

Mikhail Sergeevich!

1. It would be expedient to present the forthcoming decision on the Armed Forces externally as the result of consideration of a report from the Ministry of Defense and of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces, prepared in implementation of the corresponding decisions of the XIX All-Union Party Conference and as a step in the adaptation to the new military doctrine.

This would allow us to avoid the unnecessary speculations pitting the army and the party against each other, and to underline the seriousness of the Soviet side's intentions to strive for downgrading the importance of the military factor in international affairs within the framework of the new political thinking, and the importance of political documents, which are brought to the attention of governments and publics of other countries.

Obviously, very few people would have any doubts that the CC CPSU remains the genuine headquarters where the new ideas are being generated and where timetables for their implementation are determined. But there will be no formal excuse for malevolent ranting.

2. To guard against the costs, which accompanied the mass retiring of officers from the army in the end of the 1950s—beginning of 1960s, it would be good to think through the order of transfer of the officers to civilian work. In particular, we might want to not be stingy and to promote them to higher ranks ahead of schedule and therefore to grant them somewhat higher pensions according to their age. That would be a sign of the party and government's gratitude to the officers for their honest service. At the same time, it would allow us to exclude the situation where by the criteria of bureaucratic "economizing" officers would be retired from the Army and the Navy just a couple of months or even several weeks short of their scheduled promotions to the next rank.

It would be appropriate to conduct an assessment of practically all specialists in the [military] units and formations, especially of the mid-level commanding officers, with the view to replace negligent officers with officers from other units and formations, which are subject to dissolution. We should not oppose transfers to civilian service of those officers, who for personal or any other reasons are not interested in continuation of their service in the armed forces.

3. The armed forces have accumulated a long list catalog of unsolved social and household problems. It would seem appropriate to decide to use a significant portion (25-30%) of the resources that would become available to fix problems in the social and cultural spheres, to improve health services, resolve the housing issue, including for those servicemen, who retired from the Army and the Navy earlier having served their full term, and to provide assistance for veterans of foreign wars.
4. These and some other similar measures, in addition to improving the quality of the personnel of the armed forces, would create conditions for raising the prestige of military service, and would have a very positive effect on the perception of perestroika among the military. The Party's care about the material aspects of life of the armed forces

servicemen would undoubtedly strengthen the party's influence in the Army and the Navy.

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