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U. CHERNENKO

**Safeguard
Peace
and Ensure
the People's
Well-being**

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K. U. CHERNENKO

General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee

Safeguard Peace and Ensure the People's Well-being

Speech at a meeting with voters
of the Kuibyshev constituency in Moscow
on March 2, 1984

Speech at the extraordinary plenary
meeting of the CPSU Central Committee
on February 13, 1984

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General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee

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the People's Well-being

Speech at a meeting with workers
of the Khabarovsk region
on March 2, 1984

Speech at the anniversary meeting
of the CPSU Central Committee
on February 12, 1984

Speech at a meeting with voters of the Kuibyshev constituency in Moscow

March 2, 1984

Dear comrades,

Allow me sincerely to thank all who have spoken here, and all the working people of the Kuibyshev district of Moscow who have nominated me a candidate for election as Deputy to the USSR Supreme Soviet. I regard this trust as support for the Leninist course of our Party and your endorsement of the activities of its Central Committee and the Political Bureau of the Central Committee. I assure you that I shall devote all my energies to justifying the high honour of being your Deputy.

Quite recently we suffered a grievous loss: Yuri Vladimirovich Andropov, an outstanding Party and state figure, passed away. He was a leader of the Leninist type. He did not tolerate routine and cliches, he knew how to overcome inertia, how to rouse people to make concerted efforts to consolidate the might of our homeland, to promote world peace. Under his leadership the Party Central Committee and its Political Bureau began to bring about important positive changes in the life of the country.

The collectively elaborated guidelines for the key directions of social development and everything that has been achieved in the recent period are weighty political capital. And we shall preserve and multiply it.

Comrades, the election campaign is drawing to a close. This year it has been marked by the great enthusiasm and businesslike nature of electors' meetings. It has been living testimony to the unshakable unity of the Party and the people. The CPSU attaches great significance to the elections to the Supreme Soviet. For they are in essence an account which Soviet government renders to the working people. They are also a form of control by the masses over

the work of those whom they have empowered to govern the socialist state.

It has always been a tradition of our Party to talk frankly and honestly with the masses. Precisely such an approach permeates the Address of the CPSU Central Committee, setting out the Party's election platform.

In their speeches at meetings with voters my comrades in the Political Bureau and the Secretariat of the Central Committee have spoken in detail about our domestic and foreign policy and our plans for the future. Permit me too to voice some thoughts on this matter.

You well know how much attention the Party is paying to economic questions. These took a very prominent place in the work and decisions of the 26th CPSU Congress. They were subjected to realistic analysis at the Central Committee plenary meetings in November 1982 and December 1983. The importance of several key problems of national economic development was also stressed at the February plenary meeting of the Central Committee.

What can be said in this regard about the period that has passed since the previous elections to the Supreme Soviet?

It has been a fruitful period by and large. The nation's productive forces have gained strength and undergone considerable renewal. Over a thousand industrial enterprises with modern equipment have come into operation. The reconstruction and modernisation of existing plants and factories have been carried out on a substantial scale. Although, let me say frankly, less has been done in this field than we would have liked. The fuel- and energy-producing capacities of the national economy have been expanded. Trunk gas pipelines of a total length of almost 40,000 kilometres have been laid—such a scale and pace of construction are unprecedented in world practice. We have succeeded in turning very many factories, towns and villages over to natural gas supply. The number of domestic consumers of gas has increased by 30 million.

These years have seen considerable achievements in many other fields as well. We have, for example, developed a unique nuclear reactor with a generating capacity of 1,500,000 kilowatts. The powerful nuclear icebreakers built in our country have written a new chapter in the history of Arctic exploration. Mineral prospecting by super-deep

boreholes has begun. Lasers have begun to be widely used in industry and medicine.

Quite a lot has been done to promote agriculture. The power-to-worker ratio here has risen by 30 per cent. Mineral fertiliser supplies to collective and state farms have increased by almost a third. Combined with the development of new forms of the organisation of work and economic management in the countryside, this is producing tangible results.

Judge for yourselves. Last year too the weather did not favour us and yet the grain harvest topped 190 million tons. Livestock productivity has also appreciably increased. All this again shows that even in difficult conditions, well-organised hard work bears fruit. The specific task now is to mobilise people, to get all the machinery and equipment ready and to ensure that field work is well organised. And no time must be lost—after all, spring sowing is just round the corner, as they say. Care must also be taken to ensure that the wintering of livestock is successfully concluded.

In the last five years complications in international affairs have forced us to divert sizable resources to meet needs related to strengthening our country's security. But even in these circumstances we have never even contemplated any cutting back of social programmes. For the ultimate aim of all our work is to improve the life of Soviet people. And we take a broad view of this. We want people not only to be better provided for materially but also to be physically fit, intellectually developed and socially active.

In the past period four-fifths of the national income has been used to raise the people's well-being. Real incomes have risen and the public consumption funds have somewhat increased. And this, after all, is the source from which we draw finance for education, the health service, the payment of pensions and housing maintenance.

Our Food Programme, as well as the programme to develop the production of consumer goods and the services industry, which is in the drafting stage, are also directed to raising the people's well-being. Much is now being done to expand the production of quality goods in great demand. Modernisation of light and food industry enterprises has begun. In this we are actively cooperating with the member-countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance.

Such vital problems as the construction of housing and pre-school institutions and the expansion of the network of hospitals and polyclinics are among the constant concerns of the Party. Over two million flats were built last year—more than in any of the past five years. The target for housing to be completed in the current five-year plan is a very high one. But there are grounds for believing it will be met, or perhaps even exceeded.

