

Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee

DOCUMENTS AND MATERIALS

Report
by Mikhail GORBACHEV,
General Secretary
of the CPSU Central Committee

Resolutions

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July 29, 1988

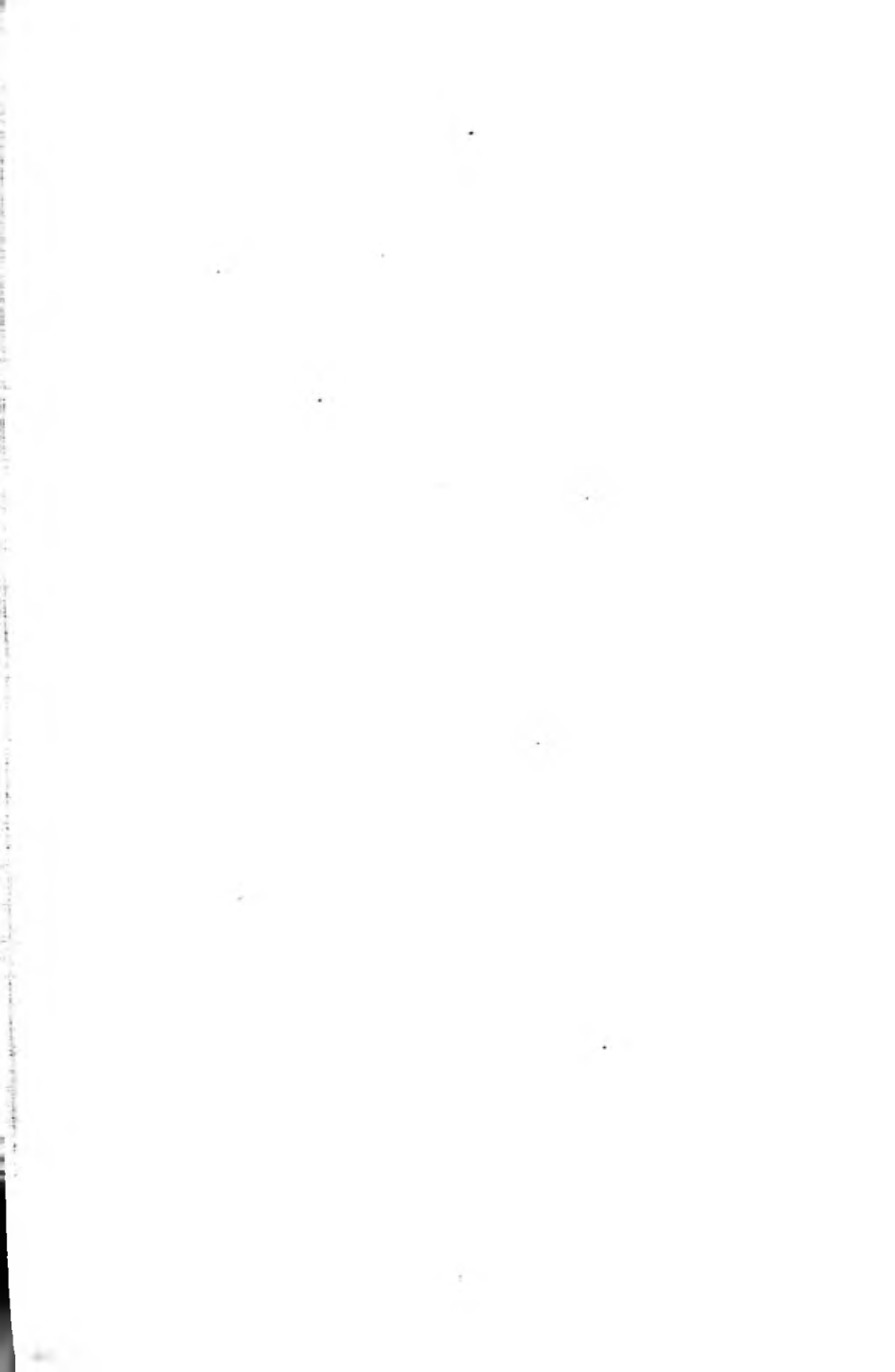
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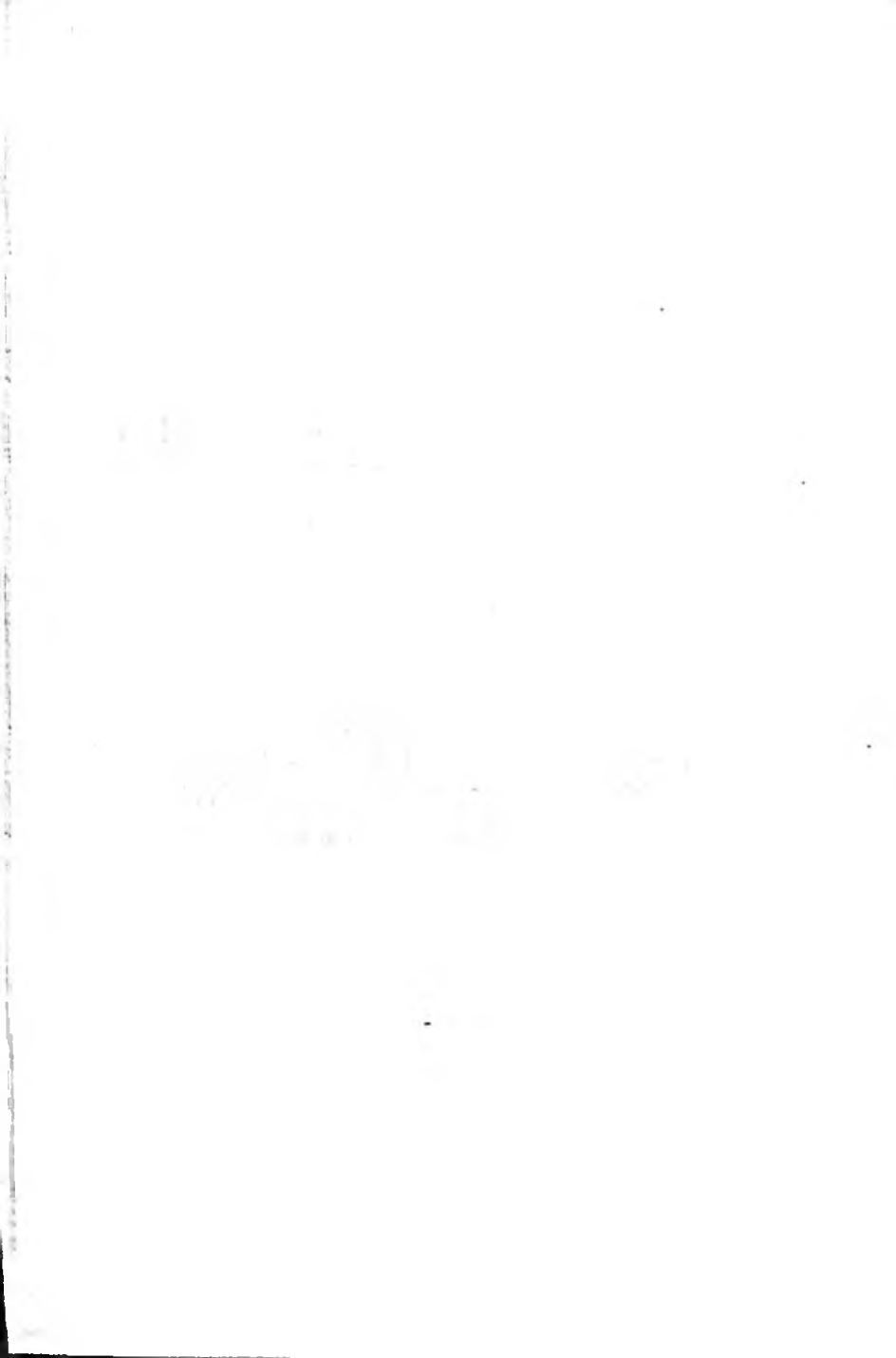
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**ON PRACTICAL WORK TO
IMPLEMENT THE
DECISIONS OF THE 19TH
ALL-UNION PARTY
CONFERENCE**

**REPORT BY MIKHAIL
GORBACHEV, GENERAL
SECRETARY OF THE CPSU
CENTRAL COMMITTEE**



Comrades,

The Politburo decided to convene the current plenary meeting in order to discuss practical measures to carry out the decisions of the 19th All-Union Party Conference, a Conference which has become a crucial political landmark of perestroika.

At the Conference we all saw clearly that the Party and society feel the need to step up work to fulfil the practical tasks of perestroika. This was stated in no uncertain terms, especially by delegates representing production collectives.

There sounded the unanimous demand that there should be no foot dragging and playing for time, that we should react more vigorously to shortcomings and failures and act resolutely in removing all the barriers and obstacles standing in our way.

The speeches by delegates contained not only concern about the way things are going, but also, and let us admit this frankly, dissatisfaction at the way the Party, government and economic bodies and our high-ranking cadres are operating.

Time is pressing us, comrades, and this should be stated bluntly. Why?

Firstly, the report-and-election campaign in the Party is beginning.

When we discussed with you the question of when to hold the All-Union Conference, we proceeded from the premise that it was to be held on the eve of reports and

elections in the Party so that the report-and-election meetings of communists and the conferences of district, city, area, regional and territorial Party organisations be held on the basis of the national Party forum's political guidelines.

Also, we agreed at the Conference that all work to reform the political system should be started right now without delay and in such a way as to hold elections on a new legal basis and convene a Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR next spring.

The conference delegates resolutely spoke out for further deepening of economic reform because the accomplishment of fundamental socio-economic tasks and the improvement of the people's life are connected with this.

So regardless of the angle of approach we must not lose time, we must act, and act resolutely, be more exacting towards those who tackle practical questions which are acquiring an ever more acute political nature.

In short, comrades, the time for action has come, the time for greater responsibility of all Party organisations, of all our cadres, all collectives, every working man and woman.

In these weeks all of us had the possibility to analyse once again the meaning of the Conference, to weigh thoroughly its results and the decisions adopted by it. It can be said that the Conference was an unprecedented event in the Party's life. It has set in motion the entire society.

The very atmosphere at the Conference was a major contribution to perestroika—uninhibited, principled, exacting, with an open debate of ripe problems.

Held in a new moral and political atmosphere, in an atmosphere of realism, the Conference has enriched the Party with new experience of a nation-wide political school, a school of glasnost and democracy.

Interest in the Conference is not fading. An intense discussion of all the questions that it raised and solved is now taking place. The Conference also evoked a great response all over the world.

The Conference has again convincingly demonstrated our Party's mighty potential. I would say that the Party

has squared its shoulders, straightened up and begun speaking confidently at full volume, innovatively, with a sense of its tremendous responsibility for the people.

