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The speech made
by the General Secretary
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Comrades,

Our Plenary Meeting takes place at an important period of perestroika. The democratization of social life and radical economic reform demand from the Party a clear perspective of things to be done. The Politbureau is being guided by these considerations in working out a concept for the 19th Party Conference. It is to determine much in the Party's strategic work.

No matter what approach we may adopt in determining ways of developing our economy, culture, social and intellectual life, it is man with his political and intellectual image, his skill, his patriotism and internationalism, his ability for creative work, his civic stance and activity that will always be the decisive factor.

There is absolutely no doubt that everything that concerns schooling, education and upbringing is directly related to the development of socialism, to perestroika. Moreover, it is its main thrust. I'll remind you that way back in the first, most difficult years after the revolution, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin regarded the creation of a new, Soviet school system as one of the most urgent tasks for the Party. This is

understandable because the future of socialism, and there is no exaggeration here, depended on the schooling, education and upbringing of the new individual.

The question is posed in the same way today, when our society is carrying out revolutionary transition to a qualitatively new state. It needs citizens who are educated, dedicated and committed to socialism, who are at the same time active, inquisitive and prepared to live and work in conditions of democracy, economic independence of collectives, in an atmosphere of growing economic and social responsibility for themselves and the country.

Comrade Yegor Ligachev and other speakers described the role of the school at all levels in educating such an individual, and I don't have to repeat what was said.

But if we make such high demands on school, what an important and authoritative figure the teacher must be! What vast knowledge, skill and gift for teaching he must have. Here is, comrades, the "basic link" in the restructuring of the entire system of education.

Certainly, we need a new organization of education, new school programmes and material and technical facilities, including computers, and we must get them as soon as possible. But without people who devote their knowledge and their heart to our children, without teachers with a capital "T", all that may remain only formal and costly innovations not embodied in real deeds.

The teacher is a major protagonist of perestroika. If he supports us with conviction, sense and passion, perestroika will gain many new sincere supporters and champions, successors to the revolutionary

socialist cause. But what if the support is formal, and the teacher remains indifferent, neutral? Who will be able to predict what social stagnation and backward movement this indifference may produce?

Of course, there is always hope that life itself will suggest the answer: today it speaks the language of perestroika—the honest, frank language of the truth, and this is probably the best social pedagogics. Nonetheless, we pin our hopes for the future largely on the work of our school—which is only natural—with its own restructuring, its own teaching talent and the creative search of the Soviet teacher.

The attitude to the teacher must be radically, resolutely changed, without delay and hesitation. He must be relieved of petty patronage, and all suspicions concerning his quests and findings must be removed. He should be relieved of duties other than teaching. His time and strength must be used for the main thing. All obstacles and barriers in the way of innovation in pedagogics must be removed, and decent material conditions must be created for the teacher's creative endeavour. This is the duty of the Party and Soviet government bodies.

Wonderful innovative teachers work in the multinational Soviet school system, and they are looking for their own ways of training and raising children. Their names are well known. The more teachers of the highest qualification we have and the more often innovative collectives of like-minded teachers appear, the quicker our schools will be rid of ossified practices, formalism and stagnation. Our children, our grandchildren and the entire cause of revolutionary restructuring will benefit from that.

Another important direction in our work is the

material base of secondary and higher schools. I mean all kinds of education and training and all types of educational establishments. It is obvious that in the future, too—both in the centre and on the periphery—we ought to seek additional possibilities for developing and strengthening educational facilities. There can be no alternative to this.

Our Plenary Meeting has examined the education reform issues from broad state positions. The main thing is that we must bring the reform of the secondary and higher school to consummation, and everywhere. No procrastination, half-measures or half-truth should be tolerated. It is necessary to act consistently and purposefully.

In these two days we have had a rather fruitful discussion. Once again we have seen how many problems have accumulated, how persistently we are to work. The general line is clear: Soviet schools should be raised to a qualitatively new level. On this we are all in complete agreement.

But, I think, it would be wrong to define now, at the Plenary Meeting, every specific way to be taken to renew the educational system. This is not easy to do. The decisive word here should belong to broad sections of the public, above all specialists—teachers, instructors and scientists. Let the decisions of our Plenary Meeting become the Party's political recommendation to the teachers as they prepare to meet at their regular congress. Let officials working in higher and specialized secondary education think about that too. No doubt, such an approach would be in the spirit of democratization, in the spirit of perestroika.

Comrades, in my speech I would like to dwell on some key ideological aspects of perestroika. And

namely the ideological interpretation of our work, for nothing escapes human consciousness, nothing can be done without it.

I would also like to use this opportunity to raise tentatively some of the issues which are to be pondered on and discussed in the run-up to the 19th All-Union Party Conference.

Today, as we have entered the decisive stage of the effort to translate into life the decisions adopted, as politics has turned into daily practice and perestroika has got under way, the vital interests of tens of millions of people and of all of society are being influenced to an ever greater extent. Issues to which answers seem to have been given have become topical again. People want to understand better the essence and purpose of perestroika, the essence of changes that have begun in our society. They want to understand where we are moving, what heights we are seeking to attain, and what we mean by the new quality of the society which we wish to achieve.

This desire is quite natural: we have started restructuring forms of social life, we are adopting new practices and discarding outdated stereotypes. The change concerns people's consciousness and psychology, their interests, status in society, at work and in the collective. There can be no concealing the fact that many good people got used in the past to abuses and failings, grew indifferent to them and became less active socially. Initially many failed to grasp the essence of the changes started, failed to see that perestroika is opening up new prospects in life and elevating the people themselves, that it is in full accord with their material and intellectual interests. Perestroika makes a special claim on those who

enjoyed unearned benefits and were not guided by their conscience, on those who performed poorly at work. I am leaving aside those who violated laws and morality of socialist society.

Such is, I would say, the complex political and ideological situation in which we have to act. The Party has literally to fight for perestroika, both in production and in the spiritual sphere. Of course, this fight does not assume here the form of class antagonisms. But we can see, comrades, how sharp it is. Heated debates are going on about the obstacles standing in the way of perestroika. People are worried that the innovative decisions of the January and June Plenary Meetings of the CPSU Central Committee are being implemented slowly and with difficulties. For the first time in many decades we really feel a socialist pluralism of views. This is something to which we are unaccustomed, and it is being assessed in different ways. It demands study, analysis and elucidation. But behind all that we must see the principal thing—growing support for the policy of restructuring on the part of the people.

We say that we support and will support everything that benefits socialism, and reject and will reject everything that injures the people's interests. We see that there is confusion in the minds of some people: are we not retreating from the positions of socialism, especially when we introduce new, unhabitual forms of economic management and social life, are we not revising Marxist-Leninist teaching itself? No wonder that there have emerged "defenders" of Marxism-Leninism and "mourners" for socialism who believe that both are under threat.

From where is this emanating? What is behind

such fears? It seems that perestroika itself is often understood in different ways. Some regard it as a face-lift, as an "adjustment" to the existing mechanism that performs poorly but at least operates somehow, while it is not clear how the new one will work. Others demand the dismantling of the very system of socialism down to its very foundation and claim that the path followed by people for decades was wrong and leading nowhere, deny offhand the values of socialism and borrow alternatives to them from the arsenal of bourgeois liberalism and nationalism. Still others turn to radical phraseology, calling for skipping the stages of socialist development, ignoring the logic of perestroika.

There is no exaggeration, no deliberate exacerbation of the problem in what I am saying. Yes, all this is taking place. This situation has been engendered by the scope of perestroika, its deepening and advancement to new frontiers, when the majority have realized that our goals and plans are realistic, that they, using Lenin's expression, are "in earnest and for a long time."

One should not fail to take into account the immense difficulties associated with re-orientation of thinking on matters of principle. A similar situation has already occurred in our history. In working out his cooperative plan, Lenin pointed out: "...We have to admit that there has been a radical modification in our whole outlook on socialism." But we know what effort the Party had to exert for that. This is evidenced by discussions of those years. It took Lenin's authority and genius for the new approach to socialism to win support in the Party and in the country. We must learn well the lessons

of that period. This is of vital importance to us now.

Perestroika compels us to consider in a new way some customary definitions and compare the path covered and yet to be taken with the criteria of progress, with the goals of building a new society as formulated by the classics of Marxism-Leninism. In other words, we are to compare the directions of our practical work with the chief beacons that have been lighting up the Communists' path for more than a century. And we are not just to repeat the set truths for the sake of ritual, but to look for the answer to many questions raised by the current situation.

