

News Release



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C-SPAN AIRS SPEECH BY SOVIET PRIME MINISTER TO USSR SUPREME SOVIET

Washington, D.C., May 31 -- As part of its U.S.-Soviet arms control summit coverage, C-SPAN will air an address by Soviet Prime Minister Nikolai Ivanovich Ryzhkov on the Soviet economy on Sunday, June 3, from 1:00pm - 3:00pm ET.

Prime Minister Ivanovich's speech before a session of the USSR Supreme Soviet was taped in Moscow on Thursday, May 24. In it, he detailed the Soviet Union's planned transition to a market economy.

The Supreme Soviet, of which Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev is a member, is a permanent legislative, administrative, and supervisory body in the Soviet Union.

THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

CONGRESS OF PEOPLE'S DEPUTIES AND USSR SUPREME SOVIET: STRUCTURE, FUNCTIONS, POWERS

In December 1988 the Soviet Union made serious changes in its political system. The national legislature approved amendments and additions to the Constitution of the USSR, changing the electoral system and constitutionalising a new structure of the highest bodies of state authority of the Union.

Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR

The Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR is the highest body of state authority in the country. It is elected for a term of five years. The Congress consists of 2,250 deputies elected in the following order: 750 deputies from territorial electoral districts with equal numbers of voters; 750 deputies from ethnic-territorial electoral districts on the basis of the following representation: 32 deputies from each Union Republic, 11 deputies from each Autonomous Republic, 5 deputies from each Autonomous Region and one deputy from each Autonomous Area; and 750 deputies from national public organisations (subsequently they will be elected by the population without special preferences).

The Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR shall be convoked for its first session by the USSR Supreme Soviet not later than two months after the elections. The first Congress of People's Deputies was held in Moscow from May 25 till June 9, 1989.

Regular sessions of the Congress are held once a year. Special sessions of the Congress can be convened on the initiative of the USSR Supreme Soviet, on the proposal of any of its two chambers, the President of the USSR, or at least one-fifth of the People's Deputies of the USSR, or on the initiative of any Union Republic represented by its highest body of state authority.

State authority in its entirety is vested in the Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR. According to the Constitution of the USSR its exclusive prerogative includes:

- adoption and amendment of the Constitution of the USSR;
- decision-making on questions of national and state composition coming within the jurisdiction of the USSR; circumscription of the state borders of the USSR and endorsement of border changes between the republics;
- encompassment of guidelines for the domestic and foreign policies of the USSR;
- approval of long-term state plans and vital federal programmes for the country's eco-

normic and social development:

- election of the USSR Supreme Soviet, election of the Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet and election of the First Vice-Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet;
- endorsement of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, the Chairman of the People's Control Committee of the USSR, the Chairman of the USSR Supreme Court, the Procurator-General of the USSR and the Chief State Arbiter of the USSR, election of Committee for Constitutional Compliance of the USSR;
- revocation, if necessary, of the legislative acts passed by the USSR Supreme Soviet; decision making on holding a nationwide vote (referendum).

It is only natural that the Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR is empowered to consider and resolve any question within the jurisdiction of the Union.

The first Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR elected Mikhail Gorbachev, Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet. The third Congress of People's Deputies last March elected Mikhail Gorbachev President of the USSR. In the future, according to the Constitution, the President will be elected by general elections. Anatoly Lukyanov, who was First Vice-Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, was elected Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

The corps of deputies comprising 2,250 representatives elected to the first Congress reflects the ethnic and social structure of Soviet society. People representing all Union Republics, Autonomous Republics, Autonomous Regions and Autonomous Areas are among the People's Deputies of the USSR. These are people of 65 nationalities.

Eighty eight per cent of all People's Deputies of the USSR were elected to the country's highest representative body of state authority for the first time. 87 per cent of deputies are members or candidate members of the Soviet Communist Party (as compared to 71.5 per cent of deputies to the USSR Supreme Soviet of the 11th convocation. The Congress reflects rather accurately the social and professional structure of Soviet society. 24.8 per cent of the deputies corps are people working in industry, construction, transport and communications (earlier their percentage stood at 40.4). 18 per cent (earlier - 16.1 per cent) are people working in agriculture. 23.7 per cent (earlier - 51.3 per cent) are workers and collective farmers. 27.4 per cent (earlier - 8.9 per cent) are scientific and cultural workers. 30.3 per cent are aged between 30 and 60. 6 per cent (earlier - 15 per cent) are members of the Young Communist League. 15 per cent of all deputies (earlier - 32.8 per cent) are women.

