



**THE OCTOBER 13  
1991  
LEGISLATIVE &  
MUNICIPAL  
ELECTIONS IN  
BULGARIA**

**NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC  
INSTITUTE FOR  
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

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to the Parliamentary and Municipal  
Elections in Bulgaria**

October 13, 1991

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## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements . . . . .	i
Executive Summary . . . . .	1

### CHAPTERS

1. Introduction . . . . .	4
2. Monitoring the 1991 Elections . . . . .	7
3. Political Developments in Bulgaria: June 1990-August 1991 . . . . .	11
4. The Political Forces . . . . .	21
5. Electoral Process . . . . .	32
6. The Election Campaign . . . . .	42
7. Election Day . . . . .	48
8. Results . . . . .	56
9. Reflections on the Bulgarian Transition Process . . . . .	59
10. Conclusion . . . . .	61
Postscript . . . . .	63

### APPENDICES

I. IRI Activities in Bulgaria Since the June 1990 Elections . . . . .	66
II. NDI Activities in Bulgaria Since the June 1990 Elections . . . . .	71
III. NDI Pre-Election Survey Report: August 5-9, 1991 . . . . .	76
IV. NDI Pre-Election Survey Report: September 8-13, 1991 . . . . .	81
V. Terms of Reference . . . . .	87
VI. Brief Summary of Bulgarian Election Procedure . . . . .	91
VII. Delegation Schedule . . . . .	93
VIII. Team Deployments . . . . .	96
IX. Post-Election Statement . . . . .	98
X. Official Results of National Assembly Elections . . . . .	103
XI. Accord on a Peaceful Transition to a Democratic Society . . . . .	105
XII. Electoral Regions . . . . .	118
XIII. Decision on Access to the National Mass Media During the Election Campaign . . . . .	119
XIV. Instructions on Voting by the Military . . . . .	122
XV. Decision No. 317 on the Funding of the Election Campaign . . . . .	125
XVI. Results by Percent of Parallel Vote Tabulations . . . . .	127
XVII. Urban and Rural Party Vote Totals . . . . .	129
XVIII. Names and Biographies of Cabinet Ministers . . . . .	130
XIX. Recommendations for the Next Elections . . . . .	133
IRI and NDI Programs, Boards and Publications . . . . .	138

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This report on the October 13, 1991 elections in Bulgaria was prepared jointly by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI). It is based on the Institutes' active presence in the country since April 1990. The two Institutes jointly organized a 60-member international observer delegation for the June 1990 Grand National Assembly elections. *The June 1990 Bulgarian Elections*, a 117-page report, which describes the initial phase of the transition, was published in September 1990.

This report focuses on the period beginning July 1990. It includes the findings of two NDI pre-election fact-finding missions that visited Bulgaria August 4-9 and September 8-13, 1991. In addition, the report draws from information collected by the 59-member international delegation that observed the October 13 elections in Sofia and 11 other regions where delegation members were deployed.

The report was prepared under the auspices of the Institutes after consultations with the delegation leaders. While information from the delegation's post-election debriefing and subsequent communications with members are incorporated in the body of this

*ii The October 13, 1991 Elections in Bulgaria*

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report, the Institutes assume full responsibility for the accuracy of the report.

NDI Program Officer Lisa C. McLean and NDI Senior Counsel Larry Garber drafted the report. Much of the material in chapters 1-4 is taken from an NDI pre-election report, which was written by McLean. The report was edited by IRI advisors Charles Andreae, William D. Harris, and Peter Schramm; IRI Regional Program Officer Kathryn Dickey; NDI Public Information Director Sue Grabowski; NDI Program Director Thomas O Melia; and NDI Executive Vice President Kenneth D. Wollack.

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# Executive Summary

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A 59-member international delegation, organized by the International Republican Institute (IRI)\* and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), observed the October 13, 1991 elections in Bulgaria. At stake were seats in the 240-member National Assembly, as well as seats on municipal councils and positions for mayor in municipalities and settlements. The October elections were the first conducted under the new constitution adopted in July 1991.

The following are the delegation's principal conclusions:

1. *The October elections marked a further step in Bulgaria's extraordinary transition from a one-party, totalitarian regime to a multiparty democracy in which human rights are respected and free elections serve as the basis for choosing leaders at all levels of government.* President Zhelu Zhelev, who was elected by the Grand National Assembly in August 1990, members of the interim government, which assumed office in December, and the Grand National Assembly, which not only approved a new constitution but also several other pieces of major

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\* In January 1992, the National Republican Institute for International Affairs (NRIIA) changed its name to the International Republican Institute.

- legislation, deserve considerable credit for guiding Bulgaria through this transition period.
2. *Changes made to the 1991 election law and regulations issued by the Central Election Commission (CEC) and other government ministries contributed to the fairness of the election campaign.* Regulations governing the media and the role of the military were particularly effective in providing equitable access to the major parties contesting the elections. In particular, the CEC acted responsibly in rejecting efforts to prevent the primarily ethnic-Turkish Movement for Rights and Freedom (MRF) from participating in the elections.
  3. *The October elections, for the most part, were administered in a fair manner.* The CEC and its subordinate bodies, all of which were formed less than six weeks before the elections, organized a credible election process. In general, election officials, regardless of party affiliation, cooperated to ensure that Bulgarians were afforded the opportunity to exercise their franchise freely and in secret. The presence of party agents at virtually all polling sites and representatives of civic organizations at many sites also contributed to the tranquil election-day environment.
  4. *Few complaints of serious import were filed by any of the parties, although in some regions incidents of intimidation and other irregularities were reported.* The most notable administrative problems related to significant delays in the balloting process that were observed at many polling sites. These delays were attributable to complications resulting from holding national and municipal elections simultaneously and from flaws in the voter registries, which were missing the names of many eligible voters. Individuals who could not find their names on the registry often traveled on foot to central municipal locations where they waited patiently to obtain the paper needed to place their names on the list. Notwithstanding the problems, more than 84 percent of the registered voters cast ballots on October 13.
  5. *The successful implementation of parallel vote tabulations by several organizations provided the public with timely information and avoided suspicions that may have arisen as a consequence of the slow release of official results by the CEC.*



These independent vote tabulations relied on statistical projections of results from pre-determined, randomly selected polling sites. The organizations conducting parallel vote tabulations acted responsibly in not projecting results until all of the polling sites in the country closed and until they had received sufficient information to ensure, with a relatively small margin of error, the accuracy of their projections.

6. *The proportional representation system used for the National Assembly elections, combined with the 4 percent threshold requirement, resulted in only three parties obtaining representation in the legislature: the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) was awarded 110 seats, the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) 106 seats and the MRF 24 seats. Twenty-six percent of the votes were cast for parties that failed to meet the 4 percent threshold. Given the composition of the new National Assembly, a degree of cooperation between at least two of the parties will be necessary to achieve a working majority.*
7. *While the election procedures were significantly better than those used in 1990, further improvements are necessary with respect to the voter registries. Also, the delegation recommends that consideration be given to using a single ballot, instead of requiring the preparation of individual ballots for each party/candidate. Finally, to ensure that electoral preparations are made in an orderly manner, the delegation recommends the establishment of a permanent national election commission.*

## *Chapter 1*

# Introduction

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On October 13, 1991, Bulgarians elected a 240-member National Assembly and mayors and council members from 278 municipalities. The elections were the first held under the constitution adopted in July 1991 and the second elections following the ouster of long-reigning Communist Party leader Todor Zhivkov in a November 1989 palace coup. As a result, Bulgaria became the first of the former Warsaw Pact countries to adopt a new constitution, and, with the October elections, the first to hold a second round of competitive, multiparty national elections.

The first such elections in more than 45 years were held in June 1990 and resulted in the establishment of a 400-member Grand National Assembly (GNA), which was responsible for drafting a new constitution and enacting necessary political and economic reforms. The Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP), the renamed Communist Party, emerged from the 1990 elections as the largest party in the GNA, although the opposition Union of Democratic Forces (UDF), a coalition of 16 political parties and groups, also obtained significant representation.

Following the elections, street demonstrations led by opposition trade unions and student activists caused the resignations of the BSP president and prime minister in July and November, respectively. The resignations resulted in political crises that took several weeks to resolve. Ultimately, Zhelu Zhelev, leader of the UDF, and Dimitar Popov, a political independent, were elected by the GNA as president and prime minister.

Despite progress made since November 1989 toward establishing a pluralist society, many Bulgarians remain skeptical regarding the significance of the changes. In part, the mistrust is caused by the severe economic crisis that Bulgaria has experienced and the slow implementation of various laws designed to eradicate the effects of 45 years of communist rule. The country's production and distribution systems collapsed during 1991, leading to food and petroleum rationing followed by price hikes. The deterioration of the economy, coupled with a seemingly ineffective parliament, increased popular disillusionment with the GNA, government ministries and democracy in general.

As the October elections approached, sectors of the opposition sought to attribute the UDF's June 1990 electoral loss to communist linkages within UDF ranks. The idea of a united opposition with similar aims (*e.g.*, ousting the former communist leaders and breaking their hold on political and economic power) was overshadowed by internal debates and personal attacks. However, despite these divisions, the principal UDF faction succeeded in winning a narrow plurality, thus positioning itself to form a government without BSP participation.

The election law passed on August 20, 1991 made significant improvements to the administrative structure used in 1990. Still, prior to the elections, many opposition leaders feared what they called communist manipulation of voters during the campaign and on election day. Pre-election suspicions increased as opposition leaders realized that, with a fractured opposition, the reformed communists might, once again, gain a plurality of the vote.

Election-day procedures proved quite complicated, forcing many polling stations to remain open until midnight, five hours after the stations were expected to close, and causing a few polling stations to operate until 3 a.m. the next morning. Significant omissions in the

## 6 The October 13, 1991 Elections in Bulgaria

voter registries meant long delays of up to six hours for some voters, particularly ethnic-Turks, Bulgarian Muslims and Gypsies.

Despite the administrative difficulties, the 59-member NDI/IRI international observer delegation concluded that the October 13 elections were generally free and fair. Election commissions, which included representatives of the major political forces at all levels, made conscientious efforts to implement a series of complicated procedures, enabling the population to exercise their franchise effectively.

Party and non-party groups conducting parallel vote tabulations announced their preliminary results on television at 3:43 a.m. on October 14, within an hour of the closing of the last polling station. In the days that followed, the Central Election Commission (CEC) announced results as they became available. There were no major discrepancies between the CEC results and the independent vote counts, nor did any party complain that the results had been manipulated.

Following consultations with leaders of the winning UDF faction, President Zhelev nominated Philip Dimitrov, chairman of the UDF, to form a new government, which was sworn into office on November 8. Presidential elections were held on January 12, 1992. For the first time in two generations, Bulgaria has freely elected leaders in office at all levels of government.

1991-1992 Annual Report  
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Electoral Systems  
and Processes  
Monitoring  
the 1991  
Elections

## *Chapter 2*

# Monitoring the 1991 Elections

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Following the 1990 elections, IRI and NDI continued to support the transition in Bulgaria, working with the Grand National Assembly, political parties and civic organizations. IRI's programs were undertaken in collaboration with the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF), while NDI worked primarily with the Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections and Civil Rights (BAFECR). IRI and NDI programs in Bulgaria since June 1990 are described in Appendices I and II respectively.

### **A. Pre-Election Missions**

Between August 4-9, 1991, an NDI-sponsored pre-election mission visited Bulgaria. Participating in the mission were: Gerard Danaher, an Irish lawyer, who was a member of the first 1990 pre-election mission and the 1990 international observer delegation; Richard Eaton, chief of staff to U.S. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY); Larry Garber, NDI senior counsel; Dimitrios Katsoudas, political adviser to Greek Prime Minister Constantine

Mitsotakis; Lisa C. McLean, NDI program officer; and David Phiri, chairman of the Zambia Independent Monitoring Team (ZIMT) and former governor of the Bank of Zambia. In Sofia, the mission met with the prime minister, the foreign minister, other government officials, party leaders, journalists and others. The group also visited Bourgas, Varna, Michurin and Kavarna where they met with local government officials, party leaders and BAFECR volunteers.

The mission highlighted the continued international interest in Bulgaria's democratic evolution and emphasized the need to assure that the October elections were conducted in a free and fair manner and were *perceived* to have been so conducted. The election law debate within the National Assembly, which began immediately prior to the group's arrival, provided the framework within which the mission operated.

At the conclusion of its visit, the group released a statement that noted the progress Bulgaria had made during the past year (see Appendix III). The statement, which also discussed several concerns regarding preparations for the October elections, was featured prominently in the Bulgarian media.

From September 8-13, 1991, NDI sponsored a second pre-election monitoring mission. The monitoring group included: Katharine I. Butler, a law professor from the University of South Carolina; Arben Imami, MP and deputy chair of the Democratic Party caucus in the newly elected Albanian People's Assembly; Lisa C. McLean, NDI program officer; Thomas O. Melia, NDI program director; and Bernard Owen, general secretary of the Paris-based Center for the Comparative Study of Elections.

The delegation's visit occurred during the week when parties and candidates were rushing to register themselves prior to the official opening of the campaign on September 14. This mission met with the deputy prime minister, the chief of the army's general staff, party leaders, members of the Central Election Commission, journalists and others involved in the election process. The delegation also visited Pazardjik and Pernik where it met with local government officials, regional and municipal election commission officials, party leaders and BAFECR volunteers.

The delegation's statement described the electoral administrative structure as adequate for the conduct of free and fair elections (see Appendix IV). The group, however, expressed deep concern that

last-minute efforts to prevent the primarily ethnic-Turkish Movement for Rights and Freedom from registering as a party would exacerbate tensions. In addition, the mission highlighted the responsibility of government and political parties to educate voters about pre-election and election-day procedures.

## **B. International Observer Delegation**

Building upon their previous activities in Bulgaria, NDI and IRI jointly organized a 59-member international observer delegation that included nationals of 22 countries. Delegation leaders were: J. Brian Atwood, NDI president; Sali Berisha, chairman of Albania's Democratic Party; Jack Buechner, IRI president; and B.A. Graham, a Liberal Party senator from Canada.

On Friday, October 11, the Institutes organized a full day of briefings for the delegation that included a review of the delegation's terms of reference (see Appendix V), and presentations by NDI and IRI representatives on the election law (see Appendix VI) and the current political situation in Bulgaria. In addition, members of the Central Election Commission, BAFECR representatives, journalists and leaders of six major political parties briefed the delegation on the election campaign environment, election procedures and prospects for free and fair elections (see Appendix VII). At midday, the delegation leaders met with the Bulgarian and international media to describe the purposes of the delegation and the Institutes' election observing methodology.

On Saturday morning, the delegation divided into 13 groups, with 11 groups travelling to cities outside Sofia (see Appendix VIII). Each of the groups included at least one delegate who had visited Bulgaria previously. Upon arrival at their destinations, the groups met with local representatives of political parties, BAFECR volunteers and members of the regional and/or municipal election commissions.

Delegation leaders and other delegates remaining in Sofia met with Prime Minister Dimitar Popov, Defense Minister Yordan Mustafchiev, Sofia Mayor Alexander Karakachanov, former CEC Chairman Zhivko Stalev, and Silvi Chernev, chairman of the regional election commission in Sofia region #25. In addition, delegates in Sofia visited the central headquarters of the major parties and reviewed BAFECR's parallel vote tabulation plans.

On election day, the observer groups sub-divided into two-member teams to visit polling sites in their assigned regions. In total, the delegation visited more than 400 polling sites, including several where military conscripts, the infirmed and the disabled were voting. By consulting with local BAFECR representatives and political party leaders, the teams designed itineraries that took them to areas where problems were expected or had been reported. Delegation members remained at polling sites during the counting process, often until after midnight.

At midday on Monday, October 14, the delegation regrouped in Sofia for a debriefing session. A consensus statement was approved by the delegation and then presented to the media at a well-attended press conference (see Appendix IX). The statement highlighted the positive reforms in the election law and in the regulations governing the media and the military, noting also the cooperation among election officials at all levels. These factors contributed to a free and fair election environment where fear and intimidation were less prevalent than during the 1990 elections. However, the delegation statement also underscored the serious administrative difficulties that complicated and delayed election-day procedures. In addition, the statement expressed concern about efforts before the elections and on election day to discourage minority groups from exercising their freedom to vote for representatives of their choice.

A delegation representative remained in Bulgaria through the second round of elections for mayors, which took place on October 20. On October 21, the official results for the National Assembly elections were released by the Central Election Commission (see Appendix X). Significantly, few complaints of election irregularities were filed with the Commission during this period.



## *Chapter 3*

# **Political Developments in Bulgaria: June 1990- August 1991**

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### **A. The June 1990 Elections**

On June 10, 1990, Bulgarians elected a 400-member Grand National Assembly (GNA) in the country's first, freely contested, multiparty elections since 1931. Run-off elections were held on June 17. The GNA was mandated to draft a new constitution within 18 months, while also serving as the national legislature during this transition period.

The election system used for the June 1990 elections combined proportional representation with a majority system: 200 GNA members were elected from party slates and an equal number were elected from single-member constituencies. The results gave the BSP 211 seats, the UDF 144 seats, the Movement for Rights and Freedom (MRF), which garnered most of its support from the ethnic-Turkish enclaves, 23 seats and the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union

(BZNS), an increasingly independent party that worked with the Communist Party from 1948-89, 16 seats.

Despite evidence of intimidation, particularly in rural areas, the June 10 elections, according to most international observers, represented a significant, positive step toward the establishment of a functioning democracy in Bulgaria. However, after the elections, Bulgaria struggled to implement reforms amid economic and political crises that tested the efficacy of the newly emerging democratic system.

## **B. Summer: July-September 1990**

Immediately following the elections, students took to the streets protesting the outcome and calling for the resignation of BSP President Petar Mladenov, the leader of the November 1989 internal coup. Protests focused on Mladenov's remarks, contained in a newly discovered videotape, suggesting a willingness to use tanks to disperse peaceful demonstrators in December 1989. After a commission verified the authenticity of the videotape, Mladenov resigned on July 6, four days before the GNA met for the first time in Bulgaria's historic capital, Veliko Turnovo.

The resignation of Mladenov ended the student strikes. In their place, "Cities of Truth" were established in all major cities. Those organizing Cities of Truth sought to rid Bulgaria of the symbols of the old communist order and to guarantee the process of democratization. Protestors focused on such symbols as the mausoleum containing the body of Georgi Dimitrov, a leading communist figure in the 1930s and 1940s, and the red star atop BSP headquarters in Sofia.

The GNA convened on July 10 with the BSP controlling a majority of the seats, but lacking the two-thirds majority needed for passage of major pieces of legislation. This proved a significant stumbling block for the BSP-dominated government.

