

market conditions will lose not only its power, but all its privileges. The population of the rural areas itself represents a special danger for the economic reform; here, drunkenness and thievery from the *kolkhoz* [collective farm] and *sovkhov* [state farm] fields is firmly rooted, the people have forgotten how to work effectively, even for themselves. It is no accident that farmer-enthusiasts get robbed, and also burned out.

In the country, my wife and I simply do a lot of good work on our garden plot, in order to obtain food for the winter. Our neighbors, who are local *sovkhov* workers, loaf around in the summertime, and come fall, they are overcome by such envy, that they are ready to burn us out.

There can only be one way out: group farming and a stiffening of administrative and legal sanctions against those who hinder the development of farming in the countryside.

EIR: The military-industrial complex of the former Soviet Union has been on a very advanced scientific-technological level. What, in your view, could be its contribution to the economic regeneration of Russia and the other CIS states?

Vasilyev: Many industrial enterprises of the military-indus-

CIS officers want action on military's problems

At the first Officers' Assembly of the Community of Independent States on Jan. 17-18, some 6,000 members of the former Soviet officers corp met to discuss the crisis in the Armed Forces, and issued a resolution demanding the passage of "laws in the shortest possible time" by the CIS states "to secure defense, military service, status of military servicemen and families, living quarters, material and financial well-being, and also for reservists and retired," and "to protect each serviceman from humiliation."

The resolution noted that "haste in dividing up the Armed Forces under conditions of an unstable political situation and economic chaos can have tragic consequences. It can devastate the security and defense ability of all CIS states, and their cooperation with the nations of the world community." The officers called on the "CIS heads of state and parliaments to maintain, for a transitional period, a unified command system of the Armed Forces, unified military-strategic space, and work out the fate of the Armed Forces through negotiations. We expect civilized, thought-out and well-founded laws and decisions, to exclude any confrontation among future armies of the republics."

trial complex (MIC) can be reoriented to the production of consumer goods, especially for the needs of agriculture. Until this has happened, I would not rush ahead with indiscriminate privatization of the MIC, but rather direct its efforts to providing technical help to enterprises engaged in food-processing and production of goods for everyday life, i.e., small goods producers, which should be under private ownership.

Later on, it will be possible to proceed to auctioning off the MIC enterprises as well.

EIR: With the price float and the radical "free market reforms," mafia-type organizations seem to have gained a dominant role in Russian economic life. These mafias seem to merge with the old communist *nomenklatura*. What danger, in your view, does this mafia-*nomenklatura* combination represent for Russia?

Vasilyev: I do not see a problem of the mafia merging with the apparat, since I am convinced that from the outset, our totalitarian system and its party and economic apparat gave birth to a mafia for the purpose of siphoning off national wealth as their personal property. The main mafia was the Politburo of the CC CPSU. That's precisely who uncontrolledly squandered not only party funds, but also the state treasury.

The latest press revelations about the secret millions of the CPSU, the KGB, and the ministries and agencies of the U.S.S.R. confirm my idea.

The appearance of commercial banks, joint enterprises, stock markets, and other commercial firms, with millions in capital—before the beginning of general privatization—also demonstrates the mafia origins of this capital. It is no accident, that on the boards of these commercial enterprises former *apparatchiki* of the party and state organs have turned up.

EIR: What is your view on the political future of Boris Yeltsin? Do you think that Yeltsin will be able to weather the economic and social storms as Russian President?

Vasilyev: I never trusted Gorbachov, since at difficult moments he always avoided taking direct responsibility and let his companions-in-arms take the heat.

Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, whom I have met face to face three times, is a complete opposite to Gorbachov. Him I trust. So far, the entire politicized part of the democratic movement also trusts him, and maybe that is precisely why we criticize him so freely, for all the mis-steps in his work as President and chairman of the Council of Ministers of Russia.

I am confident that we will be able to keep him as President to the end of his term.

EIR: If the economic plight in Russia worsens, do you think that Vice President Gen. Aleksandr Rutskoy could emerge