We all, of course, realise that the housing problem is still far from solved and we will seek ways of further improving housing conditions, and not only with public funds. We should perhaps more boldly extend cooperative forms and individual building. As for day nurseries and creches, the acuteness has been somewhat eased, but a lot remains to be done.

In the next few years it is planned to raise the pay of teachers and other workers in public education. Concern will continue to be shown for war and labour veterans, large families and newly-weds, in general, for improving the living conditions of Soviet people.

Evidently, special mention should be made of the year 1983. As you know, the November 1982 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee drew up a set of measures which made our economy more dynamic. We began to overcome the unfavourable trend of the first two years of the current five-year-plan period, when economic growth rates were slowing down. Of particular value is the increased growth rate of labour productivity and the improvement of qualitative indicators in many sectors of the economy.

Let us take your district, for instance. The entire increment in industrial output has been obtained without increasing the size of the workforce. You have actively joined the campaign now under way for overfulfilling the plan targets for increasing labour productivity and reducing production costs.

Permit me to congratulate weaver Maria Polishchuk, turner Alexander Gorbunov, glass-blower Nina Izmailova, assembly worker Alexander Serov, all the leading workers of the Kuibyshev district on their personal successes in work.

Today Victor Vasilyevich Grishin told me that the working people of Moscow have fulfilled and even slightly

overfulfilled the plan for the past two months. This is a great achievement. Permit me from this rostrum to convey our very best wishes to all Muscovites and warm thanks for their great labours!

What has been achieved, comrades, is, of course, only the beginning of a great effort. We have very many things to do, things that are urgent. We can make and wish to make more rapid progress. We can and must solve the problems of intensive development of the economy much more energetically. Only on this basis, after all, can the material and cultural requirements of the people be ever more fully satisfied.

In brief, speaking of our plans for the future, one should never forget the simple truth: to live better, we must work better. To make good progress in carrying out our social programmes there must be a stable, dynamic growth of the economy and, above all, of its efficiency. This is what was discussed at the December and February plenary meetings of the Central Committee.

We have succeeded in improving the economic indicators mainly by putting to use resources which lay, so to speak, to hand, on the surface. We set about strengthening order, organisation and discipline, and this immediately had a noticeable economic effect.

We must now go further—towards profound qualitative changes in the national economy.

In our economy there are still quite a few sectors in which the lag literally strikes the eye. Far from full use is being made of the existing production potential. The experimental base of engineering is impermissibly weak. The proportion of arduous manual and unskilled labour in industrial production and construction is being reduced too slowly.

It is absolutely necessary for us to secure the rapid and continuous modernisation of all branches of the national economy on the basis of the present-day achievements in science and technology. This is one of our basic tasks. Without it social progress is simply inconceivable.

The Party is also urgently posing the question of embarking on a large-scale improvement of the management of the economy and restructuring of the economic machinery. The main directions of this work have been

determined. They fully accord with the Leninist principle of democratic centralism.

Undoubtedly we must strengthen centralised management and planning and see that they become more effective and flexible. We must organise the work in such a way that central economic bodies devote all their efforts to deciding questions which are of really key importance for the country. And some of the matters that they are currently concerned with can very well be dealt with by organisations at lower, sectoral or local levels.

We have checked and will continue to check any actions dictated by narrow departmental or parochial considerations. But let's face it, comrades, there are still instances when local initiative is being curbed under the pretext of combatting parochial practices. This is no good at all. The development of economic initiative and creative attitudes at the level of economic regions, associations and enterprises is one of the most important, truly nationwide tasks.

It is also, you may say, a question of further strengthening friendship among the peoples of our country, one of the most important bases of the Party's Leninist policy. There must be an increase in the opportunities each republic has to make an effective contribution to the development of the Soviet economy as an integral economic complex. It goes without saying that here nationwide interests should be placed above everything else. This follows directly from the internationalist nature of our society and our world outlook.

The forms of economic activity, comrades, should meet modern requirements. The economic experiments now under way will undoubtedly help ensure this.

The essence of these experiments is to give enterprises more rights, to enhance their responsibility and free them from excessive tutelage on the part of central bodies. A practical test will make it possible to pass from the stage of quests to confident advance. But, of course, comrades, the quest for new forms and their introduction into practice should not be confined to those enterprises which are involved in one experiment or another.

It is obvious to everyone, for instance, that scope must be given for the introduction of cost accounting principles

everywhere. Everything which stands in the way of this must be removed.

One of our main concerns should be to see to it that the socialist principle of payment according to work done should be implemented always and everywhere. Those who work full out must definitely have better earnings. Some may say: but we already know how to punish slack workers by reducing their pay and are awarding bonuses to good workers. This is indeed true. But the punishment is, evidently, not yet strict enough, while the material encouragement is not as fair, and sometimes not as generous, if you like, as it should be. This question must be tackled in real earnest, and without delay either.

We must resolutely combat all manifestations of conservatism and sluggishness. In a word, the slogan of the day in the economy must be: from a correct idea, armed with experience, proceed boldly to action!

As you see, comrades, a great deal is being done to enhance the effectiveness of the national economy in this country. This is not, as you realise, an easy operation. Yet at its very height, last June, a Central Committee plenary meeting was held to discuss questions of the ideological and mass political work of the Party. Why? What connection does this have with our economic concerns? There is a direct and inseparable connection.

The point is that today, as never in the past, success in Party guidance of society depends on consistent observance of the Leninist principle of the unity of ideological, organisational and economic work.