The election of a new president was the GNA's first order of business. Six ballots failed to produce the requisite two-thirds majority needed to elect a BSP president. Finally, after a week of behind-the-scenes negotiations and the growing demands of the Cities of Truth, the BSP withdrew its nominee. The major parties settled on UDF leader, Zhelu Zhelev, as the consensus candidate.

On August 1, the GNA elected Zhelev president by a vote of 270 to 100. Zhelev nominated Antas Samerzhiev, a member of the BSP and interior minister since November 1989, as vice-president; Samerzhiev was elected with only seven dissenting votes. Soon thereafter, residents of the Cities of Truth ended their protests.

With Zhelev's election, many hoped a new government would form quickly and the process of dismantling the communist system would begin. However, this proved to be more difficult than anticipated, with the BSP seeking a broad coalition and the UDF refusing to join.

On August 26, in the first major breakdown in law and order since the November coup, protestors stormed, burned and looted the BSP headquarters in downtown Sofia. The ostensible provocation was the BSP's failure to remove the red star from atop the building. In the GNA, the parties exchanged charges of responsibility for the incident, the late arrival of the fire brigade and the brigade's alleged half-hearted attempts to stop the blaze.

By mid-September, three months after the elections, a new government still had not been formed nor had any new legislation been adopted. When the mandate of local governments expired, the caretaker government, with the approval of the major parties, appointed interim executive councils comprising representatives of the major parliamentary groups with the exception of the Movement for Rights and Freedom. This was considered a provisional measure until local elections could be organized later in the autumn.

### **C. Autumn: September-November 1990**

The summer of political protests gave way to public criticism of the economic situation, which was exacerbated by a drought and the disruption of petroleum imports from Bulgaria's two major suppliers, Iraq and the Soviet Union. While the GNA debated whether to try Zhivkov in a public forum or before a civilian court, and whether to broadcast GNA sessions on television, the public waited for incumbent BSP Prime Minister Andrei Lukanov to appoint a new Council of Ministers and to announce his plan for Bulgaria's economic transformation. Lukanov's announcement was delayed by his repeated attempts to secure UDF participation in a new government, which the UDF steadfastly refused to join.

On September 19, Lukanov presented his new government. Ten days later, Lukanov announced his long-awaited economic plan, which he viewed as a far-reaching break with past orthodox practices. However, when circulated, the plan was derided by much of the opposition. According to a December 1990 article in the Bulgarian monthly, *The Insider*: "The opposition, as well as part of the Socialist majority, believe that the program outlines merely the tendencies for reform, without committing itself to specific deadlines and branch-by-branch schedules."

On September 30, the growing disillusionment with the BSP government manifested itself in the results of a by-election held to fill Vice President Samerzhiev's seat. The UDF won the election with 58 percent of the vote, while the BSP gained only 39 percent in a constituency it had won three months earlier.

With winter approaching, Lukanov announced plans to ration gasoline, other fuel supplies and food. Lukanov relied on the BSP majority in the GNA to push through these and a number of other unpopular measures. But each step produced bitter debates and protests within and outside parliament. Finally, in November, crippling strikes and student demonstrations convinced the BSP that it could not govern effectively despite its parliamentary majority. Lukanov and his government resigned on November 29.

#### **D. Winter: December 1990-March 1991**

Lukanov's resignation once again brought the government to a standstill, and a new round of negotiations among political leaders began. On December 6, the political parties reached agreement on a new government, which was ratified by the GNA's election of Dimitar Popov, as prime minister. A judge and independent political figure, Popov had served as secretary of the Central Election Commission at the time of the June 1990 elections. With Lukanov gone, the UDF agreed to participate in government, assuming leadership of three economic ministries. The other 10 ministries went to members of the BSP (6), the BZNS (1) and independents (3). The GNA also elected three deputy prime ministers, one from each of the major parties with the exception of the Movement for Rights and Freedom.

The new government's mandate was to implement the Accord on a Peaceful Transition to a Democratic Society, an agreement

reached among the political parties in early January (see Appendix XI). The agreement acknowledged BSP responsibility for the current situation in Bulgaria and placed a moratorium on labor strikes through July. The agreement set an ambitious agenda for the passage of the constitution and laws governing the reprivatization of land, the establishment of new administrative divisions in the country and the creation of local government structures. The pact called for local elections to be held in late February, with national elections scheduled for May 1991. However, it quickly became apparent that the electoral timetable was too ambitious.

Although 15 parties signed the political agreement, half of them, including seven parties within the UDF, endorsed the pact with reservations, reflecting ambivalence about entering into an agreement with the BSP. Podkrepa, the opposition labor confederation that had recently left the UDF, welcomed the agreement, but refused to sign it. Furthermore, the Agrarian National Union-Nikola Petkov and the Social Democratic Party refused to join the government; when Ivan Pushkarov, a Social Democratic MP, accepted a ministerial portfolio, he was expelled from his party.

Despite the apparent commitment to set aside political differences to effect necessary reforms, mistrust and recriminations between and within the two major parties persisted. This bickering produced legislative stalemates and ultimately delayed the full implementation of the political agreement and the scheduling of elections.

The GNA's credibility was further tarnished in March when, following a bitter debate on the findings of the Mandate Committee, a majority of the legislators voted to dissolve the GNA and then quickly reversed their decision. The Committee, which was established to investigate election complaints, completed an extensive review of the 1990 election results in mid-January. However, the case of Stoyan Ganev, a UDF parliamentarian who was elected co-chair of the party's parliamentary caucus in December, proved too controversial for the Committee to resolve.

The BSP claimed that Ganev's opponent was denied a first-round victory because of an improper administrative decision by the district election commission. Although the Mandate Committee found the BSP claim to be justified, the BSP candidate had since renounced interest in the seat, conceding defeat in the second round. The BSP

parliamentary group demanded annulment of the results in an apparent maneuver to use the administrative discrepancy to embarrass Ganev. UDF legislators cried foul and walked out of the GNA.

Notwithstanding these polemics, the GNA enacted several key economic bills during this period, including the 1991 budget, the lifting of price controls and the passage of a land reform bill returning collectivized land to the original owners. In addition, the new government entered into negotiations with the IMF, the G-24, the World Bank and individual countries to secure needed foreign exchange credits. Nonetheless, for most Bulgarians, it was a winter of discontent with shortages of gasoline and food reminiscent of both the communist era and the worst years of World War II.

### **E. Spring: April-June 1991**

Progress on a new constitution stalled until mid-April when legislators combined features of 10 drafts into a single proposal, which was then introduced for debate on the floor of the GNA. Although the consolidated draft failed to resolve disagreements on a number of fundamental issues concerning the form of government and other matters, the expectation was that the approval process would move quickly. While some of the smaller opposition parties sought an immediate dissolution of the GNA and the scheduling of new national elections, a majority of the GNA members, supported by President Zhelev, believed that the GNA had an obligation to fulfill its mandate and enact a new constitution — or at least make a concerted effort to do so.

In April, the Social Democrats, the Agrarian National Union-Nikola Petkov, the Green Party and Ecoglasnost announced the formation of a UDF Center group within the UDF. This action represented the beginning of formal divisions within the 16-group opposition coalition that would result in the registration of four separate party slates — the UDF Movement, UDF Center, UDF Liberals and Agrarian National Union-Nikola Petkov — for the 1991 elections (see Chapter 4: The Political Forces).

The parties within the UDF Center group sought, among other things, postponement of elections until the autumn. Some of these same parties advocated an election system in which the voter would cast a ballot for a party or coalition and also would indicate a party

preference. Such a ballot would have provided the basis for re-organizing the composition of the UDF Coordination Committee after the elections to give added decision-making power to the strongest parties.

The formation of a UDF Center led to the creation of a UDF Right, comprising some of the UDF's smaller parties, including the Radical Democratic Party, the Democratic Party and the United Democratic Center. Compared with the Social Democrats and the Agrarian National Union-Nikola Petkov, these parties controlled a relatively small percentage of the UDF seats in parliament.

As the spring wore on, divisions within the UDF, including divisions within individual UDF parties, deepened. After four months of coalition government, some public opinion polls indicated a loss of support for the UDF — as well as a loss of support for the GNA and politics in general. Consequently, several parties within the UDF organized demonstrations in support of holding national elections in the summer — in order to elect a new GNA with a democratic majority before support for the UDF eroded further.

The UDF Right argued that the GNA, with its large BSP majority, did not represent the will of the people. Unlike its Center counterparts, the UDF Right saw no value in negotiating and compromising with the BSP parliamentarians, who it believed to be tainted, on legislative issues. The UDF Right, therefore, maintained that the GNA should be dissolved immediately and new elections should be scheduled.

With the UDF divided over the timing of elections, tension mounted between the UDF parliamentary leadership — composed of Petar Dertliev (BSDP) and Milan Drenchev (BZNS-NP) — and the UDF Coordination Council, which was controlled by the smaller parties. On May 15, 39 UDF legislators (mostly from the UDF Right) walked out of parliament in an effort to force the dissolution of the Assembly. Significantly, they did not resign their seats, although they declined compensation as MPs. In the following month, as progress on the constitution continued, a Movement for Rights and Freedom (MRF) faction of 23 GNA members joined the striking UDF parliamentarians, increasing the number of MPs on strike, at times, to 90.

The striking UDF parliamentarians organized themselves into the "Blue Movement," advocating that all anti-communist forces

(including MRF and BZNS) unite to defeat the BSP in the next elections under a single, blue ballot, which was the color used in the previous elections by the UDF. Believing that elections were imminent, they began organizing and gathering support in the countryside.

On May 28, the GNA enacted a measure calling for a July 6 referendum on the monarchy, passage of the constitution by July 17 (after which the GNA would dissolve), and simultaneous national and local elections in September. This move, particularly the scheduling of a referendum, caught many people unaware.

By introducing this measure, Social Democratic leader Dertliev (and the UDF legislators still in the GNA) successfully restored the political initiative to the GNA, rather than to an extra-parliamentary group of striking MPs. In the week following the GNA decision, the main topic of discussion among Bulgarians was the proposed referendum. What would the voting procedures be? Would Simeon Borisov (the son of the last Bulgarian monarch, living in exile in Spain) be allowed to campaign in Bulgaria?

While some political leaders believed that the public deserved an opportunity to validate or reject the 1946 referendum<sup>1</sup>, many thought that the proposed referendum was ill-timed for several reasons. First, a referendum 11 days prior to the scheduled passage of a new constitution was viewed as potentially confusing. Second, many argued that, given the acute economic problems in Bulgaria, a referendum on an issue that did not stand a chance of passing was a waste of money. Third, and perhaps most important, many UDF supporters understood that the referendum question was likely to cause further divisions within the UDF – shortly before national elections.

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<sup>1</sup> In 1946, the communist-dominated government organized what is believed to have been a fraudulent referendum that abolished the monarchy in Bulgaria. Since Zhivkov's ouster in November, there had been discussion about the need to legitimize the 1946 decision in a free and fair referendum. Based on public opinion surveys in the spring, the majority of the population supported maintaining Bulgaria as a republic. However, strong elements preferred restoration of the monarchy. The most visible proponent of a restored monarchy was Dr. Konstantin Trenchev, the populist leader of Podkrepa, who believed that a monarch could play a useful consensus-building role similar to the one performed by King Juan Carlos in Spain.



On Monday, June 3, Zhivko Stalev, chairman of the Central Election Commission and a respected law professor, resigned on the grounds that a referendum would be illegal. Stalev and other legal experts argued that the GNA had no authority to schedule a referendum, which was a power legally vested in the office of the president.

On June 5, Dertliev, the original proponent of the referendum, introduced a measure in the GNA to rescind plans for a referendum. The measure passed by the same number of votes cast in favor of the referendum the week before.

## **F. Passage of the Constitution and the Election Law: July-August 1991**

On July 11, the GNA approved the third and final reading of the constitution, and preparations were made for a formal signing the following day. On that same day, the 39 UDF parliamentarians who had walked out of the GNA initiated a hunger strike to protest passage of the constitution by a body unrepresentative of the population. The hunger strikers demanded a popular referendum on the constitution, which would have required a two-thirds majority to be enacted. In addition, the hunger strikers demanded that President Zhelev set a firm date for national elections. Finally, they protested a provision requiring all MPs, ministers and the president to swear allegiance to the new constitution or lose their mandates.

The success of the protests depended largely on popular support, which did not materialize. Rather than dividing the GNA, the protests caused an irreparable split in the UDF. In the end, 309 MPs signed the constitution on Friday, July 12. In addition to the "Group of 39," many representatives of the MRF declined to sign the constitution because they objected to specific provisions concerning the rights and privileges of minority groups. Several prominent UDF legislators who were ministers in the government also refused to sign the constitution.

The constitution provides for a 240-member National Assembly, a new judicial structure, an independent Constitutional Court and the direct election of a president within three months of the parliamentary elections. The constitution prohibits the formation of parties based on ethnic grounds. Although the constitution places no specific restric-



## *Chapter 4*

# **The Political Forces**

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After the June 1990 elections, new political organizations emerged in Bulgaria while others bolstered their position in Bulgarian society. The transition had implications for all sectors of society, including political parties, the media, the military and civic organizations.

### **A. Political Parties**

After nine months of in-fighting within the political parties and coalitions that contested the June 1990 elections, the registration of political parties and candidates on September 13 – 30 days before the elections – defined for electoral purposes the final divisions and coalitions among political groupings. In the two weeks prior to the registration deadline, the different parties and groups negotiated coalition formations, as well as a determination of the precise listing of candidates on the regional lists. This subsection reviews developments relating to political parties in the weeks before the elections.

### **1. Union of Democratic Forces - Movement**

The Union of Democratic Forces (referred to here as the UDF Movement to distinguish it from the other UDF groups) represented the remnants of the UDF coalition that ran in the June 1990 elections. In parliament, leaders of parties on the right were scornful of other UDF parties, which were willing to negotiate and compromise with the BSP. Acrimony mounted with the signing of the January 1991 political agreement and surfaced publicly with the May walkout of 39 MPs.

Political parties represented within the UDF Movement included: the Radical Democratic Party led by Elka Konstantinova; the Democratic Party led by Stefan Savov; the United Democratic Center led by Stoyan Ganev; and several smaller Christian Democratic parties. In addition, factions of the Bulgarian Social Democratic Party, the Green Party, Ecoglasnost, the Federation of Independent Student Societies, the Federation of Clubs for Democracy and Glasnost and others participated in the UDF Movement. The chairman of the UDF Coordination Council was Philip Dimitrov, a former leader of the Green Party. The vice-chair was Hristo Ivanov.

Throughout the campaign period, the UDF Movement maintained that it represented the ideas of the 1990 UDF and that the splinter UDF groups had abandoned the coalition and its principles. The UDF Movement campaigned against the BSP and the other UDF splinter groups, advocating immediate and thorough reform of the economic and political structure. As a reflection of its anti-accommodationist attitude, the UDF Movement announced that it would refuse to place any GNA member who had signed the constitution on its party list.

The UDF Movement benefitted considerably from the CEC decision awarding it use of the blue ballot, which had been used in June 1990 by the then-united opposition. In addition, the UDF Movement inherited the UDF's organization and infrastructure in the countryside. Nonetheless, throughout the campaign, the Movement remained a fragile organization; its unity was maintained by the skillful direction provided by Dimitrov and Ivanov.

### **2. Union of Democratic Forces - Liberal**

This party was a coalition composed of the main leadership of the Federation of Clubs for Democracy and Glasnost, the Green Party

and the Conservative Alliance Democratic Party. The leadership contained some of the most visible opposition leaders, including Sofia Mayor Alexander Karakachanov and former UDF campaign manager Petko Simeonov. At the behest of President Zhelev, Simeonov sought in early September to build a grand center coalition to contest the elections. However, disputes over leadership positions, combined with the antagonisms that had emerged during the intervening six months, prevented the formation of such a coalition.

The UDF Liberals suffered the most from the failure to build a grand coalition. With few resources and little time, the Liberals registered only 220 candidates for the national elections, and an uncertain number for local elections. The Liberals campaigned on a platform of European liberalism and expected to benefit from President Zhelev's perceived identification with the coalition.

### **3. Union of Democratic Forces - Center**

The UDF Center represented a coalition comprising the Bulgarian Social Democratic Party, Ecoglasnost and the Democratic Party-Plovdiv. The coalition was led by Petar Dertliev, chairman of the UDF parliamentary group. The UDF Center attacked the perceived extremism of the UDF Movement and emphasized a commitment to "social peace, order, rational decision-making and moderate reforms."

Dertliev's campaign strategy sought to draw away support from the BSP. Consequently, the messages of the BSP and the UDF Center were very similar. In fact, the Bulgarian Social Democratic Party symbol was an open rose — as opposed to the BSP's closed rose. The subtleties were aimed at attracting those conservative voters who might support the BSP not because of ideological affiliation, but because the party, in their view, represented stability.

### **4. Bulgarian Agrarian National Union-Nikola Petkov (BZNS-NP)**

After November 10, 1989, two agrarian political parties emerged: the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union (BZNS) and the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union-Nikola Petkov (BZNS-NP). Both parties claimed to represent the original Agrarian Union. Founded in 1899, the Agrarian Union won elections in 1920 and ruled under the leadership of Alexander Stamboliiski until 1923.

In 1945, the Agrarian Union split in a dispute regarding cooperation with the communist Fatherland Front, which controlled the government. The dissident faction, led by Nikola Petkov, garnered substantial support in the 1946 elections. However, after the elections, Petkov was tried and executed. The rest of the BZNS-NP leadership was also tried, and then executed or sent to labor camps. Thereafter, the BZNS-NP was outlawed, and the surviving leadership went into exile.

In the pre-1990 election period, the BZNS-NP re-emerged and competed under the UDF umbrella. With party leader Milan Drenchev promising to deliver the rural vote, BZNS-NP candidates were prominently featured on the UDF lists. As a result, BZNS-NP captured 17 of the 144 UDF seats in the Grand National Assembly, making it the largest group within the UDF parliamentary caucus.

In 1991, Drenchev withdrew from the UDF coalition a week before the deadline for party registration due to disappointment over what it perceived as disadvantageous placement of BZNS-NP candidates on the UDF regional lists. As a result, BZNS-NP presented a separate list of candidates. The BZNS-NP departure meant that, in some cases, the UDF Movement lost its organizational structures in the smaller towns and villages, and was thus unable to present local government candidates. At the same time, the BZNS-NP suffered from disorganization, a lack of resources and poor candidate selection. In the limited time available, BZNS-NP tried to convince voters that the party represented the traditional opposition to the Communist Party — a struggle that dated back to 1945, not just 1990.

