

Plenary meeting of Moscow City Party Committee

THE Plenary Meeting of the Moscow City Party Committee was held in the spirit of the candidness, adherence to principle and free exchange of views intrinsic to the Party. It discussed the resolution of the October 1987 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee concerning Boris Yeltsin.

General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Mikhail Gorbachev addressed the Plenary Meeting on this question. He reported on the Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee which had been held on October 21 and considered questions pertaining to the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution and several current tasks of the restructuring drive.

The Politbureau of the Central Committee, Mikhail Gorbachev said, viewed the task to lie in showing the historic importance of the October Revolution and making a detailed analysis of everything that has been accomplished throughout the seven decades that have elapsed since. It was important to reveal to the fullest extent the arduous path of the Soviet people and the Leninist party as pioneers, align it with our present-day concerns and endeavours and analyse the lessons of the past. We were obliged to make a balanced investigation of the complex events of past years, for without this there can be no honest and truthful policy, nor can there be successful advance.

In preparing for the jubilee, the Politbureau considered it necessary to reassess the course of the restructuring drive and several results of the revolutionary transformations that had been initiated by the April 1985 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, and to analyse the efforts to implement the course plotted at the 27th Party Congress. The intention was to try to solve the key problems of social development which are crucial to the restructuring campaign. This is above all the democratisation of society and radical economic reform.

The main tenets of the report devoted to the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution were unanimously approved by the Central Committee Plenary Meeting.

The considerations of the Politbureau on the nature and importance of the current moment, the course and pace of the restructuring drive and its immediate tasks received the full support of the Central Committee members. The point was stressed that the initial stage of the restructuring campaign—the stage of elaborating the new course of the Party and drawing up its ideological, theoretical and organisational platform had been concluded in the main. The

practical implementation of the drafted programme is becoming the overriding task today. It was stated at the Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee that from this standpoint, the next two or three years will be decisive and critical in this sense. This will in effect be a test of the capacity of the Party, its Central Committee and all Party, government and economic personnel, and that of work collectives, for that matter, to ensure the successful implementation of the elaborated decisions on the chief areas of the restructuring effort.

Attention was drawn at the Central Committee Plenary Meeting that at this difficult period we will have simultaneously to tackle a series of interrelated tasks encompassing the economy, the social and cultural spheres, and the development of everything that pertains to the democratisation of Soviet society.

There will indeed be more work to do, and the Party, personnel and all work collectives must be ready for this. We must pass this stage successfully, with an eye to developing the fresh broad vistas for speeding up the restructuring drive, especially in the economy, thereby ensuring reliable prerequisites for accomplishing the major socio-economic tasks and for making possible society's transition to a new qualitative state. I want to reiterate that all the Central Committee members were at one on all these points.

The address of Boris Yeltsin at the Plenary Meeting rang out as a dissonant chord. He stated that he had no critical remarks to make concerning the report and fully supported it, but that he would like to touch upon a series of questions that had accumulated during the period of his work in the Politbureau. It should be said, Mikhail Gorbachev continued, that on the whole Yeltsin's speech was politically immature and extremely confused and contradictory. It did not contain a single constructive proposal and was based not on an analysis and facts but on misrepresentations, and in effect was, as the Central Committee members appraised it, demagogical in content and character.

In fact, Comrade Yeltsin attempted to question the Party's reforming activities after the April Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee and the 27th Party Congress and the nature of ongoing changes and went so far as to say that perestroika was doing next to nothing for people.

In his opinion, the Central Committee Plenary Meeting's guidelines for the new stage of perestroika in the next 2-3 years were wrong and disoriented the Party and the people. Comrade Yeltsin demonstrated complete theoretical and political helplessness in evaluating the course of perestroika and failed to realise that in the tremendous work to renew Soviet society the Party and all working people would have to tackle both long-term and medium-term problems and ensure substantial improvement in meeting people's everyday needs in the next few years. All his argumentation was, in effect, a set of high-flown phrases. He said, for example, that the Party leadership lacked "revolutionary ardour" in pursuing the policy of perestroika.

The members of the Central Committee were particularly outraged by Comrade Yeltsin's attempts to distort the work and situation in

the Politbureau, especially in matters concerning collective decision-making.

Of course, the fact that a member of the Central Committee criticised at the Plenary Meeting the Politbureau, the Secretariat and individuals should not be considered as something extraordinary, said Mikhail Gorbachev. It is a normal thing. We all agree here that there must be no areas in the Party closed to criticism and there must be no individuals immune from criticism. We shall continue to encourage criticism and self-criticism at all levels.

But this case is different. At the critical political moment when the Central Committee concentrated on fundamental problems of theory and practice of our development, Comrade Yeltsin tried to divert the Plenary Meeting's work to other things by declaring his special position on a number of issues.

Taking into account Comrade Yeltsin's statements at the Plenary Meeting, a decision was taken to hold a discussion. Twenty-six members of the Central Committee took the floor.

I should say, Mikhail Gorbachev went on, that Comrade Yeltsin's statement caused surprise and indignation among Central Committee members. The Plenary Meeting was unanimous in qualifying that statement as politically wrong. None of the speakers supported Comrade Yeltsin. The main question asked by Central Committee members was whether Comrade Yeltsin really saw no improvements in the country's life since the April Plenary Meeting?

The participants in the Plenary Meeting said that a new atmosphere was created in our society and that it continued to improve. People are becoming more active: the Party is awakening after a long period of stagnation: the process of democratisation and glasnost continues. All this is of vital importance for the country's future. The theory and policy of perestroika have been formulated in two and a half years. In all respects, it was a very fruitful period in the life of the Party and all society.

But we were engaged not only in formulating the political, social and economic strategy of perestroika. Major national programmes for the development of engineering and computer technology and for the expansion of consumer goods production have been drawn up and adopted. The new system of state quality control is being expanded and is having a favourable effect on the quality of goods. The adoption of the Law on the State Enterprise (Amalgamation) was a momentous event.

The new methods of economic management, the new economic mechanism create real conditions for raising the efficiency of social production.

Despite all the difficulties, possibilities to resolve some pressing social issues have been found. Of course, food difficulties still exist but agricultural output is increasing. The rate of housing construction has gone up over the two years of the five-year plan, and capital investments have been additionally rechannelled into it. In 1987 the commissioning of housing will rise by 15 per cent compared with 1985. The pay of medical workers and teachers, scholarships for students, and pensions are being raised, and reforms of the general and higher school systems are being carried out. An additional six billion

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roubles have been allocated to meet the pressing needs of the health services. These are only some of the measures taken in the social sphere.

The Politbureau now sees its prime tasks in shifting the centre of gravity to control over the fulfilment of the decisions adopted, to organisational work, to stricter demands. No Party organisation, including the Moscow one, should remain beyond control.

