needy, who number many million in this country. A considerable number of people (40 per cent of those polled) fear that privatisation of economic activities will entail unemployment, and these fears aggravate the socio-political tension.

The anti-market sentiment is largely due to the deterioration of the economic situation caused by the old system of economic management, but seen by the public as a consequence of the economic reform. Take the public attitude to co-operatives. Most people regard them as thieves, though only 15 to 20 per cent of those polled ever used their services. Anti-co-operative feelings are so strong due to the shortages of essentials, the general growth of prices and, of course, to the fact that over 50 per cent of co-operatives are middle men, not producers.

Political and ideological influences on public attitudes the lack of economic knowledge and worsening living standards are the reasons for the antipathy of many kolkhoz (collective farm) members to independent farmers. In early 1990 there were only 21,000 independent farmsteads, which is but a drop in the ocean of agrarian production where there are 41,000 collective and state farms. Many, however, regard the appearance of independent farmers as a threat to society's socialist foundations.

Experience of the market economy is close to nought, if we do not count that gained by people through their contacts with the shadow economy. Therefore, only 4 per cent of those polled think they are prepared to operate in new conditions. Some 19 per cent think that they are satisfactorily prepared and 48 per cent that they

are not prepared at all; 29 per cent have not yet made up their mind. This situation dictates the need for vigorous measures to train and retrain personnel at every level of economic management, exchange and distribution.

The extension of citizens' rights to property and economic activities requires sound legal knowledge and the overcoming of ignorance of the existing economic laws. The poll indicates that many know nothing of the major laws adopted recently to regulate economic life: 44 per cent are unaware of the Law on Property, 45 per cent of the Law on Land and 41 per cent of the Law on Leasing. The number one problem is professional training and retraining of workers essential for the development of the labour market and for scientific and technical progress. Research done in 1989 at enterprises with advanced technology has revealed an unusual situation. By studying the work of people employed in flexible production systems, the researchers tried to look to the 21st Century, but only found a conflict between advanced technologies and people's obsolete attitude to labour with an outdated system of organisation and material incentives. This shows that a new type of worker cannot appear all by himself without qualitative changes in the whole economic sector.

Nonetheless, I disagree with the pessimistic conclusions that an economic boom and introduction of the latest scientific and technological achievements are impossible in the next few decades due to the low quality of manpower. True, the professional training of our workers is worse than that of Western or Japanese workers, but, as far as I know, the comparatively unskilled labour in South Korea, Hong Kong and some other countries did not prevent economic booms. Tens and hundreds of thousands of emigrants from our country are quickly mastering economic and technological skills in the West, and more and more businesses producing first-class products are appearing in this country.

It is an interesting fact that eight out of ten workers, farmers and economists think that their enterprises can work much more effectively. In addition to that, 88 per cent of those polled said that they could work better. The same opinion was expressed in 1988 and 1986. These good intentions, as a rule, come to nothing owing to the lack of economic freedom and the total alienation of workers from property. □

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Konstantin Nikolayev

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