Building and perfecting socialism means not only building modern plants and electric power stations, and making our land, our towns and villages more beautiful. This is an essential but by no means the sole concern of Communists. In transforming people's living conditions, we must at the same time do everything for their ideological and moral enhancement. It is clear that without doing a great deal for people's cultural advancement and their socialist education one cannot cope with the tasks of perfecting mature socialism.

The essence of the decisions of the June plenary meeting consists precisely in setting in motion all the creative forces stemming from the conscientiousness and

ideological staunchness of the masses. This, after all, is the basis of their activity at work and in public life.

I have spoken of the need for a considerable restructuring of the system of economic management. It is clear, though, that the improvement of this system is by no means just a matter of eliminating shortcomings in the activities of those whom we might call nominal managers.

No less important is something else: that the work must be organised so that the initiative and creative talents of the broadest masses of working people are manifested in all their force and fecundity.

I was told that at several enterprises in your district industrial robots have taken over some production operations. In time there will, of course, be more. But even then, I assure you, the importance of what we call the human factor of economic progress, or, in other words, people's knowledge, interests and attitudes will be undiminished. In the final analysis, after all, everything is the work of man and the pride of man. Scientific and technological progress will never invalidate this old truth.

Soviet people should always be fully competent and responsible masters of production. This purpose is served by the Law on Work Collectives adopted last year. It aims at further promoting precisely the businesslike initiative of working people.

Moral stimuli have an immense role to play in the life of every work collective. Work in this country is the basis of a person's public recognition and his social prestige. Idlers, job-hoppers and drunkards who try to hide their own sloth and negligence under the lofty title of working man, and even demand public respect arouse our people's just indignation. One of the main tasks of our educational work is to create and consolidate in society an atmosphere of respect for work and, at the same time, of intolerance of and contempt for every kind of idleness, laxity and irresponsibility.

There is something else I would like to stress. You know that the Party and the state have stepped up the struggle against such disgraceful phenomena as the squandering of state funds, resorting to eye-wash, abuse of office, embezzlement and bribery. This is not a temporary campaign. It is a policy that will be pursued constantly and undeviatingly.

Here no one is being or will be spared. No one should have any illusions on this score. For this reason officials should have a greater sense of responsibility and be more exacting. Party organisations and work collectives and all Soviet people must pay constant attention to these questions and the organs of people's control, of public order and justice should work even more effectively.

Comrades, there is probably no place in our vast country where the problems and the future of Soviet schools are not being discussed. The question of Soviet school reform leaves no one indifferent. It concerns literally all, old and young, as they say. The nationwide discussion of the draft reform for general education and vocational schools is a striking example of how the Soviet government tackles matters of national importance, it is an example of genuine democracy. You are, of course, familiar with the general outlines of the reform. There is only one thing I would like to speak about here. It is labour education.

Work will never be fun or entertainment. Even under communism it will remain, as Marx put it, "a devilishly serious business". Working is hard, but nothing can be done about that. Some parents, however, are tempted to rid their children of difficulties. Meanwhile only socially useful work makes a person's life meaningful. So we must teach our children not what is easy—they will manage that by themselves—but what is difficult. One of the major aims of education is to develop in schoolchildren a love of work and to use to the full the force of productive work in the education process.

What we are talking about, as you understand, is not the belittling of the importance of general education and culture or the introduction of something like labour conscription. The school reform has nothing to do with any such ideas which are being put about by hostile radio stations. What we mean is something different: a person who has not been taught to work cannot be a conscientious builder of a new world.

It is our constant concern to train young people who will not falter or bend under the weight of the historic responsibility for the destiny of the country, the destinies of socialism and peace, and who will be able both to assimilate the experience of the older generations and enrich it with their own accomplishments. Training such young

people is a matter for school and the family, but not only for them. It is also a matter for the Young Communist League, the trade unions, and work collectives.

This is an important task for the Party, because, in the final analysis, it is a question of effectively safeguarding the future of our socialist homeland. We are tackling this task, and tackling it successfully!

Comrades, shortly before the emergence of the world's first state of workers and peasants Lenin wrote: "Under socialism... the *mass* of the population will rise to taking an *independent* part, not only in voting and elections, *but also in the everyday administration of the state.*" Today, too, the success of the bodies of our people's government, primarily that of the Soviets, hinges on the ever greater involvement of politically conscious and mature, thinking citizens in running the affairs of the state.

The activists of the Soviets, and they are tens of millions of men and women, should be really active. The opportunities for this have considerably increased over the past few years. The Soviets at all levels have come to play a more important role in tackling various economic, social and political tasks.

Quite rightly, the local Soviets have begun to coordinate to a greater extent the activities of enterprises belonging to different economic sectors situated on their territory. It is good that they are increasing their control over the production of consumer goods, the development of the service industry and environmental protection. In general, the controlling functions of the Soviets must be increased and increased. There is ample scope for work in this field.

It is extremely important for the further development of the democratic foundations of the Soviet state to keep people better informed of how things stand in reality and to give greater publicity to the work of Party and government organisations. The mass media have an important role to play in this respect.

Although their work has of late improved, we expect from them more profound and interesting information about the life of the country and the world at large and that they will be bolder in presenting pressing issues.

And, of course, it is always necessary to react promptly to suggestions and criticisms from the working people and

to be intolerant of the suppression of criticism in any form.

We Communists are proud that the Party, which constitutes the nucleus of the whole political system of the country, has a tremendous influence within the Soviets. This influence does not stem from a numerical predominance of CPSU members: as is known, there are more non-Party than Communist deputies. The Party maintains its political influence in society by its tireless efforts for the prosperity and happiness of the working people and by its ability to shape and implement policies meeting the requirements of each stage of our development.