Then Mikhail Gorbachev dwelt upon the rates of perestroika. The June 1987 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee drew the conclusion that the country was entering a new stage of perestroika in the course of which we would have to overcome no small difficulties. To this end, we should intensify our efforts in all fields of work. The advance of perestroika will largely depend on how skilful and energetic our actions will be in these years.

Thinking over what has happened to Comrade Yeltsin, one cannot but recall Lenin's warnings about the great responsibility of a high-ranking official, of the clarity of his political positions. Mikhail Gorbachev went on to say. Vladimir Ilyich said that there is an objective logic of struggle which inevitably leads even the best people, if they insist on the wrong stand they have taken, to a situation which, in effect, does not differ from unprincipled demagoguery.

In fact, it so happens in reality that errors originate from personal ambitions, from the desire to stand out, and if a person is doing poorly and it becomes necessary to correct his actions, he begins to show stubbornness and gives way to his ambition. In such a case the errors augment and can turn into an unacceptable stance.

In my view, we are dealing with a case of exactly this kind here. Comrade Yeltsin has placed his personal ambitions above the Party's interests. It is relevant to say here that the Politbureau warned him against such manifestations and he promised to draw necessary lessons for himself. But, as it is clear now, these were empty promises. There is a consensus among the members of the Central Committee that Comrade Yeltsin's irresponsible and immoral deed damages what is crucial to us now — pooling of all forces, mobilisation of all possibilities for reaching the major objectives of perestroika.

At the end of his speech at the Plenary Meeting Comrade Yeltsin stated that his activity in the Politbureau of the Central Committee was for various reasons not working out — "a lack of experience and maybe of support". He raised the question of releasing him from the duties of alternate member of the Politbureau of the Central Committee.

I ought to say a few words by way of explanation here. Mikhail Gorbachev went on to say. To begin with, I knew about Comrade Yeltsin's intention to resign before the Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee. When I was on leave, I received a letter from him, containing his request to decide the question of his holding the posts in the Politbureau and of First Secretary of the Moscow City Party Committee. Upon my return from holiday I had a talk with Comrade Yeltsin, and we agreed that it was not a proper time to discuss this question and that we would meet and discuss the issue after the October Revolution celebrations. This notwithstanding, Comrade Yeltsin, violating the Party and purely human ethic, decided to raise the issue right at the Plenary Meeting, by-passing the Politbureau.

Comrade Yeltsin cites the absence of support by the Central Committee Secretariat as motive for his retirement. Without beating about the bush, his statement has to be described as totally absurd and false.

Mikhail Gorbachev went on to stress that the CPSU Central Committee sees the Moscow Party organisation as a reliable support in implementing party strategies. The Politbureau approaches all issues which pertain to the work of that body and to the city's community interests,

precisely from that very point. The Politbureau and the government examine these questions most attentively.

As members of the Moscow City Party Committee know, the City Party conference was immediately followed by a resolution in which the Central Committee Politbureau supported the City Party organisation's efforts to maintain order in Moscow, put an end to negative phenomena, and settle burning economic, social and other problems. The resolution also entrusted central and republic bodies with appropriate tasks.

The CPSU Central Committee discussed and approved the concept of comprehensive social and economic development of Moscow for the period up to the year 2000. It was deemed necessary to elaborate, in 1987 and 1988, a master plan for the development of Moscow and the Moscow region as a single national economic complex for the period up to 2010.

The reconstruction of Moscow's historical centre up to the year 2000 was also discussed, and the USSR Council of Ministers adopted a resolution on the issue. The questions of a community cultural centre to be formed in the vicinity of Red Square were regarded separately.

The Central Committee Politbureau supported the proposal of the Moscow City Party Committee to put an end to disproportions in the city infrastructure by the time of its 850th anniversary. Housing construction is to be boosted, as well as the building of trade, health service, educational and communal facilities. Some industries polluting the environment, and those out of keeping with the overall city industrial orientation, will be removed from Moscow. City construction bodies will be freed of works outside Moscow. Another question is being examined: that Union Republics and building firms of CMEA member countries take part in construction and renovation in the Soviet capital.

Large-scale measures have been worked out to improve city health services and the performance of its facilities, the supply of Moscow residents with fruit and vegetables, including potatoes, and water supply.

Moscow is receiving tangible aid for transport, a major issue. Measures have been elaborated to develop the Moscow metro and railways network. The government is discussing the development of surface transport for the years 1988 to 1990.

Measures are being worked out to strengthen the material and technical basis and to increase the potentials of construction bodies: to develop the food industry and bakeries, and dramatically improve trade and public catering. Resource and research bases will be noticeably strengthened at a number of science and education bodies.

This is a far from complete list of Moscow issues which we have been examining. Our approach remains the same.

The natural question is: Why has this happened? What are the reasons for that kind of behaviour by Comrade Yeltsin? The Politbureau has carefully analysed this question and come to the conclusion that the primary reason was the way he understood perestroika and the methods by which it should be implemented.

His critical approach to shortcomings and his strong statements about fast settlement of the existing problems and the eradication of negative phenomena in the life of the capital found certain understanding and support with the masses.

And, let us put it straight in the beginning that helped make certain changes for the better. It is clear, however, that no matter how important and responsible is the work to analyse past performance, to criticise shortcomings and to work out solutions, the most important thing that ensures ultimate success of the cause is continuous and painstaking work by all Party organisations, all workers and work collectives. The leadership of the Moscow City Committee of

the CPSU, however, has proved lacking in the necessary understanding and ability to handle that job. Under the influence of Comrade Yeltsin, the bureau of the City Party Committee tried to effect the needed changes by acting on impulse, through simple pressure, coercion and bare administrative measures. Now these, as we know, are methods from the old arsenal, and they could not secure stable and lasting results.

Besides, having got into high-sounding statements and promises from the very beginning, which were largely nourished by his inordinate ambition and fondness for staying in the limelight, Comrade Yeltsin let it go and slacked off control over the City Party organisation and the work with personnel.

On seeing that the things started stalling and that the situation in the capital was not improving but actually deteriorating in some respects, Comrade Yeltsin tried to shift the responsibility for his own shortcomings on others — first of all on the leadership. On the initiative of Comrade Yeltsin and with his most active participation the City Party Committee started what was actually a second round of personnel reshuffling, although he had been told earlier about the inadmissibility of that practice. At one of the meetings of the Politbureau before the January Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee he was warned that if all that talk about the reshuffling concealed his practical plans with respect to the Moscow City Party organisation, he would not receive support. Comrade Yeltsin's reaction on that occasion was adequate and proper. This is what he said: "I am a young man in the Politbureau. Today, I have been taught a lesson. I need it. It has not come too late, and I will find the inner strength to draw the right conclusion."