The Conference has confirmed that the CPSU is the real driving force of perestroika, its initiator and acknowledged leader that provides for the fundamental interests of the people and socialism.

And this is the most important political result of our Party Conference.

In short, we can say confidently today that since the Conference both the Party and society are no longer what they were.

The preparations for the Conference and the Conference itself raised to new heights the understanding of the country's past, present and future.

The delegates sharply denounced the mistakes and crimes of the past. At the same time they categorically rejected attempts to cross out the Soviet people's historic achievements. The course of perestroika, its achievements, shortcomings and lapses were assessed at the Conference from positions of principle. It can be said with confidence that the Conference has brought us to new evaluations of the problems and tasks of our movement on the road of society's renewal.

The Conference has demonstrated the tremendous striving of communists, the entire nation, to consistently promote perestroika, to make it irreversible, to vigorously resolve all practical questions in home and foreign policy.

At the same time it has demonstrated that conservative sentiment, longing for the past, attempts to sow doubts, to portray perestroika not as a historic endeavour but almost as social destabilisation are nowhere near defeated in society. If we want to remain realists in politics we should not discount this either.

The delegates to the Conference were strongly critical of those Party Committees that are still slow in changing the style and methods of their activity and in many instances fail to display readiness and ability to work in conditions of openness, to conduct discussions, to argue their points, to persuade people and to respond to criticism in the Bolshevik manner as Lenin taught.

* Some are simply frightened by the upsurge in the energy of people, by their awakened socio-political activeness. In words they are for perestroika but with pocket-size democracy, for glasnost but with measured criticism, for renewal but in such a way as to leave everything the same as it was for them.

The battle with parasitic attitudes is uphill all the way. Specific people are not accountable for specific assignments.

The delegates have convincingly shown that although the retarding mechanism has been crippled, it is still strong in many ways.

* The Conference has helped us get a better understanding of where and how the old structures and methods are standing in the way of the new, impeding it, preventing it from gaining scope. But it has also demonstrated that many perestroika-restraining factors are rooted in the unsufficiency of some of the steps that are being taken, in lack of competence and other subjective causes.

Taken together all this gives us a truthful picture of what we have already achieved at this stage of perestroika and what we have yet to accomplish, and without delay at that.

* In the final analysis, comrades, and this is very important to the Central Committee, the Conference has made all of us more realistic in our evaluation of the course of perestroika. It has demonstrated society's resolve to advance, to overcome conservatism and deceleration. At the same time it has spoken out against any pseudo-revolutionary slogans divorced from life, against maximalist demands and utopian attempts to restructure everything at one fell swoop.

The preparations for the Conference and the Conference itself actually became a political test of the maturity of our cadres, their political aptitude, their readiness for democratic form of action.

It highlighted with particular clarity our urgent tasks, reserves, the most effective forms and methods of work. At the Conference we worked out and adopted decisions containing a broad spectrum of transformations which

should activate socialist society's potential forces for free self-development.

When reanalysing the results of the Conference and the discussions at it, comrades, we should prepare ourselves firmly to turn resolutely to practical deeds.

The Conference has demonstrated that both in the Party and among the people, support for perestroika is followed with particular persistence in the demand, which in the past was violated many times, for words and deeds to match, the demand for accountability for one's activity as well as for one's inactivity.

The Party cadres should apply this immutable Party law first of all to themselves.

What is needed is work, what is needed is control over the fulfilment of decisions made. Otherwise recurrences of past mistakes are inevitable. Such, in effect, was the unanimous opinion of the delegates. X

Speaking of the results of the Conference I will limit myself to these brief remarks. But I do want to repeat again and again, comrades, that the time has come for vigorous action and we must not tarry.

Only action in implementing the political guidelines worked out by the Conference will make perestroika irrevocable.

What is the Politburo doing in this respect? Firstly, it has worked out a set of drafts incorporating proposals made by the participants in the Conference.

First and foremost, this concerns food, trade, consumer goods and services, that is everything that directly affects people, that is related to their daily needs and concerns. You have these documents and this saves me presenting them in detail.

I would also like to inform you about our approach to action on the proposals and critical remarks made by delegates.

The Politburo gave assignments to communists working in the relevant organisations, to the leading cadres, on all matters requiring prompt solution. Assignments were also given on long-term problems and deadlines were set for the presentation of concrete proposals. The Politburo will keep an eye on all this work.

I.

Comrades, the situation is shaping in such a way that the implementation of the Party Conference's decisions coincides with the report-and-election campaign in the Party.

I think you will agree that the forthcoming reports and elections will be unlike the previous ones.

All this obliges both the Central Committee and the local Party Committees to prepare thoroughly for the report-and-election campaign and carry it out as professionally as possible. It should be clear to all that Party organisations will pass through a strict self-assessment and be judged rigorously by society.

I believe this will be a straightforward, open, honest, a truly Party discussion of how each of us is coping with the task entrusted to him, what contribution he is making to perestroika; a discussion to see if in every case words of support for perestroika are backed up with the necessary action. This approach should become the basis for discussion at Party meetings and conferences. And this, comrades, is correct. This accords with the demands of the Conference—a more businesslike approach, more results.

That is why the Party discussion should centre on the following: What should be done to impart greater dynamism, greater effectiveness to perestroika; what should be done to put an end to "gearing up for action" and deal a final blow to everything that impedes our advance?

That is why it is important to conduct the Party meetings and conferences democratically and openly, to avoid any over-organisation, to open up broad vistas for objective evaluations of the state of affairs, for all questions that cause people's concern.

In short, the discussion started at the 19th Party Conference should be continued at the Party report-and-election meetings and conferences with the same adherence to principle, sense of responsibility and businesslike approach. The state of affairs demands exactly such an approach.

It can be said with confidence that elections of the guiding Party bodies will also be conducted in a new way. Hearing out the Conference delegates, we became con-

vinced that Communists will be very exacting when forming the Party leadership. They will decide from principled positions whom to entrust with the leadership of Party organisations at this important stage of perestroika, the stage of practical action along its key directions.

We should apply right away the recommendations of the Conference on the procedure of nominating and discussing candidates, on the inclusion in the secret ballots of a greater number of candidates, than the number of mandates. And the right to nominate from below candidates for election to higher Party bodies should be exercised.

In short, everything should be done as agreed at the Party Conference, and in the same atmosphere that reigned at it.

Considering the importance of the tasks for the forthcoming report-and-election campaign, the Politburo considers it expedient to adopt a special resolution of the Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee on this question. This is the first time we have taken such a step, but it is dictated by the situation itself. At the same time there arises the need to introduce changes in the election regulations. You have the proposals on this score and, evidently, you will state your views on them.

I would like to draw your attention to yet another question which quite logically will arise in the course of the campaign. I am referring to the fulfilment of the Conference guidelines on limiting the tenure of office of leading Party functionaries to two successive terms.

The Conference recommended that they be implemented starting with the forthcoming report-and-election campaign. What approach should be taken here?

I believe that the count of terms of office should be started with the present elections. The law, so to say, is not retroactive. I believe we have covered this matter.

At the same time in the course of the report-and-election Party meetings and conferences, questions may arise among Communists as to how to treat comrades who have already been holding elective offices for a long time.

But the Party Rules give Communists the full right to decide whether or not to elect any Party worker regardless of the number of times he has held office.

Of decisive importance here is not the number of years an official has held office, but how he is coping with his duties, whether he has the trust and support of Communists and working people or not.

This is the main criterion we should abide by when forming the elective bodies. This should be directly stated in the resolution of the Central Committee's Plenary Meeting.

Yet another question on which we should adopt a position here at the Plenary Meeting is connected with the formation of the Central Control-and-Auditing Commission of the CPSU and its local bodies, which was supported by the Conference. Should we not start the creation of these bodies from below right now, in the course of the forthcoming reports and elections? Thereby we will not only speed up the process, but also manage to gain the first experience and analyse it before the Congress.

Another variant is possible: to do this on the eve of the Congress. Let's exchange opinions.

Speaking of the forthcoming report-and-election campaign, and the problems and questions we should solve during it, I would like to dwell on the activity of the primary Party organisations.

It is with them that the report-and-election campaign in the Party begins. But that is not really the main thing. Above all, the point is that today the primary Party organisation is finding itself in a new situation with the mounting processes of perestroika in the economic and social spheres and with the growing democratisation of the life of work collectives and the whole of society. This is logical. All practical matters are solved locally, in work collectives. That is why Party Committees should devote the required attention to the activity of primary Party organisations at the present crucial stage in the life of the Party and society.

Much should be rethought here so as to exercise the Party's functions as the political vanguard with due account both for the economic reform and the expanded rights of work collectives.

As is known, much was said about increasing the role of the Party's elective bodies in the course of the discus-

sions preceding the Conference and at the Conference itself.

In this connection I would like to say the following. We must come up with ways of ensuring that the newly elected Party committees from the very first day of their work implement the ideas that were set forth by the Conference.

In particular, all members of elective Party bodies should take part on a permanent basis in the study, generalisation and discussion of key aspects of the activity of Party organisations.

Here, evidently, we should not just have occasional involvement of members of Party committees in the preparation of questions that are discussed at plenary meetings and meetings of bureaux. We must primarily impart a regular nature to this involvement by creating relevant commissions on key aspects of Party activity.

I also believe that we should adhere to the statutory requirement that plenary meetings be regularly informed of the work done by the bureaux of Party committees.

We have agreed at the Conference to carry out, within the framework of the reform of the political system, all the necessary measures to separate the functions of Party committees from those of state and economic bodies and in this connection to take practical steps to perfect the structure and activity of the Party apparatus.

In order to discuss the initial principles on which to fulfil this task, the Politburo has drawn up proposals on the main directions for reorganising the Party apparatus. You have them and, in the course of the debate, I expect you will express your views and make your remarks.

The Conference stated that the principle of the strict subordination and accountability of the Party apparatus to the elective Party bodies should be implicitly observed.

The new apparatus should first of all actively help them, and the Party in general, exercise in full measure their functions as the society's political vanguard.

Herein is the crux of the matter. This means that the Party apparatus should be totally relieved of administrative and managerial functions and concentrate on the key directions of home and foreign policy and employ political methods of guidance.

This should find its reflection both in the structure and the personnel composition of the apparatus. It should be highly competent and much smaller in numerical terms than now. Naturally, there will be questions concerning the rechanneling of personnel to be released from the apparatus.

The cadres in the Party apparatus are well trained. Their knowledge and experience should be utilised with maximum effect in the interests of society and, of course, with due account for the wishes of the comrades who will be leaving the apparatus. I believe there can be only one point of view on this score.

The main parameters of the structure of the Party apparatus could be worked out by the Politburo, while decisions on specific questions concerning structure and personnel should be left to local Party bodies, as has often been proposed by members of the Central Committee.

Now about the Soviets. The restructuring of their activity is a key aspect of the political reform.

