

Gorbachev meets American senators

"OLD structures are being eliminated, as are old ideas and concepts. A new state and society as well as a new understanding of emerging realities are being born with difficulty," Mikhail Gorbachev said at a meeting with American senators in Moscow on September 5.

At their request he described the situation in the country. The President said that everything will be clear in the next few weeks.

The present situation prompts resolute and urgent measures in all directions. On the other hand, it contains a powerful potential for sweeping changes.

Gorbachev drew the attention of the senators led by Robert Dole to various evaluations being made in the United States concerning an attitude to the USSR. "What we are doing here is necessary not only for us but also for America."

The United States, as well as the entire world, needs a dynamic Soviet Union, strong and integral. It will be more difficult for all, including the US, without a new Soviet Union.

Soviet-American co-operation has become a powerful stabilising factor in international relations. The European process has proved this. This is also corroborated by Soviet-American co-operation in the Gulf crisis.

Gorbachev and the senators exchanged opinions on the Soviet Union's transition to a market economy and, consequently, on changes in its foreign economic relations with developed and developing nations.

The sides also discussed the talks on con-

ventional weapons in Europe and on strategic offensive weapons.

Gorbachev said that, although some provisions of future treaties have not been agreed due to changes in the Warsaw Treaty and German unification, there are all grounds to hope that they will be concluded this year.

On the eve of the Helsinki meeting between the Soviet and American presidents, the sides discussed the situation in the Gulf, the position of foreigners detained in Iraq, the problem of Soviet specialists there and prospects for future relations with that country, depending on the results and methods of settling the crisis.

Both sides agreed that utmost efforts are needed to implement peacefully UN Security Council resolutions on the Gulf crisis. □

THE visiting US senators met Yegeni Primakov, member of the Presidential Council, on September 4. At the request of US legislators, he commented on the situation in the country and described the difficulties facing the Soviet union in connection with the transition to a market economy.

The sides exchanged opinions on the state of and prospects for the development of Soviet-American relations and favoured the speedier drafting of a package of agreements on disarm-

ment if the Helsinki meeting between the Soviet and American presidents is a success.

They also discussed the development of the Iraq-Kuwait conflict.

Meeting with Yeltsin

Boris Yeltsin, President of the Russian Parliament, said he favoured transition to an interstate level of relations between the Russian Federation and the United States.

He stressed during a meeting with the senators that the Russian Federation is now pursuing its own domestic and foreign policies different from the centre's line. Nevertheless, relations with the United States remain at the level of various funds and joint ventures.

Yeltsin noted that the development of relations could assume not only a social but also an economic character. He said that it is also possible to take joint steps to eliminate the nuclear threat.

He proposed a tripartite agreement between the US, Russia and Kazakhstan to ban nuclear tests, since they are conducted in these two Soviet republics.

Yeltsin described in detail some aspects of the '500-day programme', an action plan to pull the Russian Federation out of crisis.

He stressed that it provides for the preservation of economic ties with other republics and is oriented to the legislation of particular republics in contrast to the programme of the all-union government, which presupposes stiff vertical structures. □

Gorbachev's television interview

WORK to compile a programme for the Soviet Union's transition to a market economy is nearing completion, President Mikhail Gorbachev said in an interview with Soviet television broadcast on September 5.

He commented on the results of his conversation on Tuesday (September 4) with scientists and specialists working on the programme. The President pointed to the identity of approaches by the Shatalin group and the government group.

Gorbachev said that two days of work had been given to coordinate views and discuss ma-

ior points in order to finalise a single programme to be forwarded for consideration to republics and the USSR Supreme Soviet.

The main purpose of reform, the President said, is advance through the stabilisation of the market, the stabilisation of the rouble towards a normal economy oriented towards the individual.

Pointing to the interconnection between the transition to a market and the conclusion of a new union treaty, the Soviet President noted that a unified opinion existed of the need to have an all-union market, a common economic space, common currency, a single customs service, a coordinated taxation policy and a single credit-and-banking system - all that a market requires.

Gorbachev favoured the transfer of the work to prepare a new union treaty to the top level. For this purpose, he noted, a committee is being set up, which will include the top leaders of Soviet republics, and the top union leaders.

"At this important stage, when fundamental issues are being discussed, we need coordinated efforts, mutual understanding and co-operation," Gorbachev said.

Separatist actions, alienation and attempts to hide behind a fence are now inadmissible in any republic, in any region, Gorbachev stressed.

Speaking about his meeting on with a US congressional delegation led by Senator Robert Dole, Gorbachev noted that the conversation was very meaningful and important to him in connection with his forthcoming meeting in Helsinki with President George Bush. □

Soviet President meets Moldavian leaders

MOLDAVIAN President Mircha Snegur and Prime Minister Mircha Druk briefed Soviet President Mihail Gorbachev at a meeting in Moscow on September 5 on the political situation in the republic and measures to stabilise the situation.

The Moldavian leaders reaffirmed their conviction that the Moldavian sovereign republic can successfully develop and advance on the road of social renovation by remaining in the USSR, with other constituent republics and all peoples of the country. They stressed the need for the earliest possible transition of the economy to new economic relations on the basis of a nationwide market, stable economic relations and a new union treaty.

Gorbachev said he firmly supported preserving the republic's integrity as part of the union of sovereign states and tackling all issues by political methods, on the basis of respect, understanding, accord and good will.

Inter-ethnic relations are an especially delicate area, Gorbachev continued. They call for well-considered decisions and consideration of the entire diversity of interests and consequences of all steps. Emotions, suspicion, let alone confrontation, can confuse and deteriorate the situation, he said. □

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Shevardnadze assesses results of talks in Japan

"IT was a necessary visit, the results of which can be assessed as positive and constructive," said Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze. He was replying to questions from Soviet journalists on the results of his talks in Tokyo.

"If one is to speak about issues discussed, I would name as the key ones primarily those pertaining to preparations for a Soviet-Japanese summit," Shevardnadze said.

"They included, in part, tentatively harmonising the agenda of the Soviet President's visit to Japan and defining a range of documents for signature.

"I would like to emphasise that the Soviet side suggested adopting a document covering the entire range of bilateral ties, for instance a declaration on the basic principles of relations between the USSR and Japan."

Shevardnadze said that the Japanese side reacted positively to this proposal.

"The second central subject of the talks in Tokyo was strategic stability and security in the Asia-Pacific region and the two countries' positions on this issue. Our approaches to the problem of military confrontation in the region were analysed in detail."

Shevardnadze formulated some principles of the general policy in the Asia-Pacific region, mindful of the development of relations with European states and the dialogue with the United States.