The Party devotes a great deal of attention to grasping the specific features of the current period and to evaluating soberly, without a hint of utopianism, the present stage of social and economic maturity reached by our new society. In so doing, we formulate the strictly scientific principles of the policy of the CPSU. Here the concept of developed socialism as a historically long period which our country has entered upon plays a tremendously important role. We gradually move towards communism as we accomplish the tasks of improving developed socialism.

The vital political importance of these conclusions drawn by the Party can hardly be overestimated. They make it possible to get a better picture of the development of our society with all its complexity, contradictions and different aspects. They facilitate the removal in practice of the discrepancies which were permitted at times between words and deeds, between the actual possibilities of society and ill-founded forecasts. It is from this point of view that the Party Central Committee is today doing the extremely important work of preparing a revised edition of the Programme of the CPSU.

The Party is striving to make the Leninist style, in all of its diversity and wealth, the natural requirement and irreplaceable working tool of every Party and government official and every production executive. Executives have extensive rights and powers in our country, but they also bear great responsibility. An executive can do no worse than display arrogance and haughtiness or, as Lenin put it, use "the power crudely, as nothing but power, as though to say: 'I have the power, I have given my orders, and you must

obey' ". The strength of an executive lies in ability to combine the authority of his post with his own authority.

Party and government cadres win the affection and respect of the masses primarily through actual involvement in public affairs, by their energy and knowledge, by their personal example and behaviour devoid of anything that might go against man's moral sense. An executive can be demanding of others because he is most demanding of himself. That gives him a moral, apart from an official, right to be firm on occasions when it were better to "use his authority rather than waste his breath", as they say. An executive's authority is based on the people's approval and support. The person who has lost this and who is deaf to the opinion of the masses cannot and must not hold an executive post.

There is one more point. We have more than a few effective forms of mass activity and mass involvement in the affairs of society and the state. Some of them, however, are artificial and should perhaps be dropped.

There is an obsession in some districts and regions with creating all kinds of headquarters and commissions for any reason at all. There are sometimes so many of them that even their organisers cannot make out who has been assigned to do what and who is responsible for what. Some officials may head about a dozen different commissions to the detriment of their immediate official duties. All this just distracts people with unnecessary meetings and dissipates their energies, without in any way promoting the matter in hand. Sometimes certain officials do no more than "take shelter behind commissions", as Lenin aptly remarked in his time, instead of answering for the job they are supposed to do.

Our democracy is, in its essence, an operating and functioning democracy. Its expansion and the improvement of the entire Soviet state system are an important trend in our society's onward movement. The Party is the motor, the driving force of this progress. By the whole of its internal life, it sets an example of genuine socialist democracy and the integral combination of inalienable rights and immutable duties.

Now let us turn to international affairs. One of the most important and imperative mandates of the Soviet electorate has been, is and will be to cherish peace as our dearest

possession and to ensure our country's security. I can tell you that the Party and the Soviet government have unswervingly followed that mandate, and they have done so in circumstances that were not easy.

You know that recent years have seen a drastic escalation of the policy of the most aggressive forces of American imperialism—a policy of undisguised militarism, striving for world supremacy, resistance to progress, and violation of the rights and freedoms of the peoples. The world has witnessed more than a few cases of that policy's practical application.

This applies to the invasion of Lebanon and the occupation of Grenada, to the undeclared war against Nicaragua, to the threats against Syria and, finally, to the conversion of Western Europe into a launching pad for US nuclear missiles targeted on the USSR and its allies.

All this forces us to pay the gravest attention to strengthening our country's defences. Soviet people do not want any further arms buildup; they want arms reductions on both sides. But we are bound to take care of the adequate security of our country and of our friends and allies. This is exactly what we are doing. Let everybody know that no military adventurists will ever catch us off guard and that no potential aggressor can hope to escape a crushing retaliatory strike.

At the same time, the very complexity of the current situation obliges us to double and treble our efforts in pursuing a policy of peace and international cooperation.

It is hard to name any problem important for the consolidation of peace concerning which the Soviet Union and other socialist countries have not in recent years made specific and realistic proposals. Our countries' initiatives meet with ever broader support from other countries. This was convincingly confirmed by the latest session of the UN General Assembly.

Imperialist politicians do everything possible to try to limit the international influence of the socialist countries. They try to weaken their unity and to loosen the foundations of the socialist system in those places where they think they can count on success. In these conditions it is particularly important to preserve and cement the solidarity of the fraternal socialist countries. The leaders of the

Warsaw Treaty member-countries once again stated their conviction on this score during their recent meeting in Moscow.

The US is subjecting socialist Cuba to an economic blockade and military threats. The plans to frighten it and to force it off its chosen path, however, are doomed to failure. The guarantee of this is the unshakable will of the heroic Cuban people united round their Communist Party. Another guarantee is the solidarity of the independent countries of Latin America and of the many members of the Non-Aligned Movement with the island of freedom. The Cuban people have the strong support of the fraternal socialist countries. As regards the USSR, it has always stood and will stand by Cuba in both calm and stormy weather.

The role of socialism in international affairs could be increased, of course, by the normalisation of relations with the People's Republic of China. We consistently support such a normalisation. Political consultations show, however, that there are still differences on a number of questions of principle. In particular, we cannot agree to any accords damaging the interests of third countries. The exchange of opinions continues, however, and we find it useful. The Soviet Union is in favour of raising the level of these contacts to a degree acceptable to both sides.

The gradual revival of mutually beneficial contacts in the economy, culture, science and other spheres is also useful. This does not suit those who would like to capitalise on the deterioration of relations between the USSR and China, but it benefits our two countries and helps improve the general climate in the world.