This is why, comrades, the problems of ideological activity, and questions of the theory of socialism and perestroika assume such vast importance. One cannot say that we have overlooked ideological and theoretical matters. They are widely reflected in the Political Report of the Central Committee to the 27th CPSU Congress, in the new edition of the CPSU Programme, in the materials of the plenary meetings of the Central Committee, and in a number of other Party documents. It would be impossible to set the tasks of perestroika in the economy, and in the political, social and cultural spheres of society without reliance on theory and without ideological substantiation.

In the documents devoted to the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution, we were striving to give an objective, balanced appraisal of the road travelled by the Soviet people, to answer many difficult questions worrying Soviet people. It should be emphasized that it is imperative to take the new demands into account in approaching these questions and to thoroughly analyze them.

It is the Party, equipped with the scientific knowledge of the past and present, and of the tendencies having real prospects of development, that is to guide the processes of fostering socialist consciousness in society. It is the Party that can and must theoretically elucidate the new stage of socialist construction, taking into account the innovation introduced by perestroika. It is the Party that must choose and put at the service of all of society what really promotes socialism, meets the interests of its development, advances us to socialist, and not some alien, "borrowed" aims.

It is certainly above all the desire to solve the most urgent problems caused by the stagnation of the previous period that made us aware of the need for perestroika. The wider the scale of perestroika, the more understandable its general meaning and importance for the future of socialism become.

Today, there is firm awareness that perestroika is an objectively necessary stage in the development of Soviet society whose essence is a transition to its new qualitative state. We must bring about radical changes in the productive forces and relations of production, and ensure a revolutionary renewal of social and political structures, and the growth of the spiritual, intellectual potential of society. We are striving in the present conditions to revive the Leninist image of the new system, to rid it of crustations and deformations, of everything that shackled society and prevented it from using the potential of socialism in full measure. And, most importantly, we must impart a new quality to socialist society, while taking into account all the realities of the world of today.

The essence of socialism lies in asserting the

power of the working people, the priority of the welfare of man, the working class, and the entire people. In the final analysis, the task of socialism is to put an end to the social alienation of man characteristic of an exploiter society, his alienation from power, from the means of production, from the results of his work, from spiritual values.

The October Revolution opened the way to accomplishing this historic task. The establishment of the power of the working people, the abolition of private ownership of the means of production, and the elimination of the exploitation of man by man were steps of fundamental importance. These are the basic gains of socialism.

For over 70 years our Party and people have been inspired by the idea of socialism and have been building it. But because of external and internal factors we have not been able to implement in full the Leninist principles of the new social system. This was seriously hampered by the personality cult, the system of management by injunction that evolved in the thirties, bureaucratic, dogmatic and voluntarist aberrations, arbitrariness, and—in the late seventies and early eighties—by a lack of initiative and hindrances that led to stagnation. These phenomena, and what has remained of them and survived to the present, must become things of the past.

In this lies the answer to those who have fears that we might just be retreating from socialism, from the foundations laid by generations of Soviet people. No, we are not retreating a single step from socialism, from Marxism-Leninism, from everything that has been gained and created by the people.

But we decisively reject the dogmatic, bureauc-

ratic and voluntarist legacy as it has nothing in common with either Marxism-Leninism or genuine socialism.

Creative Marxism-Leninism is always an objective, profound scientific analysis of developing reality. It is a critical analysis which does not ignore anything, which does not conceal anything, which does not fear any truth. Only such an analysis works for socialism. There are no, nor can there be, any limits to a truly scientific search. Questions of theory cannot and must not be decided by decrees. Free competition of minds is needed. Our social thinking stands to gain from this. Its prognosticating capacity will be enhanced and thereby its ability to serve as a reliable basis for working out the Party's policy will increase.

Marxism-Leninism is a scientific basis for a Party approach to the cognition of social development, to the practice of communist construction. This is an approach inherent in which are humanism of aims, creative principles, objectivity and honesty in the appraisal of the real state of affairs, an extremely exacting attitude to oneself and self-criticism. We wish to thoroughly analyze, appraise our achievements and accumulated problems, and learn the lessons for work in conditions of perestroika and the renewal of Soviet society. It is for this reason that we examine so closely our Soviet past. This is why questions of history are so important to us.

What do we mean when we speak of the need to write a real, objective history of the Party and Soviet society? This question does not boil down to just mentioning some or other people, to doing justice to those who were unjustifiably forgotten, though this is

an important, inseparable, and I would say, humane part of this huge work. The point of the matter is to write a truthful and complete history, a history of the life and struggle of the people. This is the fundamental question of Marxist-Leninist methods of historical research.

If we are to follow them, we shall have to show vividly how millions of people lived and worked, in what they believed, to show both victories and failures, discoveries and errors, the bright and the tragic, revolutionary enthusiasm of the masses and violations of socialist legality, and at times crimes. This will be a scientific, materialistic picture of history as the product of the activity of the masses. This will mean a dialectical understanding of history ruling out one-sidedness and viewing history in all its diversity, complexity and contradictoriness, without the excessive exaggeration of individual aspects.

The Marxist-Leninist approach to the analysis of the history of society presupposes persistent, intensive and critical work of thought. This requires time, talent and responsibility. One can understand the impatience of the public eager to take a look at the closed pages of our past as soon as possible. However, this cannot justify hasty statements, a certain hurriedness in appraisals which can only lead to superficial conclusions that do not reflect all the complexity of the processes which occurred. It is impermissible when writings of the moment which obscure rather than elucidate the truth are offered to the broad public instead of genuine scientific research. This tendency must be halted.

The Central Committee and the editorial offices of the media now receive many letters from people

alarmed by one-sided, subjectivist appraisals of our history that have appeared of late. People write with strong emotion about the events of 50 years ago as they do of today's problems. And this is not at all surprising. These letters are about what is the main thing to us, the attitude to socialism and the concept of socialism. They want to know how it could happen that, alongside heroic achievements of the people, crimes against them became possible.

What answer can be given to this question, a question that is so difficult for us all? A distinction should be made between the essential features of socialism and its deformations, between things that stem from objective reasons and those that are engendered by the subjective factor. Regrettably, a substantiated research into our history from these positions was not completed immediately after the 20th CPSU Congress. Later on the tendency was to bypass these difficult questions. But there can be no vacuum in ideological life. Hence it was filled with either primitive myths or alien ideology. The main thing now is to create conditions for calm, objective work, to ensure coverage of that work which, on top of everything else, promotes the active participation of the people in the discussion of questions of our history and, hence, their education, the shaping of correct views on history.

Comrades, I would like to emphasize once more that looking back at our history is prompted not merely by an interest in the past. This is vitally needed for our present work, for attaining the aims of perestroika. We have proclaimed the slogan of "More socialism!" and we must make clear what values and principles should be regarded today as truly socialist.

Socialism has scaled new historic heights of renewal. Consequently, everything—practice and theory—is being renewed. Perestroika is a result of our entire previous socio-economic and spiritual development and also a special phase of "negation of negation", when we are getting rid of everything that is hindering us. Perestroika, as regards its spiritual dimensions, is one of the decisive attempts to restore fully in the eyes of everyone the huge importance of socialist values, of which the main one is an orientation towards the working people. It is necessary to remove the rust of bureaucratism from the values and ideals of socialism, to rid them of everything inhuman with which it was attempted to replace them, to unfetter the best creative forces of man and ensure spiritual flourishing of the individual.

Perestroika offers society ideas that are capable of really uniting, rallying people, not by arranging them in lines as if for a parade, but on the basis of a variety of human potentials, aspirations, interests and capabilities. Perestroika relies on the knowledge, intellect and experience of every man, on the best human qualities. It opens up maximum opportunities for educating people by life, by the personal experience of participating in social transformations. It does not only open up opportunities but demands that these opportunities really be used. This is really the essence of perestroika.

How are things going in its main thrust? People are learning practical economy, learning democracy and openness. They are not learning passively but are participating in mastering new methods of economic management. At Party meetings, through debates and the conflict of opinion in the mass media and in

their practical work, people are coming to realize the meaning of perestroika, and what actions it requires of them in the concrete conditions in which they live and work.

Life itself constantly poses a choice: what forms should people opt for when organizing the work of a team, a shop, the entire collective of an enterprise? On what principle should work be remunerated? Who should be elected manager? Who should be entrusted with what? What principles should govern relations with partners? What attitudes should be taken to new phenomena in public life, literature and art or to old phenomena which are now viewed from unusual aspects? Many such questions confront people every day. The need to make a choice prompts activity, encourages people to be independent in making appraisals and acting. Maybe there is still much in it that is controversial and superficial. But a sound basis, fair solution of burning problems and normal daily life in keeping with the principles of socialism will do their bit.