In the wake of the elections in the Party we are to conduct elections of people's deputies of the USSR, reorganise the supreme state bodies of the country and the bodies of power in the republics, territories, regions, areas, cities, districts, settlements and in the countryside. We have just one year to do this.

It stands to reason that such large-scale activities can be carried out only if there exists a corresponding juridical basis. This means that a number of important supplements and amendments to the Constitution, to the legislation on elections must be prepared and submitted for consideration to the forthcoming session of the USSR Supreme Soviet this autumn and that some other legal acts have to be adopted. This will require the study of a wide range of questions concerning state interests. The Politburo believes it expedient in this connection to create a special commission of the Central Committee. Proposals on this score have been handed out. You are welcome to make suggestions. I would only like to ask for your consent to include in the commission, in addition to members of the Central Committee, the four first secretaries of the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of Union republics

who at present are not members of the Party's Central Committee.

The commission, I believe, should organise its work in such a way as to rely on the views of scientists, those who work right in the field and the public at large. After that, evidently, we will have to assemble for a Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee on the eve of the session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in order to complete the drafting of proposals to be submitted for consideration.

Without going into everything that the commission will have to do I would like to single out the question of forming the corps of people's deputies, because this is one of the key questions.

We will have to carry out a whole set of transformations by creating the necessary preconditions for this in the law on elections. Their prime aim is to ensure genuine representation of all sections of the population in the Soviets and to make sure that people capable of carrying out the new functions in conditions of the resolute strengthening of the role of the Soviets are elected deputies.

Of course, we should discontinue the practice of regulating the cross-section of deputies. There should be no limitations on nominations. The electorate should be given the right of genuine choice both at the stage of the discussion and nomination of candidates and during voting. This means that as a rule the ballots should include more candidates than the number of mandates. The Party Conference, in effect, has clearly spoken out in support of this.

If we are to speak of the organisation of the elections themselves, experience shows that elections in multiple-mandate election districts suit rural, settlement, area, district and city Soviets better.

The electorate there knows its candidates better and can make the correct choice with the list of candidates in its hands. I believe that the institute of reserve deputies has also justified itself.

As to the other local Soviets and also people's deputies of the USSR, the Union and autonomous republics, it is feasible to elect them in single-mandate districts. But here too, of course, the work collectives and public organis-

ations should be provided with the opportunity to nominate an unlimited number of candidates. Meetings of the district's electorate will decide democratically who to include in the ballots, proceeding, naturally, from the premise that a choice of proposed candidatures also be ensured during voting.

X And yet another question. We have agreed at the Conference that a third of the total number of people's deputies of the USSR will be elected directly from public organisations. We think that with some adjustments, this principle of organising the country's supreme body of power could be applied to the Union and autonomous republics and recorded in their respective constitutions.

The role of territorial election commissions grows in connection with the major changes in the procedure of the election of deputies and the extension of the term of office of local Soviets. It is expedient to make these commissions standing ones, to expand their powers both in organising elections and in convening the first congresses and sessions of the Soviets of People's Deputies. This will mean genuinely handing over the organisation of elections to the public.

The preparation of the laws on elections should be approached creatively, with due account for regional and national specificities. If the laws on elections to local Soviets in various republics differ in some aspects this will only enrich our democratic experience and give rise to new possibilities for further developing the election system.

In the legislative acts that are now being drafted provisions should be made for the deputies' right to settle matters at sessions by secret ballot. The sources of funds to pay the deputy while on leave of absence from his regular employment have to be determined. Questions of setting up Presidiums of local Soviets and of electing chairmen of Soviets should also be constitutionally formalised.

The necessary conditions should be created for the Soviets and their executive Committees to be able to discharge their new functions normally. The relevant material and juridical base should be created and a set of incentives elaborated for the Soviets to take a new approach to fulfilling their duties.

In this connection we ought apparently to get down without delay to drafting a law on local self-government and the local economy, which should strengthen the local Soviets in legal, material and financial terms.

The approach here must be one: everything that can be decided at the local level should be within the competence of the local Soviet.

Legal reform is closely connected with democratisation of the Soviets' activities.

We shall be able to effect reorganisation of the courts within a short time. Work on related draft acts on these matters is nearing completion.

A review of criminal legislation, a reduction of the list of offenses entailing criminal responsibility and wider administration of punishment not involving imprisonment are of great significance.

It is planned to publish the drafts of the new criminal laws for nationwide discussion. Work will proceed at the same time on the code of penal procedures, the correctional labour code and the criminal codes of the constituent republics.

As far as the practice of law and preliminary investigation are concerned, drafts updating them are now in the works and will be presented for discussion in the near future.

There is a possibility of drawing up and adopting by year's end acts concerning legal services in the national economy, broader functions for arbitration, and the organisation of universal primary legal education in our country.

In this way, comrades, the following order of priorities in state development, that brook no delay appears to be set.

First of all, it is imperative to prepare a draft Law of the USSR on Elections of People's Deputies in the USSR and submit it for popular debate early in October.

In the second half of November it is provided to convene a session of the USSR Supreme Soviet and offer draft changes and additions to the USSR Constitution and a draft Law on Elections for its endorsement.

It could be agreed at the same session to call elections of people's deputies of the USSR in March 1989.

It is also expedient that the session discuss the drafts of new fundamentals of the legislation of the USSR and the constituent republics on the organisation of courts in the USSR and a law on the status of judges in the USSR.

If you support this, comrades, it is suggested that as a matter of legislative initiative the CPSU Central Committee proposes that the session discuss the tasks of upgrading the structure and activities of the bodies of state power and justice in the light of the decisions of the 19th All-Union Party Conference.

Before anything else, I should also list here the issues that could be raised at the first congress of people's deputies of the USSR in April 1989. It is to elect the USSR Supreme Soviet and the President of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

Then, acting on proposals from the President of the Supreme Soviet, it could endorse First Vice-President of the Supreme Soviet and also Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Chairman of the People's Control Committee and Chairman of the Supreme Court, who will be instructed to make their suggestions on the composition of these bodies to the USSR Supreme Soviet.

Simultaneously the congress of people's deputies could appoint Procurator-General and Chief State Arbitrator of the USSR and form a Constitutional Supervision Committee.

The first session of the newly-elected USSR Supreme Soviet will be required to form the USSR Council of Ministers and other bodies accountable to it.

The Party Conference has held a very active discussion of issues related to the development of the youth movement in the country, the rights of trade unions, voluntary societies, the press and some others. In this connection it should be made certain that from the very first steps in its activities the country's top law-making, administrative and supervisory body will keep these highly important political, legislative and legal issues within its field of vision as well.

Comrades, the fact that our state is multinational gives political reform a special nature, a colouring and distinctive features of its own.

There are, as is known, no problems in life that have

been solved once and for all. This is true of the nationalities problem in the first place.

It hardly needs proving that the nature of development of relations between nationalities is of primary significance to our federal state and that the nationalities policy for our Communist Party and the Soviet state is the most complex, and yet an important and essential one.

This is only natural as this policy ties economic, social and cultural problems tightly together.

As is known, the Conference has supported the Politburo's proposal for holding a Central Committee Plenary Meeting on the issues of inter-ethnic relations. It should be prepared seriously, by getting the public, the scientific community and representatives of the republics involved on a wide scale and accumulating ideas and proposals.

What is it that I would like to say preliminarily considering the repeated discussions of these problems in the Politburo and at a recent sitting of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet?

First of all I'd like to speak about the causes of the current aggravation of inter-ethnic relations in a number of the country's regions.

At the top of the list are, of course, the consequences of a lack of concern for many years about the specific social, economic and cultural requirements of the numerous peoples and ethnic groups making up our country.

Another, no less important reason is not too effective control on the part of the masses over the activities of executive personnel, as a result of which some officials have lost their sense of responsibility for the job at hand and, moreover, have taken the path of abuse of office, a slighting attitude to people and disregard for their needs and interests.

There is yet another cause. I mean the active reaction to perestroika on the part of corrupt groups. It should be said frankly that in a number of places they have been able to channel natural national feelings into destructive nationalist lines.

This is, of course, no accident. Nationalist passions benefit all anti-perestroika forces. By stoking up inter-

ethnic conflicts, they are out to distract public opinion and evade responsibility for what they have done over the years of stagnation.

I am convinced that our people, who have gained immense internationalist experience, won't allow anybody to encroach upon the cohesion of our Union, the friendship and brotherhood of the people of all nationalities living in our Motherland.

We ought to think also of improving Soviet legislation on these issues. It is vital, in particular, to increase accountability for kindling ethnic strife and for preaching racial or ethnic exclusiveness.

This follows directly from the USSR Constitution's Article 36.

There is no need to say how attentive we should be to developing the native languages and national cultures, to protecting nature and historical monuments, to everything that determines the distinctive features of every people and ethnic group and its unique contribution to the common treasure-house of Soviet culture with its many-sided nature and varied national colouring.

In short, we should look at any question, wherever it arises, in the interrelated context of life in the country as a whole and see it from broad Party and state positions.

What is needed now in the first place? Emphasis should be on working out and implementing large-scale measures to further develop and strengthen our Union.

It is necessary to draw up proposals for delimiting the competence of the USSR and that of the constituent republics and delegating a number of administrative functions to the republics. It is necessary to determine optimum variants for the possible changeover of republics and regions to the principles of cost-accounting and for promoting direct ties between them with a precise concretisation of their contributions to the fulfilment of countrywide programs.

It is essential at the same time to begin updating legislation on the constituent and autonomous republics and autonomous regions and areas. It is planned also to broaden legal guarantees of satisfaction of the ethnic-cultural requirements of nationalities that live outside their state-territorial entities or do not have any at all.

The new functions of the USSR Supreme Soviet's Soviet of Nationalities and procedures for forming standing commissions on inter-ethnic relations in the Soviets at any level in case of need should be clearly defined.

Considering the particular acuteness of the problem of language policy, it is evidently worth preparing a draft USSR law on the free development and equal use of the languages of the peoples of the USSR and submitting it for popular discussion.

We should also reaffirm today that membership in the Communist Party is incompatible with nationalism and chauvinism. Vladimir Lenin created the Bolshevik Party as an internationalist one in spirit, program and ethnic makeup.

There can be no excuse for a communist who has adopted the positions of chauvinism or nationalism. In point of fact, this posturing is a departure from one of the most important political principles of the Party. This must be remembered by every communist.

II.

Comrades, as you know, the discussion of such problems as food, housing and the provision of consumer goods and services has been particularly animated at the Conference. And the delegates have been very strict in their evaluations. This is understandable since the resolution of the highly important issues determining the living standards of the people is long overdue and the lag in this field has become chronic.

Let me dwell first of all on the food issue. The Politburo believes that urgent and cardinal measures, both immediate and long-term, are needed there.