"I got the impression that the Japanese delegation received positively our proposals for confidence-building measures in the military field," Shevardnadze said.

"The third group of issues concerned comprehensive bilateral relations," Shevardnadze said that in contrast to his previous visits and meetings with Japanese representatives, he formed the opinion that Japan today showed a by far greater interest in the development of Soviet-Japanese ties than earlier.

Eduard Shevardnadze addresses Japanese public

"PRESIDENT Mikhail Gorbachev's forthcoming visit to Japan may be a turning point in the modern history of bilateral relations," said visiting Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze.

He was speaking on September 6 to the Japanese public at Tokyo's Teikoku Hotel.

"We came to Japan to discuss with Japanese leaders on how to boost bilateral ties through joint efforts. This is the central goal of our visit. Why shouldn't we state at the level of the top leadership, for instance, that the USSR and Japan do not regard each other as foes," Shevardnadze said.

"The state of war between the two countries formally ended long ago, bilateral relations were restored and, by and large, are not developing badly. However, the absence of a peace treaty to draw a final line under the past has been and continues to be evident, denying us scope for movement forward.

"Life has decisively changed today. What was impossible yesterday is perceived differently today in a situation that has witnessed solutions to issues that previously seemed intractable. A year ago, German unification seemed unlikely. At the six-nation conference to be held in Moscow next week, we hope to draw a line under

Shevardnadze emphasised that the Japanese side received exceptionally positively the restructuring processes and sweeping reforms that are being implemented in the Soviet Union.

"In general, the atmosphere of the talks was amiable and frank, although many difficult issues in our relations were also discussed. There are such issues. Suffice it to name the problem of signing a peace treaty, mindful of the well-known 'territorial linkage'. I cannot say that some meaningful progress was achieved on this question.

"I can say that people in Japan are impatiently waiting for Gorbachev's visit. They link with his visit some hopes for an improvement of our relations.

"I would like to point out that the conclusion of a peace treaty is not limited only to the territorial aspect. It is a wide range of issues. We do not have differences on other components."

Shevardnadze emphasised that one of the Soviet proposals for developing bilateral ties was to announce the remaining ten years of this century a decade of building new Soviet-Japanese relations.

"We signed and adopted a whole set of joint documents in Tokyo, including a memorandum on co-operation between the USSR and Japan in cleaning up the aftermath of the Chernobyl accident, a memorandum on issues pertaining to preparations for the Soviet President's visit to Japan and a statement on the situation in the Persian Gulf.

"New contacts on a high level lie ahead. Anatoli Lukyanov, Chairman of the Soviet Parliament, will come to Japan to attend the ceremony of the official enthronement of Emperor Akihito. Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama will pay an official visit to the Soviet Union later this year. A Soviet-Japanese summit will take place next April.

"I got the impression from my stay in Japan and meetings at different levels that the Japanese side is willing to develop versatile contacts with the Soviet Union," Shevardnadze said. □

(Tokyo, September 6)

Soviet-Japanese statement

THE Soviet Union and Japan should do their best so that the forthcoming visit by President Mikhail Gorbachev to Japan becomes a turning point in bilateral relations, says a joint Soviet-Japanese press statement issued in Tokyo on September 7.

The statement was issued after a three-day official visit by Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze to Japan.

It reads that Gorbachev's visit should give an impetus to the radical improvement of bilateral relations, step up the dialogue on international issues and promote broader co-operation in the international arena.

The document notes that, during his visit to Tokyo, Shevardnadze was received by Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu and conveyed to him a verbal message from the Soviet President, confirming his intention to visit Japan for an official visit some time in April 1991.

During talks with Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama, the sides expressed the common hope that the forthcoming summit would lead to understandings to advance the drafting of a Soviet-Japanese peace treaty.

These understandings should also promote economic, scientific, cultural, humanitarian and other bilateral relations. The ministers signed a memorandum concerning preparations for the President's visit to Japan.

Shevardnadze expressed gratitude to the Japanese Government and people for their readiness to give aid to overcome the aftermath of the Chernobyl disaster. The sides signed a memorandum on co-operation in this sphere. □

Soviet-Japanese agreements

SOVIET-JAPANESE co-operation in tackling the aftermath of the Chernobyl tragedy will help assess its real scale, as well as treat and monitor the health of victims, the two countries said in a memorandum signed in Tokyo on September 6.

The memorandum was signed at the end of talks between visiting Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and his Japanese counterpart Taro Nakayama.

The Japanese side expressed readiness to help the Soviet Union examine the post-accident situation, drawing on the experience and knowledge of Japan, a country which has survived atomic bombings.

For this co-operation, the sides found it necessary and useful to begin mutual exchanges of specialists this year.

After three rounds of talks in Tokyo, Shevardnadze and Nakayama also signed a memorandum on the Soviet President's forthcoming visit to Japan. This document seals the two ministers' agreement to work to elaborate, in time for the forthcoming visit, a number of bilateral intergovernmental agreements, including on Japan's technical assistance to perestroika in the USSR and on co-operation in the environment and cultural exchanges. The sides also agreed to continue consultations to strengthen co-operation in the humanitarian field, in fisheries and to extend exchanges between people.

In addition, the two foreign ministers signed a joint document on distributing information of the two governments on the territory of their countries, issued a joint statement on the situation in the Gulf and international co-operation in thermonuclear fusion, and a statement for the press. □

Helsinki summit: encouraging results

By Vladimir Alexeev, *Novosti* observer

THE day-long Soviet-US snap summit in Helsinki has once again accentuated how far we have come in a very short time in promoting a constructive relationship between the two super powers. Just a few years back it would have been unthinkable that the leaders of the two nations could get together to jointly confront outstanding world issues. I asked the Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze about this at the summit's end and he confirmed that efforts were being undertaken in seeking a new political structure for Europe.

This might mean the beginning of the end of the cold war bloc politics, of the opposing military alliances in Europe, and the start of a new world order in which the main powers would be acting in concord for the common good.

And the Helsinki summit was the first instance of that.

The question that everyone in Helsinki was asking – was the Gorbachev-Bush summit a suc-

cess. Yes, and a great success too. Very significant to my mind is the fact that during the closing press conference President Bush a number of times emphasised that the United States was willing to work jointly with the Soviet Union in seeking a political and diplomatic settlement of the Persian Gulf crisis. This was a clear deviation from the earlier US stand that lay more emphasis on the possible use of US military forces stationed in the area. This could very well mean that we have reached such a stage in the development of bilateral relations when it is possible for one side to influence the other not by arm twisting, but by friendly persuasion.

