

28 November 1985

Conference at the CC CPSU on preparation for the XXVII Congress of the CPSU.

GORBACHEV. Our people and the international public are awaiting this congress with a great deal of interest. Hence this great attention to the reporting and electoral campaign, to the party conferences, which are taking place now around the country.

What is the role of the congress? It will have to review the results of the work on the implementation of the Third Party Program and draft a new program, [outline] the perspectives of the country's development till the end of the XX century, and introduce respective changes in the Charter of the party.

The April Plenum considered the policy line for the current stage. It is a strategic view, and it responds to the country's needs. In its realization, we have undertaken a number of steps in our domestic and foreign policy. But the main result is the increased participation of the population.

The Congress will have to analyze all that. However, it is already clear—we have to go forward in our chosen destination.

I will start from foreign policy. It was given a broader approach, a larger constructiveness. And that has received the understanding and support of the people, [and] the realistically thinking leaders in the West. Reagan is maneuvering. Of course, the essence of his policy—the policy of the military-industrial complex—has not changed, there was no increased love toward us. However, our pressure, the pressure of the public opinion are producing results, forcing him to make steps toward us. They have no choice. The Republican administration could not refuse to go to Geneva. In a couple of days you will receive the records of my conversations with the President of the USA, and of the negotiations of the delegations, and [you] will be able to make your own judgment on this issue.

We moved ahead on the issue of strengthening of the socialist commonwealth as well. During the meetings in Sophia and Prague our friends actively responded to the proposal for strengthening of integration and especially of the scientific and technological cooperation. Today it is very important. Because if our friends do not find satisfaction of their needs in the sphere of the scientific and technological progress, they look for it in the West. This cannot occur without an impact on their foreign policy, as Janos Kadar told me quite sincerely.

Our foreign policy became more active on the West European direction. That has a positive impact on our relations with America as well. We want to conduct our affairs with the developing countries in a new fashion. I had a conversation about this with Fidel Castro, who gave high evaluation to our efforts in this direction.

We are searching for ways to move the Soviet-Chinese relations from the dead point, and to give them a greater dynamism. We need to wage our struggle for China patiently and persistently, for a rapprochement with it. This is very important from the point of view of [our] country's prospects.

In short, we are striving to undertake concrete steps on the main issues of foreign policy. Rhetoric will not accomplish anything. Of course, no core changes have occurred on the international arena. The military confrontation continues, and under the current administration it would be hard to hope for any progress in this sense. But we do not want to look at the world through the prism of Soviet-American relations exclusively. We are approaching these issues broadly, taking into consideration the general situation in the world.

In any conditions, we start from the assumption that we must keep firm control over the defenses of our country. No pacifism. The Politburo will set high demands for the defense industries. This for us is the sacred of the sacred. In this regard, I would like to draw your attention to the delays in capital construction in Sverdlovsk, Gorky, Komsomolsk, and some other cities. Criticism started to come in regarding the quality of defense production as well. I ask you to look into this in Moscow, Volgograd, Tbilisi, [and] Omsk. The CC CPSU passed a resolution on strengthening military discipline. The army is not isolated from the society. We need to raise the role of the office corps, undertake measures for the improvement of material situation beginning from platoon commanders to battalion commanders, and pay attention to housing issues.

Now about domestic policy. We have talked repeatedly about special features of 1986, but not all of us comprehend them fully. The price of how work will go in the coming year is too high, especially in the sphere of the acceleration of the scientific and technological progress, improvement in the quality of products, and improvement in the living standards of the people. The social program of the 12th five-year plan can be described as modest. Even more so, it has to be fulfilled and exceeded.

In the final analysis, where the development of the country will go, and its influence in the world will depend on how we work in the 12th five-year plan [period]. We are faced with tremendous work, based on new approaches, on new methods. We should not rely on inertia, nor indulge in celebration of successes, but increase our efforts. We cannot just sit and shuffle the cards. The entire reporting and electoral campaign should be oriented toward more active work. Today all efforts should be concentrated primarily on the completion of the current year. During the 10 months, out of 163 main kinds of products, the plan was not fulfilled in 94 categories. The 1985 plan is based on the introduction of considerable industrial capacities. However, in the 10 months of this year, only 51% of planned capacities were introduced, and only one third of objects of state importance.

In this connection, I would like to touch upon the issue of fullness and reliability of information. This question will be specifically discussed at the Politburo because of its principal importance. Information from regions is coming in with huge exaggerations

and distortions. Ambassadors lie. Dressing of information happens in the reporting and electoral campaigns, even at the CC Plenums. We must put an end to apologetics, mumbling, subservience. This is not appropriate for the policy and the politicians, whom we entrusted with high positions. The main thing is movement forward, quality, effectiveness.

Regarding agriculture. Average annual numbers for this five-year period are lower than for the previous one, with the exception of those on vegetables, and animal products. There was some growth after the May Plenum, that's true, but it is lower than we expected.

[Source: The Gorbachev Foundation Archive, Moscow. Translated by Svetlana Savranskaya for the National Security Archive]