

HOPA 3OPA
BIMONTHLY POLITICAL REVIEW
OF THE
VINOZHITO

Year: 1st
February 1997
No. 1

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Yearly Subscription:

Greece 5.000 Drh.
Europe-Overseas 50 \$ US

Account No. for Subscription:

Greece:
Ethniki Trapeza tis Ellados
612749 / 5

Europe-Overseas
National Bank Of Greece
484 430000364

cover...
collage of the 3OPA Political Review

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ENGLISH EDITION

On 19th January 1997 the Second Conference of the " Vinozhito " party was held in Lerin (Florina). The Conference was attended by 76 delegates of all local units.

It adopted the Political Manifesto and the Organisatory Principles, in addition to electing a Central Council comprised of 19 members.

Out of the 76 participant delegates, Pasois Traianos and Pritskas Hristos, disagreed with the national-political character of the organization, the decisions made by the majority, and withdrew from the Conference

The Central Council held its first session in Voden (Edessa) on 26th January 1997, and elected a five-member Political Secretariat, an Economic Commission, an Editor's Council, etc. It has been decided to publish the follow-up materials (conclusions) of the Second Conference in the next edition of the Newsletter. The letter will be available in Macedonian and Greek.

Also the Central Council unanimously decided to outcast the above mentioned members on the grounds of their actions which were contrary to the Organizations Principles and the party's Political Manifesto.

In its Political Manifesto " Vinozhito " has aired its wish to cooperate with all democratic and anti-nationalist forces in the country in - its struggle for peace and European integration.

To this purpose - attributing great significance to minority issues and the developing of political democracy in the country - " Vinozhito " will Launch initiative to establish cooperation on basis of a joint political platform with all democratic forces.

The Central Council would like to express its gratitude, on behalf of all members and supporters of " Vinozhito " , to all Macedonians who have aided our efforts materially and morally - thus contributing to - the achievement of our objective as an organisation.

Voden - Edessa 26.1.1997
the
POLITICAL SECRETARIAT

Organisation principles of the " Vinozhito " Party

Any Greek citizen accepting the Political Manifesto and the Organisation Principles is eligible for " Vinozhito " party membership - provided he is active within local party structures and fees are paid on a regular basis. A member of " Vinozhito " may not be affiliated to any other political organisation / party.

Up to the furthering of political and structural evolution conducive to the staging of the First Congress , The Conference remains the paramount political structure on a bi-annual basis - provided the Central Council does not opt to stage an Extra-ordinary Session of the Conference.

All members of the organisation are equal Conference participants.

Political views and organisation principles are adopted on a majority basis by the Conference.

The Conference elects a Central Council and determines the number of its members. The Central Council is the ultimate political instance between two Conferences and in charge of implementing Conference Resolutions.

The Central Council passes decisions on a majority basis as regards attending participants. Should a quorum not be available, the meeting is to be postponed to a time and location suitable to attending participants. Decisions are adopted on a majority basis by attending Central Council members. The latter is in charge of finances and public relations.

The Central Council elects a Political Secretariat comprised of five members. This body is to provide coordination between two Conferences. The Secretariat calls the Central Council into session, prepares and proposes the agenda and concerns itself with resolution implementation.

The Central Council has political liability as regards Newsletter publication. The Editor's Commission is elected and monitored by the Central Council.

The Central Council may suspend a member who has openly violated the organisation's principles and resolutions.

Local " Vinozhito " structures function on a collective basis - categorised according to their geographic position. They are responsible for : Newsletter distribution, membership fee collection and admission of new members.

The Central Council decides which members are to represent the organisation on a government level, they may be suspended by a Central Council decision.

Financial assets in property of " Vinozhito " are handled by the Central Council.

Political Manifesto of the " Vinozhito " Party

Vinozhito is a political organisation of the Macedonian ethnic minority living within the boundaries of the Greek state, and engaged in the country's domestic political scene as an organisation of ethnic Macedonians.

On an international political level Vinozhito functions as an organisation of the Macedonian national minority resident in Greece.

Vinozhito draws its inspirations on the struggle for ethnic and social liberation, led by the Centralist IMRO, the Ilinden revolutionaries, the SNOF and NOF Antifascist forces - upholding the honour of those fighting for the Macedonian national movement.

Vinozhito believes that in present political conditions the terms : bilinguals, Slavo-Macedonians, local Macedonians (generally abstractly), Slavs, Slavophones, Bulgars, etc. - are used as strategic references in Greece by the country's political system in its battle against ethnic Macedonians. The Acceptance of some of these terms by Vinozhito, or the latter's of its evolution has occurred in specific conditions of semi- legality in which the organisation operated.