In the specific situation this year, when many areas in the Volga region, the Urals, Siberia and Kazakhstan have been hit by drought, these are directed not only at keeping food supplies as they are, but even improving them. This goal is not only essential, it is realistic.

First, the situation has been looking up in the past few weeks. Second, and perhaps most importantly, work at the

local level is now geared to taking in and preserving all the ripe crops and using them rationally. And I mean both food and fodder crops.

I would say this is central to all further work this year. There is yet a lot of work to be done and it should be done in a well-organised manner. I think working people not only in the country but also in town are well aware of the situation and, as we see, are really doing their utmost to prevent the state of affairs on the food front from worsening.

Finally, if necessary, we also draw on external sources to replenish the country's food stocks.

We should conduct all this work persistently and consistently, solving practical matters step by step.

Obviously, it is worth stressing once again that the food issue is a fundamental socio-political matter and any underestimating of its key importance must be ruled out.

Now about the long-term tasks in tackling the food problem. The Politburo's proposals on this score have been submitted to you. What are they all about?

★ First. A study of these issues show that we have real possibilities of achieving the per capita consumption levels envisaged by the Food Programme and by rational dietary norms for such staple foods as bread and bakery products, macaroni, confectionery, cereals, potatoes, vegetables, vegetable oil, butter, whole-milk products, eggs and poultry by the end of the current five-year plan period. We won't be able to do so as regards meat and fruits in this period. But there, too, the situation could be much improved.

These conclusions rest on a preliminary study of the entire range of issues with constituent and autonomous republics, territories and regions. I do not want to repeat all that is said in the proposals that have been handed out to you. But I think it essential to cite some of the most important figures. It is proposed, in particular, increasing in 1990 the purchases of cattle and poultry by 2.5 million tonnes and milk by 4.3 million tonnes more than planned.

It should be stressed that, coming over and above the plan, all these products will remain at the disposal of the particular republics, territories and regions themselves. Ensuring the planned growth rate is certainly not an easy

task and calls for an intelligent and persistent effort, but it is obvious that everybody has a stake in its being fulfilled.

Our greatest reserve lies in efforts to stop losses, preserve harvests and livestock products fully and secure their high-quality processing. This is the shortest way to improve food supplies in the immediate future. Resolving this issue will enable us to increase food stocks by at least 15 to 20 per cent. And this will require much less time and inputs than building up production. Investments in eliminating losses and produce processing are the most profitable and most effective ones. Our whole society must get to work on this problem.

Second. The situation is that over the past several five-year plan periods we have invested enormous funds in agriculture, but the payback has been insignificant.

Over the past 17 years, comrades, capital investments in farming have amounted to 680,000 million roubles.

The average annual value of basic assets in the sector in 1986-87 was 2.7 times up, power available per worker two times up and the capital goods to man ratio more than three times up on the respective figures for 1971-75.

Mineral fertiliser supplies last year grew by 2.6 times as compared to 1970 to add up to 122 kilogrammes per hectare of arable land. And this is far from everything that has been made available to agriculture.

But its gross output over those 17 years has only grown by 25 per cent, with the production of grain up just 16 per cent, cotton six per cent and sugar beet 12 per cent, while potato harvests have even shrunk by nine per cent.

In certain regions the situation is even worse. Capital productivity in agriculture is very low in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kirghizia and Turkmenia.

In the Pskov and Novgorod regions, despite the fixed capital to man ratio over those 17 years trebling or quadrupling, gross output has fallen by between 12 and 25 per cent. And the reason has been not only the unfavourable weather conditions of the non-black-earth zone where formidable difficulties have historically been a fact of life.

Let's take such regions as Kirovograd, Chernigov and Vinnitsa. While fixed capital there has increased by 2 to 2.5

times, gross output has shown practically no growth. Moreover, gross harvests of sugar beet, sunflower and potatoes in those regions have diminished and meat and milk production has risen just slightly.

We cannot but be concerned about disquieting processes in the country's agriculture. What are the causes of such phenomena? We should, comrades, give such an answer to this question as will reveal the kernel of the matter.

Of course, each region and each farm, too, have their own specific problems and their own specific reasons for those problems. But there is also one common reason. I would say the main one, why capital outlays funnelled into agriculture, into the agrarian sector have failed to pay off as they should have, been put to inefficient use and in many cases simply wasted.

It is a fact that practical measures to enhance the material foundation of the countryside have not been backed up with corresponding work to change economic relations in the villages.

We should speak of this, comrades, at the Central Committee Plenary Meeting most resolutely since the matter at issue is working out the main direction for agrarian policy and related practical actions.

Let us say bluntly at long last that so far most of our managing personnel in the countryside have linked further gains in production first of all with extra investments, continued supplies of resources, etc. And they see no other alternative.

But we have hundreds and thousands of collective and state farms that in the same conditions and effectively with the same resources achieve remarkable production and economic results.

Just look at what is being done by people working under family contracts and lease arrangements. Using the same and sometimes even worse facilities, they show incomparably better results.

Only today I read in *Selskaya Zhizn* an article about lease farmers in the Stavropol Territory. They work at the Balkovsky State Farm in the Georgiyevsky District. I know

that farm. It has difficulty getting along and is always short of hands. Lease farming has made it possible to remedy matters. And it turns out that it is even possible to do with fewer machines; and the results are better. They are taking in crops that they have never harvested before. The people's attitude to work is changing—this is the main thing. The farm's director has estimated that if lease-based relations keep developing, only 50 instead of the current 90 machine operators will be needed to harvest the crops. This means that the personnel problem, which is a popular topic today, can be solved as well.

Much has already been said and much is being written about lease-based relations and there are ample facts concerning them at present. And this experience has been gained now in every region, in every zone of the country, in every branch of the agrarian sector. And everywhere it has been producing a good effect.

Doesn't this experience demonstrate that the key to success is in changing the people's attitude to work? This can be only achieved by drastically changing economic relations in the countryside.

Our task is to restructure them in such a way as to make the farmer the master on the land and to enable him to apply his energies, knowledge and aptitudes on it.

The substance of changes is in using most diverse forms of realising socialist property principles in practice.

We shall be able to fulfil the task by introducing full-scale economic self-accounting, the contract system and lease arrangements everywhere on a wide scale, bringing about related changes in intraproduction ties on collective and state farms, promoting various forms of co-op activity, launching family farms and other production units that lease land for long terms, developing agro-industrial combines and agro-firms, and encouraging farming on individual small holdings in every way.

In short, we should open a wide road to producer independence and accountability and develop the agricultural market in every way.

And no one should be bothered by the fact that means of production will be left at the disposal of the farmer for a long time under a contract with the farm. There is nothing

anti-socialist in this. This is most real socialism as it places man in the foreground. Socialism should do away with man's estrangement from the means of production, from politics, from cultural achievements before anything else.

And we should not limit ourselves to introducing economic self-accounting at the collective or state farm level. It should be given a second wind through the lease system. Man should be offered an opportunity to give free rein to his talent as a manager, to work the land as he sees fit, and he knows better than you and me how to do that. This should not bother you. We won't suffer a defeat on this road. On the contrary, we'll win a victory. It is essential that contract and especially lease forms of farming catch on widely across the country.

These matters are so important to us now and to all the following phases of upgrading economic relations in the countryside that I should really add a bit more here. One realises after talking with the leaders of regional and territorial Party organisations and studying the situation at the local level that far from everyone who should promote these arrangements understands the substance of the matter clearly.

We have been conducting extensive work since 1983 to transfer collective and state farm teams to various forms of the brigade contract with pay for the end product. This has proven to be an effective form of economic management.

But, as I have already said, practice has suggested that those forms of economic management which are based on leasing land and other means of production for a long term, with the lessees enjoying full economic independence, are more radical now. Incidentally, the lease system in this country was widely used until the mid-30s when it was abolished.

Under the lease system, however, man becomes the real master on the land and has a stake in putting the land and other means of production he leases to the most efficient use and producing the highest returns.

Just look at what is happening in industry, comrades. People are leased low-performance workshops and factories and first thing they cut the workforce by a third, slash managerial personnel by between 50 and 67.

per cent, go about their business in earnest, putting the enterprise back on track in seven, eight or, at the most, twelve months. And our workers are thinking like statesmen, too. They are not money-grabbers at all. They are thinking not only of wages, but of how to develop production, how to form the basic assets pattern so as to increase output and raise its technical standard. And there is nothing surprising in that: they are Soviet people who have been born in Soviet times and educated by Soviet government.

Lease-based relations allow fuller use of the possibilities of socialist property principles and help ensure public interests and incentives for productive and efficient work. And, I repeat, this includes not only incentives of a material nature. A person gets an opportunity to reveal and realise his abilities in practice, bring out his creative potential and show his worth. And this gives him enormous satisfaction.

In short, we have started thorough changes and for them to be effected consistently and yield results, the requirements are hard, all-round and competent work, knowledge and understanding of the essence of the nascent economic relations in the countryside.

It appears unavoidable to adopt a special law on lease. Why should this be done? Because we still have many officials at various levels who do nothing to advance matters, and even stubbornly prevent others from displaying their initiative, ability and economic interests.

Exactly such a law should guarantee all those wishing the possibility of working in the new conditions, giving them confidence that they will be protected by the state. Besides, it appears the leases should be of a long-term nature and granted for a period, say, of 25-30 and even 50 years. Generally speaking, the question should be put as follows: nobody should have the right to deny people the possibility of working on a lease contract basis.

We should be bolder in eliminating inefficient farms, in handing over their lands on a contest basis and other means of production to those collective farms, state farms, industrial enterprises, collective or individual lessees who are capable of ensuring highly effective operation. This may also require a new law on land use.

Since at present the problem is clearly caused by the conservative stance of the management and specialists of collective farms and state farms, and officials at other levels, we see the top priority task of Party committees in creating a businesslike atmosphere and the necessary conditions to remove these obstacles,

Here the thorough ideological and organisational work of Party organisations and the assistance of the trade unions and the Komsomol are indispensable.

So let us reach agreement at today's Plenary Meeting, comrades, that we will no longer tolerate idle talk about these issues. Life has confirmed everywhere the effectiveness of the new forms of production relations in the countryside, the new approaches to organising and stimulating agricultural work. And all obstacles to their ubiquitous application should be removed. This is a national task. Its fulfilment is not just a wish, but a demand that is dictated by the very logic of our development at the stage of perestroika.

While resolutely declaring our support of the transformation of economic relations in the countryside, we must stress at once that this work calls for a great sense of responsibility. As we learn the lessons of our history we must rule out any extremes. Both sluggishness and artificial acceleration and running ahead of events are impermissible in this important endeavour.

And the main thing is that when solving these questions it is necessary to proceed from life itself, to listen to common sense, seek people's advice and use the tremendous experience that we already have.

