

MIKHAIL
GORBACHEV

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and the Party's
Personnel
Policy**

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AND THE PARTY'S
PERSONNEL POLICY**

**The Report and Concluding Speech
by the General Secretary
of the CPSU
Central Committee**

**at the Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central
Committee
January 27-28, 1987.**

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REORGANIZATION AND THE PARTY'S PERSONNEL POLICY

**Report
by MIKHAIL GORBACHEV,
General Secretary of the CPSU Central
Committee,**

*at the Plenary Meeting of the
CPSU Central Committee
January 27, 1987*

Comrades,

The 27th Party Congress vested in us, the members of the Central Committee, an immense responsibility—to implement the strategic course of accelerating the socio-economic development of the country. The Political Bureau understands the situation and the role of the Central Committee at the current stage in the life of Soviet society precisely in this way.

Proceeding from this, the Plenary Meeting has put on its agenda a matter of paramount importance for the effective implementation of the political strategy drafted by the April 1985 Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee and the 27th CPSU Congress—the question of reorganization and the Party's personnel policy. We should consider it in a broad social and political context, with due regard for the lessons of the past, the nature of the current moment and the tasks of the future.

The April Plenary Meeting and the 27th Party Congress prepared the ground for an objective critical analysis of the situation in society and took decisions of historic importance for the country's future. We have begun reorganization and will not look back. The first steps on that road have been taken.

Drawing an overall political conclusion, we can say with confidence that major changes are taking place in the life of Soviet society and that positive tendencies are gaining momentum.

Before the Plenary Meeting, I myself and other Political Bureau members and Central Committee Secretaries had many meetings and conversations with members of the Central Committee, public figures, workers, collective farmers, intellectuals, veterans and young people. The overall tenor and meaning of what they had to say was unambiguous: the

policies for renovating our society should be firmly pursued and efforts redoubled in every area.

The Central Committee finds it significant that the policies of the 27th Congress, the practical efforts to implement them and reorganization itself have been broadly supported by working people and the entire Soviet people. This, comrades, is the most important thing for a ruling party.

At the same time, however, we see that the change for the better is taking place slowly, that the business of reorganization is more difficult and the problems which have accumulated in society are more deep-rooted than we first thought. The further we go with our reorganization work, the clearer its scope and significance become; more and more unresolved problems inherited from the past crop up.

The main evaluations of the state of society and the conclusions drawn from them by the Political Bureau have already been presented to the 27th Party Congress and Plenary Meetings of the Central Committee. They have been fully corroborated. But today we know more, that is why there is a need to examine once again and in detail the sources of the obtaining situation and to sort out the reasons for what took place in the country in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

This analysis is necessary to prevent mistakes from recurring and to fulfil the resolutions of the Congress on which the future of our people and the destiny of socialism depend. It is all the more important since there is still some misunderstanding in society and in the Party of the complexity of the situation in which the country has found itself. Perhaps, this also explains questions from some comrades about the measures that are being taken by the Political Bureau and the government in the course of reorganization. We are often asked if we are not taking too sharp a turn.

We need to be absolutely clear on all the vital issues, including this one. Only a deep understanding of the situation can enable us to find correct solutions to the complex tasks.

By and large, Comrades, there is an urgent need to return to an analysis of those problems which confronted the Party and Soviet society in the few years before the April 1985 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee. The experience of the past 18 months has bolstered our resolve to deepen that analysis, to comprehend the causes of adverse processes and to work out measures to accelerate our progress, to keep us from repeating mistakes and to allow us only

to advance, proving in practice socialism's organic ability to continuously renovate itself.

The Political Bureau believes that on the basis of this approach we should hold this Plenary Meeting.

1. REORGANIZATION IS AN OBJECTIVE NECESSITY

Comrades,

Our Plenary Meeting is taking place in the year of the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. Almost seven decades ago the Leninist Party raised over the country the victorious banner of socialist revolution, of struggle for socialism, freedom, equality, social justice and social progress and against oppression and exploitation, poverty and national discrimination.

For the first time in world history the working man and his interests and needs were made the focal point of state policy. The Soviet Union achieved truly historic successes in political, economic, social, cultural and intellectual development as it built socialist society. Under the leadership of the Party, the Soviet people built socialism, achieved victory over nazism in the Great Patriotic War, rehabilitated and strengthened the national economy and made their homeland a mighty power.

Our achievements are immense and indubitable and the Soviet people by right take pride in their successes. They constitute a firm base for the fulfilment of our current programmes and our plans for the future. But the Party must see life in its entirety and complexity. No accomplishments, even the most impressive ones, should obscure either contradictions in social development or our mistakes and failings.

We talked about all that and must repeat again today that at some point the country began to lose momentum, difficulties and unresolved problems started to pile up, and there appeared elements of stagnation and other phenomena alien to socialism. All that had a most adverse effect on the economy and social, cultural and intellectual life.

Of course, Comrades, the country did not cease to develop. Tens of millions of Soviet people were working hon-

estly and many Party organizations and our personnel were working actively in the interests of the people. All that held back the intensification of negative processes but could not avert them altogether.

A need for change was ripening in the economy and other fields—but it did not materialize in the political and practical work of the Party and the state.

What was the reason for that complex and controversial situation?

The main cause—and the Political Bureau considers it necessary to say so with utmost frankness at the Plenary Meeting—was that the CPSU Central Committee and the leadership of the country failed, primarily for subjective reasons, to see in time and in full the need for change and the dangerous growth of crisis phenomena in society, and to formulate a clear-cut policy for overcoming them and making better use of the possibilities intrinsic to the socialist system.

A conservative outlook, inertia, a tendency to brush aside all that did not fit into conventional patterns, and an unwillingness to come to grips with outstanding socio-economic problems prevailed in policy-making and practical work.

Comrades, the leading bodies of the Party and the state bear responsibility for all this.

The extent to which vital problems and contradictions and social tendencies and prospects were understood in many ways depended on the condition and progress of theory, on the atmosphere on the theoretical front.

Lenin's instruction that the value of a theory consists in its providing an exact picture "of all the contradictions that are present in reality" was often simply ignored. The theoretical concepts of socialism had remained largely unchanged since the 1930s-1940s, when the tasks being tackled by society were entirely different. Developing socialism, the dialectics of its motive forces and contradictions and the actual condition of society did not become the subject of in-depth scientific research.

The causes of this go way back and are rooted in that specific historical situation in which, because of circumstances that are well known, lively debates and creative ideas disappeared from theory and the social sciences while authoritarian evaluations and opinions became unquestionable truths, that could only be commented upon.

The practical forms of society's organization became ab-

solutized in a way. Moreover, such ideas were actually equated with the essential characteristics of socialism, viewed as immutable and presented as dogmas that left no room for an objective scientific analysis. An ossified concept of socialist relations of production appeared, and their dialectical interaction with the productive forces was underestimated. The social structure of society was viewed schematically, without the contradictions and dynamism of the various interests of its different strata and groups.

Lenin's ideas of socialism were interpreted simplistically and their theoretical depth and significance were often emaciated. This was true of such key problems as public ownership, relations between classes and nationalities, the measure of work and the measure of consumption, cooperation, methods of economic management, people's rule and self-government, struggle against bureaucratic abuses, the revolutionary transforming character of socialist ideology, the principles of education and upbringing, and guarantees for the healthy development of the Party and society.

Spurious ideas of communism and various prophecies and abstract views gained some credibility, which detracted from the historical significance of socialism and from the influence of socialist ideology.

This attitude to theory could not but have an adverse effect—and it did have one—on the social sciences and their role in society. It is a fact, comrades, that all manner of scholastic theorizing, which had nothing to do with anyone's interests or vital problems, were often even encouraged in the country, while attempts to make a constructive analysis and formulate new ideas were given no support.

This situation concerning theory had adversely affected the solution of practical problems. Outdated methods were perpetuated in the practice of management for decades, while some efficient economic forms, on the other hand, were groundlessly rejected. At the same time, relations that did not correspond to society's actual level of maturity and that sometimes came into conflict with its nature were being fostered in production and distribution. Production and labour incentives were actually oriented to quantitative, extensive growth.

Special mention should be made of socialist property. Control over those who managed it and how had slackened. Departmental and parochial attitudes eroded socialist pro-

perty, it became "no one's", free, belonging to no real owner, and in many cases was used to derive unearned income.

There was an incorrect attitude to cooperative property, which was viewed as something "second-rate" and having no future. All this had grievous consequences for agrarian and social policies, bred management by injunction in relations with collective farms and resulted in the abolition of producer cooperatives. There were also grave misconceptions about personal subsidiary holdings and individual labour, which did much economic and social harm as well.

Serious discrepancies kept piling up in planning. The authority of the plan as the main tool of economic policy was being subverted by subjective approaches, imbalances, instability, the striving to embrace everything down to trifles, and a host of sectoral and regional decisions, taken in circumvention of the plan and often without due regard for real possibilities. Plans were often short of scientific substantiation, they did not aim at outlining national economic proportions, proper care for the development of the social sphere and the accomplishment of many strategic tasks.

As a consequence, the huge advantage offered by the socialist economic system, primarily its planned character, was used inefficiently. In this situation irresponsibility struck root, and diverse bureaucratic rules and instructions were devised. Day-to-day practical activity was supplanted with decree-making, a show of efficiency and mountains of paperwork.

Misconceptions about the role of monetary-commodity relations and the operation of the law of value, and sometimes their direct opposition to socialism as something alien to it, led to voluntarist attitudes in the economy, to an underestimation of profit and loss accountability and to wage levelling, and bred subjective approaches to price formation, imbalances in money circulation and disregard for the regulation of demand and supply.

Restrictions of the rights of enterprises and associations in the use of profit and loss accountability principles had especially grave consequences. They undermined the foundations of material incentive, blocked the achievement of high end results, and led to a lowering of the people's labour and social activity and to a slackening of discipline and order.

In fact, a whole system that weakened the economic tools of government emerged and a mechanism that slowed socio-

economic development and hindered the progressive transformations which make it possible to tap and use the advantages of socialism. That retarding process was rooted in serious shortcomings in the functioning of the institutions of socialist democracy, outdated political and theoretical concepts, which often did not correspond to reality, and in the conservative managerial mechanism.

All that, Comrades, adversely affected the development of many spheres in the life of society. Take material production. The growth rates of the national income in the past three five-year plan periods dropped by more than half. From the early 1970s most plan targets were not met. The economy as a whole became cumbersome and little responsive to innovation. The quality of a considerable part of the output no longer met the current requirements and imbalances in production were aggravated.

Attention to the development of engineering was slackened. Research and development work fell behind the needs of the national economy and did not meet the modernization demands. Purchases of equipment and many other commodities on the capitalist market were excessive and far from always justified.

Negative processes seriously affected the social sphere. The 27th Party Congress has already appraised its condition. The social goals of the economy in the past few five-year plan periods were obviously diluted and there emerged a sort of deafness to social issues. We see today what all this has led to. Having successfully resolved the employment question and provided basic social guarantees, we at the same time failed to fully realize the potential of socialism for improving housing, food supply, transport, health care and education, and for solving other vital problems.

There were violations of the most important principle of socialism, distribution according to work. Struggle against unearned income was not determined enough. The policy of providing material and moral incentives for efficient work was inconsistent. Large, unjustified bonuses and fringe benefits were paid and figure-padding for profit took place. Parasitic sentiments grew stronger and the mentality of wage levelling began to take hold. All that hit those workers who could and wanted to work better, while making life easier for the lazy ones.

Violation of the organic relationship between the measure

of work and the measure of consumption not only warps the attitude to work, holding back the growth of productivity, but also leads to distortion of the principle of social justice—and that is a question of great political importance.

Elements of social corrosion that emerged in recent years have adversely affected society's morale and insidiously eroded the high moral values which have always been characteristic of our people and of which we are proud, namely, ideological conviction, labour enthusiasm and Soviet patriotism.

As an inevitable consequence of all this, interest in the affairs of society slackened, signs of amorality and scepticism appeared and the role of moral incentives in work declined. The section of people, including youth, whose ultimate goal in life was material well-being and gain by any means, grew wider. Their cynical stand acquired more and more aggressive forms, poisoned the mentality of those around them and triggered a wave of consumerism. The spread of alcohol and drug abuse and a rise in crime witnessed the decline of social mores.

Disregard for laws, report-padding, bribe-taking and encouragement of toadyism and adulation had a deleterious effect on the moral atmosphere in society. Real care for people, for the conditions of their life and work and for their social well-being was often supplanted with political flirtation—the mass distribution of awards, titles and prizes. An atmosphere of lenience was formed, and exactingness, discipline and responsibility declined.

Serious shortcomings in ideological and political education in many cases were disguised with ostentatious activities and campaigns and celebrations of numerous jubilees in the centre and in the provinces. The world of day-to-day realities and that of make-believe well-being were increasingly parting ways.

The ideology and mentality of stagnation had their impact on culture, literature and the arts. Criteria in appraising creative work were reduced. As a consequence, quite a few mediocre, faceless works, which did not give anything to the mind or the heart appeared along with works which raised serious social and ethical problems and reflected real-life collisions. Stereotypes from capitalist mass culture with its propagation of vulgarity, primitive tastes and moral bankruptcy began to infiltrate Soviet society to a greater extent.

I must mention here the responsibility of our ideological

agencies, editors of art and literary journals, leaders of creative unions, literary critics, men of letters and workers in the arts for the ideological and artistic orientation of the creative process and for the moral health of the people.

There was a lack of principle, exactingness and true care for fostering and encouraging talent in the work of the creative unions. Questions of paramount importance, relating to the state of affairs in and the condition of culture, often failed to get adequate attention from the leaders of the unions. At the same time, red-tape and formalism flourished and utter intolerance of criticism emerged. In some cases excessive ambitions took the upper hand over realistic appraisals and self-appraisals.

The situation was aggravated by the fact that the Party approach to art was often supplanted by unwarranted departmental interference in purely creative processes and by likes and dislikes based on personal preferences, while methods of ideological influence and guidance gave way to administration by decree.

Comrades,

The state of the Party and its personnel also affected the socio-economic and political situation that took shape in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Leading Party bodies failed to timely and critically appraise the danger of the growing negative tendencies in society and in the conduct of some Communists, and to take decisions which life was imperatively demanding.

Although possessing immense potentialities and acting virtually in all work collectives, many primary Party organizations failed to keep to positions of principle. Not all of them waged a resolute struggle against negative phenomena, permissiveness, mutual cover-up, slackening discipline and the spread of drunkenness. Departmentalism, parochialism and manifestations of nationalism were not always properly rebuffed.