And now let us consider in more detail about the social status of People's Deputies. 6.8 per cent of them are managers working in industry. 8.5 per cent are managers of collective and state farms and agri-business firms. 316 deputies are scientific researchers, higher and secondary school professors; 96 deputies are public health workers; 146 deputies are people in culture and the arts, and 58 deputies work for mass media organisations. There are 227 party functionaries among the deputies. These are secretaries of the CPSU Central Committee and Central Committees of the Communist Parties of the Union Republics, secretaries of territorial, regional, area, district, city and borough Communist Party committees as well secretaries of primary party committees. One in every two deputies worked in Soviets of People's Deputies before the latest elections. 80 deputies represent the armed forces of the USSR. And finally, it should be mentioned that

July 1st

1) C-SPAN

a) Subscribers = 50,250,000

b) Systems = 3,825

2) C-SPAN II

a) Subscribers = 21,250,000

b) Systems = 765

3) Audio I

a) Subscribers = 1,300,000

b) Systems = 21

4) Audio II

a) Subscribers = 750,000

b) Systems = 13

→ tape from Moscow

Summit coverage
CSPAN maybe
interested in

→ 2 hours

Contact:
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→ As part of the US-Soviet summit coverage

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Prime Minister Ivanovich will on the Soviet Union's transition to a market economy.

The USSR Supreme Soviet is a permanent legislative, administrative, and supervisory body of state authority of the Soviet Union.

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MEMBERS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL COUNCIL

RYZHKOV
Nikolai Ivanovich

*Former Minister
of the USSR*

*Member, Politburo
Central Committee*

Born in 1929 in the village of Dyleyevka in Dzerzhinsk District, Donetsk Region, Russian. In 1950 finished the Kramatorsk Machine-Building Specialized Technical School, and in 1959 graduated from the S.M. Kirov Urals Polytechnical Institute; member of the CPSU since 1956.

Started his working career in 1950 as shift foreman at the Uralmash Plant. In subsequent years, he worked at that plant as shop superintendent, sector chief, chief welder, deputy director and, starting in 1965, chief engineer. In 1970 became director of the Sergo Ordzhonikidze Urals Heavy Engineering Plant. Between 1971 and 1975, general director of the Uralmash Production Association. In 1975 was appointed First Deputy Minister of Heavy and Transport Engineering of the USSR, and in 1979, First Vice-Chairman of the USSR State Planning Committee. Between 1982 and 1985, Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, head of the Economics Department of the CPSU Central Committee. In September 1985, appointed Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers.

From 1981 on, member of the CPSU Central Committee. In April 1985, elected member of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee.

People's Deputy of the USSR.

of state authority
of 2250
districts on
11

for the first time in the history of the Soviet Union seven religious figures were elected deputies to the country's highest legislative body.

It is obvious that the corps of deputies to the Congress differs from that of the USSR Supreme Soviet of the previous convocation: the number of full and alternate members of the Soviet Communist Party and the number of persons in culture and the arts increased, while the percentage of workers and collective farmers, women and young people dropped.

USSR Supreme Soviet

Elected by the Congress of People's Deputies from among People's Deputies of the USSR, the USSR Supreme Soviet comprises 542 members. It is a permanent legislative, administrative and supervisory body of state authority of the Soviet Union. According to the Constitution, the USSR Supreme Soviet convenes twice a year for regular (spring and autumn) sessions. Each of them, as a rule, lasts 3-4 months.

People's Deputies who were not elected to the Supreme Soviet nonetheless have the right to attend sittings of the USSR Supreme Soviet and take part in debates on various matters (they have a deliberative vote). They can be elected to committees and standing commissions and take an active part in all undertakings of the Supreme Soviet and its bodies. People's Deputies of the USSR, no matter if they were elected to the Supreme Soviet or not, are equal in all rights and privileges extended to People's Deputies, enjoy the right to immunity, pre-paid fare and an official expense account.

The most important distinguishing feature of the newly-elected Supreme Soviet as compared with the Supreme Soviet of previous convocations is that it is a standing body. The Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR elects the Supreme Soviet by secret ballot from among People's Deputies of the USSR. The USSR Supreme Soviet is accountable to the Congress and consists of two chambers: the Council of the Union and the Council of Nationalities. Both of them have equal rights and comprise an equal number of deputies. But the elections to the chambers are based on different principles: the Council of the Union is elected from among People's Deputies of the USSR representing territorial electoral districts and People's Deputies of the USSR representing public organisations with account of the number of voters in a given Union Republic or region, while the Council of Nationalities is elected from among People's Deputies of the USSR representing ethnic-territorial electoral districts and from among People's Deputies of the USSR representing public organisations. Elections are held on the basis of the following representation: 11 deputies from a Union Republic, 4 deputies from an Autonomous Republic, 2 deputies from an Autonomous Region and one deputy from an Autonomous Area.

The Council of Nationalities comprises 271 deputies. The same number of deputies is elected to the Council of the Union to ensure the equality of the chambers. The Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR annually re-elects up to one-fifth of the deputies to the Council of the Union and the Council of Nationalities. This means that in the duration of five years more than 900 People's Deputies of the USSR can work for a certain time in the USSR Supreme Soviet.