Unfortunately, he has never drawn that right conclusion. All that has seriously affected the work of all organisations in the city and the general situation in Party organisations, and, as he has admitted himself, has led to a decline in the working and political activity of the communists and the general masses. In other words, comrades, the style and methods of Comrade Yeltsin which are distinguished by pseudo-revolutionary rhetoric and affected determination have proved unsound. Life has shown that all his drive has not gone beyond slogans and appeals, but when the time came to confirm words with practical actions, he displayed helplessness, useless fussing and panicky moods. To all appearances, he also felt a decline of support from the communists of Moscow.

The Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee has passed the following resolution:

1. To qualify the speech by Comrade Yeltsin at the October 1987 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee as politically erroneous.

2. To instruct the Politbureau of the CPSU Central Committee and the Moscow City Party Committee to consider Comrade Yeltsin's resignation as First Secretary of the Moscow City Committee of the CPSU with due regard for the exchange of opinions at the CPSU Central Committee Plenary Meeting.

In keeping with the Plenary Meeting's instructions, the Politbureau has considered this question and, having thoroughly weighed up the situation, come to a conclusion about the need of reinforcing the leadership of the Moscow City Committee of the CPSU.

The Plenary Meeting's participants, speaking in the debates, described Boris Yeltsin's action as political adventurism, as a strike in the back of the Party aimed at placing the Moscow Party organisation in opposition to the Party Central Committee and splitting the Politbureau.

It was noted that Yeltsin made ultra-left and extra-radical declarations from the first steps of his activity.

Describing the style of Yeltsin's work, the

Plenary Meeting's participants pointed out that he made individual decisions and isolated himself from the Party activists. Openness was lacking in work with the personnel reserve. Haste in work with the cadres was reminiscent of the game of leap-frog.

While singling out Yeltsin's experience, vigour, will-power and ability to work, speakers pointed to such qualities as peremptoriness of his judgement, disregard for principles of continuity, inability to value people, absence of proper tact and respect for cadres, insufficient patience and tolerance.

Yeltsin had acquired the same big-boss syndrome, speakers noted, against which he so wrathfully spoke at the Party Congress. He quickly came to believe in his own infallibility, separated himself from the Party activists. They also mentioned such a negative trait as Yeltsin's mistrust in his colleagues. There was much ostentation in his work.

The Plenary Meeting's participants were unanimous that Yeltsin's stand did not reflect the position of the Moscow City Party Committee and that he was not fit to head the Moscow Party organisation.

In his address Boris Yeltsin said:

I do not think I should judge myself here, because what I did was totally unpredictable. Today, and at the Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee, as well as at the Politbureau session, at the bureau of the Moscow Party Committee and at this Plenary Meeting I heard much of what I have not heard during all my life. Perhaps, that explains, to some extent, what happened.

I only want to assure you all and tell you, Mikhail Sergeevich, and you, members of the Politbureau and secretaries of the Central Committee present here and members of the Moscow Party Committee and all those attending today's Plenary Meeting of the Moscow Party Committee, that, first, I give you my word as a Party member that I had no ill intentions whatsoever and that there was no political implications in my address.

Second, I agree with criticisms I have heard today. As Comrade Yeliseyev justly put it, if it had happened before, it would have done good.

I must say that I trust in. I am firmly convinced as a Party member of the correctness of the Party's strategic line and of the rulings of the 27th Party Congress. I am firmly convinced of the righteous cause of perestroika and of the fact that no matter how difficult its progress may be, it will ultimately triumph. But its progress varies from region to region and even from organisation to organisation — and this explains why we sometimes offered different evaluations of its advance. But, of course, I trust in perestroika, and there can be no doubts on that score. I am here facing you communists with whom I have worked in the Party organisation for two years, and I state this quite honestly. And any of my actions that would contradict this statement should lead to my expulsion from the Party.

Early last year I was recommended by the Politbureau and elected here at the Plenary Meeting First Secretary of the Moscow Party Committee, and the bureau was formed. I must say the work of the bureau was extremely fruitful. The executive committee of the Moscow municipal council was formed. I mean chiefly its chairman and his deputies who began doing specific things, as has been noted by many. But sometime early this year I realised I was doing badly. You no doubt remember that here at the Plenary Meeting of the Moscow Party Committee we said that every leader must say honestly if he feels he fails, he must go to the superior Party agency and say honestly that he cannot do it properly any longer. But again there was a tactical mistake there, of course. Perhaps, it was due to overstrain, etc. But it really started getting worse. I mean I saw I was doing poorly, I cannot say this for the

whole bureau. Today, it is perhaps most clearly manifest in the fact that it was easier to give promises and elaborate comprehensive programmes than to fulfil and accomplish them. That comes first. Secondly, it was during that period, or quite recently, that one of my chief personal qualities worked — ambition, the fact already mentioned here today. I tried to bottle it up, unsuccessfully.

The main thing today for me as a communist of the Moscow Party organisation is, of course, to make a decision how to lessen the damage done to this organisation. Certainly, the damage is substantial, and it will be hard for the new First Secretary of the city's Party Committee, the bureau and the city's Party Committee to heal by deeds, as quickly as possible, the wound which has been inflicted and not only on the Moscow organisation.

I cannot agree with the assertions that I do not like Moscow. Other circumstances have come into play. I have had time to grow fond of Moscow and have tried my best to rectify the drawbacks which have taken place earlier.

Today it was particularly distressing for me to listen to my Party colleagues with whom I have worked for two years, to listen to their concrete criticism, and I must say that I cannot refute anything from this criticism.

And not because I must make a show of repenting, but because, as you understand, I as a communist have lost the political face of a leader. I am very guilty before the Moscow Party organisation, I am very guilty before the Party city organisation, before you, before the bureau, and, of course, before Mikhail Gorbachev whose prestige is so high in our organisation, in our country and throughout the world.

As a communist I am sure that the Moscow organisation is at one with the Party Central Committee. It has confidently followed the course of the Party Central Committee, and I am sure that this will be the case in future too.

Then concluding remarks were made by Mikhail Gorbachev.

Today's Plenary Meeting has discussed an important issue, he said. The content and the atmosphere of the discussion have convinced me once again in the maturity and great political potential of the Moscow City Party organisation, its Party Committee. We have held a frank discussion in the spirit of high exactingness and responsibility. Correct decisions have been worked out and adopted.

The Politbureau of the Central Committee and I as General Secretary, are firmly convinced that the Moscow City Party organisation reliably supports us. The people of Moscow, as it has been at all stages of socialist construction, are setting an example of enthusiastic work now that the revolutionary renewal of society is under way.

I want to assure you, Mikhail Gorbachev went on, that Moscow's concerns are concerns of prime importance for the Central Committee. As I have already said, the Central Committee has passed a number of important resolutions aimed at developing the economy, the social sector and culture of the city. Implementing everything we have mapped out so that the Muscovites could feel the change, so that specific problems should be resolved one after another and the housing, transport and trade situation start improving is our common task now.