Democratization, comrades, is the main thing. This is the decisive means of achieving the aims of perestroika. Democratization accords with the very essence of the Leninist concept of socialism. It enables our society to attain the ideals for which the October Revolution was made. There must be a clear understanding in the entire Party that it is only through democratization that the human factor can be given full play in the profound transformation of all aspects of the life of society, in the real processes of management and self-management. It is only through democratization and glasnost that deep-rooted apathy can be ended and a strong impetus can

be given to the social and political activity of the working people. It is only through conscious and interested participation of the working people in all the affairs of society that the attainment of the humanistic aims of socialism is possible.

Today we realize deeply how much we lost in the past when we failed to make the most—in theory, and especially in practice—of the fruitfulness of Lenin's ideas, intentions and practical recommendations related to Soviet socialist democracy. This should be emphasized, comrades, for to this day we meet those who recoil at the scope of the processes of democratization. Some people have become nervous and warn us lest democracy should turn into chaos. But look attentively at what they are worrying about. It is not at all about problems of vital importance to society, but more likely about their own selfish interests. This is an absolutely unacceptable stand for Party members, especially leading ones.

Just like in everything else, the Party should set an example of democracy. It is not for nothing that I tell you this. We can see how much effort it requires to weed out one of the chronic, ingrained vices—the addiction of many Party committees and their staffs to giving commands and their eagerness to dictate to everybody and decide everything for everyone. Just look at what they are doing. Some Party bodies have taken such a fancy, for example, to radio conferences that they hold up to 40 of them every month, closing one at eleven o'clock at night and opening the next one at eight in the morning. And this goes on day after day. This won't do at all. District-level workers comment with bitter irony that the only thing lacking is a television hookup between regional and district

Party committees so that there they can see how erect the first secretary of the district committee is standing and how smart is his salute, if any.

Many attempts are still being made to squeeze glasnost and democracy into convenient limits, to rein in the press, and act without reckoning with public opinion. In one place, they come down on a "trouble-maker" who has the nerve to revolt against stagnation, mismanagement, and abuses. In another, they infringe on collective farmers' rights. In yet another, they turn a manager's election into a farce. In still another, they ignore people's opinion and make decisions contradicting their vital interests and rights. This is, no doubt, due to the habit—developed over the years by a significant part of our personnel—of "keeping everything under their thumb", acting as the ultimate authority on every matter, and applying pressure to get things done. They just don't recognize other methods, as a matter of fact. They are plainly scared by the growing activity of the people.

But it should be realized full well that at the new stage of perestroika, the Party can only ensure its guiding role of the vanguard and lead the masses to effect far-reaching changes if it uses democratic methods of work. We have lost and keep losing much because of our failure to completely unshackle grass-roots initiative, endeavour and independence. This is the biggest, the hardest, but also the most important task of perestroika. And it would be no exaggeration to say that everything today hinges on its fulfillment.

Without initiative and without creative people there can be no headway, let alone revolutionary changes. I tell you this because in practice one often

witnesses a negative response to initiative and its rejection and in many cases they don't even bother to get to the heart of the matter before making a deliberate effort to find pretexts to pull up a person who has suggested something new. This remains a most widespread practice. We cannot tolerate this. Otherwise perestroika will not succeed. We should realize all this and encourage initiative in society in every way. Today we have tens of thousands of innovators, daring, enterprising, resourceful people who are not afraid of new things. It is imperative that as early as tomorrow there should be hundreds of thousands and the day after tomorrow millions of them.

Socialism is a society of people with initiative. And socialism itself is the greatest initiative in history. In a word, initiative is not a hindrance, not an inconvenience, not a drive, but an indispensable and the most important condition for progress.

Party educational work and the mass media have an immense role to play in promoting democratization and glasnost. Frankly speaking, comrades, we are still somewhat sparing, and frequently more than frugal, in evaluating the results of the great amount of work done by our numerous propagandists, lecturers and ideological workers. But it is by dint of their words that the ideas of the Party, the ideas of renewal of society, are winning over the hearts and minds of the people.

I should say that our newspapers, socio-political and literary journals, television, radio, lectures, and public meetings with front-rank workers, with the "foremen of perestroika" have done and are continuing to do much to foster a new atmosphere, eman-

cipate the minds, excite an interest in every aspect of perestroika, and accumulate various ideas.

The press and television have been turning the spotlight of glasnost on those who are resisting and hampering perestroika, either consciously or because of thoughtlessness and incompetence. The media have been supporting enthusiasts, disseminating their experience, and protecting from injustice those who have plunged headlong into working in a new way, who are not afraid of making a mistake in a challenging job, who take risks and who have come to consider themselves personally responsible for perestroika to gain momentum.

I have already spoken at meetings in the CPSU Central Committee of our approval of this work by the media. But it does not mean, of course, that everything goes smoothly here. The media sometimes lack the ability to show all the complexity and novelty of the tasks being tackled by the Party and the people. Every now and then journals and newspapers slip up because they cannot resist the temptation of publishing a sensational story, make superficial judgements on current and past events, and show elements of factionalism. There are more articles now, but still clearly too few, on the experience of perestroika in different work collectives, cities, districts, regions, republics and in the centre. The process under way is very involved and we are moving with difficulty in search of the right way. But we shall continue to advance the cause of perestroika resolutely and unwaveringly, analyzing its problems and positive results. It is on this that the attention of the mass media should be fixed.

Comrades, the process of democratization sharply poses the question of the observance of laws in our society. The legal nihilism with which Lenin battled so relentlessly became most widespread when command methods were at work. This is because excessive centralism and management by injunction, on the one hand, and parochialism, on the other, don't go too well with legality. They rather go with the mentality of the governor described by Saltykov-Shchedrin who for a long time contemplated a bill on "the non-confinement of governors to laws."

Perestroika is mounting a solid democratic barrier to such all-permissiveness and itching to command, and compelling all agencies and all officials to verify their actions by the law. Many are not accustomed to this. But they will have to get used to it. We must firmly pursue the line of reinforcing the legal levers of perestroika, first of all prevent the Law on the State Enterprise and the other legal instruments for economic reform from being diluted with all manner of departmental instructions and directives.

The policy of promoting democratization in society presupposes consistently strengthening socialist legality. The power of the people is a complete and undivided triumph of laws expressing their will. This is why I would like to express strong support for the idea voiced at this Plenary Meeting of organizing universal primary legal education as a single, comprehensive, nationwide programme covering all sections of the population, all our personnel at central and local levels.

In short, comrades, we are apparently not yet fully aware ourselves of how far-reaching the impli-

cations of the democratization processes are and of the novelty of the approaches to issues related to the activities of the Party and the state, to the work of our personnel, and to the life and labour of all people of our country. A non-recognition or an underestimation of the need to democratize socialist society decisively means nothing other than a lack of faith in the people and in their commitment to socialism.

Revolutionary changes inevitably make a deep imprint on the issues of culture and the intellectual life of society.

It was gratifying to hear comrades yesterday and today debating this issue widely and in a concerned manner. A concern for raising the general cultural standards of the people has been voiced forcefully at this Plenary Meeting. The speakers expressed it when mentioning the allocation of class time among different school subjects, when stressing the need to improve the quality of secondary and higher education, and when talking about the requirements of modern technological progress. They voiced it also when speaking about the role to be assumed now by literature, the arts and all artistic pursuits in general, when taking up the issue of culture in everyday life, and, finally, when discussing the tasks of Party work. Such an approach is quite legitimate since an honest, fearless contact with people and readiness to discuss and solve any problems together with them are signs of a high cultural standard of an official of any rank. The speakers at the Plenary Meeting said that without culture there can be no democracy. This is indeed so.

It is especially significant that the comrades associated the problem of culture with inter-ethnic

relations and with the need to educate the younger generation in a spirit of internationalism.

It was clearly realized already on the eve of and in prevision of the Great October Revolution, that without culture, and outside of culture, there could be no socialism. The implementation of Lenin's cultural revolution programme has enabled our society to make unprecedented cultural progress and has become one of the latter's more important prerequisites.

Now that we are grappling with the problems of perestroika, renewal in socialist society and broad democratization, cultural issues are in many ways taking on a new light. Their novelty stems from our present attention to man, to his real image, potential and needs, for it is not by bread alone, not even by modern material benefits, that man lives. It is rather by truth and conscience, justice and freedom, morality and humanism that man lives today. The questions of culture are being posed in a new manner by the present phase in the development of socialism as well. It is clear today that its renovation is restoring the appeal of socialist values all over the world and clearing them of the destructive consequences of stagnation, smug complacency and spiritual immobility. They are being posed in a new way also by the contemporary world—a world of contacts, interaction and exchanges in the fields of science, culture and information of unheard-of intensity, a world of day-to-day and sharp confrontation and rivalry, but also one of mutual enrichment with progressive general human values.

