



Soviet cartoonist, Igor Smirnov, depicts the task of weeding out bureaucracy.

He stated that even though «socialism removes the antagonism of interests, contradictions of interests of various groups of the population, collectives, agencies and organizations» continue to exist. These give rise to opposing viewpoints and tendencies. Addressing solutions to these difficulties, Gorbachev advocated «extensive development of democracy... It is the command-and-administer forms of

managing society that are braking our movement. Democratic and only democratic forms are capable of giving it mighty acceleration.»

In conclusion, we note an important point that may already be obvious to our readers: The socialist renewal underway in the Soviet Union is the internal backbone of the daring and innovative Soviet foreign policy, and its cornerstone: The repeated, sincere

Soviet proposals for a world of peace, free of nuclear weapons. Just as the Soviet peace policy has thrown the most reactionary imperialist powers off-balance, the success of socialist restructuring and renewal, and the expansion of socialist democracy in the Soviet Union, can herald a future shift in the international balance of forces, in favor of the forces of peace, progress and socialism worldwide. ●

Central American Peace Plan

On August 7th, the presidents of Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras and Costa Rica met in Guatemala City and signed a peace plan for Central America. This raised hopes for a serious effort to establish peace in the region. By ruling out US support to the contras, the plan represents a political victory for Nicaragua's revolution.

The plan was the accumulation of nearly four years of regional peace talks in Central America. It calls for: (1) bringing about a ceasefire throughout Central America within 90 days (by November 7th); (2) stopping aid to all rebel groups in the region; (3) prohibiting the use of any country's territory for the purpose of undermining or overthrowing any other Central American government; (4) providing verification of the above-mentioned measures; (5) amnesty for political

prisoners and the armed opposition in each country; and (6) beginning a process of democratization in the area.

As agreed by the five presidents, the foreign ministers of thirteen Latin American countries met in Caracas, Venezuela on August 23rd, and created a commission to verify compliance with the Guatemala plan. The ten-member commission consists of the foreign ministers of Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, Panama, Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Uruguay, and the secretary

generals of the UN and OAS, or their senior representatives.

The Guatemala plan grew out of the proposals presented by Costa Rican President Oscar Arias in February. But while Arias' proposals were basically directed against Nicaragua, for example prohibiting arms shipments to the Sandinista government, the Guatemala plan deals with all countries in the region on an equal basis. Most importantly, the Guatemala plan eclipsed US President Reagan's so-called peace plan for Central America, which was introduced just one day prior to the Guatemala meeting.

The US plan, devised by Reagan and House Speaker Jim Wright, aimed at guaranteeing the survival of the Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries (contras), rather than being a genuine peace effort. It called for a negotiated ceasefire acceptable to the contras, while prohibiting any military aid from the socialist countries to the Sandinista