Our Party organizations sometimes lacked a combative spirit, exactingness towards Party members and adequate attention to fostering ideological and political qualities in Communists. Meanwhile, high ideological standards, conscientiousness, readiness to subordinate one's personal interests to those of society and selfless service to the people, are the most valuable qualities which were always characteristic of the Bolsheviks.

The situation in the Party was also influenced by the fact

that in a number of cases the Party bodies did not attach proper attention to strict compliance with the Leninist principles and norms of Party life. This was especially manifest in breaches of the principles of collective leadership. What I mean is the weakening of the role of Party meetings and elective bodies. This denied Communists the opportunity of energetically contributing to the discussion of vital issues and, in the final analysis, of actually influencing the atmosphere in work collectives and in society as a whole.

The principle of equality between Communists was often violated. Many Party members in positions of leadership were outside of control or criticism. This resulted in failures in work and serious breaches of Party ethics.

We cannot overlook the just indignation of working people at the conduct of those senior officials, vested with trust and authority and called upon to stand guard over the interests of the state and citizens, who abused their authority, suppressed criticism, sought gain, and some of whom even became accomplices in, if not organizers of, criminal activities.

Adverse processes related to the degeneration of personnel and breaches of socialist laws manifested themselves in extremely ugly forms in Uzbekistan, Moldavia, Turkmenia, some regions of Kazakhstan, the Krasnodar Territory, the Rostov Region, and also in Moscow and some other cities, regions, territories and republics, and in the systems of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Naturally, Party organizations and the Party as a whole were fighting those phenomena and expelled from the CPSU a considerable number of renegades. Among them were people guilty of embezzlement, bribe taking and report-padding, people who violated state and Party discipline and indulged in heavy drinking.

The overwhelming majority of those who joined the Party are the best representatives of the working class, collective farmers and intelligentsia. They have been honestly and selflessly performing their Party duty. Yet we should admit that in those years there was no strong barrier put up to stop dishonest, pushing, self-seeking people who were intent on benefitting from their Party membership. We deviated to some extent from the rule that the main thing is not the number of new members but the quality of the Party ranks. This told on the combative spirit of our Party organizations.

Everything said above, Comrades, shows how serious the situation has become in different spheres of society and how urgent was the need for deep change. This makes it all the more important to stress once again that the Party found the strength and courage to take a realistic look at the situation, to recognize the need for drastic changes in policy, in the economy and social, cultural and intellectual fields, and to steer the country onto the road of transformations.

In this situation, Comrades, the question of accelerating the socio-economic development of the country, the question of reorganization was raised. The case in point is actually a radical turn and measures of a revolutionary character. As we talk about reorganization and associated processes of deep-going democratization of society, we mean truly revolutionary and comprehensive transformations in society.

We must make this decisive turn because there is no other choice. We must not retreat and there is no place to retreat to. We must consistently and unswervingly steer the course charted by the April Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee and the 27th Congress, go further and raise society to a qualitatively new development level.

When starting any social change, it is important, as Lenin advised, to see "how is this change to be explained and what are the limits of its practical application." Criticism of the past—an important element of progress—makes it possible to draw lessons and conclusions for today and tomorrow and facilitates constructive work in choosing the right ways and means for making headway. We have evolved a scientifically valid strategy of acceleration clearly realizing that any rashness or spontaneity in shaping the notions of the future are no less dangerous than inertia and dogmatic distortions.

Today it is essential to say once again what we mean by reorganization.

Reorganization is a resolute overcoming of the processes of stagnation, destruction of the retarding mechanism, and the creation of dependable and efficient machinery for expediting the social and economic progress of Soviet society. The main purport of our strategy is to combine the achievements of the scientific and technological revolution with a plan-based economy and set the entire potential of socialism in motion.

Reorganization is reliance on the creative endeavour of the masses, an all-round extension of democracy and socialist self-government, the encouragement of initiative and self-

organized activities, better discipline and order, greater openness, criticism and self-criticism in all fields of public life, and full and proper respect for the value and dignity of the individual.

Reorganization is the ever greater role of intensive growth factors in Soviet economic development, the reinstatement and enhancement of the Leninist principles of democratic centralism in the management of the national economy, the employment of cost-benefit methods of management everywhere, the renunciation of the domineering style of management and administration by injunction, the transition of all elements of the economy to the principles of full-scale profit and loss accountability and new forms of organizing labour and production, and every kind of incentive for innovation and socialist enterprise.

Reorganization is a decisive turn to science, the business-like partnership of science and practice to achieve the best possible end results, an ability to ground any undertaking on a sound scientific basis, a readiness and keen desire on the part of scientists to actively support the Party's policy of revitalizing society, and a concern for scientific advancement, for increasing the number of research personnel, and for making them actively involved in the process of change.

Reorganization is the priority development of the social sphere, ever fuller satisfaction of the Soviet people's demands for adequate working and living conditions, recreational facilities, education and medical services. It is an unflinching concern for raising the intellectual and cultural standards of every person and of society as a whole. It is also the ability to combine decision-making on the major, cardinal problems of public life with that on the current issues of immediate interest to the people.

Reorganization means vigorously ridding society of any deviations from socialist morals, a consistent enforcement of the principles of social justice, harmony between words and deeds, indivisibility of rights and duties, the promotion of conscientious, high-quality work, combatting the wage-levelling tendencies and overcoming consumerism.

The final aim of reorganization is, I believe, clear: it is to effect thorough-going changes in all aspects of public life, to give socialism the most advanced forms of social organization, and bring out to the utmost the humane nature of our system in all decisive aspects—economic, social, political and moral.

This is, Comrades, the job we have started. The reorganiz-

ation is getting under way everywhere. It is acquiring a new quality, not only gaining in scope but also penetrating the deepest fibres of our life.

The drive for change has stirred all healthy forces in society to action and given people confidence in what they are doing. An objective and self-critical attitude to the state of things, a departure from the cut-and-dried, well-beaten ways of going about their work, and the search for new, uncommon approaches to problems have become typical of more and more Party committees, public organizations and work collectives. We feel the solid and decisive backing of workers and peasants, intellectuals in the arts, science and engineering, of all sections of Soviet society.

A new moral atmosphere is taking shape in the country. A reappraisal of values and their creative rethinking is under way, debates have started on ways of reorganizing the economy and social and cultural life, and the quest for new methods of organizational and ideological work is gaining in scope. Openness and candour in appraising phenomena and developments, intolerance of shortcomings, and the desire to secure improvements are increasingly affirming themselves as effective principles of life.

A more exacting attitude is developing, discipline and production organization are improving, and more order is being introduced. The first steps in reorganizing cultural and intellectual life are especially important to us, comrades, because we cannot hope to succeed without decisively changing public consciousness and remoulding mentality, thinking and moods.

We have begun to overhaul the material and technological base and the national economy on the basis of progress in research and engineering, and to update structural and investment policies. Far-reaching goal-oriented programmes have been adopted in the decisive areas of scientific and technological progress. These programmes have been taken into account in drawing up the 12th five-year plan which is now being fulfilled.

Large-scale measures are being implemented to improve management. From the start of this year all industrial enterprises and amalgamations have been switched over to experimentally tried-and-tested methods of economic management. A number of industries, enterprises and amalgamations have started working on the principles of full-scale profit and loss accountability and self-financing.

The sectors of the economy directly involved in meeting

the people's needs such as the agro-industrial sector, light industry, trade and the services have begun operating on principles that give them more leeway, while increasing their responsibility. A fundamental change is taking place in the way the capital construction industry is run. A state quality control system has been introduced at 1,500 major factories to improve product quality.

The system of foreign economic activities is being restructured. The rights of enterprises and industries in this field have been extended. New forms of cooperation, including direct relations between enterprises, joint ventures, and specialized-production and co-production schemes with foreign partners, are continuing to gain ground.

With the aim of adopting an integrated economic management system, standing bodies have been set up at the USSR Council of Ministers to manage groups of interrelated industries. A Law on State Enterprise (Amalgamation) has been drafted and work is proceeding to draw up documents on ways of optimizing the functions of central economic bodies, ministries and departments to fit in with the new economic mechanism, and to formulate proposals on organizing new forms of large production units based on individual and amalgamated factories and operating on profit and loss accountability principles, and on a number of other important matters.

Fundamental measures are being introduced to improve things in the social field. New principles have been worked out, and are being implemented, for raising pay in productive spheres. We have taken a resolute course for abandoning wage-levelling and are consistently adhering to the socialist principle of distribution in accordance with the quantity and quality of one's work. At the same time unwarranted restrictions on individual enterprise have been lifted and favourable conditions are now being provided to promote this kind of activity. People are being encouraged to set up cooperatives in various areas of production and services to meet consumer demand more fully.

On the strength of an analysis of the situation in housing construction and considering the programme task of providing every family with a self-contained apartment by the year 2000, extra reserves have been found to quicken the pace, and improve the quality, of home building. An additional 10 per cent of capital investments are being earmarked for this purpose, which will make it possible as early as 1987 to

increase the amount of housing construction by 9.1 million square metres, or nearly 8 per cent over the five-year plan targets.

The scale of home building undertaken by cooperatives and individuals is growing. Easy-term credits are being offered and the necessary resources made available, and measures are being adopted to promote the cost-benefit method of building homes by factories from their own funds and to increase the capacity of the construction industry.

A programme has been drawn up for building and modernizing health institutions, more facilities have been built to produce medicines and medical equipment, and efforts to introduce and promote new forms of health services and develop medical science have been stepped up. Measures have also been taken to improve people's working and living conditions, to extend the system of preventive treatment, eradicate drunkenness and alcoholism, and reduce morbidity. The pay of medical personnel is also being increased.

So, even a brief review of the work that has been planned and started, Comrades, demonstrates the immense scale of the reorganization effort under way throughout the country. The amount of work facing us is enormous but it cannot be otherwise. The Party does not have the right to reduce its attention to any aspect of the projected changes. All plans must be carried out without fail, to the point and on time.

Certainly, some of the measures we're working out and implementing will only yield practical results after some time. But even today the very atmosphere and the public mood are already changing attitudes to work and yielding tangible results.

This is borne out, among other things, by the results of work to fulfil the plan for the first year of the current five-year plan period. National income went up 4.1 per cent as against the planned 3.9 per cent and the annual average of 3.6 per cent in the previous five years. Industrial output grew 4.9 per cent, which is a third more than the average annual increase in the previous five-year period and makes the highest growth rate for the past nine years.

You know that the 12th five-year plan period is of decisive importance to us as far as modernizing the country's engineering sector, updating production assets and accelerating scientific and technological progress are concerned. Those charged with ensuring the priority development of the engineering sector have had to cope with great difficulties, but

nevertheless headway is being made. In the past year the production of industrial robots went up 14 per cent, that of flexible automated production systems 160 per cent, production modules 120 per cent, and machining centres 40 per cent. Capital investment in retooling and reconstruction of existing engineering factories grew 30 per cent. The Political Bureau will see to it that the engineering sector programme is being implemented. We hope that machine-builders will cope with the tasks set.

Things are looking up also in a number of other industries. Last year's showings in the iron and steel, coal mining and gas industries were not bad. The lag in oil production is also being overcome.

Labour productivity in industry rose 4.6 per cent over the plan target of 4.1 per cent. This increase accounted for 96 per cent of the gain in annual output. Production costs dropped noticeably for the first time in many years. The turnover rate of material assets went up, while the stocks of uninstalled plant, including imported equipment, were reduced.

Improvements in the agrarian sector are there for all to see. As compared with the average annual harvests in the past five-year period, grain production in 1986 increased by almost 30 million tons, or 17 per cent, potatoes by nearly 9 million tons, or 11 per cent, sugar beet close on 3 million tons, or 4 per cent, meat by 1.5 million tons, or 9 per cent, milk by 6.5 million tons, or 7 per cent, and eggs by almost 6,000 million, or 8 per cent.

As you can see, Comrades, agricultural output has begun to grow, something we have not seen in the key indicators for many years. However, it must be said that the output growth of such products as vegetables, fruits, sunflower and cotton was either insignificant or nil.

It is also important to note the improvement of the main financial and economic indicators in the performance of collective and state farms. Labour productivity in the socialized economy increased during the year by 6.9 per cent, the profit rate amounted to 19 per cent and profits went up by two billion roubles.

While acknowledging the favourable changes in economic development, it should be noted, however, that the target for the growth of national income to be used for consumption and accumulation was not met because of big losses, non-productive outlays and the non-fulfilment of assignments for expanding trade turnover.

The growth of such key figures as real per capita incomes, gross agricultural output, consumer goods manufacture, capital investments, utilization of fixed assets in production and profit fell short of the plan assignments despite a substantial increase over the previous year. Neither have there occurred serious changes in the investment process. Only two-thirds of the projects of the state plan were put into service.

Changes in the social sphere have begun after all, but with great difficulty. The number of accidents and loss of working time have declined for the first time since the 1960s after the measures taken to strengthen discipline and combat alcohol abuse. The total number of crimes has dropped by almost a quarter and the number of grave crimes by a third. The fight against violations of law and order has been intensified everywhere.

The volume of housing construction has grown, surpassing the 1985 figure by 5.2 million square metres. More kindergartens and nurseries, schools, outpatient clinics and hospitals, cultural institutions and service establishments have been built.

In short, there have been favourable changes. But the weight of the outstanding problems in this important sphere is too great and we are still too timid in tackling them.

As you know, it was with great difficulty that reserves were found to expand the construction of housing, cultural institutions and service establishments. But, alas, not everyone made proper use of these possibilities. Many construction plans were not fulfilled. The reasons for this should be sought not only in the poor organization of builders' work but also in insufficient attention on the part of enterprises, ministries, local Soviets and Party committees.

We still have difficulties with trade in foodstuffs and manufactured goods, with urban transport and the utilities, with institutions of public health care and culture. In short, we have not yet achieved fundamental changes in the development of the social sphere and remain largely in the power of old approaches.

Concluding my description of the work carried out by the Party, by the entire people to implement the decisions of the 27th Congress, I would like to say the following. It is very important that we, members of the Central Committee, take a realistic stand and objectively assess what has been accomplished, that we view the obtained results not just from past positions, but above all proceeding from our announced plans

and promises made to the people. This is the only correct Party approach.

We must clearly realize that we are only at the initial stage of the restructuring. The most important and complex work is yet to come. We must advance step by step, persistently and without wavering. We must soberly assess what has been done and not be afraid to rectify mistakes. We must search for and find new ways and means of solving tasks as they arise and definitely achieve progress towards the goals that have been set.

We should absolutely learn from the lesson of the past, that is, allowing no gap to form between decisions and the practical work for their implementation. There should be no conceit or self-complacency. I am saying this once again because we are still encountering this even now. We must act, act and act again—vigorously, boldly, creatively and competently.