We proposed adopting a special resolution on the development of the system of health services in Moscow so that Moscow's problems should not get lost among the general plans and allocations.

Speaking of the social problems, such as housing, health services, transport, schools, theatres and museums, which have aggravated in Moscow, there is one solution — creating a strong and advanced construction base commensurate with the city's scope and with the Muscovites' needs.

In a word, the Moscow City Party organisation should considerably invigorate its activities in all directions.

I think both in the Party Committee and in the city itself there should be a different atmosphere, when people work with initiative and honestly. This can be achieved by hard and persistent work. If Moscow's potential becomes deflected, this tells on the entire country. If it works smoothly and at full speed, this also tells tangibly on the entire country. In this connection I wish your Party organisation to work more actively, to be more specific and more demanding and to show more initiative. A person with initiative always finds the solution, knowing what to do and how to mobilise the people. Today's Plenary Meeting is another difficult but instructive lesson. Difficult lessons are hard to learn, and not everyone can learn them. To listen to some people, they stand for perestroika through thick and thin, drawing conclusions and swearing allegiance to progressive ideas. When you keep listening, however, you feel such a strong odour of naphthalene in their statements and assurances that you become sick. We need action, rather than assurances and promises.

The current lesson must not be lost. It is also a lesson for the CPSU Central Committee. I will not try to justify myself now and tell you in detail what has been done in order to prevent mistakes in the work of the leadership of your city committee which we are discussing today. I personally take this matter close to my heart. I have had more than one straight, frank and sincere private conversation with Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin.

I must tell you, Boris Nikolayevich, that you have been trapped in your own ambitions. We tried to put you right on the eve of the January Plenary Meeting and during the January Plenary Meeting. There was another discussion on the eve of the June Plenary Meeting.

I would like to support those comrades who spoke about the positive aspects of Yeltsin's work. And still, he failed to be up to the mark politically and proved incapable of leading a Party organisation such as the Moscow City Party Committee.

When at the January 1987 Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee we analysed the causes of stagnation, the causes of why the Politbureau and Secretariat of the Central Committee had at a point in the past turned out unable to work and what was to be done to avoid a repetition of this, we were unanimous in our conclusions. It is necessary that an atmosphere of true partisanship, of criticism and self-criticism and of collective leadership prevail everywhere. No complacency. A comradely open discussion is the best atmosphere in which to conceive fruitful plans and to check the correctness of policy. Collectivity and joint leadership is an enormous force.

At the October 1987 Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee, when all comrades had spoken out and given an assessment of the speech made by Comrade Yeltsin as politically erroneous, I asked if there were any other suggestions. Comrade V A Zatorvitsky, a well-known builder, raised his hand and walked up to the platform. I am not against the decision of the Central Committee, he said. I have a question to Comrade Yeltsin. How come you, such a prominent leader, think not of the country, not of the Party, but have got infected with careerism and are settling scores, having forgotten about the difficult tasks we have undertaken? Is this permissible? No, it is impermissible!

These words of Vladimir Andreyevich Zatorvitsky struck me right through the heart.

We are the Party of the working class, of the whole people. We bear responsibility for each of our decisions, for each of our practical moves. The working class fully appreciates perestroika, it is staunchly behind the changes, for renovation

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Mikhail Gorbachev's message to Indian people on inauguration of Soviet Festival

A special issue of the magazine *Soviet Land* devoted to the Festival of the USSR in India, beginning on November 21, was launched in a special ceremony at the House of Soviet Science, Culture and Arts in New Delhi on November 16.

Present at the ceremony were members of the Indian Government, prominent political and public figures, activists of the Friends of the Soviet Union Society and the Indo-Soviet Cultural Society.

The issue carries a message of greetings from Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, on the inauguration of the Festival of the USSR in India.

The message said:

Dear Indian Friends,

I am addressing you on the occasion of the inauguration of the Soviet Festival in India. I hope the festival will give the Indian public a chance to learn more about the life and aspirations of our multi-ethnic country, its achievements and problems, and about our plans and thoughts about the present and the future.

The Soviet Festival in India and the Indian Festival successfully under way in the Soviet Union are landmarks in the history of our two countries. They honourably embody the joint response of our great nations to the epoch-making dates to which both festivals are dedicated: the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution and the 40th anniversary of Independent India.

The October Revolution embodied the spectacular irrepressible mass drive for freedom, social justice and humane ideals. The society we are building is always centred around man, his aspirations and vital interests. We faced tremendous difficulties and overcame them. We have scored our main victory: the Soviet people have reliable social guarantees. They are sure of their future and that of their children.

The October Revolution gave a vital political and moral impetus to the current restructuring process and all-round renovation of the Soviet community. The perestroika effort is meant to boost democracy and get people involved in public affairs. The movement proceeds in a humane atmosphere of openness. Its goal is to fully implement the ideals and benefits of the socialist system. That is how Soviet society responds to the historic challenge of the day.

Our foreign policy is part and parcel of the overall restructuring effort. Never before has humanity faced problems so involved as today. The question of survival looms before all. At a time when the global future is at stake, international relations, too, need restructuring and deep-going democratic reforms. They must be updated to guarantee survival to the human race. Those relations ought to rest on consideration for the unique in every nation, for every nation's sovereign right to make its political and social choice. Confidence and peaceful co-operation, equal and beneficial to all, ought to replace animosity and confrontation.

In short, the contemporary world vitally needs new political thinking and a realistic policy based

on ideas which that thinking breeds. Last year's Delhi Declaration gives an example of just such thinking and such a policy. It does not only appeal to build a world free of violence and nuclear arsenals; it helps to blaze the trail to such a world. The time since it was signed shows that a nuclear free-world is a tangible goal, not a utopia. The declaration arose from joint meditations and quests by our two countries, which are so different yet united by their common will for peace and justice. Soviet-Indian co-operation is important for global politics.

The Soviet and Indian festivals graphically prove that our lasting traditional friendly contacts enter a new stage. The democratic spirit penetrates Soviet-Indian relations ever deeper. That is true of both the forms and content of our relations. They have gone far beyond the bounds of official governmental ties. They now involve our entire nations. We welcome direct contacts between ordinary people, citizens of our two countries.

We must cherish Soviet-Indian friendship and co-operation as our most precious possession. Then they will go on to bring us ample fruit. The Festival of the Soviet Union in your country and the Indian Festival under way in the Soviet Union serve that noble goal.

Best wishes to the readers of *Soviet Land* and to the entire Indian nation, our friend.

Sincerely yours,
Mikhail Gorbachev.

PLENARY MEETING OF MOSCOW CITY PARTY COMMITTEE

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and for making our society morally healthier.