So it can be perceived that for the United States the summit was important. It helped them out of the very difficult predicament that they had found themselves in the Persian Gulf, when quite a few of their allies were not ready to follow their belicose stance.

And Mikhail Gorbachev did not leave the Finnish capital empty handed – he got very definite assurance from the US President of support to make perestroika in the USSR and his ambitious economic plans for the nation a success. George Bush said that Washington was trying to increase economic co-operation with

the Soviet Union and that the US would be as forthcoming as it could possibly be. And made it clear that the large group of US businessmen that will soon converge on Moscow would be working in that direction with their Soviet counterparts.

The lesson that we can all learn from the Helsinki summit is that international politics are very closely intertwined with internal politics of any given nation. One can not succeed in rectifying the situation at home without the creation of favourable international climate and vice versa. And Presidents Gorbachev and Bush have shown to the whole world and to their own people that they are able to achieve this.

After Helsinki, it can be assumed that there will be further bilateral efforts to settle other outstanding world issues, namely the situation in the Middle East. After all, for the first time the two sides have underscored that they can work together to achieve that and other objectives.

And finally, there was definite indications that this might not be the last bilateral top-level meeting this year, for in answer to a question on how things stood on the limitation and reduction of strategic nuclear arms, President Bush made it quite clear that he hoped to see this agreement concluded and signed by the end of the year. □

A victory for new political thinking

By Leonid Laakso for *Novosti* in Helsinki

THIS is precisely the feeling that has engulfed me after the press conference of presidents Gorbachev and Bush in Helsinki on September 9 upon the termination of their latest summit meeting. The same conclusion is prompted by the joint statement of the two presidents in connection with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and its continued military occupation.

Apparently understanding the realities of today's world, in the course of the discussions the leaders of the two great powers did not look for solutions which would help resolve the Gulf crisis by the efforts of just one or even both of

them. Instead, the two leaders have confirmed that the only acceptable solution is the implementation in full volume of the resolutions of the UN Security Council. Thereby they have reaffirmed their recognition of the UN's leading role in the future and of the need of collective settlement of all problems arising in the world.

If in the strategic sense the meeting in Helsinki can be viewed as a victory for new thinking, then from the tactical point of view there is also an obviously new approach. Specifically, the two presidents have reaffirmed their determination to use all available resources for a peaceful settlement of the problem. In their opinion, apart from the appeals for prudence to the Iraqi leaders, another effective method of attaining this goal is strict observance of the UN-imposed economic sanctions by everyone.

Parallel with giving priority to the peaceful settlement of the problem, Gorbachev and Bush do not rule out the possibility of additional steps in accordance with the UN Charter for stopping the aggression. This is certainly not an easy matter for the USSR because before perestroika Iraq was seen at the Kremlin as a country of 'socialist orientation'. However, on this issue, too, Gorbachev has shown his allegiance to new political thinking and preparedness to support the majority of the UN members. Bush duly appreciated this step and did not demand the participation of Soviet forces in potential actions, alluding to the sufficiency of the forces of the 23 states participating in the UN action.

So, the meeting in Helsinki is over. Despite its brevity it has come as a substantial contribution to the democratisation of international relations. The control of the great powers over the settlement of global problems on their own is ending. At the same time, they have reiterated their preparedness in Helsinki not to shed the responsibility for them but to undertake the role of the leaders in this process. □

Pravda:

Lessons of Helsinki

"THE one-day Soviet-American summit in Helsinki incorporated so much new and unusual that it cannot be called 'transient' or a 'mini-summit' any longer (as many analysts did several days before the meeting)," *Pravda* says in its September 11 issue.

The summit has become a new stage in Soviet-American relations and the construction of a peaceful world order, the newspaper says.

"If the joint statement alone had been adopted in Helsinki on September 9, it would have been enough for Helsinki to take a place of honour in history after Malta and Washington," *Pravda* notes.

The Malta summit buried the cold war, and the two leaders theoretically defined in Washington (especially at Camp David) how to build their post-cold war relations.

"Fine in theory, but how would it be in practice? It was necessary to check immediately how well new thinking had taken root and whether morality was stronger than the egoistic interests of the great powers in present international relations.

"In other words, the Gulf crisis could have dashed the noble principles of a new international order and mutual trust between Moscow and Washington.

"The Soviet and American presidents are to be congratulated for not allowing this to happen.

"The joint statement says that the two leaders are unanimous in their conviction that it is impossible to put up with Iraq's aggression. No peaceful international order is possible if larger states can swallow up their smaller neighbours.

"It would seem everything is clear and simple, as is the idea that aggression cannot pay and will not pay.

"But it was necessary to wait for 45 years after the Second World War and to hold the Soviet-American summits to record these words in *Helsinki*," *Pravda* noted. □

Mikhail GORBACHEV

Speech in Odessa Military District

August 17, 1990

price 30p from:
Soviet Booklets (SN),
3 Rosary Gardens,
London SW7 4NW.

Nikolai Ryzhkov reports to Parliament

SOVIET Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov described the basic principles of the transition to a market as the sovereignty of the union republics, an all-union market and real equality of various forms of ownership.

Ryzhkov delivered a report on September 11 entitled *On Urgent Measures to Stabilise the Country's National Economy and Switch to a Regulated Market Economy to the Soviet Parliament*.

Describing in the most gloomy terms the economic crisis (accordance to his estimates, the national income, if negative tendencies are preserved, may drop by 15 per cent in 1991 and capital investments – by 30 per cent), Ryzhkov admitted that there was still “no uniform programme for the transition to a market” and that “it will be prepared in the next few days.”

This programme is expected to include elements from the government programme and the plan by the 13-member group headed by Academician Shatalin.

Ryzhkov described his programme for the transition to a market as “radical-moderate.” It is based on “recognising the sovereignty of the union republics, their quality and economic independence.”

The second principle is in creating conditions for forming an all-union market as the foundation of the effective operation of each republic and the development of integration.

“Only this market will be the solid groundwork for the renewed union as a single state,” Ryzhkov said.

The third principle, in Ryzhkov's view, is in ensuring equal conditions for various forms of ownership.

Speaking about disagreements over the two variants of the transition to a market, disagreements that have still not been ironed out, Ryzhkov singled out, first and foremost, “different assessments of the possibility of reducing the budget deficit.”

He said the government intended to trim the budget deficit by 25-30 billion roubles in 1991 or up to 2.5-3 per cent of the gross national product. Ryzhkov believes that it is impossible to achieve a deficit-free budget by March 1991, as the Shatalin group has proposed, without “infringing upon the vital interests of the large masses of the working people.”

