

Kirgizia and Moldavia expressing
said he and Soviet President Mikhail
"working structures" of the central govern-
until a majority of the Republics join
health.

choice

said the creation of the "Commonwealth
States" was made necessary because
plan to hold the nation together was
of the 15 former Soviet Republics —
frame.
refusal to join was a "serious violation of
balance," he said, because it has
ons.

Mr Gorbachev, who was speaking to his own Soviet
Parliament later in the day, said in an interview that
he was not seeking a role in the new commonwealth
and had not been offered its presidency.

While defending his vision of the Soviet Union as a
confederation of sovereign States, he told
Nezavisimaya Gazeta (the Independent newspaper)
that he would "respect the people's choice" about the
country's future, so long as changes were made within
the law.

The United States has signalled it was focusing more
on Mr Yeltsin as the country's power broker.

US Ambassador Robert Strauss told the House
Armed Services Committee in Washington last night
he believed Mr Yeltsin would succeed in winning
ratification of the new commonwealth agreement.

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German high art display

Cap stand: German artist, Nico Andreas Heller, born in Stuttgart, beside 'Art Nicodemus', one of the items in his exhibition at the Orpheus Gallery in York Street, Belfast.

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