The need to pose the question in this way is dictated by the fact that to this day in many economic, government, state and even Party bodies, and in the work collectives themselves far from everyone is marching in step with the demands being set by life. Many people are slow to cast off the burden of the past, are adopting a wait-and-see attitude and openly putting a spoke in the wheel, impeding the extensive development of the people's political, public and labour activity.

Not everyone has understood that working in the new way means to resolutely give up old habits and methods. In the long run, this depends on the civic stand of every person, on a conscientious attitude to one's job and duties, and we all have a responsibility for this towards the Party, the country and our own conscience.

Meetings and conversations with working people, with Party and economic personnel show that the reorganization is receiving ardent support. It can be said that the people are all for it. But what stands out is that many people, while supporting innovations, believe that the reorganization must take place somewhere higher up, that this has to be done by others—by Party, state and economic bodies, other sectors of the economy, allied enterprises, by others in the factory shop, on the farm or construction site. In short, that this must be done by everybody except themselves.

No, Comrades, while justly demanding reorganization at every level, each of us must begin with himself. All of us—workers, collective farmers, intellectuals, in short everybody,

from those in work collectives to the Central Committee of the CPSU and the government must work in a new way—vigorously, creatively and, I repeat, conscientiously.

In the immense undertaking of reorganization, we, Communists, rely above all on a high degree of consciousness and organization, social initiative and the major labour accomplishments of the working class, the leading political force of our society.

While highly appraising the Party's course of reorganization, the working class and all Soviet people at the same time are concerned about the course of its practical implementation. They call on the Party not to stop, but to act resolutely, to advance and steadfastly follow the adopted course. From this, Comrades, we must draw political conclusions.

The existence of this concern in society means that our efforts are still insufficient, that we are not yet acting with the necessary effectiveness and vigour everywhere and in everything. It means that the measures that are being taken and the work that is being done do not always accord with the scope and acuteness of the accumulated problems, that not everything is being done as well as the times demand. This means, Comrades, that the Central Committee has enough reason for thinking things over and drawing the appropriate conclusions.

We understand, of course, that the process of overcoming existing stereotypes of thinking and acting is a complex and painful process requiring time and a balanced approach.

It is absolutely clear that this process cannot proceed autonomously, isolated from the transformations going on in political, socio-economic, and cultural and intellectual life.

We must clearly realize that today a whole system of measures is needed. This includes the formulation of theoretical provisions based on the realities of our time and a deeply substantiated scientific forecast of the future, changes in social consciousness and consistent development of democratic institutions, the fostering of the political culture of the masses and reorganization of the mechanism of economic management, of organizational structures and, of course, the pursuance of a vigorous social policy.

This is the only way to remove the brake on progress and give the necessary scope to the forces of acceleration.

I think today's Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee should tell the Party and the people that a difficult struggle

lies ahead, requiring of every Communist and every citizen a high degree of consciousness and organization, stamina and utmost selflessness.

Comrades, the analysis of the state our society was in on the eve of the April Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee and the experience of reorganization have raised an acute and most important question. Do we have guarantees that the process of transformations that we have started will be continued to the end, that the past mistakes will not be repeated, and we'll be able to ensure the comprehensive development of our society?

The Political Bureau answers these questions in the affirmative: yes, we have such guarantees.

These are the united will, the joint actions of the Party and people united by past experience, by awareness of their responsibility for the present and the future of the socialist homeland.

These are the all-round development of the democracy of the socialist system, the real and ever more active participation of the people in solving all questions of the country's life, full restoration of the Leninist principles of openness, public control, criticism and self-criticism, and sincerity in policy consisting in the unity of words and deeds.

Finally, these are the healthy development of the Party itself, its ability to critically analyze its own activity, to update the forms and methods of its work, to determine, on the basis of revolutionary theory, the prospects of society's development, and to work for accomplishing the new tasks life poses.

It is the promotion of socialist democracy, the creative endeavour of Soviet people, the vanguard role of Communists in practical deeds that will ensure both the success and the irreversibility of the revolutionary transformations charted by the 27th Congress.

II. TO PROMOTE SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOP THE PEOPLE'S SELF- GOVERNMENT

Comrades,

We now understand better than before the profundity of Lenin's thought about the vital, inner link between socialism and democracy. The entire historical experience of our

country has convincingly demonstrated that the socialist system has in practice ensured citizens' political and socio-economic rights, their personal freedoms, revealed the advantages of Soviet democracy and given each person confidence in the morrow.

At the time of reorganization, when the task of stimulating the human factor has become so pressing, we must recall once again Lenin's stand on the question of the maximum democracy of the socialist system under which people feel that they are their own masters and creators.

"We must be guided by experience, we must allow complete freedom to the creative faculties of the masses," Lenin said.

Indeed, democracy the essence of which is the power of the man of labour is the form of realizing his extensive political and civil rights, his interest in transformations and practical participation in their implementation.

Simple and lucid thought is becoming increasingly entrenched in social consciousness: a house can be put in order only by a person who feels that he owns this house. This truth is valid not only in the worldly but also in the socio-political sense. And it must be steadily translated into life. I repeat, translated into life, otherwise the human factor will lose its effectiveness.

It is only through the consistent development of the democratic forms inherent in socialism and more extensive self-government that our progress in production, science and technology, literature, culture and the arts, in all areas of social life is possible. It is only this way that ensures conscientious discipline. The reorganization itself is possible only through democracy and due to democracy. It is only this way that it is possible to open broad vistas for socialism's most powerful creative force—free labour and free thought in a free country.

Therefore, the further democratization of Soviet society is becoming the Party's urgent task. This, in effect, is the essence of the course charted by the April Plenary Meeting and the 27th CPSU Congress for promoting people's socialist self-government. The point at issue is, certainly, not any break-up of our political system. We should use with maximum effectiveness all its potentialities, fill the work of the Party, the Soviets and the government bodies, public organizations and work collectives with deep democratic content, breathe new life into all cells of the social organism.

This process is already under way in the country. The life of the Party organizations is becoming more full-blooded. Criticism and self-criticism are broadening. The mass media have begun working more actively. The Soviet people can sense the beneficial effect of openness, which is becoming a norm of society's life.

The congresses of creative unions were held in a principled and critical atmosphere. New public organizations are being set up. The All-Union Organization of War and Labour Veterans has come into being. The Soviet Cultural Fund has been set up. Work is under way to set up women's councils. All these facts indicate the growing participation of the working people in social affairs, in the administration of the country.

What ways does the Political Bureau see to further deepen democracy in Soviet society?

We will be able to boost people's initiative and creativity effectively if our democratic institutions have a strong and real influence on the state of things in every work collective, be it in terms of planning, labour organization, distribution of material and other benefits, or selection and promotion of the most respected and competent people to leading positions. It can be said with certainty that the sooner every Soviet citizen experiences these changes for himself, the more active his civic stance and participation in all public and state affairs will be.

Of paramount importance is the development of democracy in production and the consistent implementation of the principles of working people's self-management. The economy is the decisive area of society's life. Tens of millions of people are daily engaged in it. Therefore the development of democracy in production is the most important trend in deepening and broadening socialist democracy in general. This is the lever that will enable us to ensure the broad and active participation of the working people in all areas of social life and make it possible to avoid many errors and miscalculations.

The creation of conditions and introduction of forms of production organization that will enable all working people to feel themselves real masters of their enterprises are the most important tasks. To be a real master is a lofty and responsible position. While giving extensive rights to actually run the affairs, it imposes great responsibility for all that is happening in one's work collective.

Diverse forms of working people's participation in pro-

duction management have asserted themselves in the course of socialist construction. The life of work collectives is unthinkable without the Party, trade union, Young Communist League and other public organizations. The role of workers' meetings and collective agreements has been growing of late. New forms of democracy have originated, such as the councils of production teams and workshops. Conditions have become ripe for further steps along the same lines.

Life itself made the need for drawing up a fundamental legal act, such as the Law on the State Enterprise whose draft has already been issued to you, the order of the day. This law is designed to radically change the conditions and methods of management in the main section of the economy, to consolidate the combination of the principle of planning and full-scale profit and loss accountability, independence and responsibility in the activities of enterprises, and to give the new forms of self-administration, born of the creativity of the masses, a legal basis.

The Law is intended to put one of the most important directives of the Party Congress into practice, namely, the course towards a more effective use of direct democracy. Under the draft Law, the powers to be given to the general meetings and councils of work collectives in dealing with questions bearing on production, social and personnel affairs, will be a major political measure towards, as V. I. Lenin put it, "genuine self-government by the people".

The consistent implementation of the Law on the State Enterprise in combination with the package of measures being implemented in the economic field will, we believe, create an altogether new situation in the economy, will accelerate economic development and lead to the qualitative improvement of many aspects of social life. Considering the tremendous significance of this Law, the Political Bureau proposes that it be submitted for nationwide discussion. I believe that the members of the Central Committee will support this proposal.

Our collective farms and socialist cooperation in general have broad potentialities that are still far from being fully used for democratizing management of the economy and the social sphere. The restructuring of the administration system in the agro-industrial complex and the decision to further develop cooperation in other sectors of the national economy create good prerequisites for making use of these potentialities. In this connection we think it would be advisable to

convene a congress of collective farmers to discuss the outstanding problems concerning the life of collective farms and make the necessary amendments to the Model Collective Farm Charter.

The Political Bureau energetically supports the practical steps already taken in many republics, territories and regions to more widely introduce other cooperative forms of activity. This will make it possible to meet even more fully the growing demand of the population for many commodities and services, and also create additional conditions for the development of democracy in the economic field and the better realization of man's possibilities.

It is necessary, Comrades, to resolutely overcome the past and present doubts about the cooperative movement. Cooperation, far from having exhausted its potentialities, has great prospects.

Why am I returning to this issue and laying accent on it? Because after the 27th Congress of the CPSU, despite the decisions taken by the Central Committee and the government on the development of cooperation in the field of material and technical supply, everyday services and public catering, the municipal economy, local industry and construction, this matter has not been given proper scope. All sorts of obstacles are being raised in its way, the commitment to administrative-bureaucratic methods of management is still strong, as is the rejection of forms of management, which are out of tune with the traditional concepts, even if these are vital and stimulate the initiative of working people and enhance their social activeness.

Some comrades apparently find it hard to understand that the enhancement of democracy is not just a slogan but the essence of the reorganization. They must change their views and habits so as not to find themselves aside from the mainstream of life. This is our insistent advice to all who are still doubting and slow.

It is necessary to concentrate on the question of the electivity of heads of enterprises, factories, workshops, departments, sectors, farms and teams, team leaders and foremen. The current stage in restructuring, the transition to new methods of economic management, profit and loss accountability, self-financing and self-repayment make that task a very practical one. This is an important and urgent measure, and it will undoubtedly have working people's approval.

We have embarked in a big way on the path of transfer-

ring enterprises to full-scale profit and loss accountability, self-financing and self-repayment; we have introduced state quality control. This means that the profits of enterprises, all forms of incentives for the members of the work collective, the degree to which social demands are met will totally depend on the end results of their work, the quality and quantity of the products made and the services rendered.

Under these circumstances workers and collective farmers will be far from indifferent as to who heads the enterprise, workshop, sector or team. Since the well-being of the collective is made dependent on the abilities of the managers, the working people should also have a real say in their appointment and control their activities.

Certain experience in open, public selection of management has been gained in the country. For instance, more than eight and a half thousand senior executives have been promoted in the Krasnodar Territory since 1983 with due regard for the opinions of collectives and primary Party organizations. Over two hundred candidates were not approved by the working people, and were rejected. The same kind of experience has also been acquired in a number of other places. It has been favourably received by the people and is having a good effect on the results of their work.

Comrades, to sum it up. From whatever angle we may approach this important matter, one conclusion begs of itself: the time has come for change, for democratizing the process of management selection at enterprises on the basis of all-round application of the electivity principle. This, as you understand, means a qualitatively new situation, a fundamentally different form of working people's participation in production management, an essential enhancement of the role and responsibility of the collective for the results of its activities.

All this should be taken into account in the course of the practical solution of that issue. However, I would like to convey one idea right now. The point at issue is one-man management. We think that electiveness, far from undermining, enhances the authority of the leader. He feels the support of the people who elected him. This enhances the feeling of responsibility for the matter on hand, and mutual exactingness in the collective.

The role of the Party and public organizations and economic management bodies should be comprehended in a new way. A great amount of work is to be carried out to inculcate

in all our personnel a correct understanding of the fact that extension of democracy in production presupposes an organic combination of one-man management and collective effort, promotion of democratic centralism and development of self-government.

The Political Bureau considers the advancement of the Soviet electoral system to be one of the main avenues in democratizing our life. Corresponding proposals are being drafted on that issue on the instructions of the 27th Congress.

What can be said here? The existing electoral system ensures representation for all sections of the population in the elective bodies of power. The working class, collective farmers, intellectuals, men and women, veterans and young people, all nations and nationalities in the country are represented in the present Soviets at all levels. The elective bodies reflect the social, professional and national structure of Soviet society and the diversity of the interests of the entire population. This in itself is an immense achievement of socialist democracy.

However, just as all political, economic and social institutions, the electoral system cannot remain unchanged and away from the reorganization and the new processes developing in society.

What is the essence of proposals and wishes on these matters, which people are sending to the CPSU Central Committee, the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet and to other central bodies and the mass media?

From the political point of view, it is a question of enhancing the democratic nature of the electoral system and of a more effective and real involvement of the electorate at all stages of the pre-election and election campaigns.

Concretely, most proposals suggest that voters at meetings in work collectives and at places of residence, as well as at election meetings, discuss, as a rule, several candidacies, that elections be held in larger constituencies, and that several deputies be elected from each of them. People believe that this would enable each citizen to express his attitude to a greater number of candidates and would enable Party and local government bodies to get to know better the sentiments and will of the population.

Responding to these wishes we should look anew at the way the elections themselves are organized and at the practice of nomination and discussion of candidacies for people's deputies. It is essential to rid the voting procedure of forma-

lism and to see to it that the election campaign of even this year be held in an atmosphere of broader democracy with the interested participation of the people.

As far as a legislative act on introducing amendments to the electoral system is concerned, it would be useful to publish its draft for nationwide preliminary discussion.

The implementation of these proposals would be the first major step towards the further democratization of the process of forming the bodies of state power and of their functioning. But, obviously, it is also necessary to consider deeper changes and further steps in this direction. With due regard for the experience gained and the new tasks we must once again make a thorough and profound analysis of Lenin's legacy on matters of Soviet state development and draw on it in solving the tasks facing society today.

It is quite natural that questions of promoting inner-party democracy should be considered within the overall framework of the further democratization of Soviet society.

At the 27th Congress a number of important provisions strengthening the democratic principles of Party life were introduced in amending the CPSU Rules. This work should be continued. It appears advisable to confer together on improving the mechanism for forming leading Party bodies.