The old truth has it that it is only on well-cultivated soil that a new cultural layer will emerge.

Marxism itself originated on the highroad of world culture. Bolshevism has absorbed the advanced humanist traditions of the great culture of Russia. The richness and humanism of the "old" culture—and we know how highly it was valued by Vladimir Lenin—are among the greatest assets of world civilization. It was on it that the leaders of our revolution were raised. And we should now build up and extend the cultural layer of perestroika boldly and energetically, taking advantage of and developing all the cultural wealth created by our predecessors.

In other words, Lenin's call to enrich oneself with "a knowledge... of all the treasures created by mankind" remains as topical today as ever. This reflects the real dialectics of class and general human elements under the current specific conditions.

One of the chief lessons that we should learn from the past is as follows: since we resolutely discard methods of injunction in managing economic matters, such methods are also totally unacceptable as far as cultural progress of society is concerned. The key principles of Party work in the field of culture, in the intellectual sphere of perestroika are democracy, trust in people, tolerance of the unusual and of searching, competence, benevolence, encouragement of initiative and innovation, and support for talent.

The Party has firmly embarked upon a course for a concerned, competent and far-sighted attitude to the processes under way in the intellectual sphere of our society which facilitate its purification and enrichment, growth of its moral strength and creative potential.

The idea is not to let matters drift or tolerate developments in this sphere that are incompatible

with our ideology and morality. We cannot pose the question in this way. The interests of the people and the interests of socialism are the reference points of perestroika, including the intellectual sphere.

It is necessary to handle the tasks of restructuring in such a way as to fully stimulate people's initiative and independence, to overcome their passiveness, civic dullness, apathy and inability to think independently—the direct results of a bureaucratic style of management. One should see that forces of deceleration exist in the intellectual sphere, too. They may be even stronger here than anywhere else.

Indeed, for some it is easier and more natural to live by inertia. There are also those whose expectations are excessively high, who would like to effect changes at a single stroke. There can be no miracles, however. Our tasks are great and involved. Perestroika means work, work and again work—persistent, bold and daily. To realize this, to feel responsibility for the success of perestroika means to make a step forward in intellectual development too. Soviet people, Soviet intellectuals understand this, confirming their response to and support of the Party's goals by deeds.

We appreciate the intelligentsia's contribution to perestroika, to accelerating scientific and technological progress, to the ideological theoretical assessment of our times, to the development of the nation's social awareness, to the reflection in art of the entire wealth of ideas, feelings, aspirations and thoughts of the Soviet people. I'm sure that we will read, watch and hear works worthy of our eventful time.

The unique feature of our culture is that it is multi-ethnic. We often and habitually speak about it,

but it seems we have not as yet fully learnt to appreciate it. The peoples in the USSR are tied by a community of historic destiny. It forms the basis of our brotherhood and kinship which have stood the most arduous trials. The source of our strength lies in the free development of national cultures enriched by the intellectual experience of fraternal peoples and all of mankind.

True internationalism and true friendship of the peoples are only possible if there is a profound respect for the dignity, honour, culture, language and history of each people, with extensive relations among them. We ought to facilitate in every way the further broadening of contacts between national cultures, their mutual enrichment, their development and flourishing.

Soviet patriotism is our greatest asset. Any manifestation of nationalism or chauvinism is incompatible with it. Nationalism in any form is blind. Attempts at self-isolation lead down a spiritual blind-alley. The knowledge and understanding of the scope, grandeur and human aspect of the socialist revolution, the struggle of the Party and the people for socialism, full of truth and heroic spirit, and the defence of the socialist homeland feed the roots of Soviet patriotism. Here we approach a very important issue—unification through revolution and Soviet power of the national dignity and national heritage of every people with the internationalism of socialist society.

In short, we should set about thoroughly tackling the nationalities policy at the present stage—in all areas, including theory and practice. This is the most fundamental, vital issue of our society. I think that a

Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee should examine questions of the nationalities policy.

I would like to join those comrades who, addressing this Plenary Meeting, spoke about the inadmissibility of flirtation in matters of culture and ideology. In the intellectual sphere as well, and maybe primarily in this sphere, we should be guided in our actions by our Marxist-Leninist principles. Under no circumstances should we, comrades, forego our principles. As Lenin put it, the most correct policy is a principled policy.

Comrades, the radical economic reform has set us many new problems, including ideological ones, that require study and solution. Today we can say that the economic reform is gaining broad scope encompassing virtually all spheres of the national economy. The mastering of the new methods of planning, self-financing, self-management and remuneration of work has started on a mass scale. The organizational structures of management are being readjusted as well. The novelty of the situation in the economy consists also in the growing scope of cooperation and self-employment in various branches. In fact, the socialist economy's cooperative sector is developing on a new basis.

All this introduces substantial changes also in the principles of management and economic activity, in the organization of the entire system of economic relations. Now one can no longer depend on the state's "charity". One must rely first of all on one's own resources, on the search for more effective economic decisions, on an extensive introduction of the achievements of scientific and technological progress, on the high qualifications and competence of

personnel and the initiative of working people. We are witnessing, comrades, a changing attitude of people to their work. They are growing aware of the cost of labour and material resources and are coming to realize that high end results cannot be achieved without a thrifty and effective utilization of these resources. People are beginning to understand that they will not be able to cope with the new tasks if they retain their old approaches, their old attitude to their duties.

True, we are only just beginning to introduce cost-accounting and its system will be perfected. Lying ahead are the transition to wholesale trade in the means of production, the development of direct ties and cooperation and the pricing reform. We will have to go through all this, adopt these novelties and consolidate them. The introduction of cost-accounting, even in its present form, has generated a number of problems. Cost-accounting is encountering barriers and bringing to light various aspects of the deceleration mechanism which has not yet been fully dismantled.

It seems that we have clarified the main questions of the reform. We have worked out, discussed on a nationwide scale and adopted the Law on the State Enterprise. Now it is time to work without allowing the slightest retreat from what is recorded in the law. But so far we see in practice that both centrally and at the local level people often act in the old manner and try to drag the economy along by the old methods.

The centre is still tenaciously clinging to gross output indicators; injunction methods are used when dealing with state orders, and attempts are made to

turn methods of management based on economic incentives into veiled forms of lording it over. There are instances when assignments are issued in violation of the Law on the State Enterprise, without regard for the opinion of work collectives and without proper linkage with available resources and production capacities.

The unpreparedness of many for work in conditions of cost-accounting has been revealed at the level of enterprises. Vast opportunities and extensive rights are still being used insufficiently. Many managers have adopted a wait-and-see attitude. They are counting on something and are not in a hurry to adopt the new methods of management. The adherence to the old methods is so strong that even when there is a chance to make a bigger profit by increasing the output of products that are in demand, this is not done because preference is given to an easy life rather than a bigger income. It may be explained by the fact that in a number of instances economic rates are inadequate. But the main explanation lies in the existing psychology, in overcautiousness, and sometimes incompetence.

Of course, comrades, to a certain extent one can understand all this. After all, the actual process of enterprises switching over to cost-accounting has only just begun. This can be understood, but apparently a timely warning should be made that if we do not overcome such attitudes, if we do not change radically the attitude to the new methods of management, we will not achieve what we want.

Numerous problems have been generated also by the development of the cooperative movement, self-employment, and the system of collective, family and

other contracts. Since not everything is proceeding smoothly in this great endeavour and there are instances of abuse, doubts are being expressed here and there about the expediency of such forms of economic activity. There is evidence of attempts to artificially restrain this important socio-economic process.

What can be said about this? We must accumulate experience in a calm and businesslike manner while eradicating self-seeking attitudes and relying first of all on economic methods, methods of taxation, and finally, on openness. There is one principle here, the socialist one—cooperative and personal incomes should be earned and, as everywhere else, determined by the quantity and quality of work done.

Changes for the better are taking place also in the organizational structures of management. They are quite timely and necessary because they are aimed at eliminating the consequences of the injunction methods of managing the economy. But here, too, the old approaches are not surrendering without a fight on either the regional, republican and nationwide levels.

All this, comrades, is giving rise to a far from simple situation, fanning up passions and clashes of views and, frankly speaking, creating a certain strain both in production matters and in the ideological sphere. Some fully accept the ongoing changes and confidently advance along the road of new methods of management, reliance on the initiative and enterprise of people, and make their creative contribution to the reform. Others seem reluctant to remain on the sidelines of the common advance but reduce what they do—I am searching for words to put it more nicely—to imitation of activity, limit themselves to half-measures and this cannot be justi-

fied. One should also admit that there are people who are in essence against the reform, who sabotage the introduction of economic methods of management and try to discredit them in every way, using references to objective causes or even the opinion of working people as a cover.

