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PARTY CONFERENCE: SELECTION OF MOSCOW DELEGATION

SUMMARY

1. AFTER A WEEK'S POSTPONEMENT A COMPROMISE REACHED ON THE INCLUSION OF REFORMIST INTELLECTUALS IN MOSCOW'S DELEGATION TO THE PARTY CONFERENCE.

DETAIL

2. THE MOSCOW CITY PARTY COMMITTEE MET ON 3 JUNE TO ELECT ITS DELEGATION TO THE PARTY CONFERENCE. THE MEETING WAS ATTENDED BY GORBACHEV AND ZAIKOV, BOTH OF WHOM SPOKE.

3. ZAIKOV, AS HEAD OF THE MOSCOW PARTY ORGANISATION GAVE THE KEYNOTE SPEECH. ACCORDING TO THE SUMMARY PROVIDED BY TASS HIS COMMENTS WERE DIRECTED ENTIRELY TO THE ELECTIONS IN MOSCOW. HE SAID THAT IT HAD BEEN A DIFFICULT PROCESS AND A TEST OF THE POLITICAL MATURITY OF THE MOSCOW PARTY ORGANISATION. AT VARIOUS STAGES MORE THAN 3,000 CANDIDATES HAD BEEN PUT FORWARD, NOT ONLY AT PARTY MEETINGS BUT ALSO IN THE PRESS, ON TELEVISION AND RADIO AND IN NUMEROUS LETTERS AND APPEALS TO PARTY COMMITTEES. PEOPLE HAD EVEN BEEN ON THE STREETS GATHERING SIGNATURES IN SUPPORT OF PARTICULAR CANDIDATES. (CLIPS OF THE LAST-MENTIONED ACTIVITY WERE SHOWN ON TELEVISION).

4. HE SAID THAT PARTICULAR PROBLEMS HAD ARISEN IN THOSE PARTS OF THE CITY WHERE ACADEMIC AND CREATIVE ESTABLISHMENTS WERE CONCENTRATED. THESE ESTABLISHMENTS HAD PUT FORWARD MANY STRONG SUPPORTERS OF PERESTROIKA AS CANDIDATES. HE LISTED SOME DOZEN OF THESE ADDING THAT IF THEY WERE NOT ALL ELECTED DELEGATES THIS DID NOT IN ANY WAY DIMINISH THE CONTRIBUTION THEY HAD MADE TO PERESTROIKA.

5. HE THEN DEALT WITH TWO PARTICULAR CASES WHICH HAD CAUSED CONCERN -

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THAT OF YURI AFANASEV, THE RECTOR OF THE HISTORICAL ARCHIVES INSTITUTE AND A LEADING SUPPORTER OF HISTORICAL GLASNOST, AND GAVRIIL POPOV, A REFORMIST ECONOMIST BASED AT MOSCOW UNIVERSITY, BOTH OF WHOSE CANDIDACIES HAD BEEN REJECTED BY THE PARTY ORGANISATION. IN AFANASEV'S CASE, ZAIKOV SAID, IT HAD BEEN DECIDED TO MAKE AN EXCEPTION AND HE HAD BEEN REINSERTED ON THE LIST OF CANDIDATES TO BE PUT TO THE FINAL MEETING OF THE CITY PARTY COMMITTEE. IN THE CASE OF POPOV, THE LOCAL PARTY ORGANISATION HAD LOOKED AGAIN AT THE CASE BUT HAD DECIDED THAT THE TWO CANDIDACIES THAT HAD BEEN AGREED UPON (THE MOSCOW UNIVERSITY RECTOR AND PARTY SECRETARY) SHOULD STAND. HE ADDED THAT KOROTICH (EDITOR OF OGOONYCK) WHO HAD BEEN REJECTED IN MOSCOW, HAD SUBSEQUENTLY BEEN ELECTED TO THE CONFERENCE AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF ONE OF THE UKRANIAN DELEGATIONS.

6. ZAIKOV THEN ANNOUNCED THAT ALL THE 319 CANDIDATES PUT TO THE FINAL MEETING OF THE MOSCOW PARTY COMMITTEE HAD RECEIVED THE NECESSARY NUMBER OF VOTES AND WOULD CONSTITUTE THE CITY'S DELEGATION TO THE PARTY CONFERENCE. HE NOTED THAT THOSE ELECTED BY MOSCOW INCLUDED GORBACHEV, LIGACHEV AND HIMSELF.