Many different proposals have come to the Central Committee in this connection. Allow me to report on the conclusions which have been made by summing up the proposals.

To begin with, the formation of elective bodies in the primary Party organization. The gist of most proposals on this score is to give full scope to the expression of the will of all Communists without exception during the election of secretaries of Party bureaus and Party committees and to enhance their responsibility to those who elect them.

There is also a need to think of amending the procedure for the election of secretaries of district, area, city, regional and territorial Party committees, and the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of the Union republics. Here comrades suggest that secretaries, including first secretaries, could be elected by secret ballot at the plenary sessions of the respective Party committees. In such a case the members of the Party committee would have a right to enter any number of candidates in the voting list. Such a measure would greatly increase the responsibility of secretaries to the Party committees that elected them, giving them more confidence in their

work and making it possible for them to determine more accurately the degree of their authority.

Of course, the principle of the Party Rules, under which the decisions of higher bodies are binding on all lower Party committees, including those on personnel matters, must remain immutable in the Party.

The Political Bureau's opinion is that further democratization should also apply to the formation of the central leading bodies of the Party. I think this is quite logical. It would seem logical to democratize the elections of leading bodies in other public organizations as well.

Comrades, I think you will agree that all these measures will strengthen the principles of democratic centralism in the Party's life and will promote greater unity and cohesion of the Party ranks, tougher discipline, responsibility, and activity of each Communist, all Party organizations, and the Party as a whole.

The following questions will possibly arise: shall we not be complicating the procedure of the formation of elective bodies of the Party, to what extent is all this justified, and how much will it help?

Ever since the April Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee we have been continuously emphasizing that the problems which have accumulated in society are connected to a considerable extent with the drawbacks in the activity of the Party itself and in its personnel policy. The Political Bureau believes that the further democratization of the process of forming elective bodies is one of the important conditions for boosting Party activities, for the infusion of fresh blood, the active work of Party organizations, and a safeguard against a repetition of the errors of the past.

Elections within the Party are not a formal act, and we should approach their preparation in a well-thought-out way, in a spirit of great responsibility, proceeding from the interests of the Party and society.

The democratization of society poses in a new way the question of control over the work of the Party, local government, and economic bodies and their personnel. As far as control "from above" is concerned, marked changes, as you know, have occurred in this respect of late. So-called "forbidden subjects" for criticism and control are becoming a thing of the past. The Political Bureau and the Secretariat of the Central Committee at their meetings regularly hear reports by the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of the

Union republics, territorial and regional Party committees, and consider other fundamental questions of the life of the Party and society profoundly and comprehensively. The Council of Ministers of the USSR and its Presidium have become much more exacting to ministries and departments and to the Councils of Ministers of the Union republics.

Frankly speaking, the Political Bureau, the Secretariat of the Central Committee and the Government still have a lot to do in this respect. We still have to return to one and the same problem several times over and adopt additional measures to solve it. This has been vividly shown, in particular, by the discussion at the latest meeting of the Political Bureau on the course of implementing the resolutions of the Central Committee and the Council of Ministers of the USSR on accelerating the development of the engineering industry. We take the necessary decisions but, as before, we do not implement them to the full and on time. This happens also because many have not yet got rid of the burden of old habits and an irresponsible attitude to their duties. Discipline is lax. Far from all executives follow the principle of the unity of words and deeds, while others do more speaking than working. We must draw the most serious conclusions from this.

But with all the importance of control "from above", it is of fundamental importance in the conditions of the democratization of society to raise the level and effectiveness of control "from below" so that each executive and each official constantly feel their responsibility to and dependence on the electorate, on the work collectives, public organizations, on the Party and the people as a whole. The main thing in this respect is to create and strengthen all instruments and forms of real control by the working people.

What instruments and forms do I have in mind?

Accountability, first of all. The time has come to observe strictly the rules for systematic accountability of all elected and appointed officials before work collectives and the population. It is necessary that every such account be accompanied by lively and principled discussion, criticism and self-criticism and businesslike proposals, and end with an evaluation of the activities of the person giving an account of his work.

This would be the implementation of Lenin's demand that the work of elective bodies and executives be open to everyone and be done in sight of the people. If we achieve such control, there can be no doubt that many causes for

complaints and appeals to higher organizations will disappear, and most questions raised in them will be solved at the local level. In the conditions of extended democracy, people themselves will put things in order in their work collective, town, or village.

The Soviets of People's Deputies, trade unions and other public organizations have immense possibilities for control. In the Supreme and local Soviets it is necessary to strengthen the democratic principles of the work of the sessions, standing commissions and deputies and to raise the efficiency of regular accounts of officials to the Soviets and the practice of inquiries by deputies. Such an approach will even further augment the prestige of the bodies of people's power among the masses.

While perfecting control, it is necessary to regulate without delay the flow of all kinds of check-ups and inspections at enterprises, institutions and organizations, inspections which distract people from work and introduce an element of nervousness into the work. The actual value of such check-ups or inspections is, as a rule, negligible. These issues are not new. They have repeatedly been discussed and written about. But the state of affairs has not changed so far. Obviously, the Secretariat of the Central Committee and the Presidium of the Council of Ministers of the USSR should straighten out these matters, and follow the principle of quality, not quantity, with such inspections.

While normalizing the atmosphere in society, it is essential to further encourage openness. This is a powerful lever for improving work in all sectors of our development and an effective form of control by the whole people. The experience which has been gained since the April Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee is good proof of this.

Obviously, the time has come to begin elaborating legal acts guaranteeing openness. These should ensure maximum openness in the activities of state and public organizations and give the working people a real opportunity to express their opinions on any question of social life.

Criticism and self-criticism are a tested instrument of socialist democracy. There seems to be no open objection to this. However, in real life we encounter situations indicating that by no means everyone has become aware of the need to support critical-mindedness in society. Matters at times go so far that some officials regard even the slightest remarks as an encroachment upon their prestige and defend it in any

way they can. Then there are those officials, the more experienced ones, who admit the justness of criticism and even thank you for it, but are in no hurry to eliminate drawbacks, expecting to get away with things as usual.

Such an attitude to criticism has nothing in common with our principles and ethics. At the present stage, when we are asserting new approaches in socio-political life, in the cultural and intellectual sphere, the importance of criticism and self-criticism grows immeasurably. People's attitude to criticism is an important criterion of their attitude to reorganization, to everything new that is taking place in our society.

And here I cannot but say regretfully that we continue to encounter not only cases of non-acceptance of criticism but also facts of persecution for it, of direct suppression of criticism. Not infrequently this assumes such proportions and takes such forms that the Central Committee has to intervene in order to reestablish the truth and justice and to support honest people who take the interests of work close to heart. I have already spoken of this matter, but things are improving only slowly. Take, for instance, the central press reports for January and you'll see that the persecution of people for criticism is far from a rare thing.

In this connection we must support the efforts of the mass media to develop criticism and self-criticism in our society. Their position in the struggle for reorganization has been appreciated by Soviet people.

The readership of central newspapers and magazines has increased by over 14 million and Central TV programmes on topical subjects are attracting audiences of many millions. People are impressed by the bold and profound treatment of urgent problems which are involved in the acceleration of the country's socio-economic development and which cover all aspects of life in our society. The Party believes that the programmes of the mass media will continue to be marked by depth and objectivity and a high degree of civic responsibility.

Many things can be said about the positive changes taking place in the republican and local press. Far from all of them have joined in the work of restructuring. Some lack firmness of principle and boldness in raising questions, and a critical attitude to shortcomings. Many Party Committees sometimes fail to properly use the mass media, a powerful lever in the restructuring process. At some places they continue to restrain the mass media activity.

While continuing to count on principled and constructive

criticism of shortcomings and omissions, the Party expects the mass media to more widely publicize the experience gained by work collectives, Party, local government and economic bodies, public organizations and top officials in conditions of reorganization. We need answers badly to many of the burning problems reorganization has raised or will raise. We must all help in changing our ways more quickly and in the spirit of the time. As V. I. Lenin said, this organizing function of the press should be strengthened from day to day and it should learn in practice to be a collective agitator, propagandist and organizer of the masses.

There is one more question that must be made clear. In Soviet society there should be no zones closed to criticism. This refers in full measure to the mass media.

Comrades, there can be no real democracy outside the law or above the law. The 27th Congress of the Party laid down the main guidelines for the development of our legislation and for strengthening law and order. A great amount of work must be done in the current five-year plan period to prepare and adopt new laws, connected with the development of the economy, social life, culture, the socialist self-government of the people and the broadening of guarantees for the rights and freedoms of citizens.

The Political Bureau has supported a proposal for drafting a new criminal legislation in the near future. The task is to make it more in tune with the present conditions of development of Soviet society. It must defend more effectively the interests and rights of citizens and help strengthen discipline and law and order. We must consider and take measures to raise the role and prestige of the Soviet court. The independence of judges must be strictly observed, the role of the Directorate of Public Prosecutions enhanced and the work of investigating bodies improved.

A draft law has been prepared on the procedure for filing a complaint in court against illegal actions of officials infringing upon the rights of a citizen. This law is soon to be submitted for discussion. Additional steps are planned to improve the work of state arbitration and improve legal education of the population.

Speaking of democratization of Soviet society—which is a matter of principle to us—it is important to underline once more the main, distinguishing, feature of socialist democracy—an organic combination of democracy and disci-

pline, of independence and responsibility, of the rights and duties of officials and of every citizen.

Socialist democracy has nothing in common with permissiveness, irresponsibility, and anarchy. Real democracy serves every person. It protects his political and social rights and simultaneously serves every collective and the whole of society, upholding their interests.

Democratization in all spheres of Soviet society is important first of all because we link it with the further development of working people's initiative and the use of the entire potential of the socialist system. We need democratization in order to move ahead, to ensure that legality grows stronger, that justice triumphs in our society and that a moral atmosphere in which man can freely live and fruitfully work is asserted in it.

Comrades, it is well known that the effectiveness of real democracy depends on how far it reflects the interests of the broad numbers of people, how it relies on them and is supported by all segments and groups of society. In this respect, too, the tasks of reorganization make it necessary for us to analyze again our resources and possibilities for further expanding the social base of democracy. The pertinence of such an approach is obvious.

All our experience has taught us that in periods of change, while tackling the most difficult and boldest tasks, the Party has invariably turned to the Komsomol, to youth, to their enthusiasm and dedication to the cause of socialism, to their intolerance of stagnation and their commitment to progress. Today, when we speak of the need for democratic changes, for getting the people more fully involved in the process of restructuring, the question of the position taken by the younger generation is assuming tremendous political significance.

I would like to again repeat at this Plenary Meeting: we can be proud of our youth, we pay tribute to their work—this is actually true and politically correct.

But the times require everyone to display still greater energies. And, of course, young people, who are interested in reorganization, should be more active. It is the youth who will live and work in our new society. Party organizations, their committees and the Komsomol should expand the perspective of the younger generation to ensure that young people become active participants in the changes. It is from this position that we should also approach preparations for the next congress of the Young Communist League.

In our work with the Komsomol we should give more attention to the labour, the politico-ideological and moral education of young people. We must act quicker and with greater determination in ridding ourselves of all that is alien to our work with youth and, primarily, of didactic tone and administrative methods. Yes, all this exists and mention of it should be made. Whatever lies behind this approach, be it disbelief in the soundness and maturity of the social aspirations and actions of young people, or a simple desire to play it safe and soften life's difficulties for our children—still, one must not accept such a position.

No, Comrades, there is no other realistic way of moulding a personality, of fostering a young person's civic stance, than to involve him in all public affairs. There can be no substitute for practical experience. That is why it is important to alter the present situation. What exactly do I have in mind?

Above all—more trust in young people, combining good assistance and freedom of comradely criticism of mistakes, more independence in organizing their work, studies, daily life, leisure, and greater responsibility in their undertakings and actions. This also implies their right to take part in running the affairs of society at all levels.

One important aspect of the democratization of public life is promotion of non-Party comrades to leading positions. This is a matter of principle. One of the firm guarantees of the health and progress of a socialist society lies in the political and professional growth of the front-rank worker, farmer, engineer, researcher, doctor, teacher, and public services employee. We need to constantly push to the fore and promote talent from the thick of the people.

Sometimes we come across the opinion that promotion of non-Party people is outdated because the CPSU now has over 19 million members. I think it is erroneous. To believe so is to deform the Party's relations with the people. Moreover, coming straight to the point, this infringes on the constitutional rights of citizens and limits our opportunities as regards the employment of personnel.

We have had, and continue to have, quite a few remarkable examples of fruitful work by non-Party comrades who hold leading positions. They head mills and factories, collective and state farms, construction organizations, scientific and pedagogical collectives, engineering services and are actively involved in public activities.

Open selection of workers to be promoted—from among

both Communists and non-Party people—will accord with the aims of democratization and will help involve large numbers of working people in management.

There is also the question of promoting more women to leading positions. There are many women holding Party and state posts and working successfully in science, health care, education, culture, the light industry, trade, and public services. In order to meet our country's needs today, we must more actively involve women in running the economy and culture on an all-Union or republican scale. We have such possibilities. All we have to do is trust and support women.

Comrades, there isn't one single fundamental issue that we could resolve, now as in the past, without taking into account the fact that we live in a multinational country. There is no need to prove the importance of socialist principles in the development of relations between the nationalities. It is socialism that did away with national oppression, inequality, and infringements upon the rights of people on grounds of nationality. It ensured the economic and cultural progress of all nationalities and ethnic groups. In short, the successes of our Party's nationalities policy are beyond any doubt and we can justly take pride in them.

But we must also see the real picture of the relations between nationalities and the prospects for their development. Now that democracy and self-government are expanding, that there is rapid growth of national awareness of all nationalities and ethnic groups, and the processes of internationalization are developing in depth, it is especially important to settle promptly and fairly outstanding questions in the only possible way—in the interest of the progress of each nationality and ethnic group, in the interest of their further drawing closer together, and in the interest of society as a whole.

In this connection it must be added that negative phenomena and deformities in our society, something we are combatting today, have also appeared in relations between nationalities. There have been manifestations of parochialism, ethnic isolation, and ethnic arrogance and even incidents similar to those which took place quite recently in Alma-Ata.

The events in Alma-Ata and what led up to them require a serious analysis and a principled assessment. This has not yet been thoroughly examined. It is clear today that what has occurred should compel not only Communists in Kazakhstan, but all Party organizations and their Committees to deal with the problems of further developing relations between

nationalities, and enhancing internationalist education. It is especially important to protect our younger generation from the demoralizing effect of nationalism.