And yet another thing. We should radically restructure relations between economic entities and the system of management. Since we have already admitted that the present system of managing the agribusiness has not produced any particular effect and is on the wane, there is no need to cling to it.

We should extensively move on to the voluntary creation by collective and state farms of joint management bodies instead of the district agribusinesses, to cooperative forms of the production, technical and economic servicing of farms. Moreover, this principle should also be applied to

higher levels of management here. The reorganisation of the management of the agribusiness should not be dragged out. We should sever once and for all all these channels or threads through which commands are given from above.

I have read in the newspaper *Sovetskaya Rossiya* a letter from a group of collective farm managers from Gorky Region. They complain that they have to spend the profits of their collective farms on the upkeep of the entire managerial apparatus standing above them, to allocate for its upkeep 15 per cent of their net income and 10 per cent of the sum earmarked for amortisation. This is unacceptable. Who needs such an apparatus? And the main thing is that the very same V. A. Starodubtsev and other farm managers have proved that this apparatus can and must be reduced several times over.

You also know, comrades, that the Conference delegates have emphatically come out for the allocation of the necessary means for the social development of the countryside while limiting capital investments in other spheres.

In effect we need a national programme of building in the countryside housing, schools, hospitals, roads, utilities, services, communications and trade establishments, in short everything without which a modern person cannot live and work normally.

We must increase the pace of the social advancement of the countryside right now. This is being done in many regions and republics. And it goes without saying that for this purpose we must resolutely change the pattern of capital investments in the thirteenth five-year-plan period.

Such is our political guideline for the planning agencies and the government.

And another thing, comrades. Two days ago I had a conversation with V. P. Demidenko. What has changed and improved the situation in Kustanai Region with the provision of the population with farm produce? Of course, the decisive contribution was made by collective and state farms. But it was also very important that personal plots were drawn into this on a contract basis, using new incentives. In that region there are 250 head of cattle per 100 households.

But all this, comrades, requires work with the population, requires the creation of reserve fodder resources. Only then do such possibilities open up. Experience in integrating private households with collective and state farms on a contract basis has been accumulated in Byelorussia and the Baltic republics. And this is precisely socialism. Is it really possible that to this day there are people who do not understand this?

In short, comrades, returning to the entire set of problems which I have outlined, at today's Plenary Meeting we have approached the formulation of a realistic political guideline for the whole country: how to approach the food issue. I ask you to speak out on these questions.

And now concerning the proposals to accelerate the improvement of goods and services for the population. The main road here is clear. This is the speediest possible creation of a powerful industry for the output of consumer goods.

Corresponding decisions for light industry have already been made and it is imperative to carry them out as quickly as possible, by enlisting the needed economic machinery to ensure the interest of all the work collectives in increasing the production of consumer goods.

The order of the day includes extra measures to expedite the modernisation of many factories in the light and food industries by importing equipment, as well as a greater involvement in consumer goods production of factories in the heavy and defence industries.

A significant speedup is planned in the paid services sector.

An analysis of these issues with the participation of ministries and economic agencies, republican and local bodies has shown that there is a real possibility of increasing the production of consumer manufactures in 1989-90 by 24,000 million roubles above plan, including a 9,000-million-rouble increase in 1989 and a 15,000-million-rouble one in 1990.

You have also been handed proposals on measures to improve the paid consumer services sector drastically. It is important to stress that even in this five-year-plan period the amount of such services will grow by an annual 15 to

20 per cent faster than envisioned by the relevant comprehensive programme.

This amount will stand at more than 70,000 million roubles in 1990 and increase by 60 per cent to exceed 119,000 million roubles by the end of the 13th five-year-plan period.

These are large-scale measures and they will require work both in the centre and at the local level.

But while beefing up the supply of consumer goods and paid services, we should get down to upgrading the entire system of distribution, most notably, trade and public catering.

I am speaking about this because the well-being of working people and their general moral and political condition depend not only on the quantity and quality of goods and services—which are, by themselves, of decisive significance—but also on how we dispose of them, how trade and services sector are organised.

Many drawbacks in this sphere are connected with their facilities which are behind the times and in many cases neglected and should be steadily expanded and brought up to date technically.

Such proposals have been drawn up and submitted for your consideration.

But much, very much, comrades, we can and must do immediately by declaring a resolute struggle against unhealthy phenomena and processes which have struck root too deep here. I am referring, for instance, to the impermissibility of interruptions in the distribution and sale of those commodities that are in sufficient supply in the country.

Upon being informed that constantly here and there salt, sugar, flour and many other commodities that are in ample supply vanish from the stores, one involuntarily arrives at the thought that somebody must have a stake in preserving shortages or at least is totally deprived of a sense of responsibility for the people.

All these questions should be placed under the control of Party and government bodies, under the control of working people.

Or take such a widespread occurrence as queues. There

are queues everywhere—in stores, in the services sector, in transport, in public health institutions, and in organisations and offices which have to act on various requests from working people.

The problem has acquired such an acute nature that we should tackle it thoroughly and ensure that order is established. It is a shame that many high-placed officials calmly look at queues and do not deem it necessary to do anything about them.

And this is nothing but a disrespectful and callous attitude to people.

Comrade Zaikov and me recently visited two factories of Moscow's Zarya amalgamation, which makes and markets shoes. We have good recollections of that visit. I was immensely pleased to see how people think, how they act, how they discuss questions of truly state importance.

And then I had a conversation with one woman who works there. She and her husband are paid well. They have two children. Everything appeared to be normal—they have an apartment and earnings. What troubles her? She replied: "Mikhail Sergeyevich, every day I have to spend two and sometimes even three hours queuing in stores. This is exhausting. I do not get as tired on the job as in the queues."

And this, comrades, is in Moscow where, after all, everything can be purchased. But even here people have to stand in endless queues. And in one and the same store—first in line to one cashier, then to another, then to the counter. People stand for hours in queues after work in order to buy simple things. How can we tolerate this?

These are all questions that must be dealt with by the Soviets. And if the head of a Soviet does not see this, if he does not know how people feel, then we are keeping him in his high office in vain.

I want to say once again, comrades, that we must tackle these acute problems without delay and in a businesslike manner. Of course, here we also have questions that are connected with the need to improve the location of retail and service enterprises and the equipment with which they are provided. We have permitted a big lag here.

How should the solution of this question be approached?

The first thing that comes to mind is to ask for money and for a contract to build retail and service enterprises.

Apparently, we should provide for this in our plans as well because of the lag in this sphere. And the draft of our resolution on this question provides for an expansion of new construction. But if we were to follow this road alone, the solution of problems, especially the urgent ones, would drag on for many years.

And we have to find a way to rectify the state of affairs in the near future.

Requests are coming in to the Central Committee and government that these or other premises be used to extend the commercial and consumer service network. We strongly support this.

The Politburo and government have expressed themselves in no unclear terms on this score. We are for turning the administrative buildings of various economic and also Party and state organisations, now being built, over for these purposes, except when they are badly needed.

I recently spoke to writer V. P. Astafyev. We talked about how people live in Krasnoyarsk. What a pile of problems has accumulated there. The problems of medical assistance are especially acute, there is a shortage of maternity homes, and at the same time a huge sport complex is under construction in that city. It is, of course, needed as well. But there are urgent problems and these should be addressed in the first place. The building occupied by the territorial Party Committee in the city is quite good, but a new one has been built in addition. Now they have correctly decided to turn it over for consumer service needs.

And generally, comrades, it is essential to get rid of all manner of offices more decisively, cut their number and turn their premises over to be used as stores, service shops and medical institutions. This is, as they say, one facet of the matter.

But there's also another, no less important, side to the matter. And that is absorption of funds allocated for the sphere's development. Let's agree that whatever has been allocated must be absorbed.

And the Party bodies should take this under their

control. Because it has happened that in our work we have become so involved with economic affairs that sometimes we have overlooked issues directly bearing on peoples' lives. The aim, however, is to make sure that people live better and that their general living conditions be normal. This is why the main meaning of efforts to reorganise the work of Party bodies lies in making certain that they be concerned with what really are Party affairs and political, organisational and ideological work and keep closer touch with the people. Life itself literally cries for this. It is the overriding argument for adopting new ways, comrades.

Perestroika is strong precisely in having laid bare all these issues and created conditions for people to voice their criticisms and suggestions and opinions on the state of affairs.

Perestroika is providing real possibilities to call dishonest people or unqualified managers to account.

Comrades, the matters at issue after all are such as can well be coped with and do not call for long-term programmes and scientific developments. Much can be done about them by relying on local resources and local initiative and, most importantly, by putting things in order and keeping these issues constantly within the field of vision.

I think this talk won't be wasted. We all have to draw serious conclusions and set things right.

Developing building industry facilities should be ranked among the matters requiring close attention. Delegates have spoken about this.

Since expanding the construction of housing and other social amenities, we have encountered difficulties with supplying enough building materials, machinery, equipment, etc.

This question has been studied. Additional measures have been worked out to substantially increase the output of building materials. All this calls for major efforts and much attention.

All the measures that we propose, comrades, accord with the guidelines of the Conference, which has recommended drafting the plan for the next, thirteenth, five-year-plan period from positions of intensifying our economy's social directedness.

In fact we could note that our work in this direction has already been given a boost today.

Comrades, we were all witnesses of the sharp discussion that developed at the Conference over the problem of the radical economic reform. What are the conclusions that we draw?

First of all, where it is most important, the direction of the economic reform has been chosen correctly. More than that, it has been reaffirmed that success in socio-economic transformations can be achieved only by consistently carrying out and deepening the reform. And generally speaking, nobody had put the reform in question, although the course of its implementation was sharply criticised.

The Conference has also confirmed another thing: there does exist resistance from the inertial, conservative forces which would like to soft-pedal the reform, using the slightest excuse, the hitches and miscalculations that arise on the way.

I think we can agree with the proposal of the delegates that those who stand in the way of the reform be removed from their high posts.

What must we do to accelerate the economic reform? The Politburo has studied the conclusions that were drawn on this matter by the government and the set of related proposals.

First, It is necessary first of all to foil the attempts to distort the essence of the new forms and methods of management, to put up a barrier to those who intend to force the economic mechanism back into the old channel.

This refers, in particular, to the question of the placing of state orders, so heatedly discussed at the Conference, because in practice it has developed into a concealed form of planning the volume of output on the basis of directives.

The government's proposals on this matter provide for substantially reducing the portion of state orders in the total volume of production and for concentrating the right to place state orders in the hands of the State Planning Committee and not the branch ministries.

It is suggested that provisional regulations on state orders for the next two years be adopted. The Presidium of the Council of Ministers has discussed the issue with a

large group of economic executives and scientists it invited. They held a serious discussion and arrived at the conclusion that provisional regulations on state orders are needed and the transitional period requires precisely such an approach, bearing in mind that a complete realisation of the state order idea can be achieved only in conjunction with a switchover to wholesale trade in producer goods and a price reform. These, as they say, cannot be skipped.