What can be said in regard to this? The implementation of the radical economic reform is our paramount political task. The country's ascent to the heights of social and economic progress depends on its success. There simply cannot be any retreat here. Besides, there is nowhere to retreat to. We all must act vigorously and with a sense of purpose. We cannot allow ourselves to get stuck halfway or somewhere at the beginning of our path. We must advance. This means that we should assess the positions of all departments, Party workers, state officials and economic managers and also the positions of work collectives.

I would like to pose this question in a broader way. The economic reform is an inalienable part of transforming and renewing socialism as a social system, and of imparting more modern and dynamic forms to it. It should create the necessary preconditions and powerful stimuli for scientific and technological progress, for combining the potential of a planned economy with the personal interests, initiative and enterprise of people, and give public property, methods of management and administration such forms as would make people really feel that they are the true masters of production.

Scientific analysis and practical experience have given us the firm conviction that all these tasks in their organic interconnection and unity can be suc-

cessfully accomplished by placing the operation of enterprises on the principles of cost-accounting, self-repayment, self-financing and self-management. This is the way of harmonizing the interests of society, the collective and the individual which guarantees the satisfaction of public needs and at the same time ensures the interest of the working people themselves in the end results of production. This is the way of uprooting the practice of levelling and sponging which have inflicted so much damage on us. This is the way of the most rapid solution of social problems, something that directly concerns both the individual and whole collectives, strengthens discipline and raises efficiency. This is a real economic foundation for promoting democracy and enlisting the participation of working people in management, for overcoming the alienation of people from the economic process and its results.

The question of social justice has acquired still greater acuteness during the extensive implementation of the economic reform. The problem, it would seem, is clear enough—it is essential to advance consistently along the road of strict observance of socialism's main principle, "From each according to his abilities, to each according to his work". All this is so. But in practice and, there can be no denying it, in our perceptions too, we still have a long way to go to rid ourselves of the levelling out psychology.

It is no secret that even now many people get their pay only for reporting to work and hold positions regardless of their actual labour contribution. And the most surprising thing is that this hardly worries anyone. But no sooner had people in pay-your-own-way collectives got pay rises for achieving better end

results than protests and irritated voices could be heard, complaining that those people were allegedly earning too much.

Under socialism, however, the question can only be whether the wages have been earned or not, rather than whether they are high or low. It is another matter that the way of judging the amount and quality of work should be based on scientifically grounded, tried and tested yardsticks.

In general, comrades, we should get down in earnest to eradicating levelling tendencies. This is a highly important social, economic and ideological issue. To all intents and purposes, levelling has a ruinous impact not only on the economy, but also on people's morality and on their entire way of thinking and acting. It detracts from the prestige of conscientious and creative work, spoils discipline, smothers the interest to upgrade skills, and undermines competition at work. We should say bluntly that levelling is a reflection of petty bourgeois views which have nothing to do with Marxism-Leninism or with scientific socialism. And we shall not make progress or be able to cope with the tasks of perestroika, if we don't knock the levelling attitudes out wherever they still persist.

Yes, socialism is a society of social guarantees which does not leave a person to deal with the difficulties of life and adversities all on his own. The social protection of the Soviet people rests on the abolition of private ownership and exploitation and on the power of the working people. The principle of social protection has been written into our laws and confirmed by experience over many years. The most important social guarantees created in the country

include the right to housing, full employment, free education and medical services.

Even with all the drawbacks and flaws, the fundamental significance of these gains is indubitable. But the extent of social protection in society depends on the amount of national wealth which, for its part, depends on how correctly and consistently socialism's principle, "From each according to his abilities, to each according to his work" is applied. In keeping with this principle, the individual's well-being, including his living conditions, directly depends on how he uses his aptitudes and talents and contributes to the common effort. This is the basis of socialism's vitality and it depends precisely on the talent and concrete contribution made by every worker to the country's public wealth. At the same time, we must resolutely cut short any money-grabbing inclinations wherever they manifest themselves. It is only honest and conscientious work within the framework of our laws and existing standards that can be highly rewarded materially and get public acclaim.

Comrades, we have big plans for economic development. They are known to you. But while devoting all our energies to unfolding that work on a large scale, we must bear in mind the people's everyday needs and requirements.

It will be recalled that we started perestroika under the pressure of urgent, vital problems. More than once I've had to return to the appraisal of the situation which had developed in our country by the early eighties. I would like to add some considerations. As you know, the economic growth rates were declining in our country and hit a critical point. But

even those rates, as has become clear now, were achieved to a great extent on an unhealthy basis and due to time-serving factors. I am referring to trade in oil on the world market at the high prices which were established then, and the totally unjustified increase in the sale of strong drinks. If we look at the economic indicators of growth omitting these factors, we will see that practically over four five-year plan periods there was no increase in the absolute increment of the national income, and it even began declining in the early eighties. This is a fact, comrades. Only now is economic growth beginning on a healthy basis.

We still greatly feel the consequences of the situation, which shaped in the past. Now that the world market has changed and the prices of fuel and energy resources have dropped, that we are forced to reduce the production and sale of wines and vodka in the name of preserving the population's social health, the country's economy is confronted with a most serious financial problem. Over the past three years the revenues of the state dropped by more than 37,000 million roubles as a result of reduced sales of strong drinks. On top of that, in 1987, revenues from the sale of imported goods, whose purchase we were forced to limit because of a shortage of foreign currency, declined by 9,000 million roubles compared to 1985.

The existing situation demands from us immense and, I would say, extraordinary efforts in two directions simultaneously: in implementing radical economic reform, and in improving the current economic situation and meeting the vital needs of our population.

At the June Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee, as you remember, we singled out as top priorities the food, housing, and consumer goods and services problems. How are our decisions backed by practical deeds in the country, republics, territories and regions? The Party and the people should know this, comrades.

Firstly, the food situation. Gross grain output increased by 17 per cent in the two years of the 12th five-year plan period. Meat production increased over the average annual figures of the 11th five-year plan period by 2.1 million tons, or 13 per cent; milk by 8.2 million tons, or nine per cent; and eggs by seven billion, or 9.4 per cent. There is growth, as you can see. It has resulted in some improvement in food supplies. And this took place despite cuts in the import of these products due to reduced currency receipts. Nonetheless, the situation with food resources does not satisfy us, and we should persistently build them up. There are great reserves here, but they are used in different ways.

On the one hand, a number of republics and regions have noticeably increased agricultural output in recent years. Agriculture in the Oryol Region, for instance, was seriously lagging behind in its development not long ago. Changes for the better have been taking place lately. The region's farms paid much attention to using effective forms of labour organization and remuneration. Practically, all plant-breeding is done under various forms of contract—collective, family or individual, and lease contracts. Transition to contract principles of work is nearing completion in livestock farming as well. More attention than before has been given to the social develop-

ment of the countryside. Last year the region's backward farms built on average 50-100 flats and added 40 places at schools and 43 places at child-care centres.

All that improved the situation with personnel in the countryside and created conditions for enhancing the productivity of farming and livestock breeding. As a result, gross agricultural output in 1986 and 1987 grew by 18 per cent and labour productivity by 27 per cent as compared with average annual levels in the previous five-year plan period. Thanks to above-plan production, meat sales to the local population in the past two years increased by 33 per cent and dairy sales by 17 per cent. The people thus felt real benefits from perestroika.

Regrettably, it is not everywhere that work is organized in this way. In Armenia and the Novosibirsk, Voronezh, Yaroslavl, Kirovograd, Kostroma and Rostov Regions productivity and efficiency in crop and livestock farming remain low. Because of shortfalls in dairy farming there, they didn't even meet the planned targets for milk supplies to the local population. The same has happened with meat supplies in Azerbaijan, Georgia, Uzbekistan, the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Republic, and the Odessa and Chardzhou Regions.

For the situation to change, it is essential to decisively overcome parasitic attitudes and the striving of many local officials to solve food supply problems by sending more and more requests to central authorities. What is most important here? It is time to stop issuing injunctions and commands to collective and state farms. It is important to encourage the initiative and enterprise of workers in the

agrarian sector, to make the most of all effective forms of the organization and remuneration of work: collective, lease and family contracts within collective and state farms, and also new approaches within the framework of district agro-industrial amalgamations.