The danger of the imperialist policy of endlessly heightening tension is now obvious. The greater the threat it poses to human civilisation, the greater the activity of mankind's forces of self-preservation. There is growing indignation in Western Europe at the actions of those who are sacrificing its security to the imperial ambitions of Washington. Millions of participants in the anti-missile movement speak of this in no uncertain terms.

Also far from all Western leaders and influential political parties approve of the US Administration's adventurism. It worries a considerable part of the American public as well. People there are realising ever more clearly that intensified

militarisation and the aggravation of the international situation have not brought and will not bring the US military superiority or political success. They lead only to growing criticism of Washington's bellicose course everywhere in the world. People want peace and tranquillity, not war hysteria. I can say that our talks with the leaders of the many foreign delegations that attended the funeral of Yuri Andropov confirmed this convincingly enough.

All this permits us to hope that in the end the course of events will again be turned towards the strengthening of peace, the limitation of the arms race and the growth of international cooperation.

Detente has deep roots. One of the proofs of this is the convocation of the Stockholm conference on confidence-building measures and disarmament in Europe.

Curbing the nuclear arms race is, of course, of key significance for peace and international security. The USSR's stand on this issue is clear. We are against rivalry in the buildup of nuclear arsenals. We have been and remain in favour of the prohibition and destruction of all types of these weapons. We have long since tabled our relevant proposals, both at the UN and the Geneva Committee on Disarmament, but the United States and its allies are blocking their discussion.

As for Europe, we continue to advocate that it should be free from nuclear weapons, both medium-range and tactical. We are in favour of both sides taking the first major step in this direction without delay. In so doing the Soviet Union does not intend to strengthen its security at the expense of others, but wants equal security for all.

Unfortunately, the US has turned its participation in the talks on this subject into a propaganda tool to cover up the arms race and cold war policy. We have not been and shall not be a party to such a game. By deploying their missiles in Europe the Americans have created obstacles for talks not only on "European", but also on strategic nuclear weapons. The way to work out a mutually acceptable agreement lies in removing these obstacles (which would also remove the need for our countermeasures).

The US Administration has of late begun to issue peaceful-sounding statements, calling for "dialogue".

The entire world noticed the sharp contradiction between these statements and everything that the current US

Administration had said and, most importantly, had done and continues to do in its relations with the Soviet Union.

The assurances of its good intentions can only be taken seriously if they are backed up by deeds. Well, the Soviet Union has always been in favour of seeking mutually acceptable practical solutions to specific questions to the benefit of both countries and the benefit of peace. There are more than a few such questions. The US government has many opportunities to prove its love of peace in deed.

Why cannot the US, for example, ratify the treaties signed almost ten years ago with the USSR on limiting underground nuclear weapon tests and on nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes and complete the drawing up of an agreement on a complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapon tests? Let me remind you that the relevant talks were broken off by the United States. The US can also contribute greatly to strengthening peace by agreeing to an accord on renouncing the militarisation of outer space. The USSR, as is well known, has long been proposing this.

The peaceful assurances of the US government would be much more credible if it accepted the proposal mutually to freeze American and Soviet nuclear arms. So much weaponry has already been accumulated that this step would not create the slightest threat to the security of either side. But it would considerably improve the general political atmosphere, and, one would assume, make it easier to reach agreement on a reduction of nuclear arsenals.

To rid mankind of the possibility of the use of chemical weapons is a very important task. Talks on this subject have been going on for a long time but now the conditions necessary to resolve the issue seem to be ripening. This concerns complete and general prohibition of the use of chemical weapons, their development and production, and destruction of all the stockpiles. We are in favour of effective verification of the fulfilment of such an agreement, in favour of verification embracing the entire process of the destruction of chemical weapons, from the beginning to the very end.

It is quite possible that reaching agreement on the above issues could mark the beginning of a real change in Soviet-US relations, as well as in the whole international

situation. We would welcome such a change. It is up to Washington to act now.

The policy of the powers possessing nuclear weapons is of particular importance in our time. The vital interests of all mankind and the responsibility of state leaders to the present and future generations demand that relations between these powers be subject to certain norms. In our view, these norms could be roughly as follows:

— To consider prevention of a nuclear war to be the prime aim of a state's foreign policy. To preclude situations likely to lead to a nuclear conflict. And should such a danger arise, to hold consultations without delay in order to prevent a nuclear conflagration.

— To renounce propaganda of nuclear war in any of its variants, either global or limited.

— To assume an obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons.

— Under no circumstances to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear countries which have no such weapons on their territories. To respect the status of the nuclear-free zone already established and to encourage the creation of new nuclear-free zones in various parts of the world.

— To prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in any form: not to transfer such weapons or control over them to anybody; not to deploy them on the territories of countries where there are no such weapons; not to extend the nuclear arms race to new spheres, including outer space.

— To work step by step, on the basis of the principle of equal security, for a reduction of nuclear armaments with a view to finally destroying all types of them.

The Soviet Union has made these principles the basis of its policy. We are prepared to reach agreement with other nuclear powers at any time on jointly recognising norms of this kind and on making them mandatory. I think that this would accord with the fundamental interests not only of the participating countries but also of the peoples of the whole world.

Comrades, we owe everything that we have, everything that we are proud of—the freedom and might of our Motherland, its high prestige on the international scene, and the full-blooded, peaceful life of the people—to the

intensive constructive work of the Soviet people. This work is an inexhaustible source of our confidence in the future.