Our foes call us utopians and prophesy that we shall fail. They say so because they fear our perestroika. Until the January Plenary Meeting they said it was but another campaign. A new team of rulers of the country had come and were criticising the old ones and settling old scores, so there would be no real advance. When the January Plenary Meeting passed and then the June Plenary Meeting, they panicked. Now everything is being done to sow doubts among the working class, distrust among the working people and to discredit perestroika.

Let them talk! Saying spiteful things about us is a habitual practice for them.

Our path is not easy, but we climbed the hill and now stand not on shifting sands, but on firm ground and therefore we shall hold out! We have such a huge potential that we can accomplish all

our plans. Ours is a realistic policy. I am confident that the Muscovites will make the contribution the country, the Central Committee and the government expects from them, and we shall back you up.

A Moscow City Party *aktiv* meeting took place on November 12, at which communists were informed in detail of the results of the October 1987 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee and the November 11 decisions of the Plenary Meeting of the Moscow City Party Committee. Meetings of the *aktiv* with a similar agenda were also held in all the District Party Committees of Moscow.

The meetings' participants declared their full support for the line of the Party, worked out at the April 1985 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee and the 27th Party Congress and directed at the renovation of all the aspects of the life of Soviet society, at democratisation, glasnost and the acceleration of the social and economic development of the country.

It was stressed at the meetings that the documents of the Central Committee of the Party and the decisions of the Moscow City Party Committee's Plenary Meeting give a stern, but a just assessment of what had happened. With full definiteness the communists and all working people of the capital firmly declare: the Moscow City Party organisation has always been and will continue to be a firm support for the Central Committee of the CPSU, will consistently follow the Leninist course worked out by the April 1985 Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee and show a worthy example of selflessness in the drive for perestroika, for the transformation into practice of the revolutionary reforms of our society.

The participants in the meetings stressed that the main task of the hour is to concentrate the entire huge creative potential of the Moscow communists on perestroika in every sphere of the social, economic, scientific and cultural life of the capital. And the sooner lessons are drawn from what has happened, the weightier the results of this work will be.

Member of the Politbureau and Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and First Secretary of the Moscow City Party Committee Lev Zaikov addressed the all-city meeting of the Party *aktiv*.

(Pravda, November 13. Abridged.)

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SOVIET-CZECHOSLOVAK TALKS

TALKS were held in the Kremlin on November 16 between Nikolai Ryzhkov, Member of the CPSU Central Committee and Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, and Lubomir Strougal, Member of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and Chairman of the Czechoslovak Government, who is in the Soviet Union on a working visit.

The talks focused on the issues of realising the understandings reached during the meetings of Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, and Gustav Husak, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia.

The sides stated that the current overhaul of the economic mechanisms in both countries in creating drastically new possibilities for deepening interaction between the USSR and Czechoslovakia and for broad participation in this work by Soviet and Czechoslovak enterprises and organisations with the use of new and effective forms of co-operation.

Measures were outlined to ensure the necessary economic conditions for further actively developing direct contacts between enterprises and organisations in production, science and technology and for setting up joint ventures and associations.

It was found essential to continue giving special attention to the implementation of a comprehensive programme for scientific and technological progress of the countries grouped in the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, which covers the period until the year 2000, as the basis for working out a coordinated scientific and technological policy and promoting new and advanced forms of production units.

The sides discussed issues connected with elaborating a concept for co-operation between the USSR and Czechoslovakia for the next 15 to 20 years, which is called upon to determine its prospects and ensure a fundamentally new approach, increasing bilateral trade and improving its pattern.

As international issues were discussed, a complete concurrence of views was confirmed on the situation in Europe and in the world as a whole. The conviction was expressed that forging a comprehensive system of international peace and security based on the principles of new thinking should provide a dependable route to a world without wars.

Special stress was made on the significance of the Soviet-US understanding to sign an agreement to abolish two classes of nuclear weapons — intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles. Confidence was expressed that the forthcoming meeting between Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan can become a major event in international affairs and will make it possible to consider the issue of a future treaty for making 50 per cent cuts in the strategic

offensive weapons of the USSR and the United States, while observing the ABM Treaty and not withdrawing from it for an agreed period.

The heads of government pointed to the important role of an active foreign policy pursued by the socialist countries to deliver mankind from the threat of destruction and create a nuclear-free and non-violent world. These humane goals dear to every person are served by the initiatives of the Warsaw Treaty member-states, including their efforts to translate proposals for cuts in armed forces and armaments in Europe into reality.

The sides take the view that equal and mutually beneficial economic, scientific and technological co-operation free from any forms of discrimination should form one of the mainstays of the Helsinki Process. In this connection the Soviet side reaffirmed its strong support for Czechoslovakia's initiative for convening an all-European economic forum.

The determination was voiced during the talks to continue strengthening the unity and cohesion of the countries of the socialist community, upgrade their co-operation, and further their interaction on the international scene in the interest of enhancing general peace and security.

The talks were held in a warm, comradely atmosphere.

A joint Soviet-Czechoslovak protocol was signed on the strength of the results of the working meeting.

First Soviet-American joint venture

THE ceremony of signing the constituent documents for the USSR's first joint Soviet-American enterprise to put out systems of control for modern petro-chemical productions, was held at the building of the US-USSR Trade and Economic Council in Moscow on November 11.

The documents were signed by Nikolai Lemayev, Minister of the Oil Refining and Petro-Chemical Industry of the USSR and Charles Hugel, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Combustion Engineering. The

documents were signed in the presence of Vladimir Gusev, Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and Boris Aristov, Minister of Foreign Trade of the USSR.

The establishment of the joint enterprise acquires special significance on the threshold of the Soviet-American summit meeting in Washington. Nikolai Lemayev said at the ceremony. "I am confident," he went on, "that the new enterprise will make a major contribution to the development of the USSR's production and export potential. We consider the event as the first step in extensive work with American companies."

The joint enterprise is a historical event for Combustion Engineering, said Charles Hugel. Countries in the present-day world become increasingly interdependent, and the ever deeper involvement of such a great power as the USSR in the world economic system is a natural process. "I am confident", he said, "that the first Soviet-American venture will be a major milestone not only to Combustion Engineering, but also to other American investors."

Data on the activities of the joint enterprise were disclosed at a press-conference held on the occasion of the signing ceremony. Its ownership capital, with the Soviet partner's share to be not less than 51 per cent, will be 20 million roubles. Its staff will consist of 250-300 people, among them several dozen foreign specialists. In the first three years the annual sales of the enterprise will reach 30 million roubles and in five years' 45 million roubles. The products of the joint enterprise are intended for the Soviet market, it was noted at the press conference, and the profits of the American partner and salaries for the foreign specialists in hard currency will be received as a result of increased exports of petro-chemical products through the use of the products of the enterprise.