V. I. Lenin wrote we must learn to be internationalists in deed. It is our duty to follow this precept.

All of our experience shows: nationalist tendencies can be successfully opposed only by consistent and sustained internationalism. Everything we have accomplished is due to our concerted effort. If one region produces oil, another one provides it with bread. Those who grow cotton receive machines. Each ton of bread, each gram of gold, each ton of cotton, coal and oil, and each machine—from the simplest to the most sophisticated one—contain a particle of labour of all Soviet people, of the entire country, of our whole multinational Union.

The entire atmosphere of our life and mutual work, the family and school, the army, culture, literature and arts are called upon to foster and cultivate in Soviet people of all nationalities, above all the youth, the noblest feelings, those of internationalism and Soviet patriotism.

Acting in the spirit of Leninist precepts, in the spirit of the directives of the 27th CPSU Congress, it is necessary to follow firmly the line of all nationalities and ethnic groups of the country being represented in Party, state and economic bodies, including at a countrywide level, so that the composition of the leading personnel fully reflects the country's national structure.

Naturally, the point at issue is not a mechanical assignment of jobs and posts according to the national principle—this would mean vulgarization of the very idea of internationalism. Political, professional and moral qualities is what determines in all instances the image of the worker. Besides, one should not disregard the particular delicacy of national aspects in one problem or another, folk traditions in the way of life, in people's psychology and behaviour. All this should be taken into account most carefully.

I ought to mention, Comrades, that some leaders at times approach questions of relations between nationalities without due responsibility.

From time to time misunderstandings emerge in relations between neighbouring districts or regions of various republics. At times, they flare up into disputes escalating even into litigations while the heads of Party and local government

bodies shirk principled solutions rather than prevent or abate the passions. Political workers should act wisely in such situations and cool unhealthy passions.

Our theoretical thought is greatly indebted to the practice of national relations. I mean the clearly insufficient analysis of issues in the nationalities policy that would be in line with the present stage of the country's development. It is a fact, Comrades, that instead of conducting objective studies of real phenomena in the sphere of national relations and analyzing actual socio-economic and cultural processes—very involved and contradictory in their essence—some of our social scientists have for long preferred to create treatises reminiscent at times of complimentary toasts rather than serious scientific studies.

One should admit that the errors committed in the sphere of national relations and their manifestations remained in the shadow, and it was not accepted to mention them. This has resulted in the negative consequences with which we are now dealing.

At the 27th Congress we stressed the inviolability of our Party's tradition that V. I. Lenin initiated: to display special tact and care in everything that concerns the development of national relations, that bears upon the interests of each nationality and ethnic group and people's national feelings, and to promptly resolve questions arising in this sphere.

It is in the traditions of Bolshevism to wage a principled struggle against any manifestations of national narrow-mindedness and snobbery, nationalism and chauvinism, parochialism, Zionism and anti-semitism—no matter what their forms might be. We should bear in mind that nationalism and proletarian internationalism are two opposite policies, two opposing world outlooks.

Proceeding from these positions we shall be firm and principled. People's national sentiments deserve respect, they cannot be ignored, but they should not be flirted with either. Let those who would like to play on nationalist or chauvinistic prejudices entertain no illusions and expect no leniency.

Principles, Comrades, are principles and we cannot forgo them. No doubt, this position—the principled, Leninist position—will be supported by the entire Party, by the entire multinational Soviet people.

III. PERSONNEL POLICY IN CONDITIONS OF REORGANIZATION

Comrades,

I think we clearly understand that success of the reorganization largely depends on how quickly and deeply our workers realize the need for changes and how creatively and purposefully they implement the Party's policy. What is necessary today is a personnel policy that matches the reorganization tasks and the need to accelerate social and economic development. When formulating its initial requirements, we ought to take into account both the lessons of the past and the new large-scale tasks life poses today.

The years of socialist construction in the USSR saw the formation of a powerful potential of highly skilled personnel, while the immeasurably improved level of education and culture of workers and peasants, of the entire people creates favourable conditions for its constant replenishment and renewal. Everything that we have accomplished, everything that we have attained, is the result of Soviet people's work and is due to our personnel's selfless effort.

At the same time, one should also mention at this Plenary Meeting mistakes in work with personnel, distortions in personnel policy that have occurred in recent years and resulted in major shortcomings in the activity of several links in the Party, state and economic apparatus, and in negative phenomena in society. Many errors could have been avoided if Party bodies had always consistently pursued a principled, effective personnel policy ensuring high efficiency of all links in Party leadership and economic management.

Of course, we should not confine ourselves today to the mere admission of mistakes. In order to avoid such mistakes in the future, we must benefit from lessons of the past.

What are these lessons?

The first is the need to resolve in good time the urgent personnel questions within the Party Central Committee, its Political Bureau—above all from the viewpoint of ensuring continuity in the leadership and the influx of fresh forces. At a certain stage, the violation of this natural process weakened the work-capacity of the Political Bureau, the Secretariat and the entire CPSU Central Committee and its apparatus, as well as the government.

Indeed, Comrades, following the April Plenary Meeting a large part of the Secretariat and heads of departments in the

CPSU Central Committee have been replaced, along with practically all of the Presidium of the USSR Council of Ministers. This was a forced change since the composition of the Central Committee and the government was not changed or replenished with new members for a long time, as life demanded. All this ultimately affected policy and the practical work of the Party in guiding society.

This cannot and should not be repeated. In order to ensure continuity and prevent a break in the process of renewal, the CPSU Central Committee, the Political Bureau and the Secretariat of the Central Committee, the government, the top echelons of the Party and state leadership should be open to the influx of fresh forces from various spheres of activity. Doing this fully corresponds to the Leninist understanding of personnel policy, to the interests of the Party and the people.

Certainly, the Party Central Committee has accomplished a great deal of work and continues to do so. But the level of this work should under no circumstances be allowed to decrease. On the contrary, it should constantly grow and meet the demands posed by life, by the development of society and the international situation. Any lowering in the level of the Central Committee's activity is impermissible.

The CPSU Central Committee must be an example of the implementation of Lenin's ideas, principles and methods in work. Our plenary meetings should discuss the really major issues of Party life, the country's domestic and international situation. They should be frankly and openly discussed, with a sense of profound responsibility, in an atmosphere of ideological cohesion and with a wide range of viewpoints expressed.

In this context, I want to emphasize the role of Central Committee members, their rights and responsibility. During plenary meetings, each Central Committee member should be guaranteed the right to raise questions and participate in their collective constructive discussion. In the Party—and especially at plenary meetings of the Central Committee—there should be no persons beyond criticism or without the right to criticize.

There are many things we will have to rectify here. Let us say honestly: there were many crucial issues of concern to the Party and the people that were not included in the plenary meetings' agendas for several years. Comrades will recall that the plenary meetings of the Central Committee were often

brief and formal. Many Central Committee members were never given the opportunity to participate in debates or even put forward proposals during their entire term of membership. Such an atmosphere at the plenary meetings of the Central Committee had a definite effect upon the style of work of local Party committees and organizations.

The second lesson from past experience, Comrades, is that we should not underestimate political and theoretical training, the ideological and moral steeling of Party workers. Otherwise, very serious disruptions in the activity of Party committees as bodies of political leadership occur.

These criteria in the selection, placement and education of personnel were not always taken into account in recent years. Often, the greatest significance was attached to a worker's knowledge of the specifics of one or other branch of production, science, engineering or technology, or his strength of will. Undoubtedly, all that has importance, but such qualities in the managerial staff as ideological and theoretical outlook, political maturity, moral standards and the capacity to persuade and lead people should also not be ignored.

It should be directly and honestly admitted that the technocratic, "administrative pressure" style of work caused great damage to the Party cause, especially to work with people which is the main element of the Party's activity. By plunging into economic work and, in several instances, assuming functions out of their jurisdictions, many Party workers did not pay enough attention to political issues, to socially significant phenomena in the economy, and in social and cultural life.

Certainly, objective factors underlie such a style as well. They are stemming from a number of unresolved issues of economic management and the lack of an effective economic mechanism. In this situation many Party committees, aware of their responsibility and their duty before the people, have to take upon themselves the solution of many economic problems. This has been happening for a number of years and has become deeply rooted in the style and methods of work, leading to a certain warping of the principles of Party guidance and the very composition of our personnel body.

Major measures to restructure management and the economic mechanism open up wide opportunities for improving the work of the Party committees and organizations, enhancing Party influence in all spheres of the life of society and using a political approach to all problems under consideration.

I want to emphasize that no one can relieve Party committees of their concern and responsibility for the state of affairs in the economy. As I have already said, the point is to improve the methods of Party guidance so as to eliminate petty tutelage and methods of supplanting managerial bodies.

The third lesson we must learn is that two opposite tendencies paradoxically coexisted in the personnel policy in recent years. You may wonder what I mean, comrades.

The signs of stagnation have manifested themselves rather strongly in the personnel body. Secretaries of many Party committees and top executives of government and economic bodies at the local, republican and all-union levels often have not been replaced for decades and there has been no influx of new forces there.

Saying this, I do not want to cast the slightest aspersions on many hundreds and thousands of marvelous workers, particularly at the district and city levels, who have always devoted all their energies and knowledge to selflessly serving the Party and the people. Years of honest work and their truly deserved prestige reaffirm their right to hold leading positions. The CPSU and all the people highly appreciate their difficult work, their great services, and give them due credit for that.

I think that the well-known and well-assimilated truth that personnel stability is essential does not need additional proof. This should not be carried to extremes, to the point of absurdity, if you will.

We know all too well what this led to, what price is now being paid for artificial stability which has essentially turned into personnel stagnation.

On the other hand, there also existed another, no less disquieting, tendency in the work with personnel, particularly in the primary units of the national economy. It is excessive personnel rotation, a real reshuffling of managers of industrial enterprises, construction projects, collective and state farms and other organizations.

You know how important the role of highly qualified organizers of production is. The leaders of work collectives—Communists and non-Party people—are the Party's main support in the pursuit of its socio-economic policy. They shoulder many diverse tasks. So I want to ask one question: how could it happen that the leading personnel of work collectives changed completely within several years in many districts and regions?

This can only happen when actual work with people, a real concern for their political and professional growth, and for rendering them practical assistance is pushed to the background and is replaced by administration by injunction, by hasty and at times rash judgements of their activities and capabilities. I think that Party committees should take this very serious reproach and draw the right conclusion.

Regrettably, there are also Party committees and secretaries who cover up their own blunders and, on occasion, failures with ostentatious exactingness towards personnel, by pseudo-adherence to principle without regard for either the essence of the matter or the fate of the people involved.

In this connection I want to mention yet another inadmissible quality: the intolerance of some executives of independent actions and thoughts of subordinates. It quite often happens that as soon as workers begin to express independent opinions which do not coincide with those of the secretary of a Party committee or the head of a ministry or department, enterprise, institution or organization, attempts are made to get rid of them under any pretext, at times even under outwardly plausible ones. It may appear to be better. But better for whom or for what? For the work? Nothing of the kind. It is always worse for the work.

In this, too, we should learn from Lenin. Lenin, like no one else, could bring people together and ensure their concerted effort. He supported resourceful people and attentively listened to Party comrades and, if necessary, patiently helped them to change their mind. We should learn to adhere to principle, and to be exacting and attentive.

The fourth lesson of our work with personnel is to enhance responsibility for the work assigned, to tighten discipline, and to create an atmosphere of mutual exactingness. How could it happen, comrades, that many leading positions at the district, city, regional, republican, and even all-union levels were held for decades by executives who could not cope with their duties, by undependable and undisciplined people?

The consequences are well known. For years a number of sectors, among them the iron and steel and coal industries, railway transport, machine tool manufacture, agricultural engineering, the meat-and-dairy industry, to name but some, were headed by executives who were failing to ensure the fulfilment of the tasks set. Ostensibly everyone knew this. The state of affairs in those areas was quite often criticized at sessions of the USSR Supreme Soviet, at Plenary Meetings of

the Central Committee and even at Party Congresses. But everything remained unchanged.

Are not there regions, republics, cities and districts where production targets have not been met for years and where social matters have been neglected? Their leaders bore no responsibility for failures in work. They got away with it all.

The same can be said about some managers of enterprises, economic organizations, health care, educational, scientific, and cultural institutions, and the mass media. They have long neglected their work. They cannot cope with their duties and, instead, are masters at throwing dust in people's eyes. They are complaisant in their attitudes. Until recently, they were able to retain their positions through these subterfuges.

It also happens that an executive finds himself in the wrong position and is not capable of the job required. His misfortune is that he has got that post and work that is beyond him. What should be done in such cases? It is essential to admit such errors and rectify them and, without dramatizing them, assign the person concerned to a job according to his abilities.

We must not and cannot be "kind" at the expense of the interests of the Party, society and the people. The interests of the Party and the people are above all. Such is our immutable law. Real concern for personnel has nothing in common with complacency and all-forgiveness, philanthropy and flirting. We should assimilate this lesson well, too.

Finally, one more lesson. It is natural to raise this question at our Plenary Meeting: why have all these problems that have piled up in the work with personnel remained for a long time unattended and unresolved? How could this happen? The question, as you well understand, is very serious.

The Political Bureau's opinion is that the main cause is the weakness of democratic principles in the work with personnel. I have already spoken of inner-Party democracy in a principled way as the chief guarantor of the implementation of the Party's strategic course and the tasks of reorganization. Proposals on such a cardinal question of democratization as the formation of elective bodies within the CPSU were made as well.

Now I would like to present the question of raising the role of all elective bodies. It must be frankly admitted that if they acted to the best of their abilities both in the Party and in the state, trade unions and other public organizations, many serious omissions in the work with personnel could have been avoided.

Let us look at life with open eyes, so to speak. An excessive growth of the role of executive bodies to the detriment of elective ones has occurred. At first glance everything proceeds as it should. Plenary meetings, sessions and sittings of other elective bodies are held regularly. But their work is often excessively formalized, secondary matters or those decided upon in advance are brought up for discussion. As a result, there is a lack of proper control over the activities of executive bodies and their leaders. Let's face it, some comrades began to view elective bodies as a nuisance which gives only headaches and creates the troubles. That's what we have come to.

That resulted in the decreased role of the deputies of the Soviets, of members of Party and other collective decision-making bodies in forming executive committees, selecting personnel, and controlling over their activities. Is not the same evidenced by the nature and style of relationships between the permanent staff and members of elective bodies? Quite often one comes across attempts by staff members to command members of Party committees, other public organizations and deputies to the Soviets. It turns out, in fact, that democratic mechanisms for the formation and functioning of the elective bodies are proclaimed but far from always work and, consequently, are not sufficiently effective.

This is why, returning to what was said about the development of socialist democracy as the reorganization proceeds, I want to re-emphasize the topicality and immense importance of the formulated proposals on these matters. We should work out and implement measures to ensure a decisive role of collective, elected bodies. No executive body, still less so any of its officials, is allowed to supplant an elective one or domineer it.