#### **5. Bulgarian Agrarian National Union - United (BZNS-E)**

During June 1990, the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union (BZNS) sought to distance itself from the communist regime with which it had cooperated for more than 45 years by running on a separate orange ballot; it won 16 seats in the GNA. During the following year, BZNS parliamentarians cooperated with the UDF parliamentary caucus, reinforcing the BZNS contention that it was no longer in league with the communists. In late May 1991, the parliamentary factions of BZNS and BZNS-NP were officially united as a parliamentary bloc. BZNS-NP leader Drenchev, however, rejected the unification and maintained that seven BZNS-NP

parliamentarians, who joined the united agrarian bloc, had left the UDF caucus.

In July, Tsanko Barev, a former leader of BZNS-NP living in exile, returned to Bulgaria to preside over the formal unification of the two Agrarian Unions into the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union-United (BZNS-E). Despite a number of party conferences and leadership meetings, some members of BZNS-NP, including Drenchev, refused to join BZNS-E before the elections because of lingering distrust.

A week prior to the deadline for registering parties, BZNS-E formed a political coalition with the Constitutional Forum. This small group, led by Dr. Nikolai Genchev, included many of the most prominent, formerly independent, intellectuals in Bulgaria. The coalition was designed to attract voters to lists headed by well-known intellectuals and to broaden the party's appeal beyond its traditional agricultural supporters. However, the coalition's lackluster campaign failed to translate the strategy into a significant showing at the polls.

## **6. Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP)**

BSP behavior following the June 1990 elections is difficult to characterize. According to some analysts, the BSP principally sought to use its legislative majority to protect its position in Bulgarian society and particularly the perquisites of BSP members. Others, while not denying that the BSP often acted out of self-interest, believed that divisions within the UDF permitted BSP parliamentarians to play the role of responsible legislators and innocent bystanders.

Divisions emerged within the BSP throughout 1991. In January, a group of 17 BSP legislators announced the formation of a European Social Democratic Platform within the BSP, distancing themselves from the hard-line leaders of the party who exercised effective control. Still, at the BSP national conference in August, unity was maintained despite the existence of several new factions within the party.

Perhaps the most divisive event affecting the BSP occurred in August 1991, with the coup in the Soviet Union. While President Zhelev was one of the first international leaders to condemn the coup, the hard-line leaders in the BSP failed to comment on events in the Soviet Union. When they did — after the coup had failed — the

leadership refused to use the term "coup" to describe events in the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, the "radical" (younger) BSP leaders issued a declaration condemning both the coup and the hard-liners for taking so long to react.

The BSP campaign sought to contrast the "extremist" tactics of the opposition (burning of BSP headquarters, hunger strikes, demonstrations, etc.) with the "rational behavior" of the BSP in the previous year. This strategy was designed to attract the conservative voter and those who feared retaliation from the opposition for past associations with the Communist Party.

In the southern regions of Haskovo and Kurdjali and the northeastern regions of Razgrad, Shumen and Silistra, the BSP campaign utilized an overtly nationalist message. The decision allowing the Movement for Rights and Freedom (MRF) to compete in the elections was criticized as dangerous for Bulgaria's future. In a campaign speech in Haskovo a week before the elections, former Prime Minister Andrei Lukanov warned that "blood would flow" if the MRF won a significant number of seats in the next National Assembly.

For the October elections, the BSP created a coalition with eight other parties: the Bulgarian Liberal Party, the Fatherland Party of Labor, the Christian Women's Movement Party, the Christian Republican Party, the S. Stambolov Popular Liberal Party, the Socialist Youth Union, the Federation of Bulgarian Socialist Youth and ERA-3 Union of Democratic Parties and Movements. For the most part, the coalition partners were silent and occupied few top positions on the BSP list.

## **7. Movement for Rights and Freedom**

The Political Parties Act that governed the June 1990 elections prohibited the formation of parties on ethnic or religious grounds. Despite the ban, the Movement for Rights and Freedom (MRF) was allowed to organize, campaign and win seats in the Grand National Assembly. In permitting the MRF's participation, the Central Election Commission accepted the contention that the Movement was open to all Bulgarians, even though most of its members were of Turkish origin and the Movement had been established to protect the rights of this minority group.



In 1991, with adoption of the new constitution that explicitly proscribed parties based on race, religion or ethnic origin, the question again arose about whether the MRF would be allowed to contest the October elections. Anticipating a confrontation, a small group of 55 ethnic Bulgarians organized the Party for Rights and Freedom and elected the MRF chair, Ahmed Dogan, as its chair on August 7, 1991. The lower courts quickly ruled that the Party could not register, and the matter was referred to the Supreme Court. On September 12 (one day before the deadline for party registration), the Court denied the Party's registration.

At the same time, the Movement for Rights and Freedom, whose core supporters differed from the Party, maintained that it need not re-register since it was placed on the Political Party Register in 1990. Based on this interpretation, the MRF submitted candidate lists in early September. On September 11, the Central Election Commission confirmed this interpretation in Decision 41, which registered the Movement, according it a white ballot with a pink strip.

However, the CEC decision did not end the dispute; various groups continued working to prevent the Movement from contesting the elections. On September 12, BSP members of the National Assembly tried to overturn the CEC decision through legislative action, and, when that failed, the MPs appealed to the Supreme Court. Despite these efforts, the Movement's registration remained valid.

The dispute, however, led to complaints from the MRF that municipal and regional election commissions refused to register its candidates. Furthermore, the MRF complained that its representatives were not included on the election commissions. In some cases, MRF representatives were excluded from the election commissions because the MRF did not attend meetings of the political forces held to choose the commissioners; in other cases, the MRF attended the meetings but were told that their nominees could not be commissioners because the Movement would not be allowed to present candidates in the elections. The MRF believed that the press, electronic media and the Council of Ministers conspired to confuse voters and MRF supporters/candidates into believing that the Movement would not be allowed to contest the elections.

## B. The Media

In the period prior to the June 1990 elections, there were two daily national newspapers: *Duma*, the paper of the reformed Communist Party, and *Democracia*, the paper of the UDF opposition. In the period between the June 1990 and October 1991 elections, however, newspapers proliferated. Many of the parties within the UDF published their own newspapers. In addition to party newspapers, a number of independent newspapers catering to specific audiences emerged: *Debati* reported on the activities of the parliament, while *24 Chassa* catered to the growing business sector. The parties also published local newspapers in cities outside of Sofia. Only *Duma* and *Democracia*, however, had a significant nationwide readership, with circulations of 200,000 and 160,000, respectively.

In Bulgaria, newspapers are relatively expensive since the costs involved in producing and distributing them are high. Thus, most Bulgarians rely on the government-controlled television and radio for news and commentary. Separate boards of directors, which were appointed by the Grand National Assembly, direct the operations of television and radio. The Assembly — through the Parliamentary Committee on Radio and Television — exercises oversight responsibility.

Employees of state-owned television and radio complained that there had been little turnover, and that members of the *nomenklatura* continued to wield significant power. However, the BSP maintained that the key television and radio personalities were supporters of the opposition, and that their reporting more than balanced the sides for the October elections.

In July, BSP members of the National Assembly, as well as UDF legislators who remained in parliament, were incensed by radio's almost exclusive and sympathetic coverage of the hunger striking MPs. From the National Assembly's perspective, the media's coverage provided legitimacy to this extra-parliamentary force, giving little voice to the authorized business of the parliament, including passage of the constitution. The Parliamentary Committee issued a decision calling for an investigation of radio and television coverage of the July events to determine if the reporting was biased. While no action was taken to implement this decision prior to the elections, many journalists characterized the decision as tantamount to censorship.

Following adoption of the election law, the Parliamentary Committee drafted and the National Assembly approved regulations on August 21 regarding the allocation of broadcast time during the election campaign. The regulations favored the parties represented in parliament and assigned the directors of radio and television responsibility for ensuring balanced campaign coverage (see Chapter 5, Section B below).

### **C. The Military**

Beginning in January 1991, the government took steps to increase the pace of military depoliticization. More than 100 generals were retired, and military officers were prohibited from engaging in political activities or belonging to political parties. The national seal of the People's Republic of Bulgaria with the Communist Party insignia, which had adorned all military uniforms for more than 40 years, was replaced by a neutral seal from the pre-war period.

With respect to the October elections, the 107,000 military conscripts were not allowed to possess or read partisan newspapers or journals on base. However, they were free to pursue these activities during leave. These regulations were targeted at keeping politics off military bases.

By September 13, base commanders were required to provide the interim executive councils with a registry of conscripts on their respective bases, which was appended to the appropriate voter registry of a polling station near the base. A special leave schedule was devised to ensure that all conscripts would be free to vote at some point during election day. Commanders were instructed to inform conscripts about the election law and procedures; the interim executive councils were responsible for organizing two candidate meetings for conscripts prior to the elections.

Additionally, in 1991, the military issued internal passports (identification cards) to all officers. These passports were identical to the ones carried by ordinary citizens, and they listed the officer's place of residence as his place of assignment. As a result, military officers were enrolled on the voter registry in their respective districts and were required to use their civilian passports to vote in both municipal and national elections. This innovation, as well as the depoliticization efforts, were designed to eliminate fears about double-voting by military officers and intimidation of the conscripts.

## D. Civic Organizations

The role of domestic civic organizations in conducting voter education campaigns and building confidence in the electoral process was significant during the pre-election period. The most active organization was the Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections and Civil Rights (BAFECR), which formed before the June 1990 elections. BAFECR's involvement in the 1991 elections began in early May when, in cooperation with NDI, it sponsored a training program for its nationwide network of volunteers. BAFECR later submitted to the GNA a 13-point plan for reforming the election law, and many of the plan's recommendations were incorporated into the adopted law.

Once the election law was enacted, BAFECR initiated a campaign to encourage voters to check the voter registries for accuracy. In particular regions, BAFECR also assembled its volunteers to conduct a more systematic examination of the registries. Another major theme of the BAFECR pre-election campaign was voter participation. In the major cities, BAFECR sought to counteract voter apathy with posters declaring, "You decide!!"

BAFECR's most important efforts focused on familiarizing its volunteers and the citizenry with the election law and procedures. Pamphlets highlighting provisions of the election law were prepared and distributed by BAFECR. These included: *Elections '91*, which explained key provisions in the election law, and *Crimes in Elections*, which reviewed penal law provisions relating to the election process. BAFECR also assigned a person full-time in its Sofia office to receive and investigate election-related complaints.

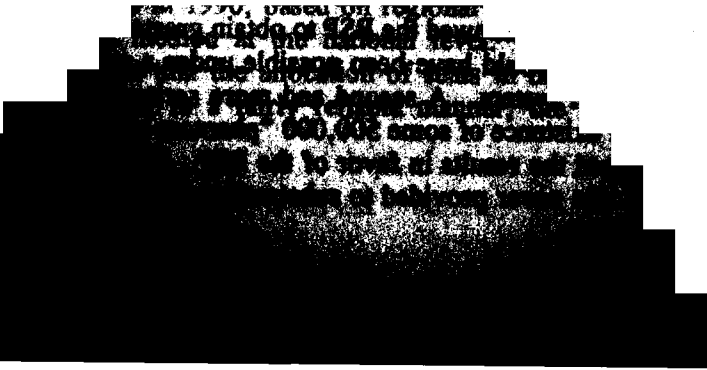
On election day, BAFECR recruited approximately 9,000 trained volunteers. The majority were assigned to monitor election-day procedures. Approximately 2,000 volunteers devoted their efforts to gathering and transmitting the information necessary for the Association's parallel vote tabulation, which was one of BAFECR's most successful initiatives in 1990.

As was the case in June 1990, the Citizens' Initiative for Fair and Democratic Elections (CIFDE) also organized a sizeable number of volunteers as election monitors. According to Leda Mileva, president of CIFDE and a BSP parliamentarian, CIFDE recruited more than 25,000 volunteers for the October elections.

CIFDE's pre-election activities included the production of election law brochures and the organization of training programs for volunteers who would be present at polling sites on election day. Earlier in the year, CIFDE published a volume of different countries' constitutions translated into Bulgarian. On election day, CIFDE also conducted a parallel vote tabulation based on a sample of 250 polling sites.

While CIFDE claimed to be nonpartisan, it was difficult for observers to accept CIFDE as a credible, neutral monitoring group. First, the organization's president was elected as a BSP legislator in the June 1990 elections. Second, at a CEC press conference following the 1991 elections, the CEC spokesperson publicly admonished CIFDE for the "silly complaints" that it had sent to the CEC on election day. The complaints were received by telefax on BSP stationery and with a BSP stamp.

The trade union Podkrepa also sought to monitor the elections. Podkrepa was viewed as clearly partisan, not only in opposing the BSP, but in supporting the UDF Movement's campaign. Still, given its membership throughout the country, Podkrepa's monitoring efforts promoted confidence in the process. It organized a parallel vote tabulation based on tally sheets from 609 polling sites, which accurately projected the official results.



## **Chapter 5**

# **Electoral Process**

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Bulgarian monitors and international observers, notwithstanding their generally positive assessment of the June 1990 elections, identified several problem areas that affected the quality of the electoral process. Administrative difficulties were attributed to the short time period available for electoral preparations and the inexperience of election officials and the population with multiparty elections. Also identified as a problem was intimidation by the ruling party, particularly in the rural areas of the country.

Countering the positive assessment of the process, some Bulgarians, particularly representatives of the trade union Podkrepa and certain factions of the UDF, argued that the 1990 elections had been manipulated to ensure a BSP majority. Initially, the debate focused on discrepancies in the size of the single-member constituencies, which allowed the BSP to obtain greater representation in the GNA than would have been possible under a strict proportional representation system. A second and more serious charge involved the alleged existence of some 500,000 "phantom voters," who it was argued tipped the results in favor of the BSP. Conclusive evidence, however, was never provided to substantiate the allegation.

Given these circumstances, a consensus among the political parties developed that changes in the election law were necessary prior to new elections. To highlight this need, BAFECR distributed to all GNA members a translated version of the recommendations included in the NDI/IRI international delegation report on the June 1990 elections, as well as the recommendations of its own 13-point plan. However, until the constitution was adopted in mid-July, GNA members did not focus on a new election law.

### **A. Election Law Debate**

The draft electoral law presented by the government to the National Assembly in late July reflected many of the recommendations suggested by BAFECR and other groups. The draft law included the following constructive changes: precise timetables for the preparation of voter registries; detailed provisions regarding the handling of election-related complaints; a prohibition on the distribution of ballots prior to the elections; an explicit requirement that the results from individual polling sites be made public; and recognition of the positive role played by domestic and international observer groups. Still, as described below, several provisions of the proposed law proved controversial.

Initially, the BSP wanted to maintain the mixed system used for the 1990 elections, while the UDF was divided between those who sought an exclusively proportional system and those who preferred a solely majoritarian system with single-member constituencies. A political compromise resulted in an agreement that the 1991 elections would be conducted on a proportional representation basis, with a 4 percent threshold at the national level.

Even after the election law passed, debate continued on the precise system to be used for allocating seats in the National Assembly. The BSP proposed a formula that would have benefited large parties; the UDF advocated a plan that would have favored smaller parties. Ultimately, an agreement was reached to allocate seats, as was done in 1990, based on regional lists but utilizing the popular D'hondt method at the national level. This system was expected to ensure that the allocation of seats in the new National Assembly reflected, in a fairly reliable manner, the national vote totals.

Another contentious issue centered on the schedule for local and national elections. The BSP argued that local elections should take precedence since the agreement to appoint interim executive councils was based on an assumption that they would serve only until the end of 1990. The UDF, however, feared that scheduling local elections first would allow the BSP to consolidate its support in certain municipalities. The opposition forces, therefore, insisted on conducting national elections before local elections.

A compromise was reached to hold the elections simultaneously, although this decision caused concern on both administrative and substantive grounds. Some argued that election administrators would not have enough time to prepare for concurrent national and local elections. Others asserted that conducting two elections on the same day would confuse the population and minimize the significance of local elections.

Voter eligibility for Bulgarians living abroad also developed into a hotly contested issue. The election law, which was passed by the National Assembly on August 20, included a provision proposed by the BSP that required Bulgarians living abroad to return home in order to cast ballots in the October elections. President Zhelev returned the law to the Assembly asking for reconsideration of the provision, citing Article 26 of the constitution, which mandates that all Bulgarians, regardless of where they reside, be afforded the same rights and privileges. After further debate, the BSP-dominated Assembly voted once again to prohibit voting by Bulgarians residing outside the country.

## **B. 1991 Election Law**

This section highlights key provisions of the Bulgarian election law adopted by the National Assembly in August. As noted above, the new law addressed many of the problem areas that emerged during the June 1990 elections. At the same time, the new law remained ambiguous in several areas. The legislation also required the CEC to issue interpretive regulations concerning several important matters. Therefore, the success of the election law depended, in large measure, on specific procedures adopted by the CEC and subsidiary bodies after the law was enacted.



## 1. Election system

The election law provided for the allocation of 240 National Assembly seats using the D'hondt method at the national level. A party contesting the election was required to obtain 4 percent of the votes nationally to secure representation in the Assembly. Votes cast for parties that failed to meet the threshold were, in effect, wasted.

An exception to the 4 percent threshold requirement applied to independent candidates. The law required that an individual collect 2,000 signatures in order to run as an independent candidate for the National Assembly elections. An independent candidate would be elected if he or she obtained more votes than the regional quota, which was determined by dividing the total number of ballots cast in a region by the number of seats allotted to this region. This provision meant that an independent candidate could obtain a seat if he or she received as little as 8 percent of the vote in the largest region, which had 13 seats. However, there were several disadvantages to contesting the elections as an independent, including the fact that votes received by an independent candidate in excess of the necessary regional quota were wasted.

The election law created 31 regions — 28 corresponding to the pre-1986 provinces, plus two regions in Sofia and one region in Plovdiv (see Appendix XII). Under the law, once seats were allocated among parties nationwide, party strength in a region determined precisely how many individuals on a given party's regional list would be elected to parliament.

At the local government level, Bulgarians elected municipal councillors, municipal mayors, and, in some cases, settlement mayors. A new territorial division law enacted shortly before the elections established 278 municipalities in Bulgaria.<sup>2</sup> Voters in each of these municipalities directly elected a mayor. In addition, a voter cast a ballot for a party list of council members, the results of which

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<sup>2</sup> The Bulgarian words for the territorial divisions do not correspond to their English translations. The largest unit, the district, is no longer in use since the creation of new territorial divisions in September 1991 (there had been nine districts in Bulgaria). The next unit is the region of which there are 31. Within each region, there are a number of municipal units, which roughly correspond to counties in the United States. And, within municipalities, there are cities, towns and villages.

defined the composition of the municipal assemblies whose size was determined by population. A third ballot was cast in all cities, towns and villages, except for the municipality center, to directly elect the mayor of a settlement.<sup>3</sup>

At least half of the registered voters had to turn out in order for the local elections to be valid in the first round. In addition, in the case of the direct elections for municipal and settlement mayors, a candidate had to receive at least 50 percent of the votes cast to win in the first round.