The joint enterprise has already received its first order from the Moscow oil refinery.

Nikolai Ryzhkov receives Armand Hammer

NIKOLAI RYZHKOV, Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, received in the Kremlin on November 14 Dr Armand Hammer, Chairman of the Board of Occidental Petroleum, who has arrived in Moscow in connection with the opening of an American art exhibition.

Armand Hammer expressed deep satisfaction with the agreement on the forthcoming visit by the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Mikhail Gorbachev to the United States and the conclusion shortly of the agreement on medium- and shorter-range missiles. Nikolai Ryzhkov noted in this connection that all people of goodwill expect of Soviet-American summit meetings tangible progress in the most important field — the reduction of strategic offensive arms and the prevention of the militarisation of outer space.

Views were exchanged on a number of general problems of international economic relations and also on questions of business co-operation between Occidental Petroleum and Soviet organisations. It was noted that the growing complexity and interconnection of economic development problems call for an active interaction of all countries. As it is carrying out its perestroika (restructuring), the Soviet Union is creating the preconditions for its ever deeper involvement in the world division of labour and facilitating the strengthening of the material base of the peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems. Armand Hammer agreed that in these conditions special importance is acquired by joint efforts to develop extensive economic co-operation and inter-state dialogue with the aim of deepening mutual understanding and taking into consideration each other's interests.

Vladimir Gusev, Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, and Vasili Dinkov, Minister of the USSR Oil Industry, took part in the conversation.

Eduard Shevardnadze receives US Deputy Secretary of State

EDUARD SHEVARDNADZE, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee and Foreign Minister of the USSR on November 16 received the US Deputy Secretary of State John Whitehead, now on a visit to Moscow.

Topical issues of Soviet-American relations in the context of the preparations for the forthcoming official visit of Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, to the United States were discussed. Principal attention was paid to a package of problems regarding security. They considered, specifically, the course of the concluding stage of work to agree on the text of the treaty on full elimination of Soviet and American medium- and shorter-range missiles.

There was also a mutual substantive exchange of opinions on humanitarian questions and a number of other important aspects of Soviet-American bilateral relations.

John Whitehead also had a talk today with Deputy Foreign Ministers of the USSR Anatol Adamishin and Alexander Bessmertnykh.

Meeting of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee

AT its regular meeting held on November 12, the Political Bureau discussed the results of the functions held in connection with the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. The resolution adopted on this question says that the celebrations have become a major political event that vividly showed the high morale of the Soviet people, its rallying around the Communist Party, strong support for the course of acceleration, restructuring and renewal in every sphere of the life of Soviet society.

The Political Bureau pointed out that the key problems decisive for the destiny of perestroika — democratisation of social life and radical economic reform — should be in the focus of attention of Party, government and managerial bodies, trade unions and the Komsomol organisation. The need was emphasised to put an end resolutely to political and organisational slackness, the lack of initiative in a considerable number of Party committees and their leaders. It is necessary to use in full measure for this purpose the preparation for the 19th All-Union Party Conference.

The October festivities showed the efficiency of the course of the CPSU for all-out development of relations with socialist countries, the deepening of interaction with them on the basis of the principles consolidated by the working meeting of leaders of fraternal parties of the CMEA countries held in Moscow in November 1986.

The Political Bureau noted the exceptional importance of the meeting of representatives of parties and movements that took part during the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Great

October. The striving of the CPSU for the development of relations with communist and workers' parties, with revolutionary-democratic, socialist, social-democratic and labour parties, with mass democratic organisations and movements was confirmed in the spirit of the line of principle worked out by the 27th CPSU Congress. Reflecting important changes in the world situation, public opinion and progressive political trends, the meeting signified the beginning of a broad dialogue of the international left forces, the establishment of contacts among them above all for the sake of averting war danger and solution of other cardinal problems common to entire humanity.

The Political Bureau approved the results of the Soviet leadership's meetings and conversations with a number of Party and state leaders who were in Moscow to attend the October Revolution celebrations. Vital issues of world politics, questions of deepening bilateral relations were discussed in an atmosphere of complete mutual understanding, in the spirit of new thinking. Agreement was reached on the general assessment of the international situation and with regard to specific areas of co-operation.

The Political Bureau examined and approved the results of the Soviet-American talks held in October in Moscow and continued in Washington. It was stressed that the latest, drastic proposals in the field of nuclear disarmament, set out by Mikhail Gorbachev in a talk with the US Secretary of State and developed in a message from the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee to US President Ronald Reagan, handed over by Eduard Shevardnadze, created the necessary objective conditions for the forthcoming substantive and constructive top-level dialogue.

The Soviet leadership's aim was that the signing of history's first treaty on the elimination of a whole class of nuclear weapons be accompanied by tangible results on the platform at

Reykjavik in the field of deep cuts in strategic offensive arms in conditions of strict compliance with the ABM Treaty which was of prime significance in maintaining strategic stability, and by the consolidation of the foundations for smoothing out and promoting the onward development of Soviet-American relations.

Having approved the results of the regular meeting of the Warsaw Treaty Foreign Ministers' Committee held in Prague on October 28-29, the Political Bureau noted with satisfaction that the Soviet stand at the talks with the US on nuclear and space arms enjoyed the unanimous support of its allies.

It was stated that the allied states reaffirmed their determination to press for the establishment of a comprehensive system of international peace and security and favoured security for all states on an equitable basis and in all spheres of international relations.

The Political Bureau considered information on a visit to the US by the USSR Supreme Soviet Delegation led by Viktor Nikonov. It stressed the importance of broadening trade and economic ties in the agro-industrial complex between Soviet organisations and enterprises and companies in the US.

The Political Bureau examined some other issues of the Soviet Union's domestic and foreign policy.

Moscow: Public opinion poll

A public opinion poll conducted at six industrial enterprises in Moscow by the Institute of Sociological Studies under the USSR Academy of Sciences has shown that the new atmosphere in the country made workers and engineers more active.

According to sociological studies, in 1985 only one third of those employed in industry believed that they worked at their full capacity, while the recent poll revealed an entirely different situation. Some 75 per cent of the polled felt that they were making a practical contribution to perestroika.

Perestroika is making a high demand on the professional skill of workers. Thirty-eight per cent of those polled had improved their skills or learned a related trade.

In the opinion of those polled, positive changes brought about by perestroika are evident. The most significant change for the better was observed in the quality of products and production planning.

Most of those polled are optimistic about the future. They are sure that the coming into force early in 1988 of the Law on the State Enterprise will provide them with real opportunities for taking part in the management of their enterprises.