The necessary political and legal prerequisites should be created for the elective bodies to exercise effective control over the executive staff, its formation and activities. This will be a reliable safeguard against many errors, including those in the work with personnel.

I think the participants in the Plenary Meeting realize well the fundamental importance of putting the question in this way and of the need to urgently solve it.

One of the causes of serious omissions in the personnel policy is the weakening of the role of control bodies within both the Party and the state and public organizations. They did not heed many reports about abuses and violations in a

number of regions and branches of the national economy, in regional, territorial and republican Party committees. The work of control bodies was often confined to superficial checks and formal financial inspections, to examination of various complaints and minor human conflicts. These matters certainly need attention, but confining ourselves to them would be impermissible, especially now.

The 27th Congress of the CPSU has given a new direction to the activities of the control bodies. It is important that all of them, from the district to the central ones, should live up to their lofty mission and set an example of adherence to principle and justice.

Comrades, summing up, we cannot and must not repeat the mistakes of the past. What is more, I think, nobody will allow us to do so.

Such are the main lessons of the personnel policy about which, in the opinion of the Political Bureau, it is necessary to report to the Plenary Meeting.

The main conclusion from them is that we must radically update our personnel policy, free it from distortions and oversights, make it truly modern, more vigorous and purposeful, inseparably link it with the key trends in the effort to accelerate socio-economic development.

I repeat that the point at issue is not just one of improving the organization of work with the personnel, but of formulating a personnel policy that accords with the tasks of reorganization. It is only with such a broad approach that work with the personnel will expedite profound, in effect, revolutionary changes.

Lenin taught us to approach the work with personnel from a political angle, first of all, to view it in the very context of the problems being tackled at the given stage and to select personnel "by the new standards, according to the new tasks". What does this mean as applied to the present stage of social development?

The personnel's attitude to reorganization and the ongoing acceleration of the country's socio-economic development, their attitude not in words, but in deeds, is today the decisive criterion in personnel policy. We must certainly take into account the fact that the selection and work of the personnel continued for a long time in far from optimum conditions. That is why change does not come easily. We must work painstakingly and persistently if we are to reorganize the personnel body.

We have decisively taken the course of supporting enterprising, thinking and energetic people, who can and wish to forge ahead boldly and who are capable of winning success. We have many of them. The decisions of the April Plenary Meeting and the 27th Congress have lent them wings and opened broad vistas for creative activities. Just look how strikingly fresh and powerful are the talents of such managers as Vladimir Kabaidze from Ivanovo, Boris Fomin from the Leningrad "Electrosila" Works, Anatoly Parshin from the Taganrog "Krasny Kotelshchik" Works, Ivan Frantsenyuk from the Novolipetsk Steel Works, Raisa Roshchinskaya, Director of the Novochoerkassk Clothing Factory, Yuri Baranov, Director of the Donetsk Mine Administration "Sotsialistichesky Donbass", Nikolai Travkin, Head of the "Mosobltselstroi" Trust No. 18, Alexander Duduk, Director of the Byelorussian "Mir" State Farm, Mikhail Klepikov, a well-known team leader from the Kuban, chairmen of collective farms—Vasily Gorin from Belgorod Region, Nikolai Tereshchenko from Stavropol Territory, Mikhail Vagin from Gorky Region and Yuri Bugakov from Novosibirsk Region, and many, many others.

We must learn to support such workers in every way and to appreciate their independence and initiative. It is important to build in every Party organization, in every work collective, an atmosphere that would stimulate all to search for effective solutions, and encourage the most open and frank exchange of views. Certainly, we must vigorously renounce such methods as dressing down, which are often used even to this day. We are for reorganization but not for a shake-up of the personnel. It is necessary, Comrades, to respect people and trust them more.

Today everyone has the opportunity to display his abilities and we must assist those who wish to work with both advice and comradely exactingness. But we part company with those who cling to old ways and who remain indifferent to the current changes, sometimes even opposing them.

Thus the attitude to the reorganization and real contribution to its implementation are decisive in appraising the personnel. We must certainly take into account other basic qualities, as well. I mean, first and foremost, intolerance of shortcomings, conservative ways, indifference and passivity, and commitment to all that is advanced and progressive.

Reorganization requires that the workers be competent and highly professional. Today one cannot do without a

modern and broad background, without a profound knowledge of production, science and technology, management, economics, labour organization, incentives and psychology. Generally speaking, we must put the country's intellectual potential to maximum use and considerably increase its payback.

Organizational standards and discipline are assuming increasing importance. They are indispensable everywhere, but are especially vital in conditions of modern production with the extensive use of the latest technologies. In recent years, consequent upon things being set in order and carelessness being dealt with, there has been a noticeable increase in the economic growth rates.

Yet the task remains here. Poor discipline and negligence are too deeply rooted and are felt painfully to this day. It was criminal negligence and lack of responsibility that stood behind such tragedies as the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power station, the wrecking of the *Admiral Nakhimov* and a number of air and railway accidents which claimed a toll of human lives.

An atmosphere ruling out any possibility of a repetition of such tragedies must be created everywhere. Discipline, promptness and efficiency should become the law for everybody.

And finally, the most important quality is the high moral standard of our personnel—honesty, incorruptibility, modesty. We now know, not only from the past, but also from our recent experience, that we would not be able to carry out the reorganization tasks without strengthening our society's moral health. It is therefore only logical that we have come to grips so uncompromisingly with negative phenomena precisely in the moral sphere. I mean the struggle to eradicate drunkenness, embezzlement, bribery, abuse of office and protectionism.

Society reacts most keenly to all that is associated with the moral image of Party members, primarily, senior executives. Our paramount duty is to rehabilitate the untarnished and honest image of a communist leader, an image somewhat degraded by the crimes of certain renegades.

In general, Comrades, considering the imperatives of the times, we are to readjust radically our work with the personnel in all branches of the national economy, in all areas of social life, in all echelons of leadership, both at the centre and in the provinces.

The Political Bureau sees the essence and main objective of the present personnel policy first and foremost as developing a more exacting attitude to the Party and its workers. To carry on reorganization in society is to reorganize the activities of the Party and its workers at all levels—from the Central Committee to primary organizations, to creatively assimilate and consistently implement the Leninist principles and rules of Party life at all levels.

How is reorganization proceeding within the Party? What example is set by the Party committees, Party leaders and activists?

Today we can say that most Party committees and their leaders have got down to work with a great sense of responsibility and a sincere desire. They are not yet able to cope with many things, but they are gaining experience and confidence with every passing day. These changes create reliable prerequisites for accelerating our advance.

All the Party workers are going through the test of reorganization. But they stand it differently. A visible gap has formed between those who are decisively forging ahead and those who are marking time. Reorganization does not come easy to some Party leaders. They cannot yet give up the controller functions so unnatural for Party committees or get rid of the tendency to decide all questions for others and keep a tight grip on things. But this, as before, prevents a sense of responsibility for the entrusted job growing in the workers and hampers the development of their initiative and independence.

Instead of developing innovative quests, Party workers often morbidly react to the initiative and activity of people and view them as something short of a natural calamity. The paramount duty of the Party committees at the time of reorganization is to guide the creativity of the masses, to help people rapidly eliminate shortcomings and get things going properly.

It is necessary at the same time to warn comrades against artificially speeding up events and putting the cart before the horse. Reorganization and the acceleration of our advance are based on the objective laws of social development. As in any social movement, the role of the subjective, personal element is sufficiently great here. Its influence may be either favourable or otherwise. It is therefore highly important that the process of revitalization, which affects human lives rather tangibly, be reliably protected against relapses of administ-

ration by injunction and a mechanical approach to matters in hand. A devaluation of the idea of reorganization cannot be allowed anywhere, not in a single sector of our social and production system. One must see and react immediately, when time-serving and self-seeking are appearing under its banner, when real work is replaced by high-sounding phrases.

I wish to repeat that without developing democracy, without the broad involvement of the working people we will not be able to cope with the tasks of reorganization. The Party committees and all workers should learn to operate in conditions of greater democracy and growing political and labour activity on the part of the people.

We have had ample opportunity to see that the reorganization proceeds faster where the district and city Party committees are more energetic and work in the new manner. This is only understandable. They are the closest to the primary Party organizations and work collectives and consequently to the frontline of the struggle to accelerate the country's social and economic development. Most of these committees have taken the right stand and are pursuing the Party's policy of reorganization resolutely and consistently.

Yet an analysis of the situation at the local level, press reports, and working people's letters to the Party Central Committee indicate that there are still quite a few city and district Party committees which keep to the old ways, act in the old fashion and remain on the sidelines of the movement for renewal. Even if this concerned just one city or district committee, it could not be ignored. But this is something wide-spread and so we must, Comrades, be concerned. In many cases this situation in the city and district Party committees is explained by the style and methods of work and the attitudes of their secretaries.

I think we will do right if we pay more attention to these important Party units—city and district Party committees. We must help them adopt a more active attitude towards reorganization as soon as possible. The primary Party organizations will then also work better and guide the work collectives in accomplishing their tasks. We are witnessing the steady growth of Communists' activity. We see inertia and formalism gradually disappearing from the work of Party organizations. But there is still a great deal to be done. The primary Party organizations need effective aid and support.

Comrades, immense responsibility for putting into effect the strategic policy for accelerated social and economic de-

velopment devolves on the managerial personnel. A changeover is currently under way across the country from administrative to cost-benefit methods of management and to a responsible and creative manner of running affairs.

Today, the work collectives of factories and amalgamations are being provided with vast financial, material and technical resources to modernize production and solve social problems. The managers are granted wide latitude, not only to make whatever tactical economic manoeuvres are expedient, but also to pursue long-term aims within the five-year plan period and beyond, in short, a new economic, social and political situation is developing, in which an energetic and competent executive can fully use his abilities.

Most executives welcome the far-reaching measures being implemented by the Party and the government to reform the system of management. They are becoming more active in their implementation.

We can already see a good start of many useful initiatives. The experience of Leningrad and Kharkov in converting factories into working in shifts is catching on and bringing the first benefits.

In Leningrad and in the entire region virtually all leading factories have been switched over to two- or three-shift operation. This has allowed an increase in the number of afternoon-shift workers by almost 50,000. Fixed assets are now being used more efficiently and updated more quickly. It has become possible to release 350,000 square metres of shopfloor space for other uses and slash the need for new construction by 120,000 square metres. According to preliminary estimates, all this will help save over 100 million roubles in capital investment, most of which could then be spent on housing construction and on other social projects.

The managers and specialists of the factories and amalgamations which have followed the example of the VAZ Auto Factory and the Frunze Engineering Amalgamation in Sumy by changing to a profit-and-loss accountability principle and self-financing at the beginning of this year have been initiating many new things.

Interesting experiences in mastering new managerial methods have been gained by the Byelorussian and other railways. These experiences have helped to improve the performance of the rail service in general and raise labour productivity. Work collectives in a number of regions in the Ukraine have displayed a business gumption and enterprise by launching a

large-scale drive for saving resources. The initiative of miners and metal workers looking for, and tapping, new reserves to meet their targets ahead of schedule also deserves to be supported. Work collectives in Sverdlovsk, Lipetsk and other cities have been setting a good example of how to tackle housing and other social problems.

The acreage of grain and a number of other crops cultivated by means of industrial technology has been on the increase. Teams working on the basis of contracts and the profit-and-loss accountability principle are being formed at collective and state farms. This has helped to quickly increase agricultural production and make the economy more efficient.

Yet it must be said frankly that the process of workers and office personnel mastering up-to-date approaches to work and modern methods of economic activity is proceeding with difficulty, in a manner full of contradictions, and not without painful phenomena and relapses into past practices. The introduction of state quality control is a good example. Realizing the immense importance of this measure, many work collectives have prepared well for work in the new conditions. Though there are difficulties, progress is being made. Labour discipline and production quality are improving.

But there are also those who could not meet the high requirements. Instead of rolling up their sleeves and getting down to improving quality, they began scaring themselves and others by dwelling on the possible complications, conflict situations and even factory shutdowns.

Comrades, I am far from simplifying the situation. But one thing is clear: we Communists, all Soviet people can no longer put up with a situation in which many enterprises have for years been manufacturing products that are hopelessly obsolete, are seriously criticized by consumers and hold back the country's scientific and technological progress. We are tackling a big task and must see it through to the end.

The transition to the cost-benefit methods and the expansion of the rights of amalgamations and enterprises create a new situation for ministries and departments. We already discussed the questions concerning a change in their style and methods of work at the June 1986 Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee. What has been done since?

Changes in the work of ministries and departments are taking place, even though slowly and painfully. Headquarters

of various branches of the economy are directly participating in drafting proposals for enterprises' operation in new economic conditions. They are giving more attention to questions of scientific and technological policy, the restructuring of enterprises and starting the production of goods meeting modern requirements.

We have reinforced some branches and their sub-divisions with capable people. As a rule, energetic specialists who want to run things in a new way and ensure the introduction of modern methods of work have been placed in key posts. This policy should be continued, the performance of ministries and departments actively improved and their staff replenished with highly-qualified personnel capable of initiative.

At the same time, there are still instances of red tape and irresponsibility in the work of ministries and departments which carry out the Party and government resolutions. The staff of ministries and departments appears to be a captive of old regulations and instructions, acts by inertia and refuses to give up its prerogatives.

It is not the first time, Comrades, that we have drawn the attention of the heads and staff members of ministries and departments to the need for a radical reorganization of their activity. In this way, everyone gets the opportunity to join in this work and master new approaches to the business at hand. But it is impermissible for a ministry or its staff to be idle or, even more so, to impede the restructuring process. This warning from the rostrum of the Plenary Meeting is necessary because this concerns the interests of the state and the people, questions of big-time policy. It is appropriate to recall here Lenin's words that an apparatus exists "for policy and not a policy for the apparatus".

Workers are being placed in new conditions by the restructuring of external economic activities, giving many ministries and amalgamations direct outlet to the foreign market and granting all enterprises the right to set up direct ties of cooperation with partners in socialist countries. This is something the branch ministries have sought for years.

But it should be well understood that success in external economic activities is possible only if active use is made of scientific and technological achievements, if personnel is adequately trained, new markets are developed, etc. The main condition for utilizing the new opportunities is to start producing goods whose quality meets world standards.

After the decisions were adopted much time and effort

were spent on various organizational matters, on specifying rights and duties, and the relations between foreign trade organizations and the branch managerial bodies. But the organizational period has already ended. Now it is necessary to direct efforts towards practical actions and to actively start the development of ties with all foreign partners, especially in the socialist countries.

I have already said that the success of the strategy of acceleration depends above all on how we are fulfilling the tasks of scientific and technological progress, on how skilfully we are combining the advantages of socialism with the achievements of the scientific and technological revolution.