The date for second-round voting was to be fixed within a week of the first round. In the second round, the two candidates who received the most votes in the first round competed, and the candidate who received a majority of the votes cast won. No minimum voter turnout was required in the second round.

## **2. Candidate/party participation**

The deadline for registering parties, coalitions and independent candidates was September 13, 1991. Individual candidates could be included on no more than two regional party lists. Additionally, candidates could run for both the National Assembly and mayoralty positions, but, if elected to both, they were obliged to assume the local government position. A candidate for a municipal council seat could not compete for a mayoral or National Assembly position. Finally, candidates for local government positions were required to have lived in the municipality for more than 60 days.

## **3. Campaign regulations**

Officially, the election campaign began on September 14 and ended 24 hours before election day. Articles 55 and 57, which regulated campaigning among the military and the allocation of media time respectively, required that regulations be established by the GNA or the CEC to "specify" or "define" the provisions.

As noted above, the GNA adopted regulations regarding the use of the mass media immediately after adoption of the election law. The prescribed formula for allocating time favored the parliamentary

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<sup>3</sup> One large city within the municipality serves as the municipality center; all other cities, towns and villages are classified as settlements. Some settlements are made up of a number of small villages.

parties and coalitions. Extra-parliamentary parties and coalitions that submitted lists in at least 11 of the 31 regions were granted access to the media on a more limited basis.

Parties were authorized to present five-minute television and radio presentations on the first and last days of the campaign. State-owned radio and television were responsible for organizing debates and covering in a balanced manner the campaigns of the different parties. In implementing this policy, radio and television personnel were obliged to define "objective and balanced" and to regulate what constituted "attacks on political opponents," terms stipulated in the GNA decision (see Appendix XIII).

On September 20, 1991, after consultations between the CEC and the chief of the army's general staff, the defense minister issued instructions regarding the military's participation in the elections and its access to the campaign (see Appendix XIV). The instructions were distributed to all base commanders who were given responsibility for implementing the decision. In the event that a commander did not comply with the instructions or had questions about the instructions, the chief of the general staff served as the Sofia liaison with the base commanders.

Three other provisions of the election law dealing with the campaign are worth noting. First, Article 58 outlined specific "right of reply" provisions applicable to the print media. Second, Article 54 stated that the election campaign should be carried out in the official language, which, according to Article 3 of the constitution, is Bulgarian; this provision seemed designed to limit active participation by the ethnic-Turkish minority in the election campaign.

Third, Article 54 proscribed trade unions from becoming involved in partisan campaigns, but the exact meaning and enforcement provisions were quite vague. Both Podkrepa and the increasingly vocal (and formerly official) Independent Federation of Trade Unions (KNSB) were affiliated with political parties — UDF Movement and UDF Center, respectively — and thus theoretically were covered by the provision. However, the law did not seem to affect their activities.

### C. Election Commissions

The Central Election Commission began work on August 25. Twenty-four members were designated by the president after consulting with political forces: 10, including the chair and one vice chair, were nominated by the BSP; 10, including a vice chair, were nominated by the UDF, with more than half designated by the UDF Movement; two were BZNS suggestions; and the MRF and an extra-parliamentary party nominated one each. Mladen Danailov, a jurist, was initially designated CEC chair, but he resigned in mid-September after being appointed to the Supreme Court; he was replaced by Lena Djelepova, also a BSP nominee.

Given the allegations of fraud directed at the CEC in 1990, it proved difficult to recruit election officials for the 1991 elections; early in the campaign period, for example, five members of the CEC resigned. Moreover, once in place, election officials were reluctant to assume responsibility for interpreting the election law. Instead, and in contrast to the June 1990 elections, the 1991 CEC defined its mandate as ensuring that the measures *stipulated* in the election law were implemented. Still, acting under considerable time pressures, the CEC members prepared for the elections in a collegial manner. In the end, only one CEC decision, relating to the participation of ERA-3 in the BSP-led coalition, was reversed by the Supreme Court.

As envisioned in the law, the national and municipal elections were distinct exercises, requiring separate polling booths and separate voter registries. Under the CEC's jurisdiction were 31 regional election commissions (RECs), responsible for the administration of the parliamentary elections. In addition, 278 municipal election commissions (MECs) were responsible for the administration of the local government elections; the MECs were accountable to the regional district courts.

The CEC appointed members of the RECs and MECs upon the recommendation of the interim executive councils after consultation with the "political forces." These secondary election commissions began work by September 9. In turn, the MECs designated sectional election commissions (SECs), which administered the polling stations on election day, after similar consultations with the "political forces."

Some SECs were not wholly constituted until the day of elections because appointed representatives could not be found. In the Plovdiv and Stara Zagora regions, there were reports of wholesale

resignations by BSP-designated election officials at the sectional level a week before the elections, presumably to complicate the efforts of election administrators. Resignations occurred at the regional and national levels, as well.

According to Article 33 of the election law, binding decisions of the election commissions required a quorum of half the members and a two-thirds majority of attending members. The law specifically opened commission meetings to advocates of the candidates, but otherwise meetings were closed to the public.

Efforts were made to train sectional election officials about their election-day responsibilities, although the success of these initiatives often depended on the degree of cooperation between the regional and municipal election commissions. Nonetheless, election officials at all levels, for the most part, deserve credit for the cooperative manner in which they worked to solve problems, regardless of political preferences.

#### **D. Voter Registries**

In an effort to avoid the accusations of fraud that were made during the 1990 elections, the 1991 election law detailed more comprehensive instructions for updating the voter registries. Specifically, the law required that the voter registries be prepared according to places of residence, rather than alphabetically as had been done in the June 1990 elections. This system was designed to facilitate efforts by the political parties and nonpartisan organizations to identify inaccuracies in the lists. In addition, the law included new provisions for updating the voter registries, for incorporating conscripts into voting sections and for limiting the issuance of certificates for voting, which permit voters to cast their ballots at polling sites that do not correspond to their permanent residence.

Having anticipated elections for several months, many interim executive councils were ready with voter registries in May or June, preliminary versions of which were posted in August. At first, this action, accompanied by the reforms in the election law and the multi-partisan character of the interim executive councils responsible for preparing the registry, engendered confidence in the accuracy of the lists. But when the lists were officially posted on September 13, opposition suspicions emerged regarding what were viewed as "communist efforts" to pad the voter registries.

Despite concerns expressed about the quality of the lists, few parties organized grassroots efforts to check the registries. Opposition groups complained that interim executive councils charged prohibitive fees (almost US \$1,000) for a copy of the registry in some regions. In other areas, opposition parties successfully obtained copies of the registries through informal connections with members of the interim executive councils.

BAFECR organized an independent review of the lists, the results of which showed that the lists released in August were, in many places, less accurate than those used in 1990. BAFECR attributed this phenomenon to delays in preparing the voter registries and the shortcomings of the Standard Registry Service, which was responsible for producing the registries. BAFECR criticized the political parties and the media for failing to inform the public of the location of the lists and to encourage the public to check the lists.

A week before the elections, the CEC spokesperson announced that the voter registries contained perhaps as many as 500,000 extra names (duplicates, deceased individuals and those who had emigrated). Meanwhile, many regions reported entire housing blocs, which had been included in the lists posted on September 13, excluded from the lists posted days before the elections. As a result, on October 10, the CEC issued a decision authorizing eligible voters whose names were not on the registry to receive certificates for voting from the interim executive council on election day. This decision, while adding to election-day confusion (see Chapter 7), provided a procedure whereby eligible voters excluded from the registries would not be unfairly disenfranchised.

According to the election law, citizens who had emigrated were required to return to Bulgaria and formally apply to vote or their names would be stricken from the registry. The law, however, did not specify a deadline for making a request to participate in the electoral process; a CEC decision set midnight, October 12, as the deadline, after which names would be removed from the voter registry. Nonetheless, uncertainty about the whereabouts of individuals made some municipal officials uneasy about deleting names from the list without conclusive evidence that the citizens had left the country or the region permanently. In many municipalities, the reluctance to delete names resulted in inflated voter registries. The CEC, meanwhile, sought to ease the process for citizens

returning from abroad to vote. With the appropriate stamp in a Bulgarian passport indicating that the last permanent address corresponded with the intended region to vote, a returning citizen could receive a voting certificate from the interim executive council.

## **Chapter 6**

# **The Election Campaign**

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The election campaign was conducted in a peaceful, almost colorless, manner. In comparison with the 1990 elections, the population's expectations, and consequently its interest, were much diminished. Still, two days before the elections, all the major parties organized large rallies for their activists; these rallies proceeded without any reported disorders.

The national leaders of the major parties focused little attention on the municipal elections, although these elections were the major focus of the local party chapters. However, local and national party leaders alike expressed concerns, even as late as a week before the elections, that the municipal elections would have to be rescheduled because of deficient administrative preparations.

The election law provided for equal access to the media and limited funds from the state budget for the principal parliamentary parties. In addition, the law and instructions issued by the defense minister provided an adequate opportunity for military conscripts to become familiar with the party platforms.

Although the power of the BSP declined in the months prior to the October 1991 elections, the former dominant party continued to



enjoy various institutional advantages and continued to be the focus of election complaints and suspicion. The late adoption of the election law and the deadlines included therein also provided little time for some of the newly formed parties and coalitions to acquaint voters with their quickly developed platforms and assigned ballot colors.

### **A. Party and Candidate Registration Irregularities**

Before the September 13 deadline, one politically contentious issue emerged regarding party participation. As discussed above, efforts to prevent the registration of the MRF's candidate list failed. Nonetheless, some regional, municipal and sectional election commissions refused to register MRF candidates, either because of prejudice or honest confusion over whether the MRF had been allowed to register. In such cases, the Central Election Commission or the district courts reversed the decisions of these subordinate election commissions upon appeal.

Despite the CEC and district court rulings, the regional and municipal election commissions in Kurdjali refused to register MRF candidates. These commissions argued that the constitution outlawed ethnically based parties and that the commissions were not constrained by CEC or district court decisions to the contrary. Days before the elections, the CEC intervened to register the MRF's candidates in Kurdjali; the sectional election commissions in the region, according to observers, respected the CEC action on election day.

Prior to election day, complaints arose in some regions about the use of duplicate signatures in registering independent candidates. Articles 42 and 53 of the election law stated that the CEC, MEC or REC could annul an independent candidate's nomination if it could establish that the independent candidate's list was not supported by the requisite number of qualified voters. In Haskovo, in particular, the UDF expressed concerns that the improper registration of independent candidates was being used by the BSP as a tactic to draw away votes from the UDF candidate. However, neither the CEC nor the REC believed that it was responsible for annulling the registration of these candidates, who were therefore allowed to compete in the elections.

A complicating factor in the municipal elections was the controversy over the requirement that an individual reside in a

settlement/municipality for at least 60 days in order to be eligible to vote or to register as a candidate. In many places, the opposition claimed that BSP candidates, using their connections in the Ministry of Interior, had falsified their documents to comply with these regulations.

These irregularities derived from ambiguities in the election law, the short time period allotted to prepare for the elections and uncertainties regarding responsibilities assigned to the interim executive councils and the various election commissions. None of the irregularities were egregious enough to alter the final outcome of the elections, but they highlight the need to allow enough time for election officials to understand their responsibilities.

## **B. Campaign Fairness**

The election law unquestionably benefitted the political parties represented in parliament. Nonetheless, with the splintering of the parliamentary bloc of the opposition UDF, it was unclear how the CEC would interpret provisions in the law concerning ballot colors (Article 34), campaign funding (Article 61) and media access (Article 57). With the exception of assigning ballot colors, the CEC treated the different groups that emerged from the 1990 UDF as separate parliamentary parties, enjoying the privileges of access to the media and an advance of funds.

### **1. Ballot color**

The CEC faced a difficult decision in resolving the competing claims of the different UDF groups to the blue ballot. Each UDF group, particularly the weaker splinter groups, sought the advantage of contesting with the symbolic blue color used by the united opposition in the 1990 elections.

The UDF Movement professed to contain the core of the original opposition; the other groups, in the UDF Movement's view, had defected and therefore did not deserve the blue ballot. The UDF Liberals and UDF Center each argued that their leaders had signed the original documents creating the UDF; the blue ballot, they asserted, should be awarded to the founders of the coalition.

The splinter groups, fearing a CEC decision in favor of the UDF Movement, sought to amend the election law to allow for blue ballots with varied stripes. In a rare occurrence, the UDF Movement

and the BSP voted together in the National Assembly to reject this amendment.

Ultimately, the CEC awarded the blue ballot to the UDF Movement. Other contestants could choose a combination of colored stripes to adorn a white ballot. During the campaign, the UDF Center and UDF Liberals complained bitterly about the CEC decision, which they claimed was politically motivated and reflected the partisan preferences of UDF members on the CEC.

## **2. Media access**

All parliamentary parties were given equal time on state radio and television. In addition, radio and television organized various debate programs to which it invited all the parliamentary parties. Unfortunately, the debates and campaign statements were often made tedious by the need to provide a forum for as many as 15 parties.

At the local level, government radio stations implemented the provisions of the law with directions from state radio. However, there were reports that candidates were charged 55 *leva* (US \$3) per minute in Plovdiv and that parties were obliged to contribute 6,000 *leva* (US \$300) for the entire campaign period in Stara Zagora for access to the radio. These costs were not only difficult to raise for parties other than the BSP, but were illegal as well, since the law stipulated that access was free. Nonetheless, to avoid losing important media time, parties decided to pay the fees, rather than appeal.

## **3. Access to resources**

The government decided on September 16 to provide 7.2 million *leva* (approximately US \$380,000) from the state budget to parties, coalitions and independent candidates competing in the National Assembly elections (see Appendix XV). Funds were allocated based on performance in the 1990 elections. Parties and coalitions that obtained more than 50,000 votes in the 1990 elections divided an advance of 3,600,000 *leva* (US \$190,000) proportional to their performance in the 1990 elections, while other parties and coalitions could apply for short-term, interest-free loans of not more than 300,000 *leva* (US \$15,800) and independents for loans of not more than 10,000 *leva* (US \$530). Ultimately, a party, coalition or independent candidate was entitled to 30,000 *leva* (US \$1,600) per seat won in the 1991 National Assembly.

The government was required to transfer funds to the parties by October 2. Since funds were released only 11 days before the elections, parties were forced to rely on other financial sources for initial campaign activities. The election law, however, established a 2,000 *leva* (US \$105) limit on individual donations. Moreover, a provision in the 1990 Political Parties Act prohibited parties from receiving campaign contributions from abroad. Nonetheless, several parties circumvented this prohibition by establishing party foundations, which ostensibly conducted nonpartisan civic education activities, to receive contributions of equipment and money.

The BSP no longer controlled the large resources that it had wielded during the June 1990 elections. For example, since June 1990, the BSP relinquished control of virtually all of its party headquarter buildings throughout the country. These buildings, which were usually the largest and most impressive structures in cities and towns, were transformed into public or private offices. In addition, on September 30, the Court of Civil Procedure froze the assets of the BSP for an indeterminate period of time, pending the Court's decision on whether the assets belonged to the state since they were acquired with state resources. However, the court order did not apply to the party's campaign resources, which still appeared to dwarf those available to other political parties.

### **C. Intimidation and Manipulation**

There were far fewer accusations of intimidation and manipulation in the 1991 pre-election period compared to the 1990 electoral campaign. Nonetheless, opposition parties still accused the BSP of using its continued control of state cooperative farms to influence voters. There also were frequent allegations of BSP attempts to bribe voters by distributing vegetable oil, an important staple commodity not available in stores, at the time of the election campaign.

The impact of attempts at intimidation and manipulation also appeared less significant. The 1990 election experience demonstrated to most voters that negative consequences were unlikely to result from voting for the "wrong" party. Still, in some remote areas of the country, such as Vidin and Silistra, fear appeared to be a factor that continued to influence voters.

Few reports of overt violence during the campaign period were registered, although the BSP heightened tensions in certain MRF

strongholds. In some areas, especially those with large concentrations of ethnic-Turks, BSP activists allegedly spread rumors before MRF rallies about impending violent clashes. These hostilities never materialized, but the rumors contributed to a tense campaign environment.

## *Chapter 7*

# **Election Day**

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As anticipated, election day was characterized by numerous administrative problems that prolonged balloting into the early hours of the following day and stretched counting well into the following week. Despite expectations of a low turnout, 5,699,960 of the 6,790,000 registered voters cast ballots, which, ignoring the inaccuracies in the voter registries, accounts for an 84 percent turnout figure.

Compared to the June 1990 elections, voters on the whole exhibited greater confidence in the fairness of these elections. Problems were accepted as a natural result of a complicated election law. After election day, anger and mistrust were directed at those responsible for preparing the voter registries.

### **A. Balloting Procedures**

Polls officially opened at 6 a.m., excepting those permitted by the CEC to open at 5 a.m. There were some complaints and reports of delays in opening the polling sites because commissions had not received specific ballots or other election materials. In addition, there were reports that sample ballots had not been posted outside polling

sites. However, most of these irregularities were rectified within a few hours.

Each polling site was administered by a sectional election commission, which included a chair, a vice-chair, a secretary and political party representatives. In addition, political party advocates, journalists and observers — from both international groups and domestic civic organizations — were authorized to be present inside the polling site.

Voters were listed, at least in theory, on a voter registry at the polling site nearest their permanent residence. In addition, polling sites were established in hospitals, maternity homes, sanatoria, homes for the elderly and disabled, and on vessels sailing under the Bulgarian flag. In contrast with the June 1990 elections, when commanders often escorted conscripts to the polling sites, conscripts exercised their right to vote on their own initiative.

Except in rare circumstances, no more than 1,000 voters, and no less than 500 voters, were assigned to an individual polling site. In the case of the special sections mentioned above, a minimum of 30 voters was necessary to establish a polling site, while, on ships, a minimum of 20 voters was needed.

National Assembly candidates, party advocates, observers, election officials and other individuals engaged in work relating to the elections were eligible to receive a certificate to enable them to vote outside their assigned polling stations. These individuals could, however, only cast ballots for the National Assembly race. At the polling site, the names of those voting with special certificates were recorded on a separate voter registry.