The second disagreement focuses on the approach to the pricing reform. Of the two approaches – the controlled one-time price increase of the introduction on January 1 of free pricing – the government favours the first one with compensation for the population's losses payable this December.

In Ryzhkov's view, free prices will “trigger a staggering surge in prices, destabilise economic life and disorientate enterprises.” Free pricing will induce a huge rise in prices, which will hit most heavily the low- and medium-income parts of the population. Living standards will fall by 30 per cent and inflation will spiral.

Responding to criticism frequently levelled at him recently, Ryzhkov demanded clarity: “Either the government should be changed or it be given a chance to work and be supported.” □

The six to end their mission in Moscow

By Oleg Sergeyev, TASS news analyst:

THE Moscow meeting of the six foreign ministers within the two-plus-four negotiation framework holds a promise of finalising the draft treaty on a German settlement following the unification of the two German states.

It is noted in the diplomatic community that the six looked for and have found mutually acceptable external parameters for a settlement of a German issue which has for decades been an irritant in European and world affairs. The six have accumulated valuable political experience which will certainly come in handy for the future.

The positions of the six negotiators were very rigid and differed greatly at the outset of the negotiations, but later the sides mustered their efforts to head towards a rapprochement. The viewpoint prevailed based on the recognition of the need for an acceptable and reliable settlement of the complex problems put forth by German unification.

Already in the early phases, the six set their sights at preparing a single comprehensive final document, thus circumventing any discord later in the discussions. Earlier proposals made by some Western participants in the negotiations indicated the possibility of producing a light-weight document ignoring some very important external aspects of German unification to the detriment of other participants' interests. Fortunately, those proposals were soon discarded.

The actual pace of German unification made the six accelerate their own search for new approaches, discard some of their stale stereotypes and come up with decisions to the benefit of all parties.

The July meeting between Mikhail Gorbachev and Helmut Kohl played a major role in the process. The agreements reached during the Gorbachev-Kohl meeting proceeded from a carefully tested balance of interests, taking into account the desired and the possible and marked a decisive breakthrough in a settlement of both military-political questions and all other foreign aspects of German unification.

In summing up the results of the two-plus-four talks, it should be stressed that all parties made their significant contributions to the success of the process and to what can be termed their common success.

The constructive role played by the representatives of the two German states cannot be overlooked in discussing the efforts made by the six. It is now certain that the Germans have thoroughly studied the lessons their past taught them.

Having opted for a single German state, East and West Germans made it perfectly clear their readiness to realise their choice in accord with their neighbours and all European countries without violating European stability, security and peace.

The final draft treaty on a settlement around Germany makes a record of all this in a binding legal form. □

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Gorbachev supports Shatalin Plan

THE future shape of Soviet society will depend on parliament's choice of measures to turn the economy around and put it on a market footing, President Gorbachev said on September 11.

Addressing the Supreme Soviet after Premier Nikolai Ryzhkov, who presented the basic principles for the transition to a market economy, he recalled an earlier decision to table a single reform blueprint combining the best from the government's plan and a programme prepared by an expert group under Academician Stanislav Shatalin.

“We should try and work out a single document, and we are nearing it,” Gorbachev said. He added that the Shatalin programme appeals more to him personally as “integrating the ideas of constituent republics.”

The principal differences between the two plans, according to Gorbachev, concern ways to stabilise the nation's finances.

“If there is a real plan to stabilise finances, money circulation, the rouble and the market, then we should adopt the Shatalin idea,” he said.

Explaining the government's position, which drew deputies' fire, the President said that the cabinet “is not sure about the possibility of implementing stabilisation measures.”

He warned parliament against “shaking up all political institutions in the country. This is unacceptable. In this case, we shall bury everything we have achieved over these five years,” Gorbachev said.

He said that a combined programme taking into account both plans will be presented on Wednesday (September 12). □

Presidential decree on military

PRESIDENT Mikhail Gorbachev has issued a decree *On Measures to Strengthen Social and Legal Protection of the Military*.

The decree, issued on September 5, says Soviet servicemen do not receive sufficient legal protection, the organisation of their everyday life and service conditions have many flaws, educational work with the personnel leaves much to be desired and disciplinary measures have been abused.

“Servicemen assigned tasks to maintain public order, especially in regions with complex inter-ethnic relations, have increasingly often become victims of physical assault,” the decree points out.

The President demands that the Defence and Interior Ministers and the USSR Security Committee Chairman take urgent measures to strengthen discipline and order in the Armed Forces and heighten the responsibility of military staffs for the safety of personnel.

The President points to the need to envisage measures to ensure legal guarantees of personal immunity of servicemen when working out bills on the military service.

The decree contains instructions to other ministries and departments concerning measures to ensure the exercise of servicemen's constitutional rights and to strengthen their social and legal protection. □

USSR: What will a new union treaty be like?

By Valeri Telegin

THIS question is now uppermost in the minds of many in the Soviet Union. And although differing views are expressed on this score, practically all agree that existing norms of relations between members of the Soviet federation are out of date and no longer conform to processes of national revival under way in the Soviet Union.

"Peoples of all Soviet republics want to see in a new union treaty the materialisation of their national aspirations and desire for freedom and independence, a guarantee for their sovereignty and, at the same time, the possibility to ensure these aspirations and desires within a renewed union state," Rafik Nishanov, Chairman of the Council of Nationalities of the USSR Supreme Soviet, said.

He gave this assessment of the significance of the treaty under preparation at a meeting with representatives of leading Soviet mass media.

The 54-year-old leader of one of the two chambers of the Soviet Parliament told journalists of the progress of work concerning the concept of the new document. To this end, he said, all the republics have set up their own working groups. Similar groups were formed in the USSR Supreme Soviet and in the government of the country.

In Nishanov's view, republics came to the first stage of that work in different degrees of preparedness and analysis of materials. Thus, dele-

gations from Byelorussia, Kirghizia, Tajikistan, Turkmenia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Azerbaijan had submitted for discussion their own drafts of a union treaty.

The working groups of the Russian Federation, Moldavia, the Ukraine, Armenia and Georgia presented their views on a new union, their vision of separate provisions of the treaty based on declarations of state sovereignty adopted in those republics.

The Baltic republics, which take a separate position, are taking part in individual consultations on the entire range of relations between them and the USSR.

"I cannot say," said Nishanov, "that there are common views and approaches on all questions. The meetings held have shown both a coincidence of points of view on a new look for the union and the character of relationships between its members, and a variety of opinions concerning the content of the treaty, its concept, and the organisation of the process of negotiations. But one thing should be mentioned as most definite: participants in the consultations succeeded in making considerable progress in realising the need to conclude the treaty in the shortest time possible, in determining crucial problems and directions in further work."