Now, a few words about housing construction and some questions of developing the social sphere. As you know, measures have been adopted and are being implemented to ensure an accelerated solution of the problems we are facing here. The first results of this work are as follows: with all the available sources of financing, about 130 million square metres of housing were built in 1987, or almost 2.5 million square metres of floor space more than planned and 10 million square metres more than in 1986. This is more than in any previous year. During the past year alone the construction of general schools went up by 18 per cent, child-care centres by 7 per cent, vocational schools by 61 per cent, outpatient clinics by 17 per cent, and clubs and community centres by 36 per cent.

I have already had occasion to speak about the search for and discovery of new ideas in housing construction in Kazakhstan. Construction workers in Kazakhstan worked well last year and had fulfilled their programme for the year by the 70th anniversary of the Great October Revolution. As a result, 20 per cent of the families on the waiting list moved into new flats. Such successes make possible a new objective—providing better housing by the year 1991 for all the working people of the republic who were on the waiting lists before the beginning of 1987.

Diverse work of developing the social sphere is under way in Estonia. It fulfils plans steadily from

year to year and has the country's highest figure of housing per capita of the population. This is largely due to the effective use of the money saved by the people. Another important objective, that of providing each farm with a school, a child-care centre, a club and a canteen, all well-built and modern, is being accomplished on a planned basis. We would like to stress particularly that the successes of the Estonian builders are based on the priority development of the republic's own material and technical base.

As you remember, the leaders of many republics and regions were criticized at the June Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee for the lag in housing construction. Such lags exist to this day. The construction of housing and social facilities is proceeding at a slow pace in Tajikistan and in a number of regions of the Russian Federation, especially in the Gorky, Novosibirsk, Penza, Ryazan and Chita Regions and in Daghestan.

What is happening? What are the main causes of the lag? Bearing in mind that the initial conditions were practically the same everywhere, the answer to that question is to be found primarily in relapses of the old disease of discrepancy between word and deed. Programmes that are quite good are being drawn up everywhere, but far from everywhere is their implementation backed up with the necessary organizational and managerial effort.

The other day the Political Bureau of the Central Committee examined and approved the decision of the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers on the development of individual housing construction in the cities and the countryside. The

measures outlined eliminate the unjustified restrictions and create favourable conditions for crediting and building such houses. All that will be very helpful in the implementation of our social programmes. The local bodies should devote proper attention to the individuals building houses for themselves and give them the necessary assistance.

In general, comrades, as you see, various measures are being taken and it is necessary to implement them most actively to solve the housing problem more speedily and create better living conditions for the Soviet people. Comrades, let us be uncompromizing in our evaluation: failure to fulfil plans for housing and socio-cultural construction is unforgivable and cannot be justified. Facts concerning failure to fulfil assignments should be made public everywhere and those guilty of frustrating an important social programme should bear responsibility before the working people.

The situation with consumer goods and services to the population is cause for serious concern. The measures taken to accelerate the production of consumer goods are yielding some results. The output of manufactured goods for the population increased over the past two years by 16.5 billion roubles, or by 9.4 per cent, including in the light industry by 3.3 billion roubles, or 4 per cent. Yet the situation on the consumer market remains tense and the population's effective demand is not being met. Last year industry manufactured 3.6 billion roubles less commodities for the population than stipulated by the plan. All-Union ministries account for a considerable part of this shortfall, especially the latest high-tech articles that are in particular demand. In practical terms there

have been no tangible changes for the better in the quality of consumer goods. The material and technical facilities for expanding services to the population are being built up particularly slowly.

While not relieving sectoral ministries of responsibility, the radical restructuring of national economic management shifts the centre of gravity of practical work mainly to the republics, territories and regions. They must satisfy the people's requirements for goods and services, and ensure that the population's cash incomes and expenditure are balanced. Attempts under any pretext to dodge participation in solving these vitally important problems should be scathingly criticized.

Evidently we should also consider the following question: How good is our economic mechanism for stimulating work collectives and industries to increase the output of consumer goods? Especially as attempts to solve the problem of the quantity and quality of goods and services solely by administrative methods have not been very effective to date. We should not fear to admit our mistakes here. On the contrary, the sooner they are identified and corrected, the sooner things will improve. Only one demand must remain unchanged: problems should be solved quickly, without procrastination.

Some may ask on hearing this part of the speech: What does it have to do with the ideological aspects of perestroika? I think that the relationship here is direct. The way these problems are handled will largely determine the moods and mentality of our people, their feelings, attitude to work, to the Party's policy and to perestroika.

Comrades, our economic reform, the development of the democratization processes and glasnost, renovation of the moral and spiritual sphere, i.e., everything that we associate with the notion of revolutionary restructuring are links in one and the same chain. They are closely interrelated and interdependent. They demand that, having started restructuring in one of them, we follow on with it in another.

It is therefore quite natural and, I would say, logical that the need has arisen to overhaul our political system. This does not mean, of course, replacing the existing system. It is rather introducing qualitatively new structures and elements, and imparting to this system the new content and dynamism which would assure successful development of our society. These issues are already being widely and actively discussed in the country. And this is only natural. Perestroika is moving deeper. It must cover all spheres, including such a key sphere as society's political system.

As I have already said, we should look thoroughly into these issues well before the 19th Party Conference. The main task in developing our political system is to create a mechanism of government and administration with well-regulated effective democratic control and legal procedures which would drastically diminish and even reduce to naught the element of chance in handling major political, state issues and preclude the possibility of subjectivism at all levels of our political system. Decisions on important matters of principle must be worked out and adopted with the people's active participation. This will correspond to our socialist democracy.

Priority should be given to significantly enhancing the role of the Soviets as the core of the political system of our society and its embodiment in state bodies. The democratic principles of socialism must be primarily realized in the way the Soviets are formed and function. In a sense, we are talking today about the need to revive the power of the Soviets as Lenin saw it. The Soviets of all levels should be turned into really working, initiative and full-fledged centres of state authority and administration.

This will evidently make it necessary to take a better look at how the Soviets are formed. This means improving our electoral system so that the process of forming the bodies of power provides for the people's active participation and for a careful selection of persons capable of orientating the Soviets' activities towards the goals of perestroika. The Soviets should take into account the entire diversity of our country, including national specifics. And, of course, we should not bypass the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. We have to rethink its role so as to increase the effectiveness of its activities, starting with the Presidium and sessions and ending with the work of the commissions and deputies.

The key issue of the reform of the political system concerns delimiting the functions of Party and state bodies. Lenin's ideas should be used as the guidelines there as well. The Party's guiding and leading role is an indispensable condition for the functioning and development of socialist society. The Party theoretically formulates and adjusts the nation's political course. It takes the policy it formulates to the masses, organizing and rallying them to accomplish the tasks

set and pursues the respective personnel policy. These are, basically, the Party's principal functions as the political vanguard of society. Today, with restructuring and democratization, Lenin's teaching about the Party and its activities under socialism should be revived in full. We should come to the All-Union Party Conference with well-thought-out, collectively-elaborated proposals on these issues.

The political system being created cannot be imagined without a developed system of public organizations and without the fundamentally changed content and methods of work. It should be based on the recognition of the fact that each public organization represents definite social strata, each with its own identities and interests. And the aim is not to level them but, on the contrary, to bring them out as fully as possible, take them into consideration and place them at the service of social progress. The main task of public organizations is to promote socio-political activity, satisfy diverse interests and develop in citizens skills of public self-administration.

I believe we must set the goal of overcoming the sway of salaried functionaries, organizational zeal and red tape in public organizations by handing over some of the powers of central bodies to those of the grassroot level. The latter should be freed of any necessity to have every step they take okayed by higher bodies.

There is a need to develop the system of social structures and to set up a number of public formations uniting people by their various social, professional and other interests. It would probably be good if we expanded the range of questions which state

bodies can resolve only with the participation of public organizations.

Socialist democracy means a diversity of forms of social and political life based, naturally, on our socialist principles and values. And this concept should underlie the decisions which, we believe, the Party Conference must formulate.

This applies also to national relations and the development of national statehood. Today we speak about the growth of national awareness of all the nations and ethnic groups of our country, and about manifestations of national feelings (sometimes in a deformed way). All these are topical questions and they have to be solved. We will also have to think about ways to further develop ties between republics, consolidate their rights, including their representation in the central state bodies.

As you see, numerous problems have accumulated, and half-measures will not do. Evidently, for the forthcoming Party Conference we have to prepare detailed proposals on improving the political system, which would be based on the ideas of the 27th Party Congress and Plenary Meetings of the Central Committee on socialist self-government by the people and take into account the processes of democratization under way in society.

Now, comrades, I will touch upon some international aspects of the ideology of perestroika.