Upon approaching the polling site, the voter passed a poster exhibiting the actual ballots that she or he would find inside the polling booths. Inside the polling site, the voter approached a table where the sectional election commission was seated and where two ballot boxes — one for National Assembly elections and one for municipal elections — were in plain view. A voter presented his or her internal passport to an election commission member. His or her name was then checked off the voter registry. If the voter's name did not appear on the registry, the voter was sent to the interim executive council's offices to receive a certificate allowing him or her to vote.

After the voter's name was checked off the registry, he or she received an opaque envelope and entered a curtained booth. Inside

the booth, the voter found more than 38 piles of colored ballots (for the UDF and BSP), white ballots with stripes (for the other 36 parties registered) and white ballots (for independent candidates). These ballots were arranged in the booth according to the order that the CEC had processed the registration of the party or independent. On each ballot was listed the party and names of the party candidates in that region. The voter chose one ballot, placed it in the envelope, left the booth and deposited the envelope in a sealed wooden box. After voting, the voter signed his or her name on the voter registry, and a member of the election commission wrote in the voter's internal passport: "Having voted for National Assembly" and the date.

Next, a voter eligible to vote in the municipal elections, *i.e.*, having resided in the municipality for at least 60 days, proceeded to the municipal voter registry in the same room. His or her name was again checked off, and he or she received a second opaque envelope. The voter then went into another curtained booth where he or she chose at least two ballots: one containing a party slate for municipal assembly candidates and another containing a single name of the candidate for municipal mayor. In many cases, the voter also selected a third ballot containing the name of a candidate for settlement mayor.

These two or three different ballots — all of varying sizes — were placed in the envelope, and the envelope was deposited in another sealed wooden box situated in front of the election commissioners. Again, after voting was completed, the voter signed the registry next to his or her name, and an election commission member signed the voter's internal passport with the words: "Having voted in the municipal elections" and the date.

Despite simulations indicating that the process for each election would take at least seven minutes, and accusations from both the UDF and BSP that party activists had been instructed to stall in the voting booth, the whole process usually was completed within four minutes or less. As the day wore on and election officials became more familiar with the process, the time needed for finding voter names on the registry and for voting diminished.

The significant delays encountered at some polling sites where the wait was sometimes two hours long resulted from complications caused by the inability of voters to find their names on the registries and the large size of some polling sites. Recognizing the delays, the



CEC issued an election-day decision stating that polling sites could remain open until all voters in line at 7 p.m. (as well as those joining the line later) had voted. While most polling sites closed by 10 p.m., many remained open until midnight, and several in Varna and Sofia did not close until 3 a.m. the next day.

## **B. Specific Observations**

The most serious election-day problem related to the long queues, which for the most part appeared to be caused by the dual election procedures required for national and municipal elections and by the inaccuracies in the voter registries. The late decision by the CEC to permit those whose names were not on the registry to vote if they received a certificate from the interim executive council caused additional confusion and delay. In some cases, election officials were unaware of this decision and refused to allow anyone to vote whose name was not on the registry, even if the voter obtained the requisite certificate. In other cases, the interim executive councils were unaware of the decision, and their offices were not open.

The inaccuracies in the voter registries were particularly serious in the ethnic-Turkish regions. Ethnic-Turks, who had applied to change their names back to the Muslim ones they had used before Zhivkov's 1984 Bulgarianization campaign, which included the forceable adoption by ethnic-Turks of Slavic names, encountered several problems in attempting to vote. Often, neither their Bulgarian nor their Muslim names appeared on the registries. Some received new passports without the appropriate stamp signifying residency for a period of more than 60 days. Moreover, in some cases, despite having resided in a particular region for decades, ethnic-Turks were denied the certificates needed to vote by the authorized municipal officials.

Other serious irregularities were reported on election day in areas populated by ethnic-Turkish and Gypsy voters in the regions of Pleven, Kurdjali and Silistra. In addition to missing names on the registries, complaints were made about intimidation and lack of privacy in the polling booths.

There were a few reports concerning the unavailability of specific party ballots upon opening of the polling sites. However, these problems were normally corrected by 9:30 a.m.

In some polling sites, the voting booth was constructed in a manner that did not afford the voter complete privacy. However, even in these instances, there did not appear to be a deliberate effort by election officials or others present to compromise the principle of a secret ballot. Several observers reported that, in violation of the election law, posters or other BSP campaign materials were displayed inside or near polling sites.

In contrast to the generally peaceful and fair manner in which the elections were administered, some observers reported that individual mayors or party officials attempted to influence voters through their presence inside or near the polling site. In a small town near Pernik, UDF activists claimed that the BSP mayor issued certificates, enabling her friends, who were not residents of the town, to cast votes for her. Similarly, in Kalipetrovo in the Sumen region, the mayor personally reviewed individual requests for voting certificates. BSP election commissioners in this town also were seen urging voters to cast their ballots for the BSP.

### **C. The Counting Process**

Once the polling sites were closed, the area was cleared of all individuals except the election officials, party representatives and observers. The ballot box for National Assembly elections was opened and emptied. The number of envelopes was then compared with the number of voters checked off the voter registry, and any discrepancies were noted. The envelopes were emptied, and the number of votes for each party and the number of invalid votes, were tabulated and recorded on the tally sheet (or, protocol as it is called in Bulgaria).

Tally sheets were prepared in triplicate and signed on each page by every member of the sectional election commission. On the last page of the protocol, there was room for commission members to express a "special opinion" and to note election-day irregularities. In addition, summary tally sheets were signed and distributed to the observers and party advocates upon request.

Once the ballots for National Assembly elections were counted and the tally sheets completed, ballots for municipal councillors and mayors were counted in the same manner. In many of the sections, counting took as long as five hours. Often, discrepancies among the

number of voters, the number of envelopes and the number of ballots necessitated a second or third count.

Upon completion of both tally sheets, the chair of the sectional election commission telephoned the municipal and regional election commissions, which each sent a police officer to transport the ballot papers, the tally sheets and at least two members of the commission from different parties to the REC or MEC. The polling officials presented the tally sheets to the municipal and regional commissions, whereupon the tally sheets were checked, and errors in completing the tally sheets were corrected and noted.

The tally sheets were then taken to a computer center, usually located in the same room or building as the MEC or REC. The results were entered into a computer and an official print-out was produced. The print-out was returned to the members of the MEC or REC and signed. At this point, the sectional election commissioners were given a copy of the tally sheet and a copy of the print-out, which they were required to post at the polling site. The tally sheet and print-out were to be kept at the local government offices until the next elections.

The municipal election results were announced by the municipal election commissions throughout Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Where possible, run-offs were scheduled for the following Sunday, October 20. Administrative delays resulted in the postponement of some run-offs until Saturday, October 26, Sunday, October 27 and Sunday, November 3.

The CEC began receiving results from the regional election commissions on Monday, and made its first announcement of national results at 2 p.m. on Monday, October 14. Further announcements were made through the Bulgarian Telegraph Agency and Bulgarian Radio on October 15 and 16 as additional results were received. Unofficial results based on 100 percent of the tally sheets were announced by the CEC at 1 p.m. on October 17. During the following week, the CEC received copies of the protocols and double-checked the information in the computers before announcing official results on October 21.

#### **D. Parallel Vote Tabulations**

The complicated procedures instituted by the CEC for announcing the official results were implemented in an effort to maintain accuracy and to guard against any manipulation. Consequently, as was the case in 1990, unofficial, independent parallel vote tabulations (PVT) provided the population with more timely information regarding the National Assembly results.

On the day before the elections, Bulgarian Television convened a meeting at which seven groups intending to implement parallel vote tabulations discussed their plans for election night. The organizations included: UDF Movement; UDF Center; BSP; BAFECR; CIFDE; Podkrepa; and British-Balkan Social Surveys (an associate member of Gallup International). Each organization described its methodology, identified its volunteer base and funding sources, and committed to withhold projections until all polling sites closed. For election-night purposes, all of the organizations relied on projections based on results from randomly selected polling sites. The size of the samples ranged from CIFDE's and British-Balkan's 250 polling sites to BAFECR's 1,350 polling sites.

On election night, the close contests encouraged a consultative process among representatives of some organizations. This cooperative spirit minimized the potential of presenting the public with conflicting projections based on partial results.

It was not until 3:43 a.m., Monday, October 14, after the CEC announced that all polling sites had closed, that Bulgarian Television invited representatives of BAFECR and British-Balkan Social Surveys to report their initial results, which showed a narrow UDF lead and only three parties likely to meet the 4 percent threshold. UDF Movement and Podkrepa representatives appeared soon thereafter on the program and reported similar results. A CIFDE representative, however, declined to report any results, claiming that even preliminary projections were premature. However, as became evident when the official results were released later in the week, the projections from the different parallel vote tabulations were quite accurate, notwithstanding the different sample sizes used and considerations of statistical margins of error (see Appendix XVI).

## *Chapter 8*

# Results

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The official results announced by the CEC on October 21 showed that only three parties garnered enough votes to obtain representation in the National Assembly. The UDF Movement obtained 34.3 percent of the total vote, 1.2 percent more than the BSP. The MRF received 7.5 percent of the vote. Twenty-six percent of the ballots were cast for parties that failed to reach the 4 percent threshold. None of the 19 independent candidates obtained more than 12,742 votes, well below the amount required for election to the National Assembly. Under the formula for allocating National Assembly seats, the UDF Movement was awarded 110, the BSP 106 and the MRF 24.

The UDF Movement ran strongest in Sofia and the large cities, while the BSP did well in small cities and rural areas. The MRF, not surprisingly, polled as much as 64 percent in regions heavily populated by ethnic-Turks (see Appendix XVII).

These trends were reflected in the municipal elections, where voters appeared to choose a specific ballot color (*i.e.*, a vote for a party) rather than selecting a ballot for the names contained therein. According to BSP and UDF party headquarters, BSP mayoral can-

didates won election in 120 municipalities, as compared to 94 UDF candidates. Among the other major parties, MRF candidates won 25 mayoral positions, BZNS-E candidates 10, BZNS-NP candidates four, UDF Center candidates one and independent candidates seven.<sup>4</sup> However, UDF mayoral candidates were elected in 31 of the 38 cities with populations of more than 50,000.

The fact that only three parties obtained representation in the National Assembly was the subject of considerable analysis. With respect to the anti-BSP vote, the UDF Movement benefitted from the blue ballot and the disinclination of voters to cast ballots for parties that might not obtain representation in the Assembly. Thus, the vote for the UDF Movement exceeded the projections of various public opinion surveys, while the vote for the splinter UDF parties was considerably less than anticipated based on public opinion surveys.

The size of the BSP vote surprised many analysts. Unlike 1990, fear and intimidation were less convincing explanations for why voters chose the BSP. Instead, some analysts speculate that many Bulgarians, particularly those living in rural areas, supported the BSP because they believed the party would best protect their material interests in the post-communist environment.

The large number of "wasted" votes also raised questions regarding the 4 percent threshold. The threshold worked, as intended, to keep small parties with limited support from exercising undue influence in the legislature and government. The consequence, however, is that the center parties — UDF Liberals and UDF Center — and the two Agrarian National Union parties are not represented in the legislature, despite the fact that collectively they received more than 13 percent of the vote.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Official results for the municipal elections were announced by the municipal election commissions. The law made no provision for collection of the results at the national level. Therefore, accurate nationwide information is difficult to obtain, even from the CEC.

<sup>5</sup> In this context, it is interesting to note that, had the original UDF coalition stayed together, it would have received 131 seats, while the BSP and the MRF would have received 91 and 18 seats respectively. Or, alternatively, if the UDF Liberals and UDF Center and the two Agrarian National unions (BZNS-E and BZNS-NP) had formed separate pre-electoral coalitions, the allocation of seats in the National Assembly, assuming no

The threshold also increased the representation of those parties that obtained more than 4 percent of the vote. This was particularly important for the BSP, which obtained 33 percent of the vote, but was allocated 44 percent of the seats in the National Assembly.

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other changes, would have been as follows: UDF Movement - 95 seats; BSP - 91 seats; Agrarians - 20 seats; MRF - 18 seats; and UDF Center/Liberals - 16 seats.

## *Chapter 9*

# Reflections on the Bulgarian Transition Process

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On November 4, 1991, the new National Assembly convened. After electing legislative leaders, the Assembly approved the government proposed by Philip Dimitrov, leader of the UDF and prime minister. The government comprises only UDF members (see Appendix XVIII). The average age of the ministers is 49. Three of the ministers served in the Popov government, while the others lack previous government experience.

Dimitrov and his colleagues face a number of daunting challenges, most significantly managing a tottering economy. Memories of the difficult 1991 winter remain fresh in people's minds. Moreover, despite the best intentions and government policies, Bulgaria's short-term economic prospects are uncertain, reflecting both the international economic climate and circumstances peculiar to the country's development during the communist era. Further, some of the practical problems associated with the transition have not yet



been resolved. What means should be used to privatize the economy? What should be done with the former Communist Party property? What actions should be taken against those guilty of human rights abuses during the communist regime? How should those associated with that regime be treated? How can the government best ensure the protection of minority rights? How can the bureaucracy and the judiciary be efficiently and effectively restructured? Finally, skepticism and self-doubt are prevalent among large segments of the population; for some, emigration is the preferred solution, while others simply grow more apathetic.

The population's malaise, reflected in various public opinion polls, is attributable partly to the profound economic crisis that Bulgarians confronted during 1991 and also to the belated realization that there are no easy solutions. In addressing the problems and challenges, UDF leaders in government and in the legislature must develop the ability to negotiate and compromise, both among themselves and with other parliamentary groups. This will not be an easy task given the sometimes polarized nature of politics that have understandably dominated Bulgarian society in the period since the fall of the Zhivkov regime.

In this context, it is worth noting that Bulgaria's transition, which has now been underway for more than two years, remains in many respects unique among the former Warsaw Pact countries. This special character is reflected in the fact that progress has been achieved in a country where the former Communist Party remains electorally powerful. In the 1990 elections, the BSP obtained a plurality of the votes and a majority of the seats in the legislature, but was still unable to dictate policy. Instead, public pressures compelled the party to accept an opposition leader as president and a *de facto* coalition government with an independent as prime minister. Now, after the second competitive, multiparty elections, the BSP enters the legislature as a powerful opposition bloc. The party also controls many of the municipalities, which provides an additional political base.

Equally unique is the MRF's pivotal role in the new legislature. In achieving its place as a third force in parliament, the MRF has overcome tremendous hurdles. As described in this report, deliberate efforts were made to prevent the MRF from participating in the elections. And, despite its position as the third largest group in the

previous legislature, the MRF obtained few of the campaign benefits afforded the other parliamentary parties. Yet, the MRF has persevered and now, with the formation of a new legislature, its influence has increased significantly.

The international community has supported Bulgaria's transition process. During the past two years, Bulgarians have benefitted not only from economic assistance, but also from advice concerning the preparation of a new constitution, organization of a multiparty legislature, electoral administration, political party development, the development of an independent judiciary and a host of other political matters.

The international observer delegation organized by IRI and NDI further demonstrated the interest of the international community in the Bulgarian democratization process. The inclusion of 16 delegates from countries undergoing transitions reflects a realization that there is much to be learned from the Bulgarian experience. Among the most relevant lessons are the importance of establishing a credible and meaningful electoral process and the critical role of political parties and civic organizations in such an endeavor.

Despite Bulgaria's success in conducting two multiparty elections in a period of 16 months, political and administrative concerns relating to future elections remain. Bulgarian history is replete with examples of changes in the election system designed to benefit the party or coalition in power. Moreover, as this report describes, there were many complaints of administrative problems in the 1991 elections. The new National Assembly should reflect on the experience of the last two elections and consider appropriate modifications to the electoral laws and regulations before the next elections. In this context, BAFECR is to be commended for its 15-point election reform proposal, which is included in the last chapter of its report on the 1991 elections (see Appendix XIX).

## *Chapter 10*

# Conclusion

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Prior to 1989, Bulgaria was a totalitarian country with a sordid human rights record, no active dissident groups, a limited democratic tradition and a special relationship with the Soviet Union. Two years later, Bulgaria is a country with a democratic constitution, elected leaders at the national and municipal levels, dynamic trade unions, an open media, active professional and civic organizations and an increasingly market-oriented economy. At the same time, it is bordered on two sides by the least democratic states in Eastern Europe (Romania and Serbia) and on the south by Turkey, with which relations remain uneasy. Its accomplishments are therefore more remarkable given that they have been achieved in continuing isolation from much of democratic Europe.

Bulgaria's determination in moving forward with the transition process is perhaps most notably demonstrated by the willingness of people from across the political spectrum to work together to ensure the successful conduct of the elections. This determination will benefit the new government and the population well as they confront the challenges of further institutionalizing democratic government. The international community, too, should assist Bulgaria in all possible

ways to ensure that the transition is a successful one and that the blight caused by 45 years of communist rule is permanently erased.

## Postscript

On January 12 and 19, Bulgarians went to the polls once again to elect, for the first time in Bulgarian history, a president and vice president. Pursuant to Article 93 of the new constitution, a candidate was required to receive at least 50 percent of the vote to be elected in the first round. While the president does not exercise executive power, this first election of a Bulgarian president was regarded by Bulgarian analysts as politically and symbolically significant.

Twenty-two tickets registered to contest the election. Incumbent Zhelu Zhelev and Blaga Dimitrova, a prominent poet and UDF activist, were the designated candidates of the UDF and were assigned the blue ballot. Velko Vulkanov and Roumen Voidenicharev were supported by the BSP although they formally ran as independents and used a white ballot. Georgi Ganchev, a businessman who lived many years outside Bulgaria, ran together with Petur Beron, the former UDF chairperson who was forced to resign his position in December 1990 after allegations surfaced that he served as a police informer under the previous regime. Two other prominent personalities also registered as presidential candidates: Blagoest Sendov, former president of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, and Dimitar Popov, prime minister from December 1990 until November 1991.

