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OF 221725Z MARCH 90  
INFO PRIORITY E.C POSTS, WASHINGTON, MOSCOW  
INFO SAVING HMC GS IN FRANCE

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*Refer to  
your meeting with  
Rocard.*

OUR TELNO.334 : FRENCH SOCIALIST PARTY CONGRESS : FINAL OUTCOME

SUMMARY

1. THE BROAD CONSENSUS WHICH SHOULD HAVE EMERGED AT THE SOCIALISTS' RENNES CONGRESS FINALLY PATCHED TOGETHER TWO DAYS LATER. MAUROY REMAINS LEADER. FABIUS TAKES SOME NEW POSTS. THE REAL WINNER, PUBLICLY ACKNOWLEDGED BY MITTERRAND, IS ROCARD. BUT HE FACES THE DIFFICULT TASK OF LEADING THE SOCIALISTS INTO THE 1993 LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS.

DETAIL

2. MITTERRAND IS REPORTED TO HAVE BROUGHT ALL HIS INFLUENCE TO BEAR ON THE INFORMAL WORKING GROUP WHICH MET BEHIND CLOSED DOORS IN PARIS ON 21 MARCH TO SALVAGE THE FAILED SOCIALIST PARTY CONGRESS LAST WEEKEND. CLEARLY THE PRESIDENT'S INFLUENCE (AND, REPORTEDLY, ANGER) WORKED. THE COMPROMISE WHICH FABIUS HAD REJECTED TWO DAYS EARLIER WAS ACCEPTED, AND ENDORSED BY THE 'COMITE DIRECTEUR' ON 22 MARCH. MAUROY REMAINS FIRST SECRETARY: NO.2 IN THE PARTY WILL BE MARCEL DEBARGE, AN UNCHARISMATIC FABIUS SUPPORTER. THE JOSPIN AND FABIUS FACTIONS EACH TAKE FOUR OTHER KEY NATIONAL SECRETARY POSTS: THREE GOING TO ROCARD AND ONE EACH TO CHEVENEMENT AND POPEREN.

3. FOR THE NEXT STAGE, THE PARTY'S NEW POLICY DOCUMENT FOR THE PERIOD TO 1992 CALLS ON THE GOVERNMENT TO 'COMMIT THEMSELVES TO A NEW PHASE OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICY' IN ORDER TO 'MOBILISE ALL THE FORCES OF THE LEFT TO WIN THE 1993 LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS'. TWO NATIONAL CONVENTIONS ARE ENVISAGED AS PART OF THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE ELECTIONS. ONE WILL DRAW UP A 'PLAN FOR THE FRANCE OF THE YEAR 2000', DEALING NOTABLY WITH THE DEFENCE AND EUROPEAN ISSUES. THIS WILL BE THE PARTY'S ELECTORAL PLATFORM. THE OTHER WILL RESHAPE THE PARTY'S INTERNAL STRUCTURES. THE POLICY DOCUMENT ACKNOWLEDGES THE 'UNDENIABLE SUCCESSES' OF THE ROCARD GOVERNMENT BUT NOTES THAT UNEMPLOYMENT REMAINS TOO HIGH AND THAT 'SOCIAL JUSTICE IS A DETERMINING FACTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH'.

4. IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE EDITOR OF 'LIBERATION' ON 22 MARCH,

PRESIDENT MITTERRAND MAKES CLEAR THAT, AFTER THE CONGRESS, HE REGARDS ROCARD AS THE SOCIALISTS' ONLY HOPE OF WINNING THE 1993 LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS: 'THERE IS NO REASON WHY MICHEL ROCARD SHOULD NOT SEE OUT THE PRESENT LEGISLATURE, AND IF THE SOCIALISTS WIN THE (1993) ELECTIONS, HE WILL BE THE ONLY SOCIALIST IN A POSITION TO CARRY THE DAY. IF THE 1993 ELECTIONS ARE LOST, THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS WILL THEN BE WON BY A MAN FROM THE RIGHT'.

## COMMENT

5. THE PARTY'S COMPROMISE SOLUTION WILL HARDLY GLADDEN THE HEARTS OF THE SOCIALIST MILITANTS: THE IMAGE OF AN OLD-FASHIONED PARTY, PREOCCUPIED WITH BALANCING PETTY INTERNAL SQUABBLES, REMAINS. BUT IT TAKES THE SOCIALISTS' TROUBLES OFF THE FRONT PAGES AND ENABLES MINISTERS OF DIFFERENT FACTIONS TO APPEAR TOGETHER IN PUBLIC AGAIN.

6. THE 'LIBERATION' ARTICLE IS INTERESTING CONTAINING THE CLEAREST STATEMENT MITTERRAND HAS MADE TO DATE ABOUT HIS SUCCESSION (INCLUDING ITS HINT THAT MITTERRAND MIGHT STAND DOWN RATHER THAN FACE MORE COHABITATION). FOR ROCARD, MITTERRAND'S ENDORSEMENT OF HIS PRIME MINISTERSHIP IS A MIXED BLESSING. HE HAS THE SATISFACTION OF SEEING FABIUS, LONG CONSIDERED MITTERRAND'S DAUPHIN, DESCRIBED BY THE PRESIDENT AS 'NEEDING TIME TO SUFFER AND TO MATURE' BEFORE ASPIRING TO THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATURE. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE BEARS A HIGHER LEVEL OF RESPONSIBILITY AND THE DIFFICULT TASK OF REMAINING POPULAR AS PRIME MINISTER FOR ANOTHER THREE YEARS NOW HE IS DESIGNATED FAVOURITE. RE-INVIGORATING THE DEMORALISED SOCIALIST TROOPS FOR THE NEXT ELECTIONS WILL ALSO BE AN UPHILL STRUGGLE FOR SOMEONE NOT ENJOYING MAJORITY SUPPORT IN THE PARTY.

7. THIS COMES AT A TIME WHEN ROCARD'S CLOSEST ADVISERS ARE REPORTEDLY ARGUING THAT HE SHOULD SOON JUMP SHIP TO PREPARE HIMSELF FOR A RUN AT THE PRESIDENCY WITH HIS POPULARITY STILL INTACT. HE HAS HARD TACTICAL DECISIONS AHEAD. AT THE MOMENT, IT LOOKS AS THOUGH HE HAS LITTLE CHOICE BUT TO ACCEPT MITTERRAND'S CHALLENGE.

FERGUSSON

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