Workers and collective farmers, scientists and engineers, physicians and cultural figures, teachers and servicemen are marking the elections to the Supreme Soviet with new achievements in their work. May these achievements multiply in the future. Then our state—the bastion of durable peace and security of the peoples—will become even stronger. Then the life of each Soviet family will become even better. Then our country will march forward even more successfully along the road of communist construction!

Speech at the extraordinary plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee

February 13, 1984

Dear comrades,

I cordially thank the members of the Central Committee for the great honour bestowed on me—for electing me General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. I fully realise the enormous responsibility which is placed on me. I understand what important and exceptionally difficult work is to be done. I assure the Central Committee and the Party that I will exert every effort, use all my knowledge and experience to live up to this trust, to continue, together with you, the principled policy of our Party which was steadily and persistently implemented by Yuri Vladimirovich Andropov.

A gift for organising, a clear, creative mind, fidelity to Leninism in theory and in politics, a keen perception of what is new and an ability to accumulate the living experience of the masses, irreconcilability to all that is alien to our world outlook, way of life and morality, his personal charm, and modesty all won Yuri Andropov tremendous prestige and respect among the Party and the people.

The Party entrusted to him difficult and responsible fields of work. Yuri Andropov's best political and human qualities were particularly strikingly revealed in the posts of General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet. He did not spare himself, always striving to be equal to the tasks facing him.

Yuri Andropov made a weighty personal contribution to the collective activities of the Central Committee and the Political Bureau of the Central Committee in outlining a thoroughly well-considered and realistic policy of the Party at the present stage—a policy of improving developed

socialism. It was under his leadership that the November 1982, June and December 1983 plenary meetings of the CPSU Central Committee were held and became important milestones in the life of the Party and the people. The political line of the 26th Congress of the CPSU was further creatively developed and given concrete expression in the decisions of the plenary meetings.

Yuri Andropov devoted much strength and energy to efforts to ensure peaceful conditions for the creative work of the Soviet people, to strengthen the positions of socialism in the international arena.

Yuri Andropov well understood that the source of the Party's prestige lies in the fact that it has gained and is strengthening its leading position and its honoured vanguard role by selfless service to the people, the ability precisely to express the interests of the working people and equip them with a correct Marxist-Leninist programme of action.

The convincing evidence of the correctness of the home and foreign policy of the CPSU, of its conformity to the requirements and spirit of the times is the ardent nationwide support for this policy. The Party is firmly advancing along the path which it has chosen—the path of communist creative work and peace.

That is how it was in the past. It will always be so!

But, comrades, we all realise that just to wish to advance along that path is not enough. We must be able not only to set correct aims but also to work persistently for their attainment, surmounting all difficulties. It is necessary to evaluate realistically what has been achieved, without exaggerating it but not belittling it either. Only such an approach prevents mistakes in policies, a temptation to indulge in wishful thinking, and makes it possible to see clearly, as Lenin said, what we have done and what we have not fully done.

Yuri Andropov was fated to work at the head of our Party and state for a short, comrades, a painfully short time. We will all miss him. He passed away at the very height of great and intensive work aimed at powerfully accelerating the development of the national economy, at surmounting the difficulties which our country encountered at the turn of the eighties. But we all know what a great amount of work our Party has succeeded in doing in that short period

of time, how many new and fruitful things have been accepted and reaffirmed in practice. By collective efforts continuing and further advancing the work started under the leadership of Yuri Andropov is the best way of paying tribute to his memory, of ensuring continuity in policies.

Continuity is not an abstract notion but a live, real task. Its essence is primarily moving forward without stopping, advancing while relying on everything that has been accomplished previously, creatively enriching it, concentrating the collective thought, the energy of the Communists, of the working class and of all the people on the unresolved tasks, on the key problems of the present and future. All this imposes a high responsibility upon us.

The strength of our Party lies in its unity, adherence to Marxism-Leninism, the ability to develop and direct the creative activity of the masses, to unite them ideologically and organisationally, guided by tested Leninist principles and methods. You know, comrades, what immense attention our Central Committee, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee and Yuri Andropov recently paid to questions of perfecting the work of the state apparatus, improving the style of Party leadership.

One of them is a clear distinction between the functions of Party committees and the tasks of state and economic bodies, the elimination of duplication in their work. This is a major issue of political significance. Frankly speaking, not everything here has been properly adjusted. There are cases when workers at central and local government bodies, ministries and enterprises do not display the necessary independence, but refer to Party bodies matters which they should handle themselves. The practice of supplanting economic managers discourages cadres. Moreover, there is a danger in this of weakening the role of the Party committee as a body of political guidance. For Party committees, handling the economy means, above all, being concerned with people who are managing the economy. This must always be borne in mind.

Comrades, a month and a half ago, at the December plenary meeting of the Central Committee, we gave an all-round appraisal of the state of affairs in the field of the country's social and economic development. The resolution it adopted emphasised the importance of maintaining

the tempo achieved and the general mood to get things going, of steadily raising the level of Party and state guidance of the economy, of more actively developing positive trends and imparting a stable character to them. It is our direct duty to implement in a consistent way the instructions of the plenary meeting.

The whole of our experience confirms that the most important source of the Party's strength was, is and will be its contact with the masses, the public-spirited activity of millions of working people, their attitude of businesslike concern for production matters, for problems of social life.

It is the duty of the Communist Party constantly to verify its course, its decisions and actions primarily by the thoughts of the working class, their great social, political and class intuition. Vladimir Lenin always highly valued the frankness and clarity of the judgements, well-founded in living experience, of the working man, sensitively heeded his opinion and appraisal of events and people, sought and found in them answers to the most urgent issues.

Heeding what is said among workers in the forefront of socialist construction and taking counsel with working people should today too be the prime obligation, a profound inner need for each Communist leader.