Second, Factories in all the industries are to go fully over to the cost-accounting system, and the forming of the new economic machinery is to be completed.

It should be stressed that the new economic machinery can operate at full blast only on the basis of new price correlations, on the condition that an effectively functioning socialist market is formed, finances are improved, a far-flung and effective banking system is set up and wholesale trade is introduced. And, of course, it presupposes a relevant reorganisation of the management structure and an overhaul of the system of foreign economic ties.

I would like to stress in this connection the importance of setting things right financially in the national economy and improving money circulation. As early as at the stage of preparing the plan and budget for next year, we should start trimming the budget deficit, and with this aim in view, it is necessary to take a careful look at plans for capital construction, begin widely replacing budget funding with bank crediting, and axe other unproductive spending resolutely.

In short, it is important to learn to live within our means. Even if the amount of capital investments declines initially, the number of newly-started and unfinished construction projects will decrease dramatically, too.

As for lame duck enterprises now being fed ministerial sops, what can be done is to widely use credits on specific terms, reorganise, and in extreme cases even shut down such enterprises or lease them out to worker collectives or cooperatives. And this shouldn't be feared.

Economic recovery should also be helped along by reorganising the banks, making them completely self-supporting and developing a network of commercial banks.

~~X~~ Third. The Conference has seen an active debate on the issue of rebuilding organisational structures for administration and especially on the role of ministries in the new system of economic management.

This is now perhaps the most important aspect of the effort to overhaul the management system. And we should take a balanced approach to this issue, relying on the experience and new functions of both managerial bodies and enterprises which should be subject first of all to the laws and the rules of economic conduct they prescribe.

It must be openly stated that the prestige of the administrative bodies and the apparatus will ultimately depend on how quickly they find their place in the new conditions, how successfully they manage to master the new methods of management and build their relations with enterprises in a new way.

A clear-cut stand was formulated at the Conference— we will not be able to do without a modern competent and highly professional management apparatus.

But at the same time this apparatus should resolutely restructure its work, taking account of the demands of the radical economic reform and the new role of work collectives.

~~X~~ Fourth. The task of restructuring relations between enterprises and the Soviets arises in connection with the reform of the political system. This is the right way to raise the question.

In fact we are speaking of creating the economic basis of self-government where part of the public property is allocated to local bodies including the municipal economy, the system of services, housing, city transport, etc.

This should not be interpreted as meaning that enterprises will now be commanded by republican and local bodies instead of the Union ministries. That would be a primitive replacement of one command system with another. All enterprises and amalgamations have the right to and should work for the country's single market, while relations between them should be based on an equivalent exchange of output.

As to their relations with the local bodies they should

be backed up with relevant legal norms and economic regulations.

We must utilise in full measure the advantages of the territorial division of labour within the framework of a single national economic complex, and at the same time by means of a growth of budget revenues we should ensure republican and local bodies' stake in raising the effectiveness of the regional economy.

X Fifth. It is proposed to give work collectives the right to choose one form of cost-accounting or another independently, to give them a weighty reason for utilising its second model. This will mean an end to the establishment from above of norms for forming the wage fund and distributing profit.

Intraproduction relations will be developed on the basis of distribution and utilisation of the cost-accounting profit, while relations between the state and enterprises will be regulated by tax rates in combination with a system of state benefits. This would be very desirable, comrades.

In the context of the study that was made of the problems of the economic reform I would like to say more about lease relations. It is these relations that, while preserving both state and cooperative ownership, make it possible to do away with its "belonging to nobody", to ensure genuine economic independence and responsibility of personnel, work collectives and a direct link between the earnings of people and the end results of their work. It is of fundamental importance that in conditions of a lease contract there remains no room for command methods of management since relations of subordination give way to mutually responsible relations of partnership based on a contract. That is why the Law on Lease, which I have already mentioned, should be an act applying to all branches of the economy.

We are duty bound to remove all the obstacles to the expansion of lease relations and promptly resolve the necessary legal matters, including the question of the length of lease.

I have already said this, but I will stress it once again: short terms of lease will not encourage investments in the development and modernisation of production and may

even generate get-rich-quick attitudes. This is obvious. We need fixed rates of lease that take into account both the budget and the interests of the work collectives.

In conclusion, comrades, I would like to touch upon some more issues which differ in essence but are, I think, important to our work.

The first is science. The Conference has put blunt emphasis on the need to develop it and noted that in a number of areas of fundamental importance we show signs of lagging behind both world development levels and the requirements of our society and the national economy. This, comrades, is something that cannot be denied, and it compels us to show maximum concern for applying the Conference's related evaluations and fulfilling its demands.

I think the leadership of the USSR Academy of Sciences should return once more to their programmes for advancing fundamental research and other aspects of science in this country. Without active support from science we won't be able to cope with the tasks of perestroika.

State agencies, in particular the USSR State Planning Committee and the USSR State Committee for Science and Technology, should, for their part, look into drastically improving material facilities available to science, and review structural and investment policies so as to ensure favourable conditions for developing priority areas. We have already settled many issues, and work towards decisions on others should be spurred on.

Social sciences call for special attention. We all have been filled with the concern and dissatisfaction expressed at the Party Conference with their present state. It should be said once again that the problem does not lie in the social sciences alone. To a significant extent the situation can be explained by the attitude taken to them in the past. Nonetheless, we should say that changes for the better in this sphere are lagging behind the requirements of the times and the very practice of perestroika. And we cannot but be worried about this.

It should be said candidly that today many of our major scientific centres are content with the role of commentators and critics and still offer too few in-depth

analyses of current problems which are posed by perestroika and whose resolution is in substantial measure decisive to both the course of perestroika and its success and results.

X I cannot but share with you the following impression: I would say some of our scientists stick to the same positions they held at the beginning of perestroika, and do not notice that perestroika has already left the stage of talking at public rallies and entered the phase of profound changes in every aspect of life in Soviet society. This requires profound scientific analysis, getting to the crux of phenomena, understanding of the ongoing processes. It seems to me that this is exactly what our social scientists lack.

— The second question is ecology. Much attention was given at the Conference to the unfavourable situation in this field. The acuteness and urgency of this problem are deeply realised in society and there exists the opinion among the public at large that cardinal changes in approaches are needed here.

I would like to divide this problem into two parts. Some matters do not require huge capital expenditures and resources. What is needed here is to organise work properly and implement the already outlined measures and programmes. It is necessary for these urgent, specific matters to be solved with the participation of the relevant central agencies and local bodies. Moreover, they should be studied and solved promptly.

Other questions are connected with the search for and use of major allocations, with relevant changes in equipment and technology. Generally speaking, these are matters of a long-term nature. And all this, comrades, should be studied when drawing up the long-term state programme for protecting the environment and rationally utilising the USSR's natural resources. Such work is already being done as part of drafting the plan for the 13th five-year-plan period and the period till the year 2005. And all the proposals made at the Conference should be studied precisely during this work.

The third question concerns the Party's policy with regard to the younger generation. In terms of principle this

question was discussed at the Conference. The task is to translate all this into reality. I think that right now we should busy ourselves with preparing a Central Committee Plenary Meeting on these questions. Serious work is required here. We cannot limit ourselves to studying the problems that lie on the surface. We need a long-term policy, based on a profound analysis and aimed at fulfilling one of our society's fundamental tasks—the preparation of a worthy generation to replace us.

And another thing, comrades. The Conference itself, the discussion that took place at it have shown how important it is now to continue the work that we have been conducting since April 1985 in the sphere of ideology. And this is correct because on having tackled matters of historic significance, we cannot cope with them without comprehending the past and the present and without forecasting the main tendencies of society's development in the future.

We are now particularly aware of the profundity of Lenin's view of the significance of revolutionary theory.

It can be said bluntly that what we have been able to do in politics and practical work over this historically short span of time, and the fact that the Party at this historical turning point is on the whole coping with its role as the political vanguard and generator of ideas and is leading the way in the main respects are things that we wouldn't have been able to achieve if we hadn't been continuously and consistently concerned with the issues of theory and ideology. Nevertheless, the Conference has demonstrated once again most graphically that no let-up, let alone tardiness, is admissible in the ideological sphere. We cannot limit ourselves here to improvisations, short-lived campaigns and efforts to address certain tasks out of context with the basic aims of perestroika.

Not only setbacks and blunders in the economy and social policy, but also arrears, and all the more so, mistakes on the theoretical and ideological front can complicate and do irreparable harm to our revolutionary cause.

This is why we should continue broadening the frontier of theoretical research and deepening ideological work in every area.

The potentialities of our Party and society for resolving theoretical problems are truly immense, comrades. And today's moral and political atmosphere also offers all the conditions conducive to a vibrant creative process in every area of social thought which has a direct influence on public mentality.

But the Party—and at this Central Committee Plenary Meeting we should self-critically concede this—is not yet really using this whole potential, has not activated it and harnessed it to help perestroika.

What is the stumbling block here, comrades?

The development of theory and social thought, updating of ideology and shaping of a new mentality are, of course, altogether a very complex, equivocal and contradictory process. It calls for time and effort. But it cannot proceed spontaneously. It has to be constantly oriented on the basis of collective work, through creative discussions, through a quest for new ideas, a comparison of views, a struggle of opinions.

Party organisations should see the entire magnitude and complexity of this task. Oversimplification here is inadmissible.

We cannot expect everything to go ahead under its own steam. Our work in this sphere should be resolutely stepped up, and on the broadest front at that: we need discussions, seminars, conferences, publications, in short, the most diverse forms of scientific activity capable of stimulating the creative mind.

And of course we need vigorous ideological activity which would transform into practice the existing achievements in the theory and policy of the present stage of perestroika. We must conduct purposeful and intelligent work so that the ideas of perestroika can be embraced by the masses on an even broader scale and so that theory can become a truly creative force of perestroika.

I would like to make yet another point, comrades. Some people say that we have too many discussions. I will give an unambiguous answer: we need discussions, serious, creative discussions of all the ripe problems. It is only through discussion that an active public opinion, the people's consciousness can be formed. Without that aware-

ness the great tasks of transforming society cannot be accomplished.

And yet another thing, comrades. We should not fear the novelty of our time and the processes of life. It may be that we are only beginning to realise that perestroika is a truly revolutionary, transforming process.

More than that, comrades, I am convinced that the novelty of our movement will yet spring more than one surprise on us. So what should we do—panic and make haste with assessments and conclusions? No, comrades, we must profoundly study life as it is, display self-control and on the basis of a thorough analysis adopt correct and well-considered final decisions in the interests of our society, in the interests of socialism.

I stand for thoroughly considered, profound and consistent work in this direction. As the party of Lenin, as a powerful political body, we should set in motion our entire intellectual potential and advance step by step in questions of theory, enriching policy and practice. In turn, drawing on the new experience, we should think it over and open the way to further activity, consistently implementing the political course worked out by the CPSU.