UN award presented to Volgograd

THE Hero City of Volgograd has been awarded the title "The Messenger of Peace" on behalf of the United Nations. On November 16 representatives of the public gathered at the City Soviet where the honorary diploma in recognition of Volgograd's contribution to the implementation of the programme of the International Year of Peace proclaimed by the UN General Assembly, was presented in a ceremony on behalf of the United Nations Secretary-

General. The people of Volgograd marked the presentation of the award by rallies and marches, and work effort the funds from which were donated to the Peace Foundation. Contacts with cities and peace-making public organisations of many countries were developed.

Volgograd is famous for the heroism of its defenders in the years of the Second World War. Completely destroyed during the Battle of Stalingrad (1942-1943); the city has been rebuilt and has become even more beautiful than it was before the war. It now has a population of about one million. New housing estates have been developed in Volgograd which stretches for nearly 80 kilometres along the banks of the Volga. Housing construction is one of the main concerns of the Executive Committee of the City Soviet and its Chairman Yuri Starovatykh who, incidentally, is a building engineer by profession.

On receiving the high award, he said: "We remember the heroes of the wartime years and the cities consumed by the flames of war and this memory obliges us to build bridges of friendship and mutual understanding with the peoples of all countries and continents. We are convinced that by pooling our efforts, the peoples of the world will be able to avert war, to defend man's sacred right to life and a peaceful future. This is why we vigorously participate in the work of all international organisations that set themselves these lofty goals."

Mikhail Gorbachev

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Soviet-British Protocol signed

A PROTOCOL on negotiations between the delegations of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and the Royal Society on the development of scientific co-operation between the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom has been signed in a ceremony held at the London Royal Society. The document was signed from the Soviet side by Academician Guri Marchuk, head of the delegation of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, and from the British side by George Porter, President of the Royal Society.

The document points to certain developments in relations between the USSR and Britain in science and technology after the signing in June, 1986 of an agreement on scientific co-operation and exchange of scientists. Meanwhile the sides

noted that bilateral co-operation has not yet been properly developed. It is now not up to a level in bilateral relations which would be commensurable to the volume and significance of scientific research carried out by the sides and would adequately reflect their potential for co-operation, the protocol says.

Programme of exchanges

To remedy the situation, the sides agreed upon a number of practical steps to broaden relations in science and technology. It was deemed expedient to make closer and more regular contacts between the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and the Royal Society. It was decided to have regular meetings between representatives of the Academy of Sciences and the Royal Society which are to be held in turn in the USSR and Britain once every two years. It is envisaged to broaden the programme of exchanges of scientists, particularly young scientists, who will

come to the Soviet Union and Britain to work for a long period. A decision was taken to broaden the existing joint scientific projects, to launch a new programme for joint bilateral symposiums on the most important scientific matters. A practical step was taken in establishing the exchange of scientific data between the Academy of Sciences and the Royal Society. It is also planned to start co-operation between the Priroda and Nature publishing houses.

At the concluding press conference the Academician Guri Marchuk, head of the Soviet delegation, highly appraised the fruitful negotiations and expressed the hope that the programme for broadening Soviet-British co-operation in science and technology would help strengthen the scientific and technical potential of the two countries, and make a tangible contribution to a recovery of the international situation, improvement of mutual understanding and co-operation between all states.

Margaret Thatcher receives leaders of Soviet delegations

BRITAIN'S Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, has received the leaders of visiting Soviet delegations, Boris Tolstykh, Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers and Chairman of the State Committee for Science and Technology, and Academician Guri Marchuk, President of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

The present state of Soviet-British ties in the economic, scientific and technological fields was reviewed during the meeting. It was noted that their development had good prospects and was important from the viewpoint of deepening the mutually beneficial co-operation of the two countries.

Both sides stressed their resolve to facilitate the implementation of this task as an important factor to consolidating positive trends in Soviet-British relations and in international life on the whole.

Margaret Thatcher expressed interest in the processes of restructuring currently under way in the USSR and the role of the scientific community in implementing the plans.

The Prime Minister wished success to the forthcoming meeting between Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan and expressed the British Government's support for the Soviet-American agreement on eliminating two classes of nuclear weapons.

Interview with chief of Soviet Visa Office

CONSIDERABLE changes are now taking place in the procedure for exit from and entry into the Soviet Union: observing the Constitution of the USSR, the Soviet Union's international obligations, the letter and spirit of the accords of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, and taking into consideration citizens' wishes, the Soviet Government is simplifying human contacts and the solution of questions of family reunion. TASS correspondents were told on November 16 by Rudolf Kuznetsov, Chief of OVIR, the Soviet Visa Office, and the office for the registration of foreigners, of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs. A number of the earlier existing restrictions and bans, were, specifically, lifted in this connection.

Statistics show that this is so. More than 26,000 people, including 7,000 minors, received permission for exit from the Soviet Union in the current year.

A report of the US news agency United Press International says that there are six divided families striving for reunion. I wish to reassure the concerned journalists from that news agency, Rudolf Kuznetsov said. Yuri Balavlenkov, Yelena Kaplan and Galina Goltzman-Mikhelson were granted permission today for exit from the Soviet Union.

The most characteristic tendency at present is the reduction of the number of applications to leave the Soviet Union for Israel. There were only 549 such applications as of October 1, 1987, and their number is several tens less now, Rudolf Kuznetsov said.

There is another indicative tendency: the number of persons who have been granted permission for exit from the Soviet Union to Israel, but refused to use it, has increased. There were over 250 such persons over the past period of this year, while there were only 63 such cases in 1986.

The chief of OVIR of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs stressed that the refusal of the authorities to grant a permission for exit from the USSR is a very rare phenomenon now. This index reached 8 per cent as of today, that is a drop of 85.7 per cent on what it was last year.

Representatives of the US hand over to the Soviet side lists of so-called "refuseniks" from time to time, and sometimes find themselves in an awkward situation, for such lists quite often include persons who have either not applied for

permission to leave or have left the Soviet Union long ago. It has happened, also, that US representatives interceded for "dead souls".

The number of exits from the Soviet Union on private business, that is to meet with relatives and acquaintances, doubled for the first six months of 1987 compared with the same period last year. This is an important tendency, Rudolf Kuznetsov said, since many people do not want to leave the Soviet Union forever, and just wish to visit their relatives abroad. We hold that the increase of exits for private affairs has led to the further decrease of applications to leave the Soviet Union and this tendency will strengthen in the future, Rudolf Kuznetsov said.

Though the procedure for exit from the USSR has clearly been simplified, there are people who wish to leave as soon as they conceived the idea. But the Soviet Union, just like any other country, has precise legislative provisions, which should not be bypassed in issuing permissions for exit. One gets the impression that many of those who express such an eager concern for the destiny of the Helsinki Process in the humanitarian area are really protecting their own self-seeking interests. A characteristic example of this is Iosif Begun, who upon receiving the visa for exit from the Soviet Union has not used it and was not even making much secret of the fact that he acts at the bidding of his masters in the West.

