

Soviet President looking to West for economic help

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev may be eager to play "Let's Make A Deal" when he meets with West Coast executives next week, but he's likely to be confronted by plenty of skepticism.

Gorbachev, beleaguered at home by rising prices and bare shelves, is going west in search of high-tech products, entrepreneurial expertise and long-term business relations after his summit talks with President Bush.

Gorbachev's June 4 luncheon with executives of 150 businesses based in California, Oregon and Washington is "more than a public relations gesture," said Bill Johnston, Palo Alto-based Hewlett-Packard Co.'s director of international planning and administration.

"He is clearly wooing the West, and certainly this area. He's trying to get his economy squared away and attract U.S. manufacturing expertise to the Soviet Union."

Hewlett-Packard has had an office in Moscow for 18 years, and last week joined four other U.S. companies in a consortium with three Soviet health and medical research ministries.

"There are a lot of problems," Johnston said. "The currency is a major issue. There is still considerable political and economic uncertainty, and the two are interlocked. They have a mess on their hands."

Despite worries about doing business in the Soviet Union, Gorbachev's visit to San Francisco and Stan-

ford University has charged the Bay area with a Super Bowl atmosphere. Corporate executives are scrambling for a chance to dine with him — some willing to pay thousands of dollars for a ticket.

Fifteen companies co-sponsoring the event are paying \$2,000 for two seats each, and up to \$500 for additional seats. Labor leaders are complaining they may be left out.

Phone lines are jammed at the Soviet consulate, Stanford, the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce and City Hall. T-shirts with Gorbachev's image and tackier souvenirs — a "Communist Party Animal" T-shirt — already are on sale, and billboards are planned to welcome the Soviet leader in the city and on the highways.

"This may even exceed the Super Bowl," predicted Stanford spokesman Joel Shurkin, who said the university had been bombarded with requests by 5,000 reporters to cover Gorbachev's speech at the 1,700-seat Memorial Auditorium.

A lottery is planned to determine who gets to go, with preference to Stanford faculty and students.

Silicon Valley is experiencing a "Gorbasm," said Mark Muchnik, president of Global Development Corp., who has organized a Soviet Silicon Summit to encourage high-tech trade between the countries.

Raisa Gorbachev's planned visit to an Oakland-based program that helps Soviet children doomed by heart defects, and the possibility that she'll visit some

of the area's big tourist attractions, has sparked more excitement.

"Lots of people have invited her ... institutions, hospitals, homes," said Charlotte Mailliard Swig, San Francisco's chief of protocol.

Armenians, Latvians, Estonians, Lithuanians, Eritreans and Soviet Jews are planning protests, some coming from hundreds of miles away to register complaints about Soviet policies.

At Gorbachev's request, the companies at the business luncheon will represent a variety of industries — telecommunications, computers, agribusiness, food processing, construction, oil, banking, hotels and tourism.

Gorbachev's aides chose the companies from a list submitted by the Chamber of Commerce, which is co-host of the luncheon with Mayor Art Agnos and California Gov. George Deukmejian.

"The Soviets have an interest in positioning the Asian part of their country as a Pacific Rim player," said Carol Piasente, spokeswoman for the Chamber of Commerce. "The purpose of this luncheon is to build a relationship between the West Coast companies and the Far Eastern part of the Soviet Union."

In addition to Hewlett-Packard, other companies with long-standing ties to the Soviet Union that will be represented at the luncheon are AT&T, BankAmerica and Chevron.

PIERCING

Continued from Page 7

Marcia Wittink, a freshman psychology major, pierced her nose during the year she spent in India. However, she removed it when she got to the University.

"I wanted something that I could keep with me in America and it seemed like a really good way to open up a conversation," Wittink said. "I thought

people would also find it beautiful but a lot of people found it offensive. A lot of people came right out and said, 'God, that's ugly, why do you have that in your nose?'"

She ended up taking it out because it wasn't quite the image she was looking for.

"It hurt a little," Goodstein said. "It's the same pain as when you pierce your ear, except it lasts longer."

Bierma pierces with an ear-gun and it

takes four to 10 weeks to fully heal. Piercing is free with the purchase of a \$5 to \$8 stud. An earring is usually used; sometimes with a back and sometimes with the post bent at a 90 degree angle, she said.

Bierma said her average nose piercing customer is a woman between 18 and 25 years old, although the number of men who pierce their nose is also rising. One man had his nose pierced six times; three on each side, she said.

Bierma has been piercing noses for three years and has had some nursing experience.

"I would rather they let me do it professionally in a sterile way than let them go home and do themselves in an unsterile way," Bierma said.

She is introducing a new "hollow needle" method of piercing that allows a hoop to be put in right away.

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