

World & Nation

U.S.-Soviets begin talks on trade

United Press International

MOSCOW — U.S. and Soviet negotiators in Moscow quietly began the highest level trade talks between the superpowers in six years Tuesday while world attention focused on superpower arms talks in Geneva.

Commerce Undersecretary Lionel Olmer and Soviet Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade Vladimir Sushkov met in the posh Western-style International Trade Center to discuss ways to increase bilateral trade, which has dropped off sharply since the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Officials declined to comment on the substance of the talks, but U.S. Embassy spokesman Jaroslav Verner

said the "working meeting would explore various problems in the area of ... trade in non-strategic areas."

Another diplomat who declined to be identified said the two-day meeting was aimed at finding ways to extend commerce as part of a general thaw in superpower relations.

Like the Geneva arms talks between Secretary of State George Shultz and Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, one of the aims of the Moscow negotiations is to open up avenues for future contacts.

The last meeting of the Cabinet-level U.S.-U.S.S.R commercial commission met in December 1978. Since then, all trade talks between

the superpowers have been at a lower level.

The official Soviet news agency Tass said that in the 1980s the United States has dropped from second to the seventh place among the Soviet Union's Western trading partners.

Bilateral trade peaked at \$3.6 billion in 1979 but dropped off sharply to \$1.5 billion the next year after then-President Jimmy Carter declared a grain embargo to protest the invasion of Afghanistan.

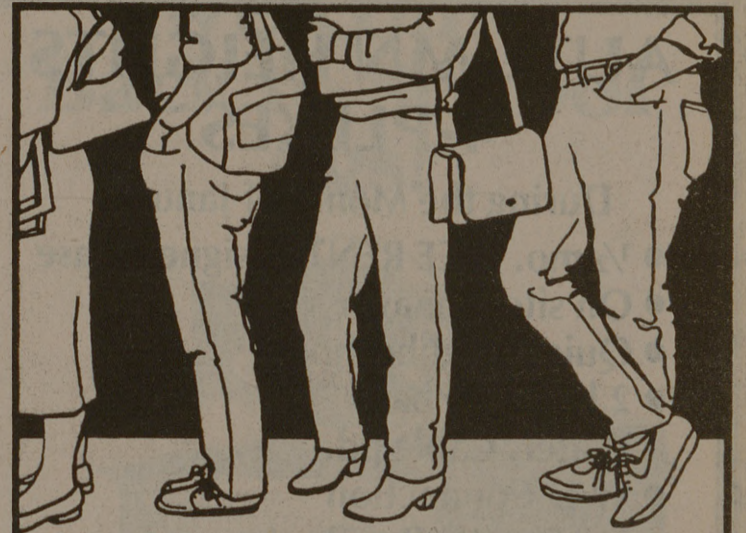
President Reagan lifted the embargo in 1981 but relations between the superpowers remained strained over a number of issues, including Reagan's attempt to block shipment

of equipment for the Soviet-European natural gas pipeline in 1982.

Grain comprises the majority of present U.S. exports to the Soviet Union.

Tass welcomed the meeting following "a long break after the U.S. side unilaterally suspended official contacts with the Soviet side on questions of trade."

In wording similar to that used in its discussion of the Geneva talks, Tass said the results of the trade meeting "depend on how constructive the approach of the U.S. side will be in a search for ways to resume mutually beneficial trade relations."



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Ad for entertainers riles union leaders

WASHINGTON — Labor leaders cried foul — and the White House wined a bit — Tuesday over an ad seeking 200 "clean-cut, all-American" non-union singers and dancers to work without pay during the 50th inaugural festivities.

"There's a minimum wage of \$3.35 an hour," Murray Seeger, spokesman for the AFL-CIO, said.

"You get it for frying hamburgers at McDonald's and you ought to at least get that much for dancing for the president."

A spokesman for the Reagan inaugural committee blamed the controversy on a Los Angeles consultant who placed a quarter-page ad in the trade publication Backstage seeking "attractive, clean-cut, all-American" entertainers to work free during inaugural events.

The ad also said that the inaugural committee was "seeking NON-UNION musical theatre performers." It continued, "A FEE WILL NOT be paid for your participation."

The ad was not cleared by the inaugural committee, spokesman John Buckley said, adding, "We are politically a little smarter than to take out an ad phrased" that way.

President Reagan would not talk about the controversy, but deputy press secretary Larry Speakes said

later, "In our opinion, the ad should have been phrased differently."

Sanford Wolff, national executive secretary of the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, said the ad is "the clearest evidence yet that this administration is completely anti-union."

But Speakes declared Reagan "is proud of his union membership and his work as president of the Screen Actors Guild," the union he headed from 1949 to 1960.

The ad said the entertainers would be paid travel and meal expenses and given lodging in "a government facility or hotel" during the nine-day engagement.

Buckley said about 100 people appeared at an audition in New York on Saturday in response to the ad. He said there were no plans to cancel scheduled performances by the non-union entertainers.

At the White House, Speakes said there will be more union performers involved in the inauguration than ever before and "thousands of volunteers from across the country ..."

"What the ad sought was non-professional performers to work in a similar capacity, such as the youth pageant at the Jefferson Memorial. The president wants a cross-section of the American people — everyone — represented."

Elvis fans gather for 50th birthday

United Press International

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — Some smiling and some weeping, 500 fans gathered in the chill outside Graceland Mansion Tuesday and sang "Happy Birthday" to Elvis Presley on what would have been his 50th birthday.

They came from as far away as Japan for the chance to offer birthday wishes to the rock 'n' roll king born in Tupelo, Miss., Jan. 8, 1935. Presley died in his Memphis mansion Aug. 16, 1977, of a suspected drug overdose.

"I love him," said Kiyoshi Ito, of Tokyo, Japan, who performs as an Elvis impersonator. "When he died, I thought about suicide. He was an original. His heart has got communication with the audience, and that's why he's loved by so many people."

Fans lined up as early as 6 a.m. despite temperatures in the 30s to hear proclamations read declaring Jan. 8 Elvis Presley Day in Tennessee.

Fans from Australia, England and Germany were among the crowd who pushed forward to take pictures of a white birthday cake decorated with royal blue ic-

ing and inscribed, "Elvis Presley, Birthday Tribute 1985."

The cake was part of a 15-minute birthday celebration, which included brief speeches by the Memphis and Shelby County mayors.

"There will never be another 50th and we had to be here," said Carol Ann Der, who was among 43 people who made an 18-hour bus ride from Baltimore for the celebration. "I come here twice a year, and this is the biggest crowd I've seen in January."

Elizabeth Woznick, 74, said her first visit to Graceland was the culmination of a dream.

"It means a lot to me because I liked him very much," she said. "I liked the way he was sweet and friendly, and his music. I always wanted to come, and my family told me I could go on his 50th birthday."

The winding driveway leading to the white-columned home was still lined with blue lights Presley used at Christmas time. A life-sized nativity scene remained in place in honor of the singer's tradition of displaying it from Thanksgiving until his birthday.

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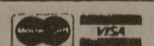
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