Having lived through the experience and lessons of the past and having passed them through our minds and souls, we have set ourselves the task of understanding, studying, and sorting out things as regards the society in which we live. Exactly in the same way we have posed the question on the inter-

national plane: we must understand, study and sort out things as regards the world in which our country lives. As a result of an objective analysis, we realized the need for perestroika and a new mode of political thinking. Thus a breakthrough was made in the scientific cognition of present-day realities which was transformed into an innovatory and dynamic policy.

Even before the Party Congress, we proclaimed in the Statement of January 15, 1986 a programme for advancement to a world without nuclear weapons as an indispensable condition for humanity's survival. The 27th Congress of the CPSU has given a detailed interpretation of the philosophy of peaceful coexistence at the turn of the century and substantiated the concept of a comprehensive system of peace and international security. Our initiatives in the field of disarmament and other concrete actions in the international arena are now no longer an improvisation, not just a reaction to various political moves and actions by the West, as was sometimes the case in the past. They have been placed on a solid and lasting scientific basis.

Thus the road was paved to Geneva, then to Reykjavik and at last to Washington where the first treaty on cutting nuclear weapons—the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles—was signed with the United States at the summit level. In evaluating its significance, I believe we all agree that it proves in practice the correctness of the policy which was initiated at the April Plenary Meeting of 1985 and was theoretically and politically substantiated at the 27th Congress. We say that the Treaty signed in Washington is the

start of real disarmament. We wish it to be so and we will work to follow it up.

But this is also the result of the efforts made by the socialist countries, other progressive and peaceable states, mass public movements, the United Nations Organization and the non-aligned movement to avert the nuclear threat. This is also the result of the activity of prominent scientists, workers in culture, and churchmen, as well as their unification and mutual understanding. This is also a consequence of the sensible and active position taken by many politicians, representatives of the business community and military circles.

The Treaty is a specific indicator of the level which the peace potential has reached. It is also evidence that the new way of thinking has not only captured the minds, but has already begun influencing world politics. The drafting of the Treaty is also instructive as regards the experience gained. The fruitfulness of equal, though difficult and tense talks, in which mutual interests and concerns are scrupulously taken into account has been proved.

The signing of the Treaty is, however, no cause for complacency. It can be said to have opened a new stage in the struggle for disarmament and peace, including the ideological struggle. Yet, very soon, after a few days of euphoria, the opponents of normalizing relations with the USSR started "sounding the rallying calls" and mobilizing their forces for the struggle against the ratification of the Treaty. The US Administration keeps its word and upholds the Treaty. Yet, it simultaneously echoes the ultrarightists in their anti-Soviet, anti-communist rhetoric. And not only in words, but also through certain

actions in the militaristic style under the same old pretext of a "growing Soviet threat". We have been confronted again with provocations on our borders. The atmosphere that prevailed during the visit to the USA clearly goes against the grain of some people.

Militaristic activities in the European part of NATO have been noticeably stepped up. There is a hurry to arrange "compensation" for the missiles to be eliminated under the Treaty. It is planned to modernize and build up "other" types of nuclear weapons, especially at sea and in the air, under the cynical plea that the latter are not covered by the Treaty. We have again heard a flat "No" from London, Paris and the NATO headquarters in Brussels to the renunciation of nuclear weapons, even though in the distant future. The statements approving the Treaty and the Soviet-American talks on a reduction in strategic weapons are accompanied with statements that France and Britain by no means intend to end the build-up of nuclear weapons. Quite the other way around. Since the signing of the Treaty, the NATO states have been demonstrating their increased activity in the field of bilateral and multilateral military integration.

Positive statements made by high-ranking figures about our perestroika again alternate with talk about "communist expansion" and warnings that one should not forget "who one is dealing with", and that, since the present Soviet leadership is not going to change its system, its "diplomacy of smiles" arouses suspicion. They continue to harp on the senselessness of any talks with the USSR, since, they claim, it cannot be trusted. Consolidation of reactionary, extremely anti-Soviet forces is under way.

All sorts of "analysts" and kremlinologists make frightening recommendations to their governments, confuse the public and intimidate it with "catastrophic consequences" for the West if the disarmament process is carried on.

Attempts have been stepped up to bring the ideological struggle over the questions of perestroika and disarmament into our territory, into our midst. "Radio voices" are spreading provocative inventions about a sharpening struggle within Soviet society and the Soviet leadership. They say that an "opposition" to perestroika and the CPSU's foreign policy has already emerged and is growing. They wish to sow uncertainty and disbelief in the possibility of attaining the goals set by the Party. These centres of anti-socialist provocation are engaged in such activities not only vis-à-vis the Soviet Union—we see this very well. They are hastily developing new methods of subversive activities against the other socialist countries, where dynamic processes of further advancing socialism are also under way. They are trying to find specific methods for each of them to be able to act, one might say, with due regard for the national specific features.

We know why they are worried. It's not only because disarmament is a threat to the profits of the military-industrial complex and those who live well by it, but also because they are afraid of a revival of the attractive force of the socialist ideas and a growth in the prestige of socialism as a community of the working people. They are scared because good feelings for our country are again growing and a fresh "discovery" of the Soviet Union is taking place.

All that undermines the "enemy image" and hence the ideological foundations of anti-Soviet and imperialist policy. What served the reactionaries so well in the past decades is now falling to pieces. Hence, the "rightists" are unhappy about the USSR's policy of initiative and peace. That is why they wish to stop the disarmament train, which is picking up speed. We should see that and take appropriate measures in our ideological and propaganda work.

Comrades, since the preceding Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee, another significant international event, along with the INF Treaty, has been the advance towards a settlement of the Afghan problem. It has long had a direct and deep impact on the feelings of Soviet people and our entire society.

After the April 1985 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, the Politbureau made an exacting, objective analysis of the situation and already then started looking for a way out. Yet, it has proved to be no simple matter to practically resolve all the problems, to untie all the main knots of that most involved regional conflict. It became possible after truly national forces with Najibullah at their head appeared on the political scene in Afghanistan late in 1986. External prerequisites have also formed for settling the conflict in a way making it possible for Afghanistan to be an independent, neutral and non-aligned state. This is consonant with the interests of the Afghan people and our state interests as well.

You are aware of the statement which was issued ten days ago. It explains how we intend to act and what we hope for. It has been met with understanding and approval by our people, our allies and friends, and by the world public at large. It faces with

new realities those who intend to further exploit the Afghan problem to their selfish ends. And they will have to reckon with those realities. The months to come will show the true stand of all the participants in the political settlement of the situation in Afghanistan.

Certainly, comrades, our participation in the Afghan conflict is a very difficult problem involving many aspects of what we are overcoming in the process of restructuring and consistent transformation of the new mode of thinking into a practical policy. But, the main thing now is that the Politbureau acts on the issue too in strict conformity with the fundamental line of the 27th CPSU Congress.

It must be said in general that the scientific treatment of problems pertaining to new thinking and their ideological substantiation are also at the initial stage. And in the atmosphere of increasing openness the amount of work to be done will not diminish. It is a natural desire of Soviet people to want to look into everything for themselves, to have a better understanding of current developments, and especially to participate with competence in the nationwide campaign against the threat of war, and in international relations.

That is precisely why all the necessary conditions are being created to raise the informativeness and intellectual level of foreign-policy propaganda, and improve the analysis of international issues. This is a very important part of our ideological activity. Just as with regard to our ideas and changes on the domestic scene, there is confusion in the minds of some people with regard to the essence of new

thinking. This is not surprising: the problems are too significant and they will mount, and fight has already begun over them.

We are witnessing and taking part in an unprecedented development, a kind of paradox created by the great dialectics of world history. The growing internationalization of many world processes is being accompanied by the multiplication of the number of options for the national and regional development of countries and peoples. Both contribute to the consolidation of the world's integrity. Such things have yet to be seriously studied in theory and translated into policy. This is a task, both theoretical and practical, that has many offshoots.

We countered the militarist doctrine on which power politics are based with the concept of the "balance of interests" and reciprocal equal security. Our state interests do not contradict the interests of nations and working people in any other society. If peace is not preserved there can be no progress at all, and it is senseless to speak about anyone's interests outside the context of accomplishing this task. The struggle to preclude war from international politics is a struggle to save millions of lives, above all, those of working people who are the first and hardest hit by any war. Normal business relations with states of the opposing system are, among other things, a blow to anti-Sovietism and anti-Communism, thus weakening the reactionaries' pressure on democratic gains and aspirations.

Wiping out militarism—the issue which we have pointedly raised and which we approach in a businesslike, realistic way—not only helps restrain the most reactionary forces, but also promises more

jobs everywhere. In addition to directly benefitting the working people, this will result in the expansion of the economically and socially active sector of the working people, which is the social base of democracy and progress.