7. GORBACHEV THEN TOOK THE FLOOR, AND BEGAN BY BRIEFING THOSE PRESENT ON THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED SUMMIT. HE SAID THAT THE DIALOGUE HAD BEEN DIFFICULT AND AT TIMES TENSE, BUT THAT ON BALANCE IT HAD LED TO AN IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS WITH THE USA. ON THE ECONOMY HE NOTED THAT THERE WERE NOW REAL OPPORTUNITIES TO MOVE AHEAD RAPIDLY IN RESOLVING THE FOOD PROBLEM, BUT THAT ECONOMIC REFORM WAS A WHOLE WAS NOT YET PRODUCING THE RESULTS THAT HAD BEEN HOPED FOR. THERE WAS NO NEED FOR PANIC, HOWEVER, OR FOR UNNECESSARY SHOWS OF EMOTION. LEFTIST PHRASES WERE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE. ONE COULD NOT BUY CHEAP AUTHORITY WITH THEM. ADVENTURISM WAS NOT THE POLICY.

COMMENT

8. THE SELECTION OF MOSCOW'S DELEGATION TO THE PARTY CONFERENCE HAS EVIDENTLY BEEN A FRAUGHT PROCESS. THE FINAL ELECTION MEETING WAS DUE TO HAVE BEEN HELD ON 29 MAY, BUT WAS POSTPONED FOR A WEEK. INTELLECTUALS HERE OVER THE PAST TWO OR THREE WEEKS HAVE BEEN EXPRESSING CONCERN AT THE WAY IN WHICH THE MOSCOW PARTY AUTHORITIES HAVE BEEN REJECTING THE CANDIDACIES OF MOST OF THE MAIN FIGUREHEADS OF GLASNOST AND PERESTROIKA. THE TWO CASES TO WHICH ZAIKOV REFERRED IN DETAIL (SEE PARAGRAPH 5 ABOVE) HAVE BEEN WRITTEN UP IN SEVERAL ARTICLES WHICH EXPRESSED CONCERN AT THE UNDEMOCRATIC WAY IN WHICH THEIR CANDIDACIES HAD BEEN REJECTED.

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BURLATSKY TOLD FOREIGN JOURNALISTS LAST WEEK THAT HE BELIEVED THAT THE WEEK'S POSTPONEMENT WAS INTENDED TO ALLOW FOR "CORRECTION" OF THE SELECTION PROCESS WHICH HAD DEVIATED FROM THE POLITBURO GUIDELINES.

9. THE ISSUE IS AN IMPORTANT ONE FOR GORBACHEV AS EVIDENCED BY THE FACT THAT HE HIMSELF ATTENDED THE FINAL MEETING. HE HAS PUBLICLY CALLED FOR THE DELEGATES TO THE CONFERENCE TO BE ARDENT SUPPORTERS OF PERESTROIKA. IF THE MOSCOW PARTY AUTHORITIES HAD BEEN SEEN TO BE ABLE TO REJECT THE CANDIDACIES OF A BROAD SWEEP OF THE NATIONALLY KNOWN PROPONENTS OF RADICAL REFORM THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN A DEMONSTRATION OF HIS INABILITY TO CONTROL THE ELECTION PROCESS. IN ADDITION, THE PRESENCE OF INDEPENDENT MINDED INTELLECTUALS AT THE PARTY CONFERENCE SHOULD ENSURE THAT THERE ARE SOME RADICAL REFORMIST SPEECHES IN ADDITION TO THE STAGE-MANAGED CONTRIBUTIONS OF PARTY AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.

10. IN THE EVENT, A LARGE NUMBER OF REFORMIST INTELLECTUALS HAVE FAILED TO MAKE THE DELEGATION. BUT AFANASEV, WHO WAS REINSERTED INTO THE FINAL LIST WITH SCANT REGARD FOR DEMOCRATIC PROCEDURES, IS A MEMBER OF THE DELEGATION. AND THE FINAL DELEGATION LIST WHICH HAS NOW BEEN PUBLISHED IN THE LOCAL PRESS CONTAIN ANOTHER HALF DOZEN LEADING RADICALS - ENOUGH TO MAKE THIS A REASONABLE COMPROMISE FOR GORBACHEV, AND TO ENSURE THAT THERE WILL BE AT LEAST SOME RADICAL REFORM RHETORIC FROM THE CONFERENCE FLOOR.

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