What are the main conclusions from the consultative meetings? In reply to this question put to him by a Novosti correspondent, Nishanov stressed above all the full identity of views on the need on a radical renewal of the union. What is now needed is fundamental transformations on democratic principles, creation of a new alliance of sovereign republics uniting peoples on a voluntary, equal and mutually beneficial basis.

The point of departure for these new principles should be declarations or other acts affirming the state sovereignty of republics.

Participants in the consultations from all republics declared for the preservation of union relations. But on the question of specific forms of organisation of a new community there is a wide diversity of views. Thus, most representatives of republics favour a union based on federal principles, that is, the retention of the union state which is characterised by all signs of a state formation – sovereignty, citizenship, property, a budget, administrative functions, and legislation. Of course, relations inside the federation should be entirely different from those that have existed and exist now. At the same time, representatives of a number of republics advanced an idea for the possible organisation of a union on principles of a confederation.

Equally complex was the question connected with the problem of demarcation of powers between members of the USSR. That applies above all to the most cardinal question – the formation and division of property. Most participants in the consultations admit the necessity of its existence in the all-union form for implementing the powers of the union in the interests of all its members. But there is also a different point of view: property should be possessed only by sovereign states that are members of the union. In this case, the funds allocated for it will be shared (mixed, joint) property of founders of the union.

"I think, however," said Nishanov, expressing his own point of view, "that the negative attitude to union property is weighed down with the past, with fear of renewed diktat from the centre, as has been the case in the past and, it must be admitted, as it is still now. But the new union treaty is being drafted precisely not to allow such distortions in the future."

The same applies to the powers of the future union itself. Practically all participants in the discussion agreed that questions of defence, security, the defence industry, nuclear power, and nature protection are best tackled by joint efforts within the framework of a union state. Many republics favour including in the terms of reference of the union such spheres as formation of a common economic and legal space, outer space research, rail, air, sea and trunk pipeline transport, customs services, the monetary and foreign economic activities. But a number of republics believe that all these spheres should be under the joint control of the union and republics.

Such are, in a nutshell, the basic results of the consultative meetings. On the whole, as Nishanov remarked, it was useful and productive work. It is continuing now. In particular, the work of nine expert groups has begun in Moscow in the past few days, as was agreed during the consultations, on the basic problems of the union treaty. But it is necessary to move further and this requires direct involvement in the process of top leaders of republics and the union. This is why a recent joint sitting of the Presidential and the Federation Councils agreed to from a preparatory committee to draft a new union treaty, which will consist of fully-fledged delegations from the republics led by their top state officials and with the direct participation of the President of the USSR, the Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet and the Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers. The committee is expected to start work in the middle of September.

As Nishanov said in conclusion, this work will be conducted in full glasnost, taking into account various points of view and approaches, in the interests of all peoples of the multi-national Soviet State. □

Izvestia comments on economic reform programme

THE main distinction of the economic reform programme worked out by a Shatalin group is that it proceeds from an economic doctrine that is new in principle – it advocates the movement towards a market at the state expense, not at the expense of the ordinary people, the newspaper *Izvestia* says in its issue of September 4.

The individual's right to own property is ensured by means of stripping the state of its overall monopoly and privatising, by transferring state property to citizens. Every citizen, even he does not have a considerable initial capital, can, if he so wishes, get his share of the national wealth. The equality of opportunity is ensured by a variety of forms of privatisation.

Citizens' right to ownership will be realised by specially created privatisation bodies and land reform committees under regional (direct) councils of people's deputies.

On the very first day, when the implementation of the programme will begin, the equality of all natural and legal persons' rights to conduct economic activity will be officially declared. An announcement will be made of the programme for privatising and transforming major state-owned enterprises into joint-stock societies and selling small enterprises in the distribution network, public catering and personal services and so forth. The right to own any kind of property will be guaranteed. All people, convicted under criminal code articles dealing with entrepreneurial activity, will be amnestied and the articles themselves will be

removed from criminal and administrative legislation.

Reform aims at normalising the consumer market by liberalising pricing. Free currency sales-and-purchases rates will be introduced and a currency market will be expanded. A number of major banks will be granted the right to trade in currency at market prices, and Soviet citizens will be allowed to freely keep their currency reserves in banks.

A stage-by-stage transition to free prices is envisaged, beginning with commodities which are not among the first essentials.

Enterprises will be granted full freedom of economic activity, but payment for credits is expected to rise, state subsidies will no longer be issued, state investments and procurement will be radically cut and foreign competition is expected to appear.

The rights of republics to economic sovereignty will be ensured in keeping with the programme on the basis of an economic union of sovereign states, stipulated in a treaty.

Republics will have to determine the measure of their economic management independence and shoulder the disposal of respective kinds of state property. Many kinds of property will be left in state ownership in accordance with an agreement approved by all republics.

The centre's economic rights will be equal to a sum total of rights delegated to it by sovereign republics.

"This programme could only appear under conditions of perestroika and is fully in the vein of the policy launched in 1985. Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin initiated its preparation, and it can only be implemented with their joint support," *Izvestia* stresses. □

The joint Gorbachev-Yeltsin team search for radical economic recovery

IT IS an attempt to make the Soviet economy go through all stages of market formation within one and a half years under the tough pressure of reforms. In industrialised nations such stages constituted an entire epoch.

The programme is called "The Concept of an Accelerated Switching of the Soviet Economy to Market Principles." It consists of two parts. The first contains fundamental principles and directions of reforms and the second an almost day-to-day schedule of practical measures to be carried out in four stages.

The first point of the programme, entitled **Legal Guarantees**, provides for the right to any economic activity and any type of property, equally for Soviet and foreign citizens, enterprises and organisations.

Budget policy envisages lower expenditure on subsidies for unprofitable enterprises, agriculture and defence.

Taxes on personal income are to be levied under a tougher scale than taxes on profit. The aim of such a tax reform is to stipulate not personal consumption, but productive accumulation, enterprising initiative and investment. A high tax is to be introduced on new industrial construction.

A classic two-tier bank system is to be established. The State Bank shall retain the functions of a reserve bank and its branches shall be transformed into commercial banks.

Foreign trade policy is based on the belief that it is impossible to stabilise the economy without large foreign loans and direct foreign investment. Initial steps in this direction will be negotiations with the aim of receiving credits on favourable terms and stabilisation credits. The rouble is to be devalued and its exchange value will be the same for trade and non-trade operations.

Urgent measures are being taken to make debtor nations pay off their debts.