The real accomplishments here are determined by the level of scientific knowledge, by the advancement of original ideas that can be embodied in fundamentally new machines and technologies that make it possible to forge ahead in the leading areas of science and technology. Such is the strategic task the restructuring process sets before science.

Everything is important in accomplishing it—from enrolment of students at institutions of higher learning and the standards of training specialists to replenishing the Academy of Sciences with talented scientists, from the work of scientific student societies to the research programmes of the leading academic and branch institutes, from a creative atmosphere in scientific collectives to the most effective forms of organizing and promoting science.

Integration of science with production has now acquired a special importance.

A significant role in this matter is assigned to intersectoral scientific and technical complexes. By now, over 20 of them have already been established. We have great hopes that the activity of these complexes will accelerate the development of new ideas and, in particular, the introduction of scientific and technical achievements. Therefore, it is necessary to give more attention to the work of intersectoral scientific and technical complexes. The Presidium of the USSR Academy of Sciences and appropriate ministries and departments should provide them with all the necessary facilities, give them help they need and do everything to facilitate their effective work.

Such major issues as the proper coordination of academic, higher-school and sectoral science; the integration of efforts by natural, technical and social sciences; the comprehensive research; the profundity of treatment of fundamental prob-

lems, and the enhancement of the effectiveness of particular projects in many respects remain unsolved.

Addressing our scientists and all scientific workers on behalf of the Plenary Meeting, I want to say that for science to be actively involved in the process of restructuring it should be reorganized in many ways. Life forces us to quicken our pace. He who is not in the lead in scientific ideas is running the risk of falling behind in everything. That is the way the question is posed by our time, a time of profound changes in science and technology, yet unseen by mankind.

This makes it necessary for Party committees, ministries and departments and economic bodies to meet the needs of science which should always feel effective support. We know that the Presidium of the USSR Academy of Sciences and its President, Academician G. I. Marchuk, have interesting ideas and proposals on this score. I can assure you that these ideas will find support in the Central Committee and the government.

Prospects for socio-economic, scientific, technological and cultural progress depend in many ways on the educational system and the quality of education. We have begun a reform of general and vocational schools. As you evidently know, this reform is not a simple thing and therefore it demands unflagging attention all along the line—from building up education's material and technical base to improving the content, forms and methods of the teaching and educational process. Decisions have been made to reorganize higher and specialized secondary education, raise the salaries of the higher school staff as well as grants for post-graduate and undergraduate students. All this will create favourable prerequisites for the accelerated development of science and production and for the fulfilment of the decisions adopted by the Party Congress. We must implement them and see to it that high end results are achieved as soon as possible.

The system of advanced training and retraining of specialists will be built on a new basis. Present-day production demands that the knowledge and skills of workers should be continuously increased and improved. The establishment of a state-run system of life-long education was set by the 27th Congress as one of the main tasks for us to accomplish. This is the only way to maintain the competence of personnel at the level of present-day demands, especially in the new and newest fields of technology and engineering. There is hardly any need to prove how important it is to hasten the preparation of proposals on this issue.

And, finally, a few words about the tasks facing our planning, financial and other economic bodies. In their effort to radically reorganize their work they should take into account the provisions of the economic reform.

The economic departments of this country have submitted quite a number of proposals for restructuring management and the economic mechanism. But, frankly speaking, the personnel of these departments are slow to reorganize and, I would say, even fall behind economic transformations in the sphere of production. What is happening there requires considerable changes in the functions of general economic departments and their local bodies.

The political directives formulated by the 27th Congress should be taken by them as a guide in their work. The aim of the economic reform in the country is both the extensive development of independence of the lower echelons in the economy and further consolidation of the principles of centralism in management while simultaneously freeing the centre from petty tutelage of sectors, amalgamations and plants. All personnel, particularly the leaders of economic departments, should now act precisely in this key and give up the old approaches to work.

One more question directly relating to the activities of economic executives. Special attention in the twelfth five-year plan is given to the development of the social sphere. This is dictated by the state of affairs in this sphere.

We must close more quickly the existing gap between the development levels in the productive and social spheres.

The Party Congress made serious corrections in the political guidelines on these matters and came to the conclusion that insufficient attention to the social sphere had become one of the factors behind the lag in scientific and technological progress and the growth of production efficiency, and had hampered the utilization of the existing potential.

The fact that over many years economic executives were not strictly asked to account for social matters seriously affected their attitude to work. This situation must be resolutely rectified. It will be difficult to accomplish without Party committees taking a firm position on the matter and without consistent practical steps on the part of the government.

Let us take the latest example. The first stage of the Astrakhan gas complex was commissioned late last year. Over 1.5 billion roubles were invested in that project. Eight

thousand workers and specialists work there but only three thousand of them have permanent housing. Moreover, the lag in building housing, outpatient clinics, canteens and other social and cultural facilities was a planning fault from the very beginning. Such is the deplorable outcome of the incorrect, mistaken approach to social matters by planning bodies. The situation is to be rectified as soon as possible.

All leading personnel from top to bottom are responsible for pursuing a vigorous social policy. Life itself has demanded that man's interests be given top priority in the activity of leading executives. Their ability to cope with social matters has now become one of the chief criteria of their business and political maturity.

Comrades, a great role in implementing the decisions of the 27th Congress is assigned to Soviets, trade unions, Kom-somol and other public organizations and their workers. They, too, are facing the task of restructuring their activity. In effect, the restructuring has already begun.

In what direction should it be continued? This is a question of immense political connotation since the points at issue are very important institutions of our political system. In carrying out reorganization, one should bear in mind both the current situation and trends in the development of Soviet society in general, of the political system, socialist democracy and the economic mechanism.

I want to reiterate: the course towards democratization and the establishment of a new mechanism of administration and management offers an opportunity to correctly combine the Party's political guidance with the active role of government bodies, trade unions and other public organizations.

We have already adopted fundamental decisions on improving the activity of the Soviets under the present conditions. These decisions enable them to act as true bodies of authority on their territory. Changes in the activity of the Soviets are taking place, but they cannot as yet satisfy us. We are all interested in seeing the Soviets starting work as soon as possible in earnest, in the spirit of the times.

Party committees must firmly steer the course towards enhancing the role of the Soviets and must not permit unjustified interference in their affairs, let alone supplanting them. It is of no less importance that the heads of the Soviets and the Soviet apparatus start work at full capacity and overcome inertia, the habit to look back all the time at someone and wait for instructions. It is necessary to enhance

democratic principles in the activity of the Soviets and their executive bodies.

As we said at the 27th Congress, there are many issues bearing upon the vital interests of the working people that no one will resolve for the Soviets. They concern social policy, the improvement of services. The Soviets, however, have not fully realized their new rights, and are not making due demands on economic managers. This is also one of the reasons why last year's plans were not fulfilled as regards many indicators in building social and cultural facilities.

Let us take communal services. The way they operate, especially in the conditions of freezing temperatures, is giving rise to much criticism at present. But that is the direct and proper business of the Soviets. They should drastically alter the work of improving trade, services, the organization of recreation for working people and consumer goods production, and use more broadly the reserves for replenishing food resources.

We are planning major measures in the field of health services and public education. They are linked most closely with the activity of Soviets at various levels. The tasks are building up, so the Soviets ought to act with greater efficiency and persistence. This is what we have the right to demand from the people working in the Soviets and their apparatus. This is what Soviet people expect from them.

Reorganization, all its facets, concerns trade unions. Their rights are substantially expanded with the growth of the economic independence of enterprises and amalgamations. At the same time, their responsibility is considerably growing in connection with more powers given to work collectives and the development of self-government. And, certainly, no one is relieving the trade unions of their obligations to accomplish tasks of social policy, to defend working people's interests.

In brief, the demands on trade union workers have sharply increased. It is necessary to help them adopt an active stand in reorganization, to create conditions for their broader participation in decision-making at all levels of management.

Now that the review and election campaign is drawing to an end in trade union organizations and the scheduled Congress of the Soviet Trade Unions is approaching, it is important that the entire complex of topical problems related to reorganization be placed in the focus of attention of the delegates to the Congress. Work collectives make up the central link of reorganization. It is there that the trade unions

should reveal their potential, appraise, in a new way, their capabilities and rights and thus increase their contribution to the national cause of socio-economic acceleration.

In launching the struggle for improving the health of society, the Party has proceeded since the very beginning from the premise that this immense work should be based on the solid foundation of persuasion. Shaping the consciousness of millions of working people in the spirit of restructuring is one of the key areas of ideological activity.

We have succeeded to a certain extent in bringing ideological work closer to life, to the processes under way in society today. It is largely thanks to Party organizations, to our propagandists that the ideas of renewal are becoming truly attractive for the masses. Work on the ideological front has not yet been launched in earnest in many areas. This includes political and economic education, lectures and foreign policy propaganda, atheistic education and so on.

The Central Committee is steering Party organizations into drawing all Party leaders, all Communists into ideological work. But this in no way removes the task of strengthening the ideological sectors with highly skilled, educated people who feel the pulse of the time and who understand fully the essence of the tasks set, who are capable of lucidly explaining the policy of the Party and of leading and organizing the people.

The present-day conditions persistently demand that the Party's ideological army be reinforced with people who are well versed in economics, law, philosophy, sociology, literature and the arts. These are people who are deeply convinced that the decisions adopted by the 27th Congress and the course for restructuring are vitally needed.

Comrades, the need for strengthening socialist legality and order in the country confronts the Soviet courts, procurator's offices, militia and other law-enforcement agencies with new crucial tasks.

The Central Committee attaches great significance to these issues which are of concern to society. It recently adopted a special decision on further strengthening socialist legality and order and increasing protection for the rights and legitimate interests of citizens. It has given law-enforcement agencies and their personnel important and more challenging tasks. The Party committees and government bodies are to make every effort to increase the authority of those working in the courts, procurator's offices, judicial bodies, militia,

courts of arbitration and notary offices, and see to it that these legal workers must be true to principle. The Party committees and government bodies must support voluntary patrolmen maintaining public order and help disseminate legal knowledge.

This position held by the Party places high demands on those standing guard over the law. Letters from working people and complaints from localities indicate that there are still a number of breaches in law-enforcement agencies themselves. In some areas, to use a popular idiom, they "use cannons to shoot at sparrows", while leaving grave crimes against the interests of our society and citizens unsolved.

We set the law-enforcement personnel the task of abiding undeviatingly by this decision and learning persistently to work in the setting of greater democracy and public openness, relying on the trust and backing of all people.

Now a few words about diplomatic personnel. The activities of the Foreign Ministry are currently being reorganized. The structure of its central apparatus and foreign missions is being readjusted. Senior personnel are being renewed. This line should be pursued consistently and care should be taken to increase the efficiency of diplomatic services. We must make certain that diplomatic work is fully in line with the vigorous international activities of the CPSU and the Soviet state.

The state security bodies staffed by ideologically steered and professionally well-trained personnel dedicated to the Party and the people, vigilantly guard the Motherland's interests. We are convinced that the Soviet security bodies will continue uncovering hostile intrigues against our country quickly and cut them decisively short.

Finally, the tasks of the military personnel. The Party never slackens its efforts to build up the country's defense capability and assigns to servicemen a special role in fulfilling this vital task. This determines their immense responsibility to the people.

The Soviet Armed Forces are deeply involved in reorganization as well. They are reliably protecting the peaceful work of our people and the country's security. They are discharging their internationalist duty with honour.

The Central Committee strongly relies on the military personnel and the Soviet officer corps in strengthening the country's defence capability. I am positive that in the complicated international situation today, the Communists and all army and naval personnel will act with utmost respons-

ibility, upgrade their skills, and increase the combat preparedness of all arms of the service.

The Soviet people and our Party rely on our Armed Forces and are doing everything to strengthen them. They have every reason to hope that no aggressive forces will be able to catch us unawares.

Comrades, in conclusion I would like to speak briefly about the goals for 1987. This year, which marks the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution, holds special significance for us. The Soviet people are looking forward to the forthcoming anniversary as they thoroughly reorganize all aspects of public life. This year the Political Bureau believes it would be well to issue an Address to all Party members and all working people in the USSR.

The Central Committee calls on Communists and all Soviet people to display a still greater understanding and sense of responsibility for what is to be accomplished, for the destiny of the country and for the future image of socialism. We have achieved a lot in the decades of socialist construction. But time is putting new and ever greater demands on us. In these new changed conditions Soviet society is passing a test of dynamism, of the ability to climb the steps of progress rapidly.

Our economy is passing the test of high efficiency, of receptivity to advanced technologies, of ability to produce first-class goods and compete on the world markets. Our morality and the entire Soviet way of life are being put to test for an ability to develop steadily and enrich the values of socialist democracy, social justice and humanism. Our foreign policy is being tested for firmness and consistency in the defence of peace, for flexibility and self-possession in conditions of the frenzied arms race fuelled by imperialism and the international tension fanned by it.

In its innermost revolutionary essence, in the Bolshevik boldness of the plans, in its humanistic social orientation, the work being done today is a direct continuation of the great accomplishments started by our Leninist Party in October 1917.

Today the whole world is looking at the Soviet people. Will we be able to cope with the task? Shall we hold out? Will we be able to meet worthily the challenge thrown to socialism? We must give a worthy answer by our deeds, by our persevering work. And we cannot put it off.

As you well understand, Comrades, the year 1987 has a

most important role to play in the implementation of the Party's acceleration strategy. The success of the whole five-year plan period, of our major undertakings and the fulfilment of our long-term plans will depend on how well we do it. Hence it is of utmost importance to concentrate from the very beginning on specific deeds, on the implementation of the decisions taken. In short, it takes work—painstaking, routine but extremely important—on the part of Party committees, organizations, and all work collectives to implement the Congress decisions.

Not only must we consolidate and develop our achievements of the first year of the five-year plan period in all sectors of the economy and in all spheres of life, but we must also advance further and make greater use of long-term growth factors. Along these lines it is imperative to achieve noticeable changes for the better and to make them irreversible.

While orientating the personnel to tackling the current tasks and fulfilling the assignments of the 12th five-year plan period by all means, we must, as Lenin taught us, not lose sight of our perspective. We must specify and finalize ways of economic and social progress. The drafting of the plan for the 13th five-year plan period will begin shortly. It will be based on the new system of management making it possible to utilize socialism's potentialities and advantages to a greater extent.

Since the ongoing radical reform of economic management concerns fundamental questions of the functioning of the socialist economic system, as well as many aspects of political and social life and the style and methods of work, it would be expedient to examine the entire range of these problems at the Central Committee's next plenary meeting.