The effort to build a new world economic order and overcome glaring crisis phenomena in the Third World ultimately means the creation of conditions worthy of man for millions of people on whole continents, and their involvement in making history. This is also a major factor in world progress, independent development and revolutionary change.

The complexity of world processes and unpredictability of "shifts and turns" in world politics, the scope and extraordinary nature of our peace offensive which has evoked an unprecedented international response, resistance of formidable forces which are objectively not interested in peaceful co-existence, and, finally, the need to be understood correctly—all this raises substantially not only our political, but also our theoretical responsibility. The vital theoretical issue now facing the Marxists and their opponents is the question of combining class and universal human principles in real world development and, consequently, in politics.

The Report on the 70th Anniversary of the October Revolution set down basic guidelines for this. A fundamental point has been raised: is it possible at the present stage, with the present level of interdependence and integrity in the world attained by the end of the 20th century, to influence the nature of imperialism so as to block the most dangerous of its manifestations? Criteria have taken shape for competition of various social systems and the poss-

ibility of their co-existence in forms that would preclude universal catastrophe. Our social science has become bolder in its endeavour to analyze the particular features and main signs in the new epoch.

Large sections of world public regard our perestroika as benefitting all mankind and view positively and even benevolently the reforms we have started and our foreign policy. Many openly and energetically support it. We have revived throughout the world hope for the future. This is a great moral asset. We ought to treasure that, and to justify the trust that we feel everywhere. This is one aspect of the matter which is directly associated with the human factor but with roots running into the objective processes of our time.

Another aspect is the essential changes experienced by monopoly capital and the society where it dominates. Besides, absolutely new factors have emerged that have acquired decisive significance for present-day world development: the threat of nuclear war, the unprecedented social and international consequences of the scientific and technological revolution, the universal ecological threat and a fundamentally new situation in the sphere of information and all types of communications. The exacerbation of global problems and the realization of the need for international cooperation in handling them work for the benefit of peace and disarmament. The consequences of the horrific experience of fascism and the Second World War have had a lasting psychological effect on the people of many countries.

All this changes the balance between the "party of war" and the "party of peace" within the framework of monopoly capitalism and its international-political

superstructure, between, in Lenin's words, the "gross bourgeois, aggressive-bourgeois, reactionary-bourgeois" and the "pacifist" camps of the class dominating in the West. In a word, the international conditions under which we have started a new major phase of our revolution differ substantially from those that existed during its previous stages.

New thinking means correct understanding of new realities subjected to analysis by the method of materialistic dialectics. It also means conclusions drawn from such an analysis and checked against revolutionary Leninist experience and the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism. I must also stress: new thinking rests on Lenin's theory of imperialism, on Lenin's study of imperialism's nature that will never be good. We have no illusions on this score, nor had we any.

The centrepiece of new thinking is a new role of universally shared values. Their significance was stressed by both Karl Marx and Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. And those were not just general considerations stemming from the humanist nature of their teachings. Emphasizing the significance of the processes of internationalization in the world, our great teachers revealed the objective basis of universally shared values, combining them dialectically with the socio-class ones. Now all this is becoming the cornerstone of practical policy. This demand on politics is determined by both the negative and the positive processes of our time: on the one hand, by the mounting of unprecedented dangers to the very existence of the human race and, on the other, by the growing role of the masses and the general democratic factor in domestic and world politics.

This also calls for fundamentally different international relations. What kind of relations? What principle should be the underlying and indispensable? We have named it. We have declared it for all to hear and keep repeating it to everyone—from the US President to our friends struggling for national independence and for socialism. This principle is one of recognizing that every people and every country should have freedom of social and political choice. There is not a shade of utopia or illusion about it. We are perfectly aware that it is not through diplomatic courtesies or propaganda that the West can be brought to recognize this principle.

There should, of course, be no underestimation whatsoever of the significance of our good will, the new style of our international activities, our desire of a frank and productive dialogue for the sake of achieving the minimum of confidence that is possible between representatives of the opposite social systems, our sincere renunciation of the ideologization of inter-state relations, and our readiness for a compromise on a parity basis, without damage to anybody's security, in short, all that distinguishes Soviet foreign policy at the time of restructuring.

The above-mentioned realities of the modern world which are reflected in the new mode of thinking serve as the main, increasingly persuasive "enlightener" on the need to recognize the right of the nations to live as they choose, without outside interference. Incidentally, we consider the new mode of thinking suitable not only for ourselves, but also for the world at large because it adequately reflects the world. These realities compel everyone without exception to reckon with them, because in the final

count the survival of humanity and the very existence of civilization are at stake.

The most important, and I would say historic mission of the forces of socialism, democracy and progress consists precisely in augmenting, consolidating and even creating new realities which would form an insurmountable barrier for the forces of aggression and intervention.

We in the Soviet Union are creating and consolidating these realities through our perestroika. I would like to repeat that all our foreign policy achievements and the very cause of peace are resting on the success of perestroika, on our work, comrades. It is important, however, that all our people also fully realize that successful perestroika is impossible without a foreign policy based on new thinking.

Comrades, it is in this dialectic interrelationship of internal and external political aspects that the ideological problems of perestroika appear before us at its new stage. Once again, but ten times as forcefully, they are calling our attention to a matter accentuated at the Central Committee's January Plenary Meeting a year ago—the personnel issue.

In our vibrant and dynamic organizational, political and ideological work, which is currently being vigorously restyled, there must be no place for individuals like one described by Saltykov-Shchedrin who used to say: "I don't understand the new ideas. I don't understand even why I should understand them." It's very bad if a contemporary of ours should think in the same vein. But it is still worse when this frame of mind is shared by a party member, especially a leading one. Let me stress again and again

that the example of democracy should be set by the Party and every Communist, whatever his post. Without this, the process of democratization won't succeed.

The Party has begun perestroika with itself, with its members. Since the January Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee the Party has achieved much in its work with the personnel. The main criterion guiding us has been the attitude to perestroika. The recently completed accounts by the elected bodies of all the Party organizations of their guidance of perestroika have shown that most Communists do not want to put up with inactivity, irresponsibility, inertia and indifference to perestroika, and that they do not tolerate phrase-mongers and windbags. The Communists at these meetings rated the work of more than 4,800 Party committees and Party bureaus unsatisfactory and replaced over 89,000 members of elected bodies. This is a natural result of the building in the Party of an atmosphere of greater responsibility for the progress of perestroika.

We should consistently advance along this path and this means tirelessly learning democracy, as demanded by the time of perestroika. Learning democracy is a difficult thing. But we have reliable guidelines and a reliable Leninist method to learn by.

It includes fearless development of criticism and self-criticism.

It includes a constant desire to be in the midst of the masses, and deal with the most burning problems of the time.

It includes considering the moods, needs and vital interests of the working people, of all sectors of society.

It includes, finally, the affirmation from day to day of the Leninist efficient style of work whose main feature is reliance on the masses.

And, certainly, democratization should permeate all Party life—through enhancing the role of the elected bodies and decisively raising the fighting spirit of the primary Party organizations.

We are obliged to remember that the guiding role of our Party is not something given by someone higher up once and for all. It has been won by several generations of Communists through their selfless struggle for socialism and the interests of working people. And now, daily and hourly, we should reaffirm and assert our right to be in the vanguard of the revolutionary renewal of society through our hard work for the sake of the people, for the sake of our homeland.

In conclusion, comrades, I would like to note that much has already been done if we compare our life today with what we had before perestroika nearly three years ago. But too little has been done if we compare it with what we expect from perestroika and what our society is capable of. Many tough problems are to be solved on the road to a qualitatively new state of Soviet society.

We are building up to the 19th All-Union Party Conference. We have to make a thorough analysis of the basic results of the past three years of living and working under the perestroika, especially the first months of the operation of the Law on the State Enterprise. We have to determine where our Party and society stand and where they are heading now that the processes of democratization and radical economic reform are under way. We have to make

specific decisions on how to update our political system and on the Party's role as the political vanguard at the new stage of the country's development. Thus, we shall give a fresh impetus to our revolutionary restructuring.

So, a lot of hard work lies ahead. The number of innovative ideas and proposals made in the Party and society of late is immense. The mass of concrete questions is great and keeps growing.

How shall we tackle them? We should work on them together, moving along the charted path step by step. We should maintain our quest creatively and daringly, in an efficient and responsible fashion, in a Leninist, Bolshevik manner.

Михаил Сергеевич Горбачев

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ИДЕОЛОГИЮ ОБНОВЛЕНИЯ

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