Agrarian reform guarantees the equality of all forms of property. There will be no subsidies for enterprises. Subsidies shall be allocated from local budgets for concrete types of produce. Non-repayable centralised capital investments are to be reduced to a minimum. The fixed assets of unprofitable state farms will be sold out. The property of bankrupt collective farms is to be divided between their members. Peasants will be able freely to leave the farm with their individual plots of land.

A land market is to be established together with a commodity exchange of material and technical resources for agriculture. The state order and state control over prices shall remain only for one or two types of key agricultural produce. All restrictions on the sale of goods will be lifted.

Social guarantees. The state will not guarantee employment. The following system for social protection is to be introduced: the indexing of incomes, with maximum additional payment for the growth of prices spreading only to benefits and pensions. The growth of the wage fund (compensation for inflation) shall be limited by a certain indicator.

All institutions and mechanisms for servicing unemployment, known the world over, will be introduced. Among them are benefits, retraining and public works.

Social programmes of aid to certain social groups are being worked out.

Preparatory stage: amendment of laws,

measures to guarantee the rights of ownership, the transfer of land and housing to citizens, the transfer of enterprises and organisations to their personnel, taking stock of state property, ascertaining of country's foreign and internal debts, initial measures for the sale of state-owned enterprises.

Second stage – denationalisation. All forms of denationalisation of mainly small and medium enterprises – purchases, buying in instalments and lease – shall be used and encouraged. A large non-state sector with a system of free price formation is to be created. A rigid tax system will simultaneously be introduced. The work of improving legislation will be continued. Banking reform shall also be carried out at this stage.

Third stage – actuation of market mechanisms. If privatisation gathers pace, a structural reform of the economy will begin. If not, extreme, unpopular measures will be taken. Among them are the freezing of savings and the exchange of banknotes (a monetary reform). New taxes and the arresting of the funds of enterprises are not ruled out.

A structural reform will bring about a reduction in the output of basic – power and metallurgical – industries. This will be accompanied, in some cases, by the bankruptcy and closing of enterprises. A redistribution of manpower will take place.

The reforms proceed according to market mechanisms. The state does not intervene. It does its own business, extending the infrastructure (transport and communications).

A complex of social guarantees, mainly in kind, not in cash, is to be introduced.

Fourth stage – stabilisation. If the structural crisis is over – this is to be expressed in a slower decline in the output of basic industries, in the increased output of consumer goods and in the reduction of prices for them – the stage of stabilisation will begin. Stabilisation programmes are to eliminate large disproportions, improve social protection, and regulate prices by economic methods.

Various resources, even foreign aid, will be used for the purpose of stabilisation.

(*New Times*, August 27-September 7)

Boris Yeltsin gives interview to Novosti

THE second session of the Russian legislature (Supreme Soviet) has opened in Moscow. At the end of the first day of its work, Boris Yeltsin, Supreme Soviet Chairman, gave the following exclusive interview to Novosti's analyst Felix Alekseyev:

ALEKSEYEV: How do you evaluate the prospects of the current session?

YELTSIN: The agenda of the session, which is to continue for more than two months, includes 65 items, which has been proposed by parliamentary deputies.

The main item for discussion is a programme to stabilize the economy and carry out a transition to market relations. I want to emphasise right away that we are considering a programme of nationwide, rather than merely a Russia-wide, scale. It has been elaborated by a group led by a Academician Stanislav Shatalin.

This is a very interesting programme which radically differs from the one proposed by the federal government. If the Russian Supreme Soviet accepts it with the changes it may suggest, as Chairman of the Supreme Soviet I would like to have the parliament's approval to sign an economic agreement with the other republics. Such an agreement will open a way for the implementation of this programme.

Such an agreement is also important because a new framework of relations, which will emerge thanks to it, can help unite the republics. I don't think that a treaty of alliance will be signed any time soon: there are too many problems and the drafts of such a treaty proposed by republics differ too much from one another.

As for an economic agreement, all the republics with the exception of Estonia support it. If signed by the fourteen republics and President Gorbachev, this agreement will give a powerful impulse to the implementation of a programme, which is dubbed '500 Days'. We would like work on this programme to begin as soon as the supreme soviets of all republics make their

decision, i.e., on October 1.

You have just made it clear in your statement that in the Supreme Soviet you will be above any party interests. Do you really intend to firmly adhere to this position?

Exactly. That is why at the 28th Communist Congress Party I announced that I was leaving the CPSU. Some may think that I did that in order to create a new party. This is not so. The point is that the Chairman of a Supreme Soviet should not be a member of any single party and protect the interests of any specific group. This should be out of the question: I must work in the interests of the whole of Russia.

You have just returned from a trip around Russia. You have seen with your own eyes the state this republic is in and felt growing tension. Are you still sure that the programme '500 Days' can be fulfilled?

In 22 days I have visited 27 cities and met with upwards of 300,000 people. I must say that I have returned with a hard feeling of alarm. Indeed, the republic is in a deplorable state – the farther from Moscow, the worse it is.

But the people of Russia trust their new leaders. During the meetings I heard words of firm support. This not only enhances my responsibility but also arouses alarm and apprehension. Five hundred days is not a long enough period of time not only to carry through a programme for stabilising the economy but even to begin improving the living standards of the people of Russia. Nevertheless, I am sure that this programme is quite feasible. Otherwise, it wouldn't have been worth even considering it.

Are you sure that the Soviet President will support it?

Forthcoming discussions will show. I hope and I want very much that the President will understand that today this is the only feasible programme. It proceeds from the interests of all republics and its implementation begins with legislative acts adopted precisely by these republics, rather than by the centre. This is very important. □

Russian Communist Party Congress discuss market

By Alexei Dumov

THE economy's switchover to a market was one of the sharply debated questions at the second stage of the founding Congress of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, which ended in the Kremlin recently. No summing-up document was adopted, however. This means the Party did not define its market strategy. A relevant document is not expected until before the end of the year.

The Congress instructed its Central Committee to work out the main guidelines for Party activity, with reliance on Party activists. The draft document will be published before October 15. It will then be discussed in all Party branches of the republic. Next, not later than December, it is expected to be adopted by an extended sitting of the leading bodies of the Russian Communist Party.

So the Communist Party of the largest Soviet republic does not yet have its own programme of action. Many delegates at the Party forum, and not them alone, called the situation absurd. Indeed, a parallel session of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation is discussing in Moscow a programme for the republic's transition to a market-based economy. The union parliament is to take major decisions on the market very soon.