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Soviet military expert on Roger's statement

A STATEMENT by former NATO Supreme Allied Commander — Europe, American General Rogers, in which he expressed his negative attitude to the intention of the US Administration to conclude the Soviet-American agreement on medium- and shorter-range missiles, pursues a definite aim: to justify in the eyes of the broad public the Pentagon's and NATO's intentions to rearm and modernise their forces. This is how General Rogers's recent statement was commented upon by USSR Defence Ministry expert Major-General Filip Gontar.

In an interview on November 17 to a TASS diplomatic correspondent, the Soviet military expert said that according to Rogers the elimination from Europe of US medium-range missiles capable of reaching targets on the territory of the USSR will be the gravest mistake as a result of which Western Europe will be disarmed.

Trying to intimidate philistines with "Soviet

USSR Foreign Ministry spokesman on Pretoria's inventions

ASSERTIONS that Soviet servicemen take a direct part in military actions jointly with government troops of the People's Republic of Angola are not in keeping with reality, and are a deliberate provocation. Yuri Gremitskikh, first deputy chief of the Information Directorate of the USSR Foreign Ministry, said at a briefing in the Press Centre of the USSR Foreign Ministry on November 12. The presence of Soviet military experts in Angola is limited to rendering assistance to the Angolans in mastering military equipment.

Pretoria's invention has the obvious aim of justifying in some way the direct intervention of the racist regime against the Angolan people, to legalise the so-called "protection of national interests" and its outright backing for Unita bands, the spokesman said.

The aggressive policy of the apartheid regime is a source of constant menace to "frontline" states. It shows that the line of "constructive engagement" and limited sanctions conducted by the USA with regard to the Republic of South Africa does nothing to promote the solution of the problem of southern Africa and the peaceful, independent development of its peoples.

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military supremacy". Rogers deliberately avoids mentioning the fact that up to one thousand nuclear delivery aircraft, some 200 launchers of Lance tactical missiles and several thousand guns for atomic artillery remain on the territories of the European countries. If Rogers is to be believed, the USA keeps in Europe 4,600 units of nuclear ammunition for the available means of delivery. Filip Gontar noted. The American general also prefers to keep silent about the fact that more than 300 planes and nuclear delivery vehicles are based on the aircraft-carriers of the US Sixth and Second Fleets sailing near the European coasts, and that submarines and surface ships of those fleets carry nuclear-armed cruise missiles capable of reaching the territory of the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Treaty countries. Besides that, several hundred warheads of Poseidon missiles with a range of up to 4,5 thousand kilometres are intended not to be counted in the armaments of the US missile-carrying submarine fleet patrolling the North Atlantic.

Declaring against the Soviet-American agreement on the elimination of the two classes of nuclear missiles, Rogers pretends that over 170 sea-based and land-based ballistic missiles (more than 500 nuclear warheads) belonging to Britain and France targeted on Warsaw Treaty countries do not exist in Western Europe.

In order to compensate for the loss of the US medium-range missiles in Europe, Rogers suggests intensive measures to replace in West European NATO countries the Lance tactical missiles with a maximum range of 128 kilo-

metres, that has become outdated, with new missiles with a longer range that could hit targets at a range of over 240 kilometres.

Rogers also comes out in favour of supplementing the fleet of strike tactical aviation of NATO countries with newly perfected aircraft, delivery vehicles, and to equip them with air-to-ground missiles capable of dealing nuclear strikes at targets situated within a range of not less than 240 kilometres, without getting into the zone of operation of the enemy anti-aircraft defences. There are reports, the Soviet expert said, that as a "compensatory measure" the US Department of Defence intends to instal on surface ships and submarines of the US Sixth and Second Fleets an additional number of nuclear cruise missiles capable of hitting targets on the territory of the European part of the USSR and its allies.

Insisting on a further build-up of the US nuclear potential in Europe, Rogers at the same time demands from the America's West European allies an increase in expenditures for the modernisation of conventional armaments, banking mainly on their qualitative renewal and large scale equipment of general-purpose armed forces with new high-precision long-range conventional weapons and systems, which would approach tactical nuclear weapons for their strike capacity. The Pentagon and the NATO leaders continue to seek to tip the military balance in Europe in their favour, to get advantage over the Warsaw Treaty Organisation in the area of conventional armaments, the Soviet expert said.

Demarche of US Embassy

THE US Ambassador in Moscow Jack Matlock on November 16 refused to receive a group of Deputies of the Supreme Soviet of the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic and disregarded their categorical protest against a provocative action by the House of Representatives of the US Congress which had recently adopted a resolution on a so-called Latvian Independence Day.

The parliamentarians had to wait for about an hour outside the Embassy building in cold and

windy weather before a member of the Embassy staff, who presented himself as a second secretary, told the members of the delegation that they could be received only as private persons, not as Deputies. The Latvian parliamentarians rejected that ultimatum with indignation.

"Well, we shall have to look for some other way to make it known to our American 'patrons' in what way the Supreme Soviet and all the working people of Latvia reacted to the US Government decision to 'observe' Latvian Independence Day on November 18. The reaction was unambiguous: anger and indignation", a TASS correspondent was told by Deputy Carl Rutenberg, a trade union functionary from Riga.

"We found particularly insulting the recommendations of the congressmen to send a representative of the US President and Western correspondents to 'watch' the events in Latvia. We welcome guests when they come with good intentions, not as unasked for advisers and instigators of anti-Soviet actions. The Latvian people declared for Soviet power back in 1917 and confirmed its historic choice more than once. There is no doubt it will continue advancing together with other Soviet peoples along the road charted by the Great October.

"The resolution of the American Congress is a gross interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign republic, an outright violation of the norms of international law, the United Nations Charter and the Helsinki accords," said Deputy Andris Berzins, researcher of the Riga medical institute. "One would like to believe that common sense and new political thinking will prevail in the USA and the Congress will discard the notorious resolution on 'the Baltic question' which, incidentally, has been resolved by history in a final way."

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

Statement by Estonia's Supreme Soviet

MEMBERS of Parliament in Estonia, a Soviet Baltic republic, qualified the provocative actions directed by Washington, in particular the holding of "Baltic freedom day" as rude interference in Estonia's internal affairs.

On November 14 a session of Estonia's Supreme Soviet (Parliament) adopted a statement addressed to the US Congress. It says that at a time when changes for the better are taking shape in relations between the USSR and the United States some government circles and representatives of the press are launching provocative campaigns against Soviet Estonia, interfering in the internal affairs of this sovereign republic. Such actions are incompatible with the spirit and principles of the Helsinki Final Act and detente in bilateral relations. The deputies of the Supreme Soviet demanded that the United States Congress put an end to its attacks on Soviet Estonia and stop its unseemly anti-Soviet campaign.