The policy permitting the use of the terms Slavophones, bilinguals, Slavo-Macedonians, locals, Bulgars, etc. has the intention of obstructing the use of the reference " ethnic Macedonians ", as it is not in concordance to official Greek state policy which does not recognise the existence of a Macedonian nation and a Macedonian national minority in Greece.

Such a policy permits the controlled denoting of differences due to international pressure - but only to an extent of adhering to folk symbols, customs and traditions. Folklore is being used to divide national minority movements, as it is quite clearly and systematically being done in case of the " Pomaci " (Islamic Bulgarians).

Vinozhito is engaging all its sources to obtain all minority rights for ethnic Macedonians, as codified in international agreements and commitments Greece has taken upon itself. It is our strategic objective to acquire equal civic rights and opportunities for ethnic Macedonians in Greece and within the EU.

Vinozhito considers - as does the European intelligentsia - that nations have been created in recent years - parallel to a certain evolutionary stage in history ; in the history of production, labour organisation and political systems in the world. It is also believed that every nationalist / racist view on national issues is inevitably

linked to the stealing of ancient history, which is not only contrary to scientific principles but also politically endangering as regards peace and democracy.

Vinozhito is differentiating between national dignity, the right to a joint ethnic identity and nationalism / chauvinism. We further believe that permanent ideological and political activity is prerequisite - in order to highlight and subsequently sever ties between national and nationalist ideology.

Vinozhito advocates political integration and the enlarging of a unified Europe - an ideal multicultural and multilingual European community. We believe that the European orientation is of key significance to the development of political democracy in the country.

Vinozhito considers that the struggle for peace requires the respecting of existent borders - independent of past historical injustice. The battle for civic equality and social justice should be headed by progressive forces within the boundaries a Balkan region without confrontations and wars - where nations will live in brotherhood and shared well-being.

Particular priority in our political programme is being attributed to the direct and unconditional return of ethnic Macedonians - political emigrants and refugee children, to the elimination of revoking citizenship by the Greek Government of Macedonians who have emigrated due to economic reasons, to the returning of all confiscated property. Specific significance is paid to the development of Macedonian culture.

Concrete tactical objectives to be achieved by nurturing Macedonian language are :

- a) the publishing of a bilingual (Greek - Macedonian) periodical
- b) the publishing of a Macedonian - Greek dictionary

The strategic objective as regards language use is the introducing of lectures in Macedonian (standard) language within the nine-year educational system in those places in Greece where ethnic Macedonians live and the language is spoken ; this is to be conducive to its development analogical to that in the Republic of Macedonia, and to the establishment of the Dept. of Macedonian language within the university education system.

The immediate political objective in terms of developing national culture is the systematic participation of Vinozhito members in manifestations and cultural clubs - particularly in places where the Macedonian song has positive impact in terms of national self-perception.

Vinozhito demands the alternation of toponyms which have been changed self-initiatively, systematically and forcefully by the Greek administration during the third decade of the 20th century. We advocate the dual naming of geographical entities - which is being supported by European democratic movements within the framework of respecting European cultural heritage.

Vinozhito supports each reform conducive to economic and administrative decentralisation, to the power transfer and unit governing on a municipal level. We oppose every policy of decentralising power via autocracy embodied by the present-day "Athenian State". It is being considered that the conducting of programmes of low-restricted trade and economic decentralisation will not only be conducive to economic development - but also to the decentralisation of power from a political perspective, and to the creating of friendly relations and cooperation among states.

From a principle point of view, Vinozhito supports the struggle of the Turkish ethnicity in Thrace for the obtaining of all minority rights guaranteed through international legally binding agreements on civic equality and national dignity.

Vinozhito is further endorsing the most progressive cultural and political requests of the Vlach, the Romany and the Arvanite ethnicities - as Greek citizens who are mainly concerned with preserving and furthering their language.

Vinozhito is to oppose each violation of the principle / right to freedom of religious worship, or the right to adhere to atheism. Due to this we advocate Constitutional reforms which would completely separate the Greek Orthodox Church from the Greek state.

We support the fight of those citizens refusing to fulfill their National Service obligation for religious or political reasons; we further promote the providing of an alternative option - social / community service or its suspension altogether.

Vinozhito endorses the rights of immigrant employees forced to seek a living in Greece by hunger and despair. We support their right to live without decreasing the pay of Greek workers at the same time - this barring the door to fascism and racism. Vinozhito advocates equal pay and social insurance for the equal amount of labour delivered by Greeks and immigrants alike - in addition to all civic rights for immigrant employees after having lived in Greece for a certain period of time.