Naturally, the Party Congress was eager to formulate an economic strategy for the Party to

define its attitude to proposals under consideration in the republican parliament. This did not occur, however. Differences in delegates' views proved to be big to hammer out a position satisfying most of them.

Such an outcome, it appears to me, was to be expected. The draft programme, which was discussed at the Congress, was published only just two weeks before it. And many delegates pointed out with reason that Party branches had no time to voice their attitude to the document. The content of the document was also criticised a lot. Many of its provisions appear amorphous, inconsistent and contradictory.

A person scrutinising the text involuntarily suspects that its authors, while paying lip service to the need to go over to a market economy, actually are going to do nothing. There is no doubt that views of conservative forces that have not given up their dogmatic approaches to economic development had an effect on the content of the draft programme.

Yuri Prokofiev, First Secretary of the Moscow City Party Committee, assessing the draft, said: "The document offered for discussion is no more than a collection of modern-sounding sociological terms, not concerned with pressing requirements, interests of people, and the problems that crop up daily. The theoretical level of the document is not satisfactory either. The document is contradictory and eclectic. There is even the impression that its authors strove to reconcile the irreconcilable and to cater to differing interests."

Ivan Polozkov, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, who made a report on the

action programme, should have directed the discussion into a more meaningful channel: events in the country are developing rapidly, society has in the past two to three weeks made marked progress in understanding problems involved in transition to a market economy, and new and major documents have been published.

Alas, the speaker preferred not to notice all that. The report, which I could hear from the balcony where Congress journalists were seated, left a bad impression. It failed to suggest any way out of the crisis.

Many of the participants in the Party forum, whom I interviewed, had a negative view of the report also. Boris Gidasov, the leader of the Leningrad communists, told me that Polozkov's report was non-committal, evaded any analysis of the causes of the current crisis and did not contain any clear assessments.

"What do you think of another report, that by Russian Federation Prime Minister Ivan Silayev at the session of the republican parliament, which is based on a market-transition programme known as '500 Days'?" I asked him.

"Its radicalism is attractive," replied Gidasov, "but I am sure that we will come against lots of difficulties in implementing that programme."

Another interviewee, well-known economist Pavel Bunich, described Polozkov's report as "toneless and non-committal." Speaking of transition to a market, Bunich stressed that a programme prepared by the working group led by Academician Shatalin should be taken as a guide. It is based on ideas proposed by experts from the Russian Federation for the '500 Days' programme. "As it is implemented, certain adjustments will probably have to be made," he added.

I also managed to interview Leonid Abalkin, deputy head of the Soviet government. He said that the level of Polozkov's report was too low for a major political Party, it lacked clearly formulated positions and any fresh ideas.

To be sure, I heard different views in the corridors of the Congress. Praise for the speaker could often be heard also in speeches from the rostrum.

The great diversity of assessments is not surprising. Delegates included representatives of all platforms and currents in the Party, with the right, conservative wing much in evidence.

Usually, summing up Party forums, people say who has won. To my mind, common sense has won. At the moment communists of Russia are not in a position to work out a decision to suit the majority. And the best way out was indeed to postpone a decision until the end of the year. By that time the situation concerning transition to a market economy would evidently clear up a good deal. At the same time, one cannot fail to see that the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, by failing to offer its own market strategy to the people, is trailing events. □

(Novosti)

Ecology and market compatible says Soviet economist

TOP Soviet economist Abel Aganbegyan believes that the transition to the market economy will drastically change the ecological management system.

"Problems of ecology are closely intertwined with those of the economy, law and politics and

to consider them separately, as is sometimes done by ecological movements, is senseless," Aganbegyan writes in *Pravda* on September 11.

He points out that the USSR utilises minerals, which are produced in astronomical amounts, two to four times less efficiently than other countries.

The increasing pollution of the environment stems from the extravagant use of natural resources. The incomplete extraction of minerals necessitates continual increases in the scope of extraction, which, in turn, results in masses of industrial waste.

The extravagant use of fuel and raw materials also prompts the accumulation of waste and the emission of toxic substances into the atmosphere, water and soil.

Aganbegyan emphasises that a new structural policy is needed to stem the threatening tendencies and make ecological management truly nature-friendly. This policy is meant to alter the correlation between the extracting and processing industries in favour of the latter.

The academician believes that reforming wholesale prices and doubling the prices of fuel and raw materials can significantly influence the solution of conservation problems during the transition from administrative to economic methods of management.

Introducing fees for land, water, forest and other natural resources will also be a stimulating factor, Aganbegyan writes.

Charging for the pollution of the environment may radically improve nature conservation, the article says. A new taxation system could also play an important stimulating role here. It envisages exempting from taxes the part of enterprises' profits that are diverted into environmental protection. □

The Requirements of Common Sense

by Stanislav Kondrashov
Stanislav Kondrashov (b. 1928), a graduate of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations, is a political analyst with the newspaper *Izvestia*. His specialities are Soviet-American relations and life in the United States, where he spent many years as an *Izvestia* correspondent. Stanislav Kondrashov has written numerous books, essays, feature-stories, and articles, including, to mention just a few, *Martin Luther King, A Long Look at America* and *People Across the Ocean*.

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SOF treaty and security

By Lieutenant-General M. Vinogradov and Major-General V. Belous

AMONG the problems discussed by the top political leaders of the two countries during this year's visit of Mikhail Gorbachev, President of the USSR, to the United States, the keenest interest all over the world was, undoubtedly, caused by the efforts to remove obstacles to, and preparations for, concluding the proposed Treaty of Reductions in Strategic Offensive Forces (SOF).

While on the whole positively assessing the course taken for reducing the number of strategic weapons, one should emphasise that the sophistication of weapons of this class considerably depreciates the planned quantitative reductions.

The acceptance of the number of strategic delivery vehicles and warheads as basic criteria of parity is a certain concession to the United States, because the US has a quantitative advantage in most of these types of weapons.

According to the US Natural Resources Defence Council (NRDC), the nuclear warheads currently in service with the US strategic offensive forces have an aggregate yield of 3,000 megatons. According to US calculations, the relevant figure for the USSR is approximately twice as large. At the same time, the USSR's land-based intercontinental missiles account for nearly 60 per cent of the total yield of warheads, while in the United States submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) and air-launched cruise missiles (ALCMs) account for 80 per cent of warheads' total yield.

The aggregate yield of warheads along with the relatively low accuracy is of greater importance in delivering strikes upon major area targets, such as cities or industrial centres. In other words, Soviet nuclear strategic arms are more oriented towards delivering a retaliatory strike, which is consonant with the basic provisions of the Soviet military doctrine. Contrary to this, the United States' strategic offensive arms are now oriented, and so will be in the future, towards increasing counterforce capabilities, which is more in keeping with the concept of a first, disarming attack.