To be able to perceive and back the people's initiative promptly, and on the broadest scale—from a businesslike, creative approach to the work at one's place of employment to active participation in managing the affairs of state and society—constitutes the largest, one may say an inexhaustible, reserve of our progress. Our economy in varying degrees owes every one of its major accomplishments to the creative initiatives of work collectives, to their own plans, known as counter-plans.

The broad response by the country's work collectives to the December plenary meeting's call to raise labour productivity by one per cent above plan and to reduce production costs further by 0.5 per cent gives rise to profound satisfaction. The patriotic enthusiasm, energy and businesslike approach with which the working people, the Party, trade union and Komsomol organisations have started to implement this task inspires confidence that success will be ensured.

I think it is necessary to consider the question of directing all the means and resources that will be obtained

as a result—and they will be considerable—to improving the conditions of work and life of the Soviet people, medical services and housing construction. This would fully meet the supreme goal of the Party's policy—all-round concern for the good of man.

In general, comrades, we should probably think of providing better material and moral incentives for the creative initiatives and innovations of working people.

Social justice is the foundation of the Soviet system. This constitutes its immense strength. That is why it is so important that it be strictly observed in everyday affairs, whether the matter concerns salaries and bonuses, the distribution of housing and passes to health resorts, the granting of awards—in brief, that everything be done fairly, in accordance with each person's labour contribution to our common cause.

Here there is work to be done by Party, trade union and Komsomol organisations and economic managers. Much depends on the work collectives themselves. They now have extensive rights, endorsed by legislation. Now it is a matter of using them more fully.

The Party has lately enriched itself with fresh experience in guiding a socialist society. We have begun to make better use of the advantages and possibilities of our system. Among them, undoubtedly, are the degree of organisation and awareness of the masses. Hence our attention to strengthening order and discipline.

The question of organisation and order is one of principle for us. There can be no two views on this score. Any slackness, irresponsibility cause society not only material losses. They do serious social and moral harm. We Communists and millions of Soviet people understand this very well. And it is quite natural that the measures adopted by the Party with a view to enhancing labour, production, planning and state discipline and strengthening socialist legality have been received with nationwide approval.

We have already succeeded in making some progress in this field. And everybody knows what salutary effect this has had on production affairs, on our social life and simply on the mood of people. Yet it would be wrong to believe that everything has already been done. No, comrades, life teaches us that there should by no means be any relaxing here.

So far as the guidelines for the development of our economy are concerned, these have been clearly outlined by the Party. The intensification of production, the accelerated introduction of the achievements of science and technology into production, the implementation of large-scale comprehensive programmes are all designed in the final analysis to raise the productive forces of our society to a qualitatively new level.

The system of economic management, the whole of our economic machinery need serious restructuring. Work in this direction has only been started. It includes a large-scale economic experiment for broadening the rights and increasing the responsibility of enterprises. A search is under way for new forms and methods of management in the field of public services. They will undoubtedly be very useful and help us resolve the strategically important problem of increasing the effectiveness of the whole national economy.

Let us, however, ask ourselves: does not waiting for the results of experiments serve some economic executives as a cover for passiveness, for wishing to work in the old way? It goes without saying that the renewal of economic structures is an important matter. In this field it will be advisable to observe the wise old rule: look before you leap. But this is no justification for those who do not wish to reckon at all with the changed conditions, with the new demands of life.

From our economic executives we expect more independence at all levels, a bold search and, if necessary, a well-justified risk for the sake of increasing the effectiveness of the economy and securing a rise in the living standards of the people.

You know that in the past year the CPSU Central Committee and the government have drawn up and adopted several decisions on principled issues of economic development. These decisions have given the Party and economic bodies certain levers for raising the effectiveness of production and accelerating the country's economic development.

The planned measures—and these measures are not only of economic but also of great political significance—will be put into life only if their implementation becomes the main substance of the daily work of every Party organisation, of every working person.

Coping with present-day tasks, we are creating the prerequisites for attaining much higher accomplishments in the future. Perhaps it is still early to speak in detail of our morrow, of the 12th five-year plan, but the main issues, the main directions of the work ahead are already to be seen now.

The new five-year plan should become, above all, the beginning of profound qualitative changes in production, a five-year plan of the decisive turning point in the intensification of all branches of our national economy. The present material and technological basis and the managerial system should acquire new, higher qualities.

It is no less important now to ensure an increasingly closer interconnection of the economic, social and cultural advance of Soviet society. It is impossible to raise the economy to a qualitatively new level without creating the necessary social and ideological prerequisites for it. It is likewise impossible to resolve pressing problems of the development of socialist awareness without reliance on a firm foundation of economic and social policy.

To build a new world means tirelessly to attend to the moulding of the people of the new world, to their ideological and moral advancement. The June plenary meeting of the Central Committee, as is known, considered questions of ideological and political work among the masses from precisely this viewpoint. In accordance with its directives the Party will seek to bring this work fully into line with the nature of the big and complex tasks of perfecting developed socialism.

To comprehend these tasks in their entirety, to outline the clear long-term strategy for their solution, to show the link between our current deeds and the Communist prospects—this is what a revised edition of the Party Programme should give us. The Central Committee attaches great significance to its preparation.

Comrades, drawing up plans for the further development of our country, we cannot but take into account the situation now emerging in the world. And, as you know, it is now a complicated and tense one. The correct course of the Party and the Soviet state in the sphere of foreign policy acquires even greater significance in these conditions.