In view of these mounting tasks, we turn to our personnel. What is required of them is good organization, efficiency, and the ability to mobilize the creative energies and resources of work collectives to the utmost. Everyone should learn to be able to react promptly and in a businesslike manner to the arising problems and difficulties, which naturally may emerge since the tasks being tackled are new and in no way easy. As a matter of fact, all of us have to pass the test of political maturity in mastering new methods of work and guidance in all areas of socialist construction.

In short, the new year has brought forth new and quite responsible tasks in implementing the general line of the 27th

Congress. The Political Bureau is convinced that the ideas of the Congress, which have been profoundly understood by all our personnel and which have taken hold of their minds and thoughts, will more and more persistently and on a growing scale make their way into life. They will determine the course of our development and guarantee that the country will make fundamentally new advances in the economic, social and cultural spheres.

It is possible to sum up what has been said as follows: we all, and everyone of us, should improve our work. The mobilizing role of our Party, of all its organizations and of all Communists should manifest itself with particular force in the new situation. It is important to continuously keep in touch with the pulse of life and to do everything for the projected plans to be implemented.

In this connection, I would like to take counsel on this fundamental issue. Perhaps, it is advisable to convene an all-Union Party conference next year on the eve of the report-and-election campaign within the Party, and to extensively review the course of the implementation of the decisions of the 27th CPSU Congress and sum up the results of the first half of the five-year plan period. It would also be in line for the conference to discuss ways to further democratize the life of the Party and society as a whole.

The discussion started at this conference could be continued at report-and-election Party meetings and conferences, at which the results of the restructuring work of each Party organization should be analyzed in an exacting way.

The very fact of convening an all-Union Party conference in accordance with the CPSU's Rules would be a serious step towards making our Party life more democratic in practice and developing Communists' activity.

Comrades, by formulating a personnel policy in the conditions of the reorganization and acceleration of the country's social and economic development, the Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee thereby determines the most important areas of our work for many years to come. At the Plenary Meeting today we have repeatedly referred to Lenin, his thoughts and ideas. This is not just a tribute of great respect, not only an acknowledgement of Lenin's authority. This reflects the pressing desire to revive in modern conditions and to the fullest possible extent the spirit of Leninism, to assert in our life the Leninist demands on personnel. You will recall, Comrades, how passionately, how tirelessly Lenin taught us

that the success of revolutionary struggle, the success of any cardinal restructuring of society is largely determined by the tone set by the Party.

We wish to turn our country into a model highly developed state, into a society with the most advanced economy, the broadest democracy, the most humane and lofty ethics, where the working man feels that he is real master, enjoys all the benefits of material and intellectual culture, where the future of his children is secure, where he has everything that is necessary for a full and interesting life. And even sceptics will be forced to say: yes, the Bolsheviks can accomplish anything. Yes, the truth is on their side. Yes, socialism is a system serving man, working for his benefit, in his social and economic interests, for his cultural elevation.

(The Report was heard with great attention and punctuated with long applause)

THE CONCLUDING SPEECH

**by MIKHAIL GORBACHEV,
General Secretary of the CPSU Central
Committee,**

*at the Plenary Meeting of the
CPSU Central Committee
January 28, 1987*

Comrades,

Our Plenary Meeting is finishing its work—the discussion of the main item on the agenda. The atmosphere in which it has taken place and the speeches made witness the complete unanimity of views on all issues which the Plenary Meeting of the Party's Central Committee had to consider and decide. This has not been a formal unity but a unity based on the awareness of the Central Committee's responsibility for the success of the strategy formulated by the April Plenary Meeting and the 27th Congress of the CPSU.

Now that we have finished the discussions and are to adopt a decision, it would be appropriate to ask this question: has our Plenary Meeting come up to the expectations of Communists and of all Soviet people? How is this question to be answered? Even by the highest standards, this Plenary Meeting has been a major political event in the life of both the CPSU and Soviet society.

I believe we have every reason for saying that this Plenary Meeting is taking the Party, the country and all society perceptibly further along the path of reorganization. However, its significance can only manifest itself fully on this indispensable condition: all that we have agreed upon here must be consistently translated into reality by the CPSU Central Committee's Political Bureau, the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of the constituent Republics, the Party committees at territorial, regional, city, district and area levels, and all Party organizations throughout the Soviet Union.

This is why I put it this way: the Plenary Meeting will live up to the expectations if we continue in the same vein after it. This Plenary Meeting has laid a solid foundation for making further, steady progress along the path of acceleration,

change, and improvements in personnel policy meeting the needs of the present stage of historical development.

The extensive discussions, in which 34 comrades took part out of the total 77 who had entered their names on the speakers' list, have given us a unique opportunity to look once more from different levels and angles of Party and state work, at the drive for reorganization, reflect on its purpose, assess the very process of reorganization again, and hear first-hand opinions about it.

What is of paramount importance to us, and I think we have the right to say this, is primarily the political confirmation by the Plenary Meeting of the fact that the Party and all healthy forces of society stand for reorganization. And since this is so, there can be no other path at all. And this should mark an end to the debates on whether we need reorganization or not. I fully agree with Comrade D. K. Motorny who stated here that reorganization is no longer an idea, it is a reality.

The Soviet people are associating their own plans as well as the future of their country and its international prestige and authority with the reorganization effort. Should we permit any wavering in pressing on with it? No, Comrades, we should not.

Certainly, reorganization is already a reality. Today we realize ever more clearly and profoundly that from the standpoint of both internal development and external conditions, the international situation, we must ensure the country's more rapid social and economic progress. But there will be no acceleration without society's renovation. Nor will there be any change in all spheres of its life without its renovation. The new tasks cannot be tackled by taking the old approaches, especially the historic tasks facing us today.

Reorganization is not strolling along a well-beaten path. It is going uphill, often by untrodden ways. As the Central Committee's Plenary Meeting has shown once again, quite a few problems have accumulated in our society. Immense creative efforts and a long, selfless struggle are needed to carry out the great cause of reorganization as our people and the time demand.

We are just at the start of the road. This must be made plain by the Central Committee's Plenary Meeting since knowing where we are enables us to realize what we must do and how. If some people have decided they have already changed their ways, they must be reminded that we have only

just started our reorganization. The most important work is yet ahead. This is another important conclusion drawn by the Plenary Meeting of the Party's Central Committee.

While pursuing our reorganization we must not run to extremes in our judgements. We must stand firmly on what is the only stable base—reality. Overestimating our achievements would be detrimental, but I would also like to stress with equal force that we must not fail to take note of even the slightest progress, even the tiny modicums of experience since that would be just as harmful. All this is inadmissible, first of all, for the following reason.

We are just getting into stride, finding concrete approaches in our political line and mapping out ways of attaining the targets we have set ourselves. We are just turning on the mechanism and means of reorganization and making our first steps in having them swing into action and yield results. But already today as we reviewed the results of 1986, we saw that headway had been made.

How has progress been made? It is the direct result of our people's support for the line towards reorganization, towards acceleration.

How can we fail to see this or say that nothing has happened or nothing is taking place? The revolutionary is not the one who uses revolutionary phrases, but the one who can view things in perspective and rouse the people and the Party to protracted and persistent effort, taking note of every step of progress and using it to find another fulcrum for a new and broader stride.

Today at the Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee we must express the Party's immense gratitude to our people for realizing and feeling that they are called for a difficult struggle for such changes and such goals which will bear fine fruit to our entire society, to every family and every person.

The Soviet people have believed us and supported the Party. This is why the good changes achieved in 1986 are so important to us. They are of importance because they reflect our people's powerful support for the Party's policy and for its course for acceleration.

I want to emphasize some other points mentioned at the Plenary Meeting. To my mind, it is quite legitimate that the subject of serious, in-depth democratization of Soviet society has been put as the major one in the Report of the Political Bureau.

This is, Comrades, the lever which will make it possible to draw into the reorganization its decisive force—the people. If we do not do this, we will never accomplish the tasks of acceleration, not achieve reorganization. There will be just no reorganization at all.

On the other hand, while developing and furthering socialist democracy and bringing its potential into play, we must create most reliable guarantees that will prevent a repetition of the errors of the past. But the point is not only in that.

We need democracy like air. If we fail to realize this or if we do realize it but make no real serious steps to broaden it, to promote it and draw the country's working people extensively into the reorganization process, our policy will get choked, and reorganization will fail, Comrades.

That is our main idea, and as all the members of the Political Bureau—we exchanged opinions on the course of the Plenary Meeting during each interval—I am very much satisfied with the fact that this major line in the CPSU's activities at the present stage of the drive for attaining the goals of acceleration has been fully supported by the Central Committee's Plenary Meeting.

The Communist Party is firmly of the opinion that the people should know everything. Openness, criticism and self-criticism, and control exercised by the masses are guarantees for Soviet society's healthy development. Since the people need them, this means that they are really needed. This is all the more important since the CPSU is the ruling party. It is also interested in openness, in criticism and self-criticism, for these are real and reliable forms of the normal functioning of the CPSU. These are the means which can protect the Party from errors in politics. The price of these errors is known to all of us.

Today we all are arriving at the same conclusion: we need openness, criticism and self-criticism as effective forms of socialist democracy. In our state, a state of workers and peasants, everything concerns the people, because it is a state of the people. They should know everything and be able to consciously judge everything. These words, as you know, were said by Lenin.

The people want the truth. While on this point I would like to remind you of Lenin's standpoint expressed in a letter to the newspaper *Iskra*. "Indeed, it is high time to make a clean sweep of the traditions of circle sectarianism and—in a

party which rests on the *masses*—resolutely advance the slogan: *More light!*—let the Party know *everything*,” Lenin wrote. As never before, we need now more light, so that the Party and the people can know everything, so that no dark nooks are left to become overgrown with mould again, something we are resolutely fighting, but have yet a long way to go in our struggle. This is why we need more light.

Can it possibly be that with such a powerful Party and patriotic people, loyal to the ideals of socialism and their Motherland, we will fail to rise to the occasion if someone tries to take advantage of wide openness and democratic processes to pursue selfish and anti-social purposes and to slander?

I want to share an observation I made from analyzing my trips. Before, more often than not demagogues came to the fore, showing off their “courage”. The demagoguery was mainly along such lines: in what direction are the top officials, especially those in Moscow, looking? The situation is different now. I draw this conclusion from scores of meetings. Today mature, serious people engage in frank conversations, often in most unexpected, unprepared audiences and places. They raise issues in a business-like manner, ask questions about what is unclear to them, and find out how particular issues are to be solved.

It is the openness and democracy that have allowed the working class, the peasantry, our intelligentsia and all healthy forces to hold up their heads. Once a demagogue appears, they put him down. I have seen this dozens of times. People will always see which is which.

Openness, criticism and self-criticism are vital for us. These are major requisites of the socialist way of life. If someone believes that we need these only for criticizing past drawbacks he is making a big mistake. The main point is that openness, criticism and self-criticism, democracy, are necessary for our advance, for accomplishing immense tasks. We shall not be able to accomplish these tasks without the people’s active involvement. This is why we need all this.

If someone finds that it is not easy to work in such a situation, I want to recall that six months ago I urged people to begin learning how to work in conditions of widening democracy. Let all of us learn that.

The press must promote openness of information in the country and keep our people informed about everything. But it should do this responsibly: such is the wish we are expressing.

Don't indulge in sensationalism. We need the press as an active participant in reorganization.

We should add work efficiency. Remarks by many comrades on this score have already been sounded right here.

This concerns all, including the press. At present it is very important for us to see all that is positive and constructive and adopt that for further use, to make it the asset of the entire Party and all people, and to cherish the sprouts of new approaches in the process of reorganization. Greater openness and the popularization of everything advanced are necessary in this field, too.

With this January Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee, we are entering—I do not want to be accused of inventing another stage—but we are now entering a new stage of our movement, our reorganization. I shall explain this. The situation has been reviewed, a political course has been set, and the main decisions for implementing the course have been adopted. Now what is needed is deeds and only deeds.

The people will judge our policy and our efforts of reorganization and they will do this ever more strictly, by the tangible results we achieve in securing real improvements in the working and living conditions of the millions: how much has been done to make the organization of production more efficient or labour remuneration more fair, to step up housing construction, improve trade, services, municipal transport and the work of outpatient clinics and hospitals, and to build a healthier atmosphere in Party organizations and within work collectives.

In short, we Communists must prove the correctness of our policy and the vitality of reorganization on thousands upon thousands of facts of daily life. This places especially high demands on the personnel and concentrates their attention on attaining practical results. This is why it is so important now, as already been said in the Report, to quicken the step, move into a higher gear, and for everyone to put in an even bigger effort at one's workplace.

I especially would like to stress the significance of the tasks to be tackled in this year 1987. These tasks are stupendous in terms of their scope and of the frontiers we shall have to reach in coping with them. They are especially important from the standpoint of mastering new methods of management, of switching the entire economy, including its numerous sectors onto the new rails of management.

Reorganization, Comrades, is a great school. It sets formidable tasks and we must pass through this school with flying colours. I would like to repeat once again: we must act, act and act—energetically, boldly, creatively and competently! This is, if you will, the principal task of the moment. Everybody, all Party organizations, all Party committees, all leaders, all Communists should regard this task as their own.

On behalf of the Central Committee of the CPSU I would like to address all comrades in the Party and all Soviet people: the cause of reorganization, the cause of the revolutionary revitalization of society, and the country's future are in the hands of the people. The future will be what we make it, by our common labour, our intellect, and our conscience.

Reorganization is the frontline for every honest person, for every patriot. There is enough work for everyone and the road ahead is long.

We are firm in our desire to carry out the decisions of the 27th Congress. We shall press on with bringing Soviet society to a qualitatively new peak in life. We are confident that reorganization is irreversible.

Members of the Central Committee have spoken in favour of a countrywide Party Conference. For the Party such a Conference would be a political event of great magnitude. I understand that those who did not participate in the deliberations, also share this proposal which the Political Bureau put forward at the Plenary Meeting.

Comrades, we remember from history more than one conference which at crucial stages helped open up new ways and means for achieving the set aims, and solved problems transcending far beyond the framework of tactical ones.

We consider it necessary, and I am putting this to you for consideration that the Political Bureau prepares proposals ready for one of the nearest plenary meetings of the Central Committee on the date and procedure of holding such a conference. We think that the all-Union Party Conference will impart a mighty charge to the report-and-election campaign and give a new impetus to the reorganization activity of the Party and all of its organizations.

These are, briefly, considerations which I wanted to express in conclusion of the discussion that took place at the Plenary Meeting of the Party's Central Committee. I thank you all for your active participation in the work of the Plenary Meeting and wish all great successes in our common cause.

Михаил Сергеевич Горбачев
О ПЕРЕСТРОЙКЕ И КАДРОВОЙ ПОЛИТИКЕ ПАРТИИ

на английском языке

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