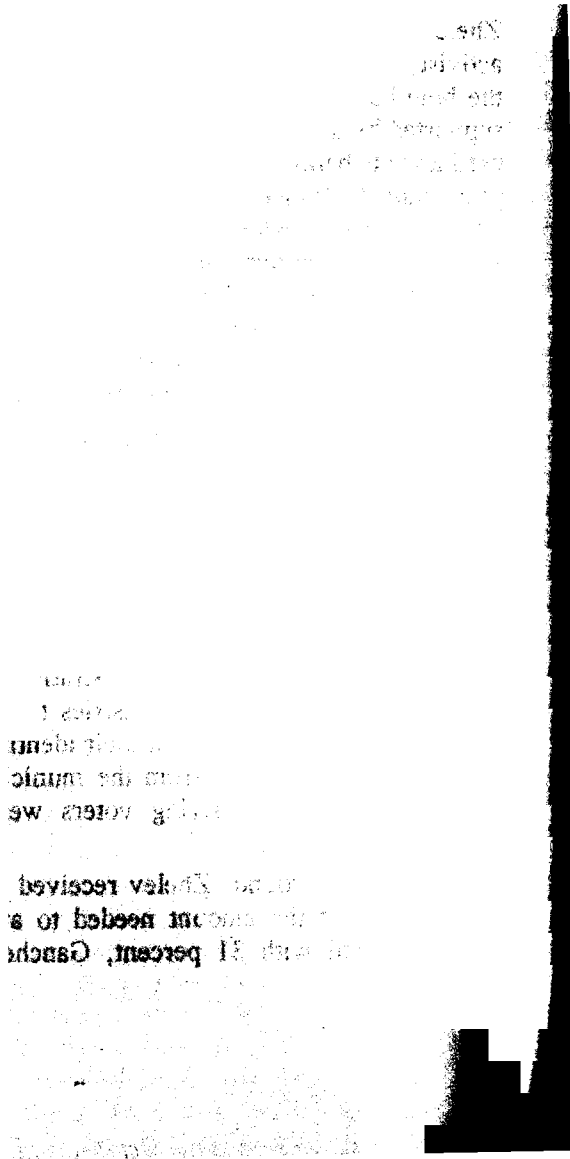
The election law, adopted in September 1991, was virtually identical to the one used for the October National Assembly elections. However, in one of its first acts, the new National Assembly enacted legislation authorizing Bulgarians living abroad to participate in all future elections.

Twenty of the 24 Central Election Commission remained on the CEC, although the chair, a BSP designee, was replaced by Rumen Yankov, a UDF nominee. Administratively, the major CEC initiative permitted all voters not on registries to vote at the polling section nearest to the address listed on their identity cards, without having to first obtain authorization from the municipality. Fears of multiple registration cards and flying voters were not significant as the elections approached.

In the first round, Zhelev received 45 percent of the vote, 5 percent short of the amount needed to avoid a runoff. Vulkanov finished second with 31 percent, Ganchev polled a surprising 16

percent, and the remaining candidates collectively received 8 percent. Turnout was approximately 75 percent.

In the second round, Zhelev obtained 53.5 percent to Vulkanov's 46.5 percent. In his post-election press conference, Zhelev acknowledged his disappointment at the narrow margin, which analysts attributed to the impact of unemployment, price increases and other severe economic shocks resulting from the country's shift to a free market-oriented economy.



## APPENDICES

*Appendix I*

**IRI Activities in Bulgaria  
Since the June 1990 Elections**

After the June 1990 Bulgarian elections, IRI continued its training in democratic party building, parliamentary process and election law process in order to prepare the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) for their new positions in the Grand National Assembly and a second election to be held within the year.

Immediately following the elections, the Institute mounted intensive training seminars and consultations for the opposition on coalition building, parliamentary-party relationship, theme development, and election law analysis using Republican experts from the United States and International Democratic Union members from Western Europe.

In order to transform the UDF into a competitive viable and more efficient coalition, IRI also provided material support. Through this infrastructure support, which included computers, office supplies, transportation equipment, and communications equipment, IRI tried to compensate for the decided disadvantage that the UDF faced.

Furthermore, IRI sponsored civic education videotapes, featuring former U.S. President Ronald Reagan that appeared on Bulgaria's most popular television program. President Reagan encouraged all Bulgarians to participate in the democratic process, emphasizing the excitement and importance of a government by the people.

IRI commitment to Bulgaria is demonstrated by the dedication of Republican consultants William D. Harris, Charles Andreae, Cindy Hays, Robert Dahl, Bill Parks, Thomas Hoefeller and Jay Neptune. This cadre of political experts who have extensive backgrounds with the Reagan Presidential Campaigns, Bush Presidential Campaigns, Republican National Committee, and Federal Election Commission were instrumental in making the program work, each traveling to Bulgarian for training missions between five and 12 times. In addition, IRI identified Bulgaria as a pivotal country in the Balkan region for democratic development, and saw the critical need to place an In-Country Officer in Bulgaria for one full year to monitor the political situation and implement program activities.



## **A. Political Party Training**

IRI conducted training missions for the UDF in the capital of Sofia and in the countryside throughout 1990 and 1991. Initial emphasis was placed on organization and management at the national and regional levels. Training seminars on UDF structure and communication from the national leadership to the regional leadership was a primary focus in order to build a strong base for election preparation. IRI brought regional leaders to Sofia to meet with the national leadership to discuss grassroots development and support.

National and localized theme development was also a concentrated area of training for the UDF. Training seminars on opinion poll analysis for voter identification, issue identification and UDF support were held monthly during the second half of 1990.

Communicating identified themes through outlets in the legislative process, media leadership and platform development was phase three of IRI's political party training program. Symposia on press conference construction, press release development, speech writing and verbal communication techniques were held from late 1990 through 1991.

Election preparation was the critical area of IRI training for the UDF. The aforementioned components to democratic party development were reiterated during the early months of 1991. Candidate identification and candidate training consultations were held at the national level. The UDF needed assistance in recruiting community leaders to run for city councils, mayors and the parliament. IRI assisted the UDF in composing a procedure for candidate selection in a process without primaries.

IRI developed a training workbook for the UDF in order to assist party organizers and candidates at the local level prepare for the elections. IRI held numerous seminars in Sofia and Bulgaria's major cities, which addressed each chapter in the workbook. The intention of creating the workbook was twofold: first, to clearly explain key terms and essential components associated with preparing for an election and, second, to provide simple worksheets that would help political parties effectively organize people and resources for elections. Worksheets were created to enable parties to designate volunteers, locations for rallies and speeches, and equipment needs — all vital components for effective election preparation. With the

software programs provided to the UDF by IRI, the national leadership was able to input the data obtained from the worksheets so that concise information was available to strategize for the elections.

In an effort to best assist the UDF, IRI provided training for equipment utilization and consulted with political leaders on regional communication centers for intra-coalition organization.

## **B. Parliamentary Training**

Between October 1990 and July 1991, IRI sent six missions that emphasized the workings of parliamentary democracy, both processes and structures. The newly elected opposition MPs were virtually without knowledge of parliamentary procedures, committee structures and priorities, constituency outreach programs, as well as the general concept of constituent representation.

IRI recognized the fact that the UDF was a coalition of broadly based political parties and clubs with a wide spectrum of ideologies. Therefore, the parliamentary program needed to address UDF internal conflicts in order to best assist the coalition in presenting clear, unified ideas for drafting legislation.

IRI sought to train newly elected members of the Grand National Assembly on their responsibilities as elected officials. What role does political party unity play in attracting individual votes? What contact should be maintained with the constituency? How should legislation be conceived and drafted? How should an office be organized and staffed? How should records be kept? What is the role of the opposition party? How often should an MP travel to his/her constituency? What activities should be performed in the constituency area? What role do individual parties play in GNA? What are methods of constructive debate? How should internal coalition building be accomplished?

IRI conducted the training exercises with 10-12 MPs at a time, placing importance on small group interaction and participation. IRI consultants spent numerous hours in the Grand National Assembly attending plenary sessions, committee meetings and UDF organizational meetings. Additional consultations were conducted with those UDF coalition leaders outside parliament on coordinating with the UDF parliamentarians.

To support the techniques and approaches outlined in the seminars and consultations, IRI distributed many manuals that assist the U.S. Republican leadership in Congress.

### **C. Election Law Process**

Prior to the June 1990 elections, IRI played a large role in assisting the UDF leadership during the election process roundtable discussions.

The program of election process training continued in the post-election period with primary focus on election law drafting. IRI assisted the UDF in being pro-active, instead of re-active, in the process of designing a democratic election law for "free and fair elections." IRI attempted to identify and train those responsible in negotiating laws and then to educate as many UDF political organizers about the basic rules.

With experts and software from the Republican National Committee, IRI was able to assist the UDF in producing election result analysis. With technical assistance, the UDF developed a tracking system software program so that voting patterns and demographic analysis could be initiated for long-term use.

Other aspects of IRI training workshops focused on comparative election law, different systems of election balloting, instruction on get-out-the-vote campaigns and ballot security. IRI also consulted UDF leadership on the areas of the election law which were confusing. Timelines on election process deadlines were developed and distributed to all party organizers. In addition, IRI created a ballot security outline for party organizers to train pollwatchers for the October 1991 elections.

IRI plans to continue these three programs with funding from the Agency for International Development well into 1993. Moreover, the IRI proposes to establish a Regional Party Training Institute in Bulgaria in late 1992. It will provide an outstanding opportunity for the democratic parties of the Balkan region to exchange ideas, share experiences, and develop a network for better relations among the future political leaders of the Balkans nations.

The Institute will host conferences and roundtable discussions between these various parties that will be overseen by experts from the United States and Western Europe. These actions will continue the dialogue and training that is necessary for Bulgaria and other

nations to continue on the road of democracy. Building stable, indigenous, democratic institutions takes patience, understanding and long-term commitment. IRI has made that commitment.

IRI recognizes  
 practical difficulties  
 the parliament  
 believed  
 IRI...

committee  
 outside parliament  
 outside parties  
 committee

*Appendix II*

**NDI Activities in Bulgaria  
Since the June 1990 Elections**

After the June 1990 elections, NDI continued to support the institutionalization of democratic change in Bulgaria. A series of seminars and consultations were sponsored in cooperation with the Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections, which was renamed the Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections and Civil Rights (BAFECR) in July 1990. NDI also continued to monitor the political situation in Bulgaria and to advise on electoral reform issues.

**A. Seminar on Parliamentary Procedures**

In July, three weeks after the newly elected Grand National Assembly (GNA) convened, NDI sponsored a parliamentary training seminar for approximately 45 Bulgarian legislators and advisors. The seminar addressed issues relating to democratic procedures and organizational structures in the GNA. The experts participating in the seminar included: Floyd Fithian, a former member of the U.S. Congress and chief of staff to U.S. Senator Paul Simon; Francois Frison-Roche, a parliamentary expert from France; Connie Hedegaard, a member of the Danish Parliament for the Conservative People's Party; Martha Keys, a former member of the U.S. Congress; Jozsef Szajer, a member of the Hungarian Parliament and a founding member of the Federation of Young Democrats (FIDESZ); and Antonio Vitorino, a former member of the Portuguese Parliament and currently a judge on the Constitutional Court of Portugal.

During the course of the seminar, the strengths and weaknesses of the French, Danish, Portuguese, Hungarian and U.S. systems were described. From a broader perspective, the seminar enhanced the reputation of BAFECR as a leader in promoting the institutionalization of democracy in Bulgaria. The seminars were featured on Bulgarian television, along with interviews of the international participants. BAFECR also published and distributed a 100-page transcript of the seminar to all members of the GNA.

## **B. Seminars on Local Government, Human Rights and Civic Education**

In response to further requests from BAFECR and GNA members, NDI organized on September 15 and 16, a series of seminars on local government, human rights and civic education in Sofia. During the following week, NDI and BAFECR sponsored smaller seminars in six cities for BAFECR activists.

### **1. Local Government Seminar**

A vital step in Bulgaria's democratic transition is the creation of genuinely representative local governments. The NDI-sponsored seminar was designed to expose GNA members to different models of local government as practiced in democratic countries. As one participant explained, "There is a need to distinguish between local administration, which you have had for 45 years, and local government, which you will have an opportunity to choose in the future."

The international participants in the seminar included: Glenn Cowan, a former New Jersey mayor, city commissioner and public safety director and a civic education expert; Baroness Patricia Hollis, a member of the House of Lords, a city councillor for 25 years, professor of local government at the University of East Anglia and the Labor Party's expert on local government; Dr. Ryszard Piotrowski, law professor in Warsaw and an advisor to the Polish Parliament on local government reform; Katja Pitsounis, former town councillor in Greece; and Joseph Sweat, executive director of the Tennessee Municipal League. The audience of more than 75 Bulgarians included the Speaker of the Grand National Assembly, numerous members of the GNA who serve on the committee that is charged with drafting a local government law, and BAFECR activists. During the week following the seminar, the Council of Ministers produced draft legislation for local government elections.

### **2. Human Rights Seminar**

On September 15, NDI and BAFECR sponsored a seminar on human rights for more than 200 participants, including members of parliament, members of the two largest bar associations in Bulgaria and human rights activists. The panelists included: Roberta Cohen, former deputy assistant secretary for humanitarian affairs and human rights at the U.S. Department of State during the Carter

Administration; Larry Garber, NDI senior counsel; Menno Kamminga, a professor of international law in the Netherlands and former legal advisor to Amnesty International; Patrick Merloe, an attorney and chair of the International Committee on Human Rights of the San Francisco Bar Association; and Theodore Zang, representative in Bulgaria for Helsinki Watch and professor at Sofia University. The discussions defined the role of different international and domestic human rights organizations, and addressed the obligations imposed by different human rights conventions and protocols to which Bulgaria is a signatory.

Following the seminar, the team of experts met with President Zhelev. The team urged the president to take a leading role in encouraging the translation, publication and distribution of relevant human rights documents so that Bulgarian citizens could learn their rights and pursue government compliance with them. BAFECR subsequently translated and published a number of these human rights instruments.

### **3. Seminars for BAFECR Activists**

Using the international participants as trainers, NDI organized seminars for BAFECR activists in Sofia, Vratsa, Plovdiv, Varna, Bourgas, Kurdjali and Pleven. The seminars, which were attended by as many as 200 activists, provided BAFECR members an opportunity to discuss the role of the organization in local elections and human rights monitoring. The seminars outside Sofia were successful in directing the attention of BAFECR activists to the continuing role of BAFECR in institutionalizing the democratic process in Bulgaria.

The presence of experts from Western Europe and the United States, and the publicity they received, reassured the seminar audiences of the West's continuing interest in and support for Bulgaria's democratic progress. And, once again, BAFECR's close association with an international organization such as NDI and its wide network of international contacts enhanced BAFECR's credibility throughout Bulgaria as a nonpartisan organization promoting democratic change.

### **C. Follow-up Consultations on Parliamentary Procedures, Election Administration and Local Government**

In November, NDI dispatched Representative Ronnie G. Flippo (D-AL) and Robert Dove, parliamentarian emeritus of the U.S. Senate, to Bulgaria for two weeks to consult with MPs and their advisors on the development of parliamentary procedures. Soon thereafter, the GNA enacted a set of parliamentary rules.

In early January, NDI Senior Counsel Larry Garber returned to Bulgaria to consult with presidential advisors and GNA members concerning the recommendations of NDI's international observer delegation to the June 1990 elections. Garber urged the government to convene a Central Election Commission to address the administrative issues of the election process so that irregularities and last-minute decisions that had undermined confidence in the last elections, would not occur again.

In April, Joseph Sweat returned to Sofia to advise Mayor Alexander Karakachanov. During his week-long visit, Sweat discussed with the mayor and members of his administration various issues related to local government management. Sweat also recommended that NDI implement a local government training program in Bulgaria.

### **D. Assessment of the Grand National Assembly**

In late May, Robert Dove returned to Sofia to assess the functioning of the GNA and the effectiveness of its rules. Contrary to Bulgarian popular opinion, Dove found that the GNA had enacted a broad range of legislation targeted at transforming the Bulgarian political and economic structure.

### **E. Seminars for BAFECR Activists**

From May 24-31, NDI sponsored a civic education program in cooperation with the Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections and Civil Rights (BAFECR). The program involved: 1) a seminar in Sofia, which was attended by BAFECR activists from 68 cities; 2) visits to six cities to meet with BAFECR leaders, municipal leaders and BAFECR activists; and 3) a town meeting for 250 BAFECR activists in Sofia. In addition, the international participants met with government officials and political party leaders to discuss preparations



for the October elections, including matters relating to election reform.

International participants included: Nureya Abarca, a professor of psychology at the Catholic University in Santiago and a member of Participa, a civic education organization in Chile; Margaret Blackshere, assistant to the President of the American Federation of Teachers in Illinois, responsible for lobbying legislators and conducting voter education programs; Jan Bubenik, a leader of the student movement at the time of the "Velvet Revolution" and a former representative in the Czechoslovakian Federal Assembly; David Cohen, former president of Common Cause and currently co-director of the Advocacy Institute; Deborah Seiler, former consultant to the California state legislature on election administration, campaign reform, reapportionment, ballot measures and constitutional amendments; and Ingse Stabel, Norway's Equal Status Ombud and attorney with extensive experience in local government, election administration and constitutional law.

The meeting with BAFECR activists throughout the country highlighted the extreme mistrust toward central authorities that existed among large segments of the population. There were frequent questions about the fairness of the 1990 elections and the role of BAFECR and international observers in validating the elections. Many activists believed that "fear" would, once again, play a large role in the October elections.

*Appendix III*

**NDI Pre-Election Survey Report**

August 5-9, 1991

The following statement is offered by a fact-finding mission to Bulgaria sponsored by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) in anticipation of the upcoming elections. This is the first of two such missions. NDI also plans to co-sponsor an international delegation at the time of the elections.

The participants were:

- **GERARD DANAHER:** Legal Adviser to the Fianna Fail (Republican) Party in Ireland, Chairman of the Employment Appeals Tribunal in Ireland and participant in the April 1990 NDI pre-election mission and the international observer delegation to the June 10, 1990 Bulgarian elections;
- **RICHARD EATON:** Chief of Staff to Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY) and former New York state judge;
- **LARRY GARBER:** NDI Senior Counsel and principal author of the NDI/IRI international observer delegation's report on the June 10, 1990 elections (the "Green Report");
- **DIMITRIOS K. KATSODAS:** Director of the Center for Political Research and Information in Greece and Adviser on Political Communication to the Greek Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis;
- **LISA C. MCLEAN:** NDI Program Officer responsible for coordinating NDI's Eastern and Central European programs and participant in the international observer delegation to the June 10, 1990 elections; and,
- **DAVID PHIRI:** Businessman, former Zambian Ambassador to Sweden, former Governor of the Bank of Zambia and currently chairman of the Zambian Independent Monitoring Team (ZIMT).

The mission was assigned the following tasks: 1) to assess the quality of the draft electoral laws; 2) to identify administrative impediments to free and fair elections; 3) to evaluate political conditions in Bulgaria at the outset of the election campaign; and, 4) to determine

which issues require further investigation by subsequent missions. In pursuance of these tasks, the mission met with government officials (including the prime minister), political party leaders and members, journalists and representatives of nongovernmental organizations in Sofia, Varna, Bourgas, Kavarna and Michurin. The delegation's itinerary, in large measure, was facilitated by the Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections and Civil Rights (BAFECR), with which NDI has worked since April 1990.