The coordinated general ceilings of 1,600 strategic offensive delivery systems and 6,000 warheads are bound to considerably reduce the stockpiles of nuclear charges. Though, as we shall show further, the original plans did not fully materialise. At the same time, the remaining stocks of arms are perfectly sufficient for playing the role of deterrent.

Among the positive provisions of a future document, one should class the agreement on a ceiling of 600km on the maximum range of ALCMs.

The talk have helped resolve yet another challenging problem: the counting rules governing the number of submarine-launched cruise missiles and the limitation thereof. A key point is the agreement on leaving this class of strategic arms beyond the framework of the treaty. Either side has the right to deploy no more than 880 missiles of this type. Today, the US has close to 350 of them, while the USSR has none.

The agreement reached on the deployment of mobile ICBMs, which we have and the US does not, is a very positive point in favour of the Soviet Union. By virtue of their high first-strike survivability and mainly due to the uncertainty of their location, they are meant for delivering a retaliatory strike and are an important deterrent. At present, the United States does not have the sufficient number of reconnaissance satellites of proper quality to reliably and promptly

locate concealed mobile ICBMs and target weapons on them.

At the same time, we are by no means inclined to idealise the draft treaty and to consider it optimal.

It seems that the US wants to weaken the Soviet ICBM forces, which are currently the main Soviet deterrence element, as much as possible. At the same time, aware of its superiority in SLBMs and heavy bombers, the US is using the concept of "competing strategies" to force the Soviet Union to strengthen these components of the triad.

It is not by chance that the draft treaty allows the Soviet Union to deploy 60 additional heavy bombers (over the 150 of the US). This programme will cost some 18,000-20,000 million dollars, proceeding from the cost of a similar US plane, the B-1. Regrettably, in conditions of secrecy that still shrouds the armed forces, though it is far from always justified, we have to refer to foreign sources for data.

At present the US is superior to the Soviet Union in the number of warheads on strategic delivery vehicles. We are sorry to say that the draft treaty did not eliminate the imbalance in this, one of the main indices of the sides' combat capabilities.

Addressing the USSR Supreme Soviet, Mikhail Gorbachev said that after the completion of reductions the Soviet Union will have 7,400, and the US 8,300 charges. Some US experts point out that the difference may be even greater. Thus, NRDC experts believe that the US will have 8,900, and the Soviet Union 6,900 charges, due to the equivalent procedure of counting ALCMs and the fact that the US heavy bombers can actually carry twice as many charges (20 instead of the counted 10).

Though the US has reviewed its strategic concepts, the country's leaders are still advocating power politics. The recent statements by President Bush and Defence Secretary Richard Cheney prove that conventional reduction plans exist side by side with programmes for the modernisation of nuclear forces.

The current Soviet-US military-strategic parity has a substantial margin of safety, but it will shrink with the reduction of armaments. So, we must be more careful in taking into account all factors.

It should be remembered that the importance of some factors, which currently remain outside the talks, will grow after the planned reductions are effected. We mean above all the nuclear forces of Britain, France and China. The reduction of the nuclear forces of the Soviet Union and the US is accompanied by the increase in the nuclear capabilities of these countries, and it would be unrealistic and unpardonable to overlook their influence on the balance of forces.

The noted American nuclear arms expert T. Taylor calculates that in the late 1980s the UK had 700 nuclear warheads and France, 500 warheads. The potential threat to the Soviet Union is illustrated in a letter by People's Deputy of the USSR Captain Gams to the *Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn* editorial office, reprinted by the newspaper *L'Humanite*: "In 1990, Soviet human losses following a French nuclear attack may make up 48-55 million people, and some 25-40 per cent of the country's industrial potential would be destroyed. By 1995, Paris plans to have a nuclear potential capable of annihilating 81 million Soviets and two-thirds of the Soviet Union's industrial facilities." It means that France will be capable of causing what the Pentagon calls 'unacceptable damage', which effectively spells the annihilation of this state. The UK potential is even bigger, which means that the two allies of the USA can deal a lethal

blow at the USSR on their own. It goes without saying that they would perish along with us. But we are now talking of a balance of forces. Following the elimination of our INF, we naturally had to retrain some of our SOF on targets in Europe. Suppose we retarget as many warheads as the UK and France have trained on us. This decision would look quite logical. In that case, the Soviet-American correlation would be 6,300:8,300 by official data, and even worse by unofficial data.

The US plans to build a large-scale space-based AMB system come into the limelight in this connection. The two Presidents' statement on the future course for the talks on nuclear and space weapons and measures to strengthen the strategic stability says that the sides are going to dovetail the issue of the strategic offensive forces to that of defensive armaments.

Americans estimate the cost of the 1,400 Soviet land-based ICBMs at 280 billion US dollars. Some 80 per cent of the cost falls on the designing, testing and production of missiles, and only 20 per cent on the maintenance of the weapons and crews. Consequently, we are saving only 20 per cent of the cost of scrapping the missiles. In case the USA violates the ABM Treaty, we would have to deploy a part of our SOF again and thus spend many billions of roubles.

Is there any guarantee against US violations? Can anybody guarantee that the USA would not launch another round of the race for arms under the pretext of Lithuania, emigration, or other Soviet domestic affairs? By scrapping missiles and blasting silos, which are complex and costly engineering installations, fitted out with the latest electronics, we are wasting billions of roubles, which no force on the Earth can turn into fridges, TV sets and even coffee grinders.

True, nuclear weapons are the cheapest by the efficiency-cost formula. Americans estimate that it costs about a billion dollars to arm an armoured division. But how powerful is it in today's circumstances? At the same time, a billion-dollar investment would pay for the maintenance of the existing ICBMs with which to cause 'unacceptable damage' to the opponent.

Many countries are about to lay their hands on nuclear and missile technologies. Is there any guarantee that a totalitarian or a reckless regime would not use nuclear missiles to attain its ambitious aims?

In this light, the USSR and the USA may be forced to launch a concerted effort to find ways to defend their territories against a nuclear missile strike by a third country. Yet the proliferation of strike weapons in space is no go, for it may destabilise the international situation beyond repair. To conclude: the SOF talks should be elevated to a higher level, progressing from the purely quantitative comparisons to both quantitative and qualitative parameters.

A newspaper article does not provide enough room for a detailed analysis of a complex document that is the draft SOF accord. What is needed is a comprehensive consideration of the issue, involving both pros and broad public circles.

(*Sovetskaya Rossia*, August 23. In full.)

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