We should clearly see that the old approaches do not apply to new phenomena.

And the most important thing—in the struggle for perestroika let us not lose our way in what really counts, let us not get lost in minor details and waste time and effort on trifles.

In a new endeavour losses are inevitable and they should not be ignored. But our own experience has already demonstrated that only resolute and real advance along the road of revolutionary transformations sweeps away those questions which only yesterday seemed unsolvable and even menacing.

Of course, all this requires of us intellectual work, creative activity, constant attention to the entire spectrum of phenomena that are generated every day by perestroika. Everybody should understand this and time must be found, because otherwise we will inevitably fall behind and life could outstrip us. We simply have no right to allow this

to happen if we really want to be a political vanguard in our revolutionary times.

These were some ideas on executing the Conference's decisions.

Let's discuss the proposals submitted for consideration by the Plenary Meeting.

On the whole, as you can see, we have a challenging programme. It stems from the pressing need to further perestroika and has been determined by the decisions of the 27th Party Congress and the 19th All-Union Party Conference.

We need fundamental shifts in every aspect of society's renewal, above all in solving the vital problems in the life of Soviet people. This is a cause for every Party organisation and every communist.

Vesting the local level with appreciable powers and creating possibilities of encouraging socio-political, economic and labour initiative, we thereby also delegate Party responsibility and personal accountability of communists for work in specific areas of perestroika.

Now is the time to act. And the contribution of every communist and every worker to perestroika is determined by his work and the actual results of that work.

RESOLUTIONS



ON PRACTICAL WORK TO IMPLEMENT THE DECISIONS OF THE 19TH ALL-UNION CONFERENCE OF THE CPSU

1. The Central Committee of the CPSU notes that the 19th All-Union Conference of the CPSU, which has been a major event in the life of the Party and the country, has adopted decisions which will make it possible to accelerate considerably the processes of perestroika, of radical economic reform and the drive for more democracy in Soviet society.

The debate on the report of the CPSU Central Committee and the other documents of the Conference, which was marked by high activeness of the delegates, was of a frank and principled character, and was permeated with great concern for the good of the people and the destiny of socialism. Many proposals have been expressed and tabled for the elimination of the shortcomings which stand in the way of perestroika and contain the processes of renovation, and for reforming the political system and further democratising the life of society and the Party. A considerable part of the remarks and practical observations concern urgent matters pertaining to the activities of the work collectives, improving supplies to the population, accelerating the development of all fields of the services for the working people.

The Central Committee of the CPSU has made it incumbent upon the Party organisations to concentrate on the practical implementation of the guidelines of the Conference, make sure that their implementation should become the core of the Party's work, of work by all the

government and community organisations, and should encourage people to act to the full extent of their energy and with utmost responsibility for the work entrusted to them. Initiative and good organisation by communists are of vital significance, implying an active stand by each Party member for constructive resolution of any problems arising, assertion of new approaches in the political, economic, social and cultural fields and effort to combat shortcomings, bureaucracy, slackness and irresponsibility. All of this work should be done specifically and persistently, pressing ahead for weighty results.

2. The Central Committee of the CPSU:

Approves the proposals drawn up by the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee on measures to improve food supplies in the country, and the guidelines for further developing and perfecting economic relations in the agribusiness;

Considers it expedient that the USSR Council of Ministers, the Councils of Ministers of the Union and autonomous republics, the executive committees of territorial and regional Soviets of People's Deputies, the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of the Union republics, territorial and regional Party committees should outline and implement on the basis of these proposals specific measures to improve food supplies in the country;

Takes note of the fact that, in keeping with the recommendations of the 19th All-Union Party Conference, the USSR Council of Ministers has drawn up proposals on measures to develop and deepen the radical economic reform and eliminate the shortcomings brought to light in the course of its implementation. The above-said proposals approved by the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee shall be made the basis of further work to carry out the radical economic reform;

Approves the draft decisions of the USSR government as tabled by the Council of Ministers on the questions raised at the 19th All-Union Party Conference pertaining to ensuring an increase in the output of consumer goods, improving the trade services for the population and radically restructuring the field of paid services.

3. The Central Committees of the Communist Parties of the Union republics, the territorial, regional, area, city and district Party committees and the communists working at the corresponding government bodies shall take practical steps at an early date with due account for the decisions of the 19th Party Conference on delimiting the functions of the Party committees and the Soviets of the People's Deputies. Ensure greater responsibility on the part of the Soviets for the socio-economic development of the territories, increasing their independence, give assistance to the Soviets in replenishing them with fresh blood, in organising work for the administration of the local affairs, and implementing the policy of the Party and the state. Exclude any adoption of joint resolutions by the Party committees and the executive-administrative bodies of the Soviets, and resolutely stop any attempts by members of the Party apparatus to interfere in the exercise of the powers by the bodies of the Soviets.

Approve the main directions of restructuring the Party apparatus and complete this work by the end of the current year.

4. Noting the importance of enhancing the activeness and strengthening independence in the work of the Party organisations, the Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee considers it necessary to implement without any additional instructions the demands of the CPSU Conference as regards democratising intra-Party relations, asserting everywhere the atmosphere of Party comradeship, free discussion of all issues, openness, collectivism, conscientious discipline, and personal responsibility. Special attention shall be drawn to overcoming the passiveness of a part of the Party members. Steadily increase demands relating to observance of the Party Rules. Change radically the work done by the elected bodies, which shall bear all responsibility for the state of things at Party organisations and shall persevere with the policy of perestroika.

The Plenary Meeting notes the fundamental significance of the upcoming report-and-election campaign in the Party. It shall proceed under the slogan of enhancing the Party role as the political vanguard of the people, mobilis-

ing the communists to carry out radical transformations in all fields of society's life, accelerating the country's socio-economic development. It is important that the spirit of the Party Conference, its democratic atmosphere and critical trend should spread to provincial organisations and combine the ideas of perestroika with practical activities by every Party organisation, with renovation of all Party life and democratisation of Party leadership ensured. Endorse the decision of the Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee "On Reports and Elections in Party Organisations".

5. It is necessary to carry out without delay legal and organisational measures for the reform of the political system.

To this end:

There shall be submitted for nation-wide discussions in October 1988 a Draft Law on Amendments and Supplements to the Constitution of the USSR and a Draft Law on the Election of the People's Deputies of the USSR, with elections to be held in March 1989. Simultaneously appropriate work shall be organised in the Union and autonomous republics so that the new republican and local bodies of state power start discharging their duties in December 1989. In drafting laws on amendments to the USSR Constitution and on elections it is necessary to proceed from the provisions contained in the report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 19th Party Conference, the resolutions adopted by it and the report by the Politburo of the Central Committee at the current Plenary Meeting.

The next session of the USSR Supreme Soviet shall examine on behalf of the CPSU Central Committee the tasks in perfecting the structure and activities of the bodies of state power and justice in the light of the decisions of the 19th All-Union Party Conference. A draft shall be submitted to the session on legislative acts and proposals on making amendments to the Constitution of the USSR in connection with the implementation of the reform of the political system, renovation of the electoral system in effect and restructuring the activities of the courts of law.

In keeping with the decisions of the Conference, a

Congress of the People's Deputies of the USSR should convene in April 1989 to elect the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and resolve other questions within its power pertaining to forming the all-Union state bodies. Then the USSR Supreme Soviet shall draft laws on youth, on the rights of the trade unions, on voluntary societies, on the governing bodies of public activities and other public associations, on the press and other legislative acts ensuing from the reform of the political system.

To enhance the role of the Soviets and fundamentally strengthen their legal and material-financial basis, in 1989 a law shall be drafted on the local self-government and local economy by using as its basis the principles of self-administration, self-financing, self-sufficiency and the linkage of regional interests with those of the whole state, strengthening the ties between the local Soviets and plants and collective farms, the councils of work collectives and public organisations. The said draft law shall be submitted for broad public discussion.

The Soviets at all levels shall press ahead for more democracy now, with the role of the deputies, of the standing committees and the deputy groups growing so that the guidelines of the 19th Party Conference on increasing control over the bodies of administration, on combating bureaucratism and on developing glasnost win through.

6. In the field of inter-ethnic relations, attention shall be concentrated on eliminating stagnant phenomena in the development of some regions, on stopping underestimation of the socio-economic and cultural requirements of the peoples and nationalities. It is necessary to oppose resolutely anti-perestroika forces who fan up nationalist and chauvinist passions. Carry out measures to strengthen the legal basis of inter-ethnic relations as was envisaged by the 19th Party Conference, to intensify ideological and political work, persevere in asserting socialist internationalism.

The Politburo of the Central Committee shall be instructed to prepare, jointly with the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of the Union republics, the corresponding territorial and regional Party committees and

research institutions, by the beginning of 1989 the necessary materials on questions pertaining to the perfection of inter-ethnic relations in the USSR for examination at a plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee.

7. By the middle of 1989 there shall be a reform of the judiciary, a restructuring in the activities of the procurator's offices, arbitration, investigatory authorities, the bar, the legal service in the economy and work for perfecting the criminal law. Juridical education shall be made broadly available for all. These measures are to be regarded as the first steps toward a large-scale legal reform and strengthening the foundations of the Soviet socialist legal state.

ON REPORTS AND ELECTIONS IN PARTY ORGANISATIONS

1. In accordance with the CPSU Rules and decisions of the 19th All-Union CPSU Conference, report-and-election meetings and conferences will take place before the end of this year in the CPSU's primary, district, city, area, regional and territorial organisations.

The Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee believes that the upcoming report-and-election campaign should mark an important stage in the practical implementation of the guidelines worked out by the 19th CPSU Conference to deepen perestroika, carry out the reform of the political system and further democratise the life of society and the Party. It is to promote in every way the activation of the Party masses, enhancement of the role and responsibility of the Party organisations and committees, and assert political methods of leadership in them. The revolutionary and democratic atmosphere of the Conference, its businesslike tenor, frankness and the acuity of the discussions held at it, irreconcilability to shortcomings, and the creative quest at the Conference for ways and means to make the renovation process irreversible, should penetrate all Party meetings and conferences.

2. The Central Committees of the Union Republics, the territorial, regional, area, city, district Party committees and the primary Party organisations are obliged to carefully prepare for the report-and-election campaign, to conduct it at a high ideological, political and organisational level, keyed by increasing the role of the Party

as the political vanguard of the people and by mobilising the communists to implement radical changes in all spheres of society, to accelerate the social and economic development of the country.

At the report-and-election meetings and conferences, there must be profound and comprehensive analysis of the progress in the implementation of the decisions of the 27th Party Congress, the state of the organisational, ideological and education work. A self-critical and principled approach should be taken when analysing the style and methods of activity of Party organisations and their elective bodies. Communists should concentrate on practical work toward the targets set by the 19th All-Union Party Conference.