This statement highlights several points regarding the Bulgarian election process that is scheduled to commence in the immediate future. The findings of the mission will be incorporated into a more complete report that NDI will publish prior to the elections.

1) The mission notes the considerable progress that Bulgaria has made during the past year in developing a pluralist political system in which fundamental rights are respected. In particular, Bulgaria deserves credit for being the first of the former Warsaw Pact countries to adopt a new constitution, which, whatever its flaws, marks a significant break from the constitution of the previous regime. The upcoming elections should mark a further institutionalization of the democratic process in a country that for 45 years was controlled by a communist dictatorship.

2) At the same time, the mission detected a widespread lack of confidence among sectors of the population and considerable skepticism regarding the conduct of the 1990 elections. Whatever the truth of the allegations presented regarding fraud in the 1990 elections, there is a real need to ensure not only that the upcoming elections are conducted peacefully, fairly, honestly and openly, but that they are seen to have been so conducted. A failure in this regard will only result in further political and economic stagnation.

3) Given the above, the mission is concerned that the election law has yet to be adopted, even though there are fewer than 55 days left before September 29, which President Zhelu Zhelev has announced as the election date. The delay in adopting the law is particularly worrisome because the plan is to hold national and municipal elections simultaneously, which in some regions of the country will mean there will be as many as five elections occurring on the same day.

Even if a new election law is adopted by the National Assembly in the next few days, the still-to-be designated election officials will

have to work at an extraordinary pace to prepare for the elections. In this context, the political parties may wish to consider whether it might not be more practical to schedule the national and municipal elections for different days.

4) The mission has reviewed the draft election law now pending before the National Assembly and notes several changes that have been proposed to address problem areas identified during and following the 1990 elections. Among the provisions that the mission welcomes are the following:

- the emphasis on preparing accurate voter registries. These registries were seriously flawed last year and resulted in increased suspicions regarding possible "phantom" voters. The mission welcomes the role given to political parties in reviewing the lists;
- the decision to prohibit the distribution of ballots prior to the elections, which should help eliminate a potential source of intimidation;
- the provisions regarding media access, which provide all contesting parties with free and equal access to television and radio;
- the providing of protocols to all parties and all observers, which should permit the verification of the results; and,
- the recognition given to domestic and international observers, which should enhance confidence in the process and encourage participation in the elections.

5) The debate underway in the National Assembly highlights the deep divisions that exist in Bulgaria regarding aspects of the proposed election law. For example, several Bulgarians stated that the provision proscribing the casting of ballots by Bulgarians living abroad was inconsistent with the newly adopted constitution.

While the practice in democratic countries differs with respect to this issue, the mission fears that, given the circumstances in Bulgaria, constitutional challenges to this or other sections of the election law will only delay the preparations and potentially cause administrative chaos. Thus, every effort should be made to adopt a law that reflects a consensus of the political parties and that can withstand constitutional challenges.

6) The mission is also concerned that efforts to prevent the Movement for Rights and Freedom and other ethnic organizations from registering as political parties will violate the principle of freedom of association and prejudice the ability of minorities to participate fully in the electoral process. This matter should be monitored by civil rights groups in Bulgaria and by the international community.

7) The mission was informed by several journalists that recent actions by the legislature are perceived as bids to censor the mass media. Clearly, such efforts have no place in a democratic society. With respect to the print media, the delegation was told that the state still plays a large role in the distribution of newspapers and in controlling the supply of newsprint. Moreover, the tax laws apparently disadvantage independent newspapers, as compared to party newspapers, a situation that potentially could eliminate independent newspapers from the market.

8) Given the suspicions that exist, all efforts must be made to assure that the elections are in fact free and fair and are *perceived* to be free and fair. In this context, the Central Election Commission, as soon as it is appointed, should commit to: a) announcing publicly each of its decisions; b) establishing effective procedures for reviewing election-related complaints; and, c) publishing certified election results, section-by-section, within a specified time period immediately following the elections.

The mission also encourages the use of all means possible to ensure an effective monitoring of the elections. The political parties bear a principal responsibility in this regard; they must recruit and train a sufficient number of volunteers to be present at polling sites throughout the country.

BAFECR, which established its *bona fides* during the 1990 election and has remained active since the elections, should implement its plan of action. This plan includes developing a civic education program that will explain the election procedures to the population, monitoring the pre-election campaign, having volunteers present at polling sites on election day, and performing a credible parallel vote tabulation. In accordance with the draft election law, the mission believes that any organization — trade union or other — which wishes to conduct an election monitoring operation should not only be permitted but should be encouraged to do so. A refusal to allow an

organization to conduct an election monitoring operation will fuel suspicion as regards to the *bona fides* of the electoral process not only in the minds of the members of that organization, but also among other sectors of the Bulgarian people and the international community. Finally, international observers, who once again have been welcomed by government officials and political party leaders, should undertake to monitor the elections responsibly.

9) Bulgaria stands at the dawn of a new era. The fair conduct of the upcoming elections are critical to the institutionalization of the democratic process in Bulgaria, for the establishment of a new, free and effective economic order and for the acceptance of Bulgaria by the community of democratic nations.

*August 9, 1991*

*Appendix IV*

**NDI Pre-Election Survey Report**

September 8-13, 1991

This statement is offered by an international team of election experts organized by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI). This is the second such mission NDI has organized as part of its comprehensive program of monitoring Bulgaria's national and local elections scheduled for October 13, 1991. At the time of the elections, NDI plans to co-sponsor an international observer delegation.

The participants in this mission were:

- **KATHARINE I. BUTLER:** Professor of Law at the University of South Carolina and former attorney in the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice;
- **ARBEN IMAMI, MP:** Deputy Chairman of the Parliamentary Group of the Democratic Party of Albania since the first multiparty elections in March/April 1991;
- **LISA C. MCLEAN:** NDI Program Officer and participant in NDI's August 1991 pre-election mission;
- **THOMAS O. MELIA:** NDI Program Director; and,
- **BERNARD OWEN:** General Secretary of the Center for the Comparative Study of Elections at Paris University.

Building on the work of the previous mission present in Bulgaria from August 5 to 9, 1991, the current mission was assigned the following tasks: 1) review administrative preparations for the elections and to identify potential administrative impediments to the conduct of free and fair elections; 2) evaluate political conditions in Bulgaria; 3) examine the roles of the media and the military in the elections; and, 4) identify issues that should be considered by the international observer delegations that will visit Bulgaria at the time of the elections in October.

The mission met with government officials, election officials at the national, regional and municipal levels, political party leaders, journalists and representatives of nongovernmental organizations in Sofia and in two municipalities, Pernik and Pazardjik. The Bulgarian

Association for Fair Elections and Civil Rights (BAFECR) facilitated many of the meetings and provided additional briefings to the delegation.

Since the passage of the election law on August 20, government officials, political party leaders, candidates and voters have begun the important task of preparing for free and fair elections within a very short time. The effect of the proportional representation system in Bulgaria seems to be to facilitate the proliferation of parties and the breakup of coalitions, consistent with the experience of other nations where electoral systems historically have exerted a decisive influence on the attitudes of party leaders and on the way voters perceive the contest.

The election process formally began with the appointment of the Central Election Commission (CEC) on August 25. During the week of the delegation's visit, municipal and regional election commissions began work; the political parties negotiated coalition agreements and prepared candidate lists, which by law, are to be submitted by today; and, interim executive councils throughout the country prepared to release final, corrected versions of the voter registries.

Based on the delegation's meetings and on NDI's continuing analysis of Bulgaria's election process since March 1990, the delegation is persuaded that the government and the National Assembly have created a general framework adequate for the conduct of fair and meaningful elections. An election law, incorporating many of the suggestions of domestic and international observers of the June 1990 elections, was passed by the National Assembly. Throughout the country, preliminary voter registries were posted in the last month, which listed voters by address to facilitate the process of reviewing and correcting the registries. The National Assembly has enacted a decision governing media access during the campaign. And, the minister of defense has issued preliminary instructions governing the voting of conscripts, which are at the moment being reviewed by the Central Election Commission before being issued to military commanders. Election papers, including an improved tally sheet, have already been sent to the printer, as have the effectively opaque envelopes necessary in the Bulgarian system.

Now it is time for citizens and political parties to assume their share of the responsibility to ensure that fair and meaningful elections take place. Some progress in this direction has already been



undertaken by nongovernmental organizations — most notably BAFECR which presented proposals for improving the election law and which has already organized local efforts to scrutinize the voter registries. Political parties must also assume responsibility for educating their supporters about the election law provisions and monitoring activities in the pre-election period. We are concerned about the apparent lack of initiative exhibited by the political parties to undertake this responsibility.

1) There is an amendment pending today in the National Assembly that seems directed at excluding the Movement for Rights and Freedom from competing in the October elections. Passage of the amendment would be dismaying and would surely aggravate ethnic tensions in Bulgaria. The delegation has held extensive discussions on this subject this week with leaders of all the principal political forces and has watched events during the week with great attention and concern. We were heartened when the Central Election Commission found a responsible way to reconcile the conflicting views by ruling — in its decision on Wednesday, September 11 — that all groups that were on the political party register at the time of the June 1990 elections were considered eligible to submit lists for the October 1991 elections. We hope this will be allowed to stand.

Though the legal arguments are complex, the heart of the issue is clear: whether the majority population in Bulgaria, through its elected representatives in the National Assembly, desires to find a way to include in the country's evolving political process the significant and distinct ethnic community represented in the Turkish and Muslim communities.

When the Central Election Commission on Wednesday found a reasonable way to do this, some in the Assembly immediately launched extraordinary action to overturn this decision. This is unfortunate. If successful, this initiative would deprive all voters of the right to choose the candidate of their choice by disqualifying the third largest group in the present Assembly on the final day for registering candidates for elections. Bulgaria's increasingly bright reputation in the international community would be diminished by such an action, which will seem to be motivated by narrow partisan considerations and an archaic communal chauvinism that should have no place in Europe in the 1990s, and is inconsistent with the Helsinki Accords.

2) The delegation has studied the National Assembly's Decision of August 21, 1991, which establishes a framework for equitable allocation of broadcast time for party statements and multiparty forums during the campaign period. In addition, the delegation has discussed it with party representatives, broadcast officials and parliamentarians. Pursuant to this law, the Central Election Commission has established a task force to monitor the law's implementation.

We applaud the efforts of those who have sought to create a responsible media regime for the imminent campaign. We hope that the lofty objectives envisioned in the National Assembly's Decision can be achieved without the need to prosecute under the provisions of the law.

There are a number of provisions that will require interpretation by the CEC — such as that in Paragraph 9 that states: "Attacks on political opponents are inadmissible." In the absence of clear standards as to what this means, or even the assignment of a responsible authority to further clarify the subject, such a provision is unenforceable.

We are aware of the special situation in this country where, after 45 years in which no free press was permitted, there is a burgeoning market of printed matter in circulation. Much of it is animated or organized for explicitly political purposes, though the diversity of the printed press seems to ensure that most every voice has a chance to be heard. Yet the state continues to maintain its monopoly control of the broadcast media at a time when it is not clear what policies govern them. We look forward to the day when Bulgarians are able to establish television and radio broadcasting independent of political pressures and increasingly professional in its work. In the meantime, political figures must learn to live with the investigative and critical press that is vital for a democratic culture.

3) Given the highly energized political debate underway now among an increasingly diverse array of political forces, it seems to us important for the Council of Ministers or the Central Election Commission to undertake a program of public education about the election process. We say this not because we underestimate the quite evident intelligence of the Bulgarian voter, but because of the new complexities that have been introduced in the recent legislation (and in regulations that are yet to be issued by the CEC). All of the

political parties have described to us this week their concern about the complexity of voting for four separate offices. A public education campaign, using television, radio and the print media, should explain to the voter: the offices being contested; how to cast correctly the ballots on election day, in two separate voting procedures; and the secrecy of the ballot.

All of the parties presenting slates should be asked to approve the content and style of the presentations before broadcast to promote a consensus that the elections are indeed being conducted according to rules that are agreed upon and whose results all are prepared to accept.

4) We are aware that a program to depoliticize the military has been underway for 18 months, and we have been informed about the significant overhaul that has been made in recent months in the leadership of the Bulgarian armed forces. We met this week with General Petrov, chief of the general staff, and his colleagues. From this and other meetings, we have learned that several significant and positive steps have been taken to enable the 107,000 Bulgarians serving in the armed forces to cast a ballot according to their choice:

- the preparation of voter registries in advance of the September 13 deadline and plans to submit final registries to the regional election commissions by October 5;
- the issuance of civilian passports to sergeants, officers, and generals that include addresses, signifying an improved integration of officers into the civilian voter registries in the communities in which they reside and diminishing significantly the fear of multiple voting;
- the release of conscripts from the usual training camp isolation (scheduled to take place during October) in order that they may participate in the election process; and,
- the establishment of a CEC task force to coordinate and oversee voting arrangements within the military.

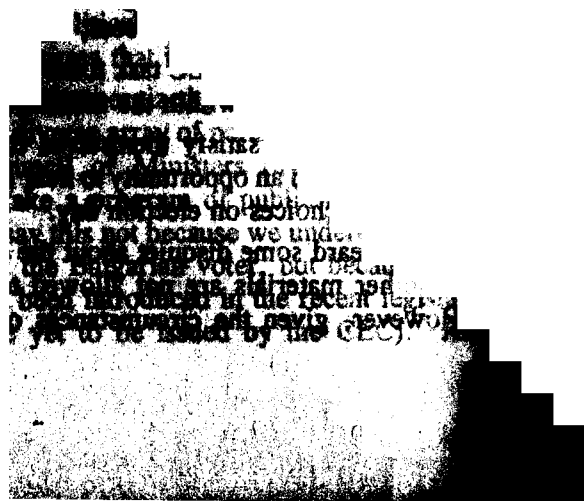
We urge the parties to satisfy themselves that cadets and enlisted personnel are provided an opportunity to hear campaign messages and to make informed choices on election day.

We have heard some disquiet about the fact that political party papers and other materials are not allowed to circulate on military bases. However, given the circumstances of what has previously

been a highly politicized military, we cannot argue with a policy whose goal is to remove partisan agitation from the barracks at this time rather than to increase it. The prohibition may contribute in a healthy way to the development of a professional military subject to civilian control on a nonpartisan basis.

5) Although it now appears that these elections will be well organized, the fact that so many major administrative and policy matters are being addressed simultaneously and in haste underscores one of the recommendations made by NDI and others following the June 1990 elections. We recommend that a permanent election administration office be established to review voter registries and to research possible refinements, alternatives and cost-saving measures in the field of elections.

*September 13, 1991*



*Appendix V*

**Terms of Reference**

**INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION TO THE  
BULGARIAN ELECTIONS**

The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI) are organizing a 59-member international delegation to observe the October 13, 1991 national elections in Bulgaria. The delegation includes parliamentarians, political party leaders and election experts from across the democratic political spectrum and from 22 countries.

The Institutes organized an international observer delegation for the June 10, 1990 elections, which were the first freely contested multiparty elections since 1931. The 1990 delegation concluded that the election-day procedures were considered to have been free and fair, but also highlighted the fears that existed among sectors of the population. Since the 1990 elections, the Institutes have continued to work in Bulgaria, organizing training programs for political party and civic activists.

The purposes of this delegation are threefold. First, the delegation's presence will demonstrate the international community's continued interest in and support for the democratization process underway in Bulgaria. Second, the delegation will provide the international community with an objective assessment of the Bulgarian electoral process. Third, members of the delegation will have an opportunity to hear about and learn from the Bulgarian transition experience.

The observations of this delegation and other credible sources will form the basis for our conclusions regarding the October 13 Bulgarian elections. The delegation, therefore, must attempt to document observations and, in all instances, to distinguish factual terms from subjective judgements. To accomplish this task, the delegation will meet with government and election officials, those active in the campaigns for the different parties contesting the elections, and representatives of other institutions playing a role in monitoring the process, in Sofia and other cities.

After a briefing in Sofia on October 11, the delegation will divide into teams that will visit the different regions of Bulgaria. Based on the findings of the teams, the delegation will present a national perspective on the election process in a statement that IRI and NDI expect the delegation to issue on Monday, October 14 in Sofia. In addition, the Institutes would like each team to prepare a short report based on its observations that can be included in the report that will be published following the elections.

In undertaking this effort, the delegation should adhere to the internationally recognized guidelines for observing elections. These guidelines require that the delegation remain neutral with respect to the outcome of the elections. Further, the delegates should, in all instances, abide by the relevant Bulgarian laws and in no way interfere in the process. This means that statements should not be made to the press, except in accordance with the press guidelines. Finally, delegation members should understand that their role is a limited one; the ultimate judgement about the process will be made by the Bulgarian people.

Based on the Institutes' work in Bulgaria during the past year, the following are among the issues that should be considered by the delegation:

**I. ELECTION LAW**

- A. How were the laws governing the electoral process developed? When were they approved? What were the main issues involved in the negotiations concerning the laws? What innovations were introduced by the laws? How do the laws compare with those of other democratic countries?
- B. Was the law adequately understood by the election administrators, political parties and the electorate? What civic education programs were utilized to inform the population regarding the election laws and procedures?

**II. ELECTION ADMINISTRATION**

- A. Who were the election administrators at the national, regional and polling site levels? How were they selected? Have concerns been raised regarding partisanship and competence?

- B. What was the relationship between national and local election administrators? What mechanisms were in place to ensure that the local administrators use uniform procedures in administering elections?

### III. POLITICAL PARTIES

- A. What parties participated in the elections? Did the electoral law unreasonably limit the number of parties or individuals contesting the elections?
- B. What role did the political parties play in developing the administrative rules for the elections? What role did the parties play on election day in monitoring the balloting process?

### IV. CAMPAIGN

- A. Did the campaign period provide an adequate opportunity for the parties to communicate their respective messages to prospective voters? How did the parties communicate their messages (*e.g.*, media, rallies, posters)?
- B. What complaints were presented regarding the nature of the campaign? Were the laws governing the conduct of the campaign enforced?
- C. Were there any restrictions that interfered with the ability of parties or citizens to compete in the elections? Were there reports of politically motivated harassment associated with the campaign?
- D. What rules governed access to the government-controlled media during the campaign? Did the competing parties receive comparable or adequate access to the media in terms of both news coverage and free time?
- E. Was there any censorship of the media?
- F. What role did public opinion play in the effort to prepare for these elections? What role did nongovernmental groups play in the electoral process?