Vinozhito objects to the policy of demographic manipulation conducted by the Greek Government in a selective and systematic manner over decades, on the territories of Macedonia and Thrace by populating these areas with so-called 'repatriates'. Not only is such a policy not favouring the evolution of friendly relations among the population, but it rather contributes to a tensed, biased and spiteful climate.

Vinozhito believes that the parliamentary entrance quota of 3% (applying to both Greek and European structures) has the function to obstruct minority representation in these bodies. We demand the altering of the Election Law, as well as the introducing of more proportionate and realistic percentages - so that minorities may be represented in the Greek and in the European Parliament.

By expressing the spirit of resistance of a people throughout an entire century, against the barbarism of Greek nationalism, Vinozhito has sided itself with anti-nationalist and anti-chauvinist forces in the country.

Vinozhito considers that an indicator on the honesty and wish for inter-ethnic coexistence of a Greek political party or NGO is to be seen in crossing the red line created by the Greek Foreign Office. Crossing this red line would mean the recognition of both ethnic minorities (the Turkish and the Macedonian one), as well as aiding their struggle to obtain all internationally guaranteed rights. This entails the recognition and respecting of the ethnic Macedonian identity - which is prerequisite to political cooperation and the networking of our movement with individuals and organisations both in and outside Greece.

Vinozhito is promoting peaceful and friendly relations with all neighbours, based on the democratic principles of peaceful coexistence: non-interference into internal matters of a state, the respecting of its integrity, equality and mutual benefit.

Vinozhito believes that each attempt by states to participate in 'religious axes', i.e. nationalist fronts on religious grounds, creates a political 'Dark Age' which does not favour the advancing of contemporary European reality.

Vinozhito considers that the current political system in Greece represented by MPs of various political parties has been conducting an aggressive, nationalist and analogically anti-European policy, though always in slightly differing hues. This policy has been confirmed by rendering support to Serb expansionism, the division of Bosnia and ethnic cleansing conducted in this country, etc. It has been and still is the objective of Greek nationalism and aggression to target the Republic of Macedonia.

Vinozhito does not believe that the Greek Government is handling the name-issue and relations to the Republic of Macedonia wisely, as it is trying to prohibit the use of this reference by all means and impose its own proposal. This unfortunately only bears evidence of the profoundly anti-democratic political culture prevailing in this country.

Vinozhito endorses the irrevocable right of a people and a state to use the name Macedonia on the basis of national self-determination. We agree on a political (not theoretical) level with the view that the name of a nation is its soul. This is also the view of ethnic Macedonians contributing to the cause within the ranks of Vinozhito who are not playing 'Greek drama' when airing this motto, but fully believing it.

Vinozhito believes that the only way towards creating friendly relations between Greece and Macedonia is the recognition and respecting of the latter by the former, as applies to its citizens on grounds of national self-determination and direct bilateral discussions on all levels.

The political doctrine of 'thinking up enemies' which is constantly being employed by the Greek Government, is undermining the country's European orientation and endangering the entire Balkan and Southeast Mediterranean region. At the same time the country's darkest political forces of its interior are being nourished and given the opportunity to play a major role in the country.

Vinozhito considers the huge military expenses - justified by the alibi of an 'imminent Greek-Turkish conflict' - as conducive to leading the nation into economic hardship as the economic potential of the country is being stretched to the maximum. As is the case with the well-being of the population.

It is the political creed of Vinozhito to exclusively promote non-violent conflict resolution via dialogue. This approach is also to be employed in case of neighbouring Turkey, as discord between both countries does not suffice as a reason for armed confrontation. Thus conflicts may be resolved by implementing the principles of peaceful coexistence and mutual benefit.

The premise that there is nothing to generate discord among nations, or even armed conflicts, is correct. Unless however this principle becomes state policy, a policy condemning war, it is conducive to a political farce. Vinozhito believes that the best way to avert armed confrontation is the striving towards peace and coexistence.

Vinozhito is not a regional, geographically isolated and self-contained movement. Ethnic minority issues are key priorities linked to questions of equality i.e. on the core issue of intensifying and improving democratisation procedures in the country.

The obtaining of national minority rights require a stable European orientation of the country, a policy remote of nationalist and chauvinist political components. To this purpose Vinozhito has joined the unified political front for peace and democracy in Europe, together with all trustworthy anti-nationalist and anti-racist forces of the country.

Based on such a policy Vinozhito supports programmes on implementing objectives shared with other political organisations and movements in the country, which includes the creating of alliances for joint election campaigns. In the same sense Vinozhito supports the implementation of joint objectives with kindred ideological / political entities in Europe.

Vinozhito cooperates with organisations, associations and movements of Macedonians in neighbouring countries and throughout the world, concordant to UN Conventions and the principles and integrity of this Organisation.

Lerin - Florina

19.01.1997