Each chamber of the USSR Supreme Soviet elects a Chairman and two Vice-Chairmen. Ivan Laptev, the former editor-in-chief of Izvestia, is Chairman of the Council of the

Union. Rafik Nishanov, a prominent statesman from Uzbekistan is Chairman of the Council of Nationalities. Regular sessions of the USSR Supreme Soviet are convened by its Chairman. Special sessions can also be convened by the Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet at its discretion, or on the proposal of the President of the USSR, of a Union republic represented by its highest body of state authority, or on the initiative of at least one-third of the deputies to either of the chambers of the USSR Supreme Soviet. A session of the USSR Supreme Soviet consists of separate and joint sittings of the chambers, and of meetings of the standing commissions of the chambers and committees of the USSR Supreme Soviet, held between the sittings of the chambers.

Important state powers are vested in the USSR Supreme Soviet. First of all it is the legislative function--the enactment of the laws of the USSR. The Supreme Soviet also ensures uniformity of legislative regulation throughout Soviet territory and establishes the fundamentals of legislation of the USSR and the Union Republics. It also names the date of elections of People's Deputies of the USSR and endorses the make-up of the Central Electoral Commission; appoints, on the President's suggestion, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR; endorses, on the latter's suggestions, the composition of the government of the USSR and makes changes in it; elects the People's Control Committee and the Supreme Court of the USSR, appoints the Procurator-General and the Chief State Arbitrator of the USSR; endorses the collegium of the USSR Procurator's Office and the collegium of the USSR State Arbitration.

The USSR Supreme Soviet regularly hears reports of the bodies which it forms or elects and of the officials whom it appoints or elects.

The USSR Supreme Soviet also performs, within the terms of reference of the USSR, the legislative regulation of relations of ownership; organisation of management of the national economy, social and cultural development, the budget and financial system; remuneration of labour and pricing; taxation; environmental protection and use of natural resources, the exercise of constitutional rights, freedoms and duties of citizens and other relations.

In accordance with the Constitution, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, which is a standing legislature, establishes general principles and determines the guidelines for the activity of Republican and local bodies of state authority and administration, and determines the legal status of public organisations. It submits drafts of long-term state plans and the most important federal programmes of the development of the USSR for endorsement by the Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR, endorses state plans and the state budget, supervises their implementation, ratifies and denounces international treaties of the USSR; supervises the granting of loans and assistance to foreign states, the conclusion of agreements on state loans and credits received from foreign sources, determines main measures in the sphere of defence and state security.

The USSR Supreme Soviet institutes military and diplomatic ranks, honorary and other special titles, institutes orders and medals of the USSR, issues federal acts of amnesty. It has the right to revoke decrees and resolutions of the USSR Council of Ministers. It can revoke resolutions and ordinances of the Councils of Ministers of the Union Republics should they fail to conform to the Constitution and laws of the USSR. It resolves other questions within the competence of the Union except those which come

U-matic NTSC 60'

the first part

Report on transition to
market economy.

within the exclusive competence of the Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR.

On its own initiative or on the suggestion of the USSR President the Supreme Soviet of the USSR can give the government the vote of no-confidence which involves its resignation.

Lawmaking is a vital sphere of activity of the USSR Supreme Soviet. Who can submit draft laws and resolutions to the USSR Supreme Soviet for consideration? According to the Soviet Constitution, the right to initiate legislation during sessions of the Congress of People's Deputies and Supreme Soviet of the USSR belongs to People's Deputies, the Council of the Union, the Council of Nationalities, the Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, the President of the USSR, the Committee for Constitutional Compliance, the USSR Council of Ministers, the Union and Autonomous Republics through their highest bodies of state authority, Autonomous Regions and Autonomous Areas, standing commissions of the chambers and committees of the Supreme Soviet, the People's Control Committee and the Supreme Court of the USSR, to the Procurator-General and the Chief State Arbiter of the USSR. In addition, the right of legislative initiative also belongs to public organisations through their all-Union bodies and to the USSR Academy of Sciences.

The USSR Constitution defines the approximate range of questions which are first subject to consideration by one or the other chamber of the USSR Supreme Soviet. Questions of social and economic development and of the development of the state which are of equal significance to the entire country, of the rights, freedoms and obligations of the citizens of the USSR, of foreign policy, and of defence and state security of the USSR are first subject to consideration in the Council of the Union. Questions of ensuring ethnic equality and interests of nations, ethnic groups and social strata in combination with the common interests and requirements of the Soviet multi-ethnic state, and upgrading of the legislation of the USSR regulating inter-ethnic relations are first subject to consideration in the Council of Nationalities.

The Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet

The Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet is formed by the USSR Supreme Soviet on the basis of the new principles laid down in the Constitution of the USSR. The Presidium is a body accountable to the USSR Supreme Soviet. It ensures organisation of the work of the Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR and of the USSR Supreme Soviet and exercises other powers within limits defined by the USSR Constitution and laws of the USSR.

The Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet is formed of the following officials: the Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, the Chairman of the Council of the Union and the Chairman of the Council of Nationalities, their deputies, the Chairmen of the standing commissions of the chambers and committees of the USSR Supreme Soviet, other deputies of the USSR (one from each Union Republic), as well as one representative from Autonomous Republics and one - from Autonomous Areas. The Presidium is headed by the Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

The Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet has no right to approve legislative acts,

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NOTE:

John:
This is the first in a series of tapes we
will receive from the Soviet legislative
body.

-KW