Special attention should be given to a further organisational and political strengthening and upgrading of the role of the primary Party organisations, to improving the activity of communists in the Soviets of People's Deputies, trade unions, the Komsomol and other public organisations, to perfecting the selection, promotion and education of cadres.

The progress of the economic reform, the questions of the introduction of the new economic mechanism, of the assertion of the principles of cost-accounting and self-financing, of the development of socialist self-government at production should be profoundly and comprehensively discussed.

The process of reports and elections should be one of examining in detail the ways of the most rapid solution of the food problem, of clearly defining what needs to be done for this in a practical way in each region, in each work collective. Measures should be worked out to ensure effective utilisation of the possibilities of the collective- and state-farm production on the basis of developing different forms of contract, leasing and cooperation. It is also important to adopt a businesslike approach to discussing other urgent tasks: filling the market with high-quality consumer goods, increasing the scale of housing, public and cultural construction, bettering trade and the entire services sphere, improving health care, carrying out reform of the secondary and higher education, meeting

more fully the spiritual and cultural requirements of the working people.

Questions of ideological and internationalist upbringing of the Soviet people, especially the young, of fostering a conscientious and creative attitude to work, a profound awareness of the duty before society, irreconcilability to any manifestations of irresponsibility and bureaucratism.

3. The report-and-election campaign is called upon to make a maximum contribution to a further democratisation of all internal Party life, to foster in the Party organisations an atmosphere of creative discussion, freedom of opinion, broad criticism and self-criticism, greater initiative, personal responsibility and conscious discipline among the communists.

Guided by the decisions of the 19th All-Union Party Conference, it is necessary to ensure everywhere a broad discussion of candidatures and vote by secret ballot during the election of members and secretaries of Party committees, the full possibility for including in the ballots more candidates than the number of mandates, the implementation of the right of Party organisations to make proposals on candidatures to the higher Party body, on the understanding that the final decision belongs to the delegates of the corresponding conference.

It is important that the elections to the ruling bodies of the Party be conducted in a manner that would bring into them people truly active, with initiative and authority, capable of carrying perestroika forward not in words but in deeds, of competently working with the masses, achieving real, practical results. The report-and-election campaign should be used for replenishing the Party ranks with fresh blood, for consolidating various links of the Party leadership with politically mature, competent workers who possess good moral qualities.

The Plenary Meeting finds it necessary to put into effect the decision made by the 19th All-Union Party Conference to limit the holding of one and the same elective office in Party bodies to two five-year tenures, starting the count of tenures with the forthcoming report-and-election campaign. At the same time communists have the right to discuss and decide the question about every

leader on his personal merits, regardless of the time spent by him in office, and taking into account the way he tackled the responsibilities entrusted him and whether he is capable of achieving a qualitative improvement of his performance.

4. Reports and elections in Party organisations must take place in a situation of broad openness. The Central and local press, television and radio should give systematic coverage to the progress of meetings and conferences, their atmosphere, the issues raised by communists; provide the public with detailed information on the decisions adopted, the composition of the elected Party bodies; and show how the critical remarks and proposals are implemented.

5. The proposals of the local Party bodies shall be adopted on holding report-and-election meetings in primary Party organisations in September-October; of district, city and area conferences in October-November; of regional and territorial conferences in November-December of the current year.

6. The CPSU CC Politburo shall be instructed, with account for the discussion held at the Plenary Meeting, to approve the instruction on elections to the leading Party bodies.

ON THE MAIN DIRECTIONS OF RESTRUCTURING THE PARTY APPARATUS

The 19th All-Union Party Conference has found it necessary drastically to restructure the entire activity of the Party, to bring the forms and methods of the work of Party organisations in line with the CPSU's role of political vanguard of society and the new tasks. In this connection key importance is given to a clear-cut and consistent delimitation of the functions of Party committees and state, economic bodies, the overcoming of parallelism and duplication in their work, a radical change in the structure and improvement of the quality of the Party apparatus, and strict subordination and accountability of it to elective Party collegiums.

The Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee resolves:

1. To reorganise the apparatus of the CPSU Central Committee and the local Party bodies by the end of the current year, to reorganise its structure in accordance with the Party's functions in the present-day conditions with a view to discontinuing the practice of spreading out the apparatus piecemeal among branches of administration and to strengthen the departments that deal with the main questions of home and foreign policy. The overall number of personnel should be substantially reduced.

↳ To proceed from the premise that the Party apparatus, being an inalienable component part of the Party's organisational structure, is called upon to be an active force of perestroika, an instrument by means of which the

elective Party bodies exercise their political, organising and educational functions, conduct their current work to implement and verify fulfilment of adopted decisions and provide assistance to lower-standing organisations in their activity.

To use the reorganisation of the Party apparatus and the reduction of a part of its personnel for strengthening important sectors of state, economic and public activity, as well as lower-standing Party echelons. Special attention here should be given to strengthening the apparatus of the Soviets of People's Deputies and people's control bodies with due account for their new role in the political system.

To ensure active participation by primary Party organisations of the apparatus of Party committees in the implementation of its restructuring.

2. The CPSU Central Committee attaches prime importance to strengthening the political nature of the guidance effected by Party committees, to resolutely eliminating the methods of guidance by command and manifestations of technocratism in their activity, and to asserting democratic principles in Party and public life.

The ability to consistently implement the Party's line of the revolutionary renewal of society, to act creatively, by methods of ideological-educational and organisational work, without excessive wardship over lower-standing Party echelons and without fettering them, is now particularly required of Party committees. It is necessary to attentively study and sum up the practice of Party work in the new conditions, to analyse processes taking place in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres, to promote the dissemination of the best experience. The work of the Party apparatus should be increasingly marked by efficiency, openness, a critical attitude and daily links with the masses.

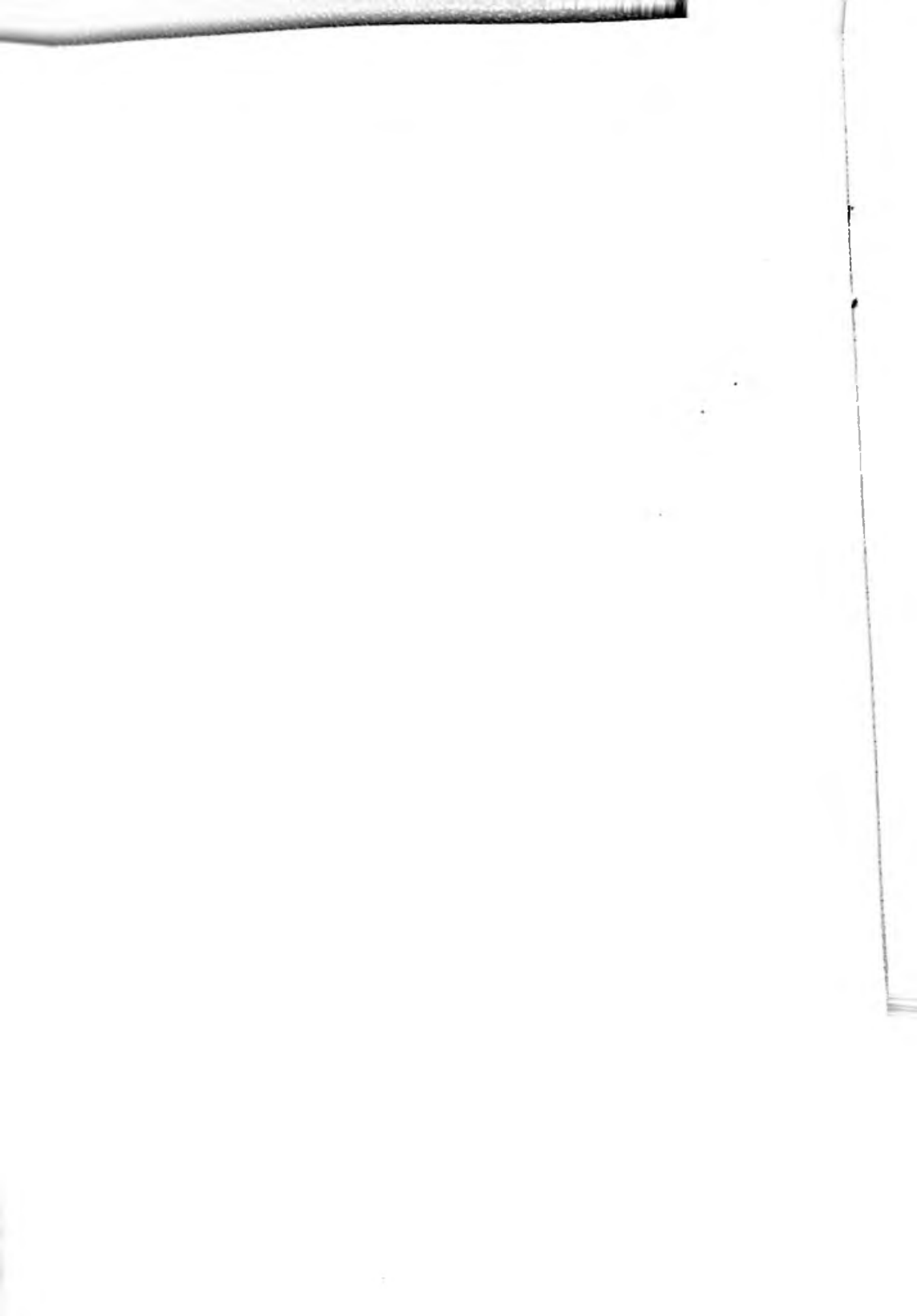
3. The Party committees, their bureaus and secretariats are obliged to devote more attention to the selection and nomination of personnel to the Party apparatus, staff it with politically mature, well-prepared communists who possess high moral qualities and are capable of organising work in a new way.

A recommendation of a primary Party organisation is

obligatory for the nomination of personnel to the Party apparatus. The Party organisation that recommended a communist to engage in Party work has the right to raise the question of relieving him of his post if he has not justified the trust shown in him.

It is necessary to support and develop in every way the initiative of members of the apparatus, to give them more assistance, to assert an atmosphere of Party comradeship, of equality by all communists before the Rules of the CPSU, resolutely to uproot elements of bureaucratism, manifestations of immodesty, communist self-conceit and servility.

4. To instruct the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee to study and approve a new structure for the apparatus of the Central Committee of the CPSU and also to determine the main echelons of the apparatus of local Party bodies while giving to the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of the Union Republics, the Party territorial and regional committees the right to independently solve the questions of the structure and staff of all Party committees and Party institutions with due account for the change in the functions and within the limits of the approved wages fund of the republican, territorial and regional Party organisations.



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29 июля 1988 г.
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на английском языке
Цена 20 к.