The struggle for lasting peace, the freedom and in-

dependence of the peoples was always in the centre of attention of Yuri Andropov. Under his direction the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee and our top bodies of state authority shaped an active foreign policy which is in line with these noble principles, a policy aimed at delivering mankind from the threat of a world nuclear war. This Leninist policy of peace, the main features of which were determined at the present historical stage by the decisions of the latest congresses of the CPSU, accords with the fundamental interests of the Soviet people, and basically also of other peoples of the world. And we firmly declare: we shall not deviate an inch from that policy.

It is absolutely clear, comrades, that the success of the efforts to preserve and strengthen peace depends to a considerable degree on how great will be the influence of the socialist countries in the world arena, how vigorous, purposeful and coordinated their actions will be. Our countries have a vital stake in peace. For the sake of this goal we will strive to broaden cooperation with all the socialist countries. By developing and deepening in every possible way cohesion and cooperation with all countries of the socialist community in all fields, including, of course, such an important one as the economic field, we are making a great contribution to the cause of peace, progress and international security.

Addressing the fraternal countries, we say: the Soviet Union will continue to be your reliable friend and true ally.

One of the fundamentals of the foreign policy of our Party and the Soviet state has been and will remain solidarity with the peoples who have shattered the fetters of colonial dependence and embarked on the path of independent development. Especially, of course, with the peoples who have to repel the attacks of the aggressive forces of imperialism which is creating very dangerous seats of bloody violence and war conflagration in one part of the world after another. Siding with the just cause of the peoples and working for the elimination of such hotbeds is today also an essential and important direction in the struggle for lasting peace on earth. Our Party's principled stand on these issues is clear, pure and noble. And we will unswervingly adhere to it.

Now about relations with capitalist countries. Great

Lenin bequeathed to us the principle of the peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems. We are invariably loyal to this principle. Nowadays, in the age of nuclear weapons and super-accurate missiles, the peoples need it as never before. Regrettably, some leaders of capitalist countries, to all appearances, do not clearly realise, or do not wish to realise this.

We see very well the threat which the reckless, adventurist actions of imperialism's aggressive forces are creating today for mankind, and we speak of it out loud, drawing the attention of the peoples of the whole world to that danger. We do not need any military superiority. We do not intend to dictate our will to others. But we will not let the military equilibrium that has been achieved be upset. And let no one have even the slightest doubt that we will continue to see to it that our country's defence capability is strengthened, that we have sufficient means to cool the hot heads of bellicose adventurists. This, comrades, is a very substantial prerequisite for preserving peace.

As a great socialist power the Soviet Union is fully aware of its responsibility to the peoples for preserving and strengthening peace. We are open to peaceful, mutually beneficial cooperation with states on all continents. We are for the peaceful settlement of all disputed international problems through serious, equal and constructive talks. The USSR will in full measure cooperate with all states prepared with practical deeds to help lessen international tension and create an atmosphere of trust in the world. In other words, with those who will really pursue a policy leading not to preparing for war but to strengthening the foundations of peace. And we believe that to this end full use should be made of all the existing levers, including, of course, such a one as the United Nations Organisation, which was founded precisely for preserving and strengthening peace.

Comrades, we Soviet Communists are sincerely gratified that in the struggle for a peaceful future and the progress of mankind we are advancing side by side with millions of our class brothers, with numerous contingents of the world Communist and working-class movement. Unswervingly loyal to the principle of proletarian internationalism, we regard with ardent sympathy and deep respect the struggle our foreign comrades are waging for

the interests and rights of the working people and we see it to be our duty in every way to strengthen the bonds linking us.

This is what I would like to say today about the policy of our Party in international affairs. And we are confident that the Soviet people wholeheartedly and ardently support it.

Comrades,

The Soviet people inseparably link all their achievements with the activities of the Party. Selflessly devoted to the masses, the Party enjoys the full trust of the masses.

The review-and-election campaign has just ended in Party organisations. It again showed the high level of awareness and activity of Communists. Competent, experienced, and knowledgeable people have been elected to leading posts.

First secretaries of territorial and regional Party committees are taking part in the proceedings of the plenary meeting. To you, comrades, I would like to make a special address. The Central Committee well knows how wide is the range of your obligations, of your concerns. It knows how much depends upon you in tackling our current, immediate and strategic tasks. The Political Bureau of the Central Committee is confident you will do everything necessary to secure stable growth rates of industrial production, to successfully implement the Food Programme, encourage greater labour efforts on the part of the masses, as well as implement measures directed at raising the people's well-being, and thereby enhance the Party's vanguard role.

Any elective post in our Party is a post with responsibility. Election to a Party committee should be regarded as a kind of credit of confidence issued by Party members to their comrades. And this confidence must be justified by selfless work. Such is the mandate given by those participating in the meetings and conferences that have been held. Now, on the eve of elections to the USSR Supreme Soviet, the Party passes on this exacting mandate also to the Communists who have been nominated as candidates for Deputies, who will become members of the supreme body of state authority.

The inexhaustible strength of Soviet Communists lies in the cohesion of their ranks. This strength fully manifests

itself when, as Lenin said, "*all of us, as members of the Party, act as one man*". The Leninist Central Committee of the CPSU, its leading core—the Political Bureau of the Central Committee, are acting precisely thus, in concord and unity. This makes it possible to adopt tested, thoroughly weighed decisions leading to consolidation of the alliance of the working class, farmers and intelligentsia, of the fraternal friendship of the peoples of the USSR.

The truly Party, businesslike and creative atmosphere, to the establishment of which Yuri Andropov devoted such great energies, has been and will be an essential condition of the work of the Party's Central Committee. This is the guarantee of the further growth of the CPSU's authority, of success in tackling the great and complex tasks of communist construction that face us.

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