### V. ELECTION DAY

- A. How was voter eligibility at the polling site established? Were there provisions in the law for absentee balloting?
- B. What procedures ensured the integrity of the process (*i.e.*, only those eligible are permitted to vote, no one votes

- more than once, secrecy is guaranteed, the votes are counted correctly, etc.)?
- C. Were there any complications or irregularities involved in holding the municipal and national elections on the same day?
  - D. Were the results announced in accordance with the prescribed procedures and without unreasonable delays? Were these results disseminated to the public expeditiously? Were there unofficial parallel tabulations of the results? Were they consistent with the official results?
  - E. Did the political parties accept the official results? How were the post-election challenges filed by the political parties handled?

#### VI. PROSPECTS

What is the likelihood that a democratic polity will develop in Bulgaria? What types of democratic development assistance, if any, is needed (*e.g.*, strengthening political parties, the media, the judicial system, or the election process; promoting civic education)?

*October 2, 1991*



*Appendix VI*

**Brief Summary of Bulgarian Election Procedure**

Prepared by Robert Dahl, IRI Advisor

Two elections (national and local) are being conducted simultaneously, which means the utilization of two separate sets of voter lists, voting booths, ballots, ballot boxes, notations in voters passports, tabulation of votes, and protocols of election results.

No campaigning is permitted after Friday, and no campaigning is allowed near polling sites on election day.

The law provides for tableau posting of sample ballots at polling sites.

Polls open at 6 a.m. and close at 7 p.m. Voters in line at 7 p.m. may vote. The following individuals are permitted to be *present at polling sites*: voters; election officials (commissioners); candidates; representatives of parties, coalitions and independent candidates; journalists; and credentialed domestic and international observers.

*Opening of polls*: Ballot boxes are turned upside down to demonstrate that the box is empty and then sealed except for envelope opening. The sectional election commission chairman is responsible for making sure all necessary voting materials are ready. He or she then declares that the voting process can begin.

*Identification of voter*: The voter presents passport, military ID or "absentee ballot." Data in passport is checked against voter registry; any discrepancies are noted. Generally, the voter must be listed to vote.

*Voting*: The voter first votes in national contest, and then the voter repeats process for local elections. The voter is given an envelope. He or she then enters the respective booth, chooses a ballot (or ballots in local election), places ballot(s) in envelope and seals it. The voter leaves booth, places envelope in respective ballot box and signs voter list. The voter's passport is marked by an official. No one is permitted in the voting booth with voter (although the disabled may designate an assistant). When no one is voting, observers and commission members may check booths for adequate ballot supply or mischief.

*Tabulation:* The sectional election commission chairman must declare that the voting is over. Excess, unused voting materials must be removed from counting area, after which the two-step counting process — national, then local — can begin. Envelopes are removed from ballot boxes and counted; the number of envelopes is checked against number who have voted according to the voter registry in the respective election. Ballots are removed from envelopes, placed in piles by type and counted. Valid/invalid ballots are specified by law and CEC rules; the sectional election commission decides cases; invalid ballots are segregated and described in protocols.

*Protocols:* Separate, triplicate protocols are filled out with election returns for national/local elections (noting complaints or discrepancies); protocols are signed by commissioners (dissent noted); appropriate copies are transmitted to the respective regional or municipal election commissions; and copy is posted at polling place.

*Appendix VII*

**Delegation Schedule**

**INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION TO THE  
BULGARIAN ELECTIONS**

Sofia, Bulgaria  
October 10-15, 1991

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1991**

- Pm Delegation Arrival: Sheraton Hotel Registration
- 6 pm International Observer Mission Reception Hosted by  
IRI, NDI and U.S. Ambassador Kenneth Hill
- 9 pm Team Coordinator Meeting

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1991**

- 7 am Breakfast
- 8:30 am Introduction: International Leaders
- 8:45 am Terms of Reference
  - J. Brian Atwood, NDI President
  - Jack Buechner, IRI President
- 9 am Briefing on Political Environment and Election Law
  - Robert Dahl, Federal Election Commission
  - Larry Garber, NDI Senior Counsel
- 10 am Central Election Commission
  - Stephan Grozdev
  - Rumen Nenkov
- 11 am Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections and Civil  
Rights (BAFECR)
  - Velko Miloev, Civic Education Coordinator
  - Miroslav Sevlievski, Executive Secretary
  - Michael Yanakiev, Parallel Vote Tabulation Coord.
- 11:30 am Press Conference

*94 The October 13, 1991 Elections in Bulgaria*

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- 12 pm      Lunch  
                 Zhelu Zhelev, President of Bulgaria
- 2 pm        Media Panel:  
                 Vlianna Mepodieva, Bulgarian Television  
                 Dimitar Naidenov, Bulgarian Newspaper  
                 Vasil Zhobanov, Bulgarian Radio
- 2:45-5:45 pm      Political Party Briefings:
- 2:45 pm      Bulgarian Agrarian National Union-Nikola Petkov  
                 Milan Drenchev
- 3:15 pm      Union of Democratic Forces Liberals  
                 Petko Simeonov
- 3:45 pm      Bulgarian Socialist Party  
                 Alexander Lilov
- 4:15 pm      Union of Democratic Forces Center  
                 Peter Dertliev
- 4:45 pm      Bulgarian Agrarian National Union-United  
                 Tsanko Barev
- 5:15 pm      Union of Democratic Forces Movement  
                 Philip Dimitrov
- 6:30 pm      Rallies of Political Parties
- 7 pm        Dinner

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12, 1991**

- 5 am        Breakfast
- Am         Deployments to Regions:  
                 Briefings with local party leadership and municipal and  
                 regional election commissions
- Pm         Election-Day Planning Dinner

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1991 — Election Day**

6 am      Polls open  
7 pm      Polls close: ballot tabulation  
11 pm     Calls for Parallel Vote Tabulation

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1991**

Am        Deployment teams return to Sofia  
12 pm     Lunch  
            Debriefing on Election-day Observations  
4 pm      Press Conference  
7:30 pm   Dinner

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1991**

Pm        Delegation Departure

*Appendix VIII*

**Team Deployments**

**INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION TO THE  
BULGARIAN ELECTIONS**

October 13, 1991

**BLAGOEVGRAD**

Charles D. Ablard  
Ray Branch  
Katja Pitsounis  
James Tierney

**BOURGAS**

Thomas Campbell  
Andrei A. Goltsblatt  
Thomas Kahn  
Marta Lagos  
Van Poole  
Edward Selami

**HASKOVO**

Jan Bubenik  
Stephen Heintz  
Jonathan Ortman  
Marilyn Paine

**KURDJALI**

Cesar Baena  
Katharine I. Butler  
Mary Scott Guest  
Shahid Kardar  
Trevor Potter  
Ronald Sarasin

**MIHAILOVGRAD**

John Bachman  
Feroz M. Hassan  
Susan Johnson  
Kenneth Romines

**PLEVEN**

Cindy Hays  
Bernard Owen  
Nicholas Salikas  
Jill Schuker

PLOVDIV-PAZARDJIK

David Blackman  
Roger Bodman  
Robert Dahl  
Irving Stolberg  
Wynelle White  
Andrus Villem

ROUSSE

Lonnie Rowell  
Martin Sampson

SOFIA

Delegation Leadership

J. Brian Atwood  
Sali Berisha  
Jack Buechner  
Kathryn Dickey  
Larry Garber  
B.A. Graham

SOFIA

Charles Andreae  
Leonid Bogdanov  
Marilyn Edwards  
Margareta Fogelberg  
William Harris  
Michael Kostiw  
Nicolae Manolescu  
Lisa C. McLean  
Cornel Nistorescu  
David Petts  
Gabor Roszik  
Ousmane Sane  
Joseph Sweat

STARA ZAGORA-SLIVEN

Luis Xavier Garrido  
Shahin Kardare  
Jeffrey Lovitky  
Tina Rosenberg

SUMEN-RAZGRAD

Beth Branch  
Brad Johnson  
Stanley Mabiszela

VARNA

Paul Burns  
Praphan Hutasingh  
Alec Poitevint  
Ronna Romney  
Peter Schramm  
Rodney Washington

*Appendix IX*

**Post-Election Statement**

**INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION TO THE  
BULGARIAN ELECTIONS**

Sofia, Bulgaria  
October 14, 1991

We are pleased to offer this statement on behalf of the international observer delegation organized jointly by the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI). This delegation comprises 59 members from 22 countries, including several countries also in the process of transition from one-party, totalitarian government to multiparty democracy.

Many delegation members participated in the observer delegation organized by the two Institutes for the June 1990 Bulgarian elections, and so had a basis for comparing yesterday's elections to the elections that occurred 16 months ago. The delegation also relied on the information gathered by NDI and IRI during the past year, particularly as a result of pre-election missions to Bulgaria in August and September.

To ensure a comprehensive observation of the elections, the delegation divided over the weekend into 13 teams, 11 of which traveled to cities and towns throughout Bulgaria following an intensive day of briefings in Sofia. These teams, generally, concentrated their observations in the smaller towns and villages. Altogether, we visited approximately 400 polling sections. The Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections and Civil Rights (BAFECR) facilitated many of the delegation's meetings and visits to the polling sites. The delegation also coordinated with other international delegations present in Bulgaria for the elections.

The joint delegation sponsored by the Institutes in June 1990 concluded that Bulgaria's first multiparty elections in more than 45 years represented a significant accomplishment. At the same time, the delegation highlighted the "unfortunate reality that fear is still a factor in the country."



Since the June 1990 elections, Bulgaria has undergone dramatic changes. In August 1990, the Grand National Assembly elected Zhelu Zhelev, leader of the opposition, as president of the country; in December 1990, a multiparty government was formed, which proceeded to implement several key economic reforms; and political parties and the media have continued to flourish and multiply. In July 1991, Bulgaria became the first of the former Warsaw Pact countries to adopt a new constitution. Bulgaria also is the first of the former Warsaw Pact countries to hold a second round of national elections.

During the past 16 months, pre-election missions identified many of the positive changes that occurred. In addition, the missions noted that efforts were being made to ensure that the administrative problems encountered during the June 1990 elections were not repeated. Indeed, the election law incorporated many of the specific recommendations presented by the international delegation in 1990.

Fear also seemed to be less of a concern among the population than was the case in 1990, although examples of intimidation were still reported before and during the elections. While the fear factor has diminished, we note that a lack of trust continues to influence relationships among many Bulgarians.

The media in Bulgaria appears considerably freer today than it did in June 1990. There are hundreds of newspapers and magazines, many of which are affiliated with political parties. Newsprint and the distribution networks for print media are both more widely available.

The law and regulations governing access to the electronic media provided the political parties contesting the elections the opportunity to communicate their messages to the electorate. News coverage also seemed generally fair, and the electronic media made a concerted effort to educate prospective voters regarding the new electoral procedures.

Positive changes were also implemented with respect to the military's role in the elections. Directives from the minister of defense assured that military personnel would be exposed to information regarding the electoral process from all parties contesting the elections, including the publicizing of all party platforms in the official military newspaper. Further, to reduce the possibility of intimidation directed at military conscripts, separate polling sites for military personnel were eliminated from this year's elections.

Instead, military personnel voted at the same polling sites as the general population.

Notwithstanding the reforms included in the election law and the cooperation exhibited among members of the election commissions at all levels, the delegation observed serious administrative problems throughout the country. In part, this resulted from the late adoption of the election law and the consequent delays in appointing a new Central Election Commission. Also, the holding of national and local elections simultaneously contributed to the administrative problems, causing confusion among voters, long queues in some areas and delays in the closing of many polling sites.

The election registries, once again, were riddled with mistakes, necessitating the Central Election Commission to promulgate a decree two days before the elections that permitted voting by Bulgarians whose names were not on the registries. The instructions on this matter were erratically distributed and frequently misunderstood by voters and local election officials alike. Indeed, the majority of complaints received on election day and suspicions of irregularities related to implementation of this decree. The decree had the virtue of enfranchising significant numbers of voters, but also added to the general confusion at the polling sites. With respect to the latter matter, the Central Election Commission has committed to reviewing the voter lists and to prosecuting those who may have engaged in illegal activities.

The delegation also observed other administrative problems. These problems will be described in detail in the delegation's final report.

As was the case in 1990, parallel vote tabulations played a critical role in ensuring that the Bulgarian people had reliable information regarding the election results as soon as practicable. This reduced potential tensions that may have emerged, given the expected delays in announcing the official results. Consultations among groups conducting parallel vote tabulations also assured that the information provided to the public was consistent and mutually reinforcing, despite the relatively close race between the two leading parties and the uncertainty as to which parties would cross the 4 percent threshold.

The delegation's observations with respect to the Turkish, Gypsy and other minorities deserve special attention. At the outset

of the campaign, there were efforts to restrict the ability of the Turkish minority to participate fully in the electoral process. The Party for Rights and Freedom was refused registration as a political party, although a courageous decision by the CEC, which was upheld by the Supreme Court, permitted the Movement for Rights and Freedom, which is not technically a political party, to present party lists in these elections. Nonetheless, confusion and, in some cases, the deliberate efforts of regional election commissions delayed the registration of Movement candidates in some regions. These pre-election problems were exacerbated by developments on election day, where in some areas with large Turkish populations, there were insufficient efforts to ensure that prospective voters of Turkish origin were allowed to vote. It should be pointed out also that the delegation witnessed election officials who attempted to alleviate these problems.

Democracy in Bulgaria has gained strong roots. The Bulgarian people deserve special credit for assuring, notwithstanding the administrative problems, that yesterday's elections were a success. The new national government, which apparently will require a coalition among at least two parties, must continue the political progress made during the past 16 months, while effecting the difficult transition to a market economy. The parties obtaining seats in the National Assembly have a special responsibility to represent all Bulgarian citizens, particularly given the consequences of the 4 percent threshold established by the election law. The newly elected local governments also will face tremendous challenges in establishing their authority and in developing sound practices for managing the myriad of problems facing Bulgarian municipalities.

We believe that linkages with the West and other Eastern European countries will be strengthened by these elections. These linkages were instrumental in the process we have just witnessed. Political parties and nongovernmental groups, which played a critical role in these elections, have been supported by their international counterparts. Bulgaria's progress can best be recognized by the international community through a commitment to continuing this work and doing even more to assist its democracy.

This delegation, while it represented 22 countries, is nongovernmental. We, nonetheless, commit to report to our respective governments, parliaments, political parties and other institutions

that Bulgaria is a democratic nation worthy of even more support in the economic and political spheres.

## Appendix X

## Official Results of National Assembly Elections

October 13, 1991

*The parties are listed in the order in which they were registered by the Central Election Commission (CEC). The three parties listed with parentheses subsequently had their registration revoked prior to the elections.*

Parties and Coalitions Registered for the Elections	Percent	Seats
1. Union of Democratic Forces (UDF)	34.36	110
2. Liberal Party-Pernik	0.34	
3. Union of Politically Unaffiliated Guarantors	0.18	
4. Free Cooperative Party	0.22	
5. Bulgarian National Democratic Party	0.28	
6. Organization of Cardiacs and Socially Vulnerable Citizens	0.06	
7. Bulgarian Eagle Party	0.09	
8. Pre-Election Union of the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP)	33.14	106
9. Liberal Congress Party	0.26	
10. Bulgarian Democratic Party for European and World States	0.02	
11. National Patriotic Union Party	0.26	
12. Bulgarian National Radical Party	1.13	
13. Bulgarian Communist Party	0.71	
14. Bulgarian Democratic Party	0.25	
15. Preobrazhenie Political Forum	0.55	
16. Christian Radical Party	0.12	
17. Bulgarian Agrarian National Union-United (BZNS-E)	3.86	
18. Bulgarian Workers' Social Democratic Party	0.11	
19. Bulgarian Communist Party-Marxist	0.14	

*104 The October 13, 1991 Elections in Bulgaria*

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<b>Parties and Coalitions Registered for the Elections</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Seats</b>
20. Svoboda Coalition for the Turnovo Constitution	0.72	
21. Non-Party Members for Democracy Movement	0.41	
22. Movement For Rights and Freedom (MRF)	7.55	24
23. Bulgarian Business Party	0.93	
24. Party of Free Democrats-Center	0.02	
25. Bulgarian Agrarian National Union- Nikola Petkov (BZNS-NP)	3.44	
26. Independent Democratic Party	0.23	
27. Bulgarian Worker Peasant Party	0.07	
28. (Constitutional Forum Political Club)	—	
29. Christian Radical Democratic Party	0.00	
30. UDF Center	3.20	
31. UDF Liberal	2.81	
32. Bulgarian Revolutionary Youth Party	0.15	
33. Party of Owners in Bulgaria	0.00	
34. (National Party of Labor, Private Owners and Creators)	—	
35. Bulgarian National Union Coalition	0.31	
36. Bulgarian Business Bloc	1.32	
37. (New Christian Democratic Party)	—	
38. Free Democratic Party	0.03	
39. United Democratic Union-Party of Justice	0.00	
40. Kingdom of Bulgaria Federation	1.82	
All the independent candidates	0.95	

*Appendix XI*

**Accord on a Peaceful Transition  
to a Democratic Society**

January 1991

The political forces represented in the Grand National Assembly assess the existing political situation in the country as extremely complex and tense. The overcoming of the existing situation is possible only through an agreement among the political forces based on the mutual recognition of their individual rights and legitimate interests, and on a mutual respect and observance of the country's laws.

With the present agreement, the political forces declare their resolve to guarantee the further peaceful transition to a democratic society in the Republic of Bulgaria. They hereby confirm that they shall be unconditionally guided in their activity by the following fundamental principles:

- affirmation of political plurality as the cornerstone of a democratic society;
- participation of the political forces in the exercise of state power in accordance with the will of the electorate, the only source of state power, expressed through general elections and other legitimate means;
- insurance and defense of the rights and freedoms of all Bulgarians regardless of race, sex, religious or ethnic community, on the basis of their complete equality before the law and freedom from discrimination; and,
- establishment of safeguards against any and all forms and manifestations of discrimination, persecution, extralegal or violent acts on grounds of political activity, affiliation or convictions.

In accordance with the above, and in awareness of their moral, political and legal responsibility to guarantee the irreversibility of the democratic changes by complete observance of the constitution and the laws of the country, the political forces hereby declare and undertake before the Bulgarian nation and the international community

to do everything within their means for the implementation of the following agreement:

## **PARLIAMENT**

The Grand National Assembly is the sole national representative body elected through the freely expressed will of the Bulgarian nation.

Whatever contradictions might arise in the course of the peaceful transition to a democratic society shall be resolved by lawful means through the institutions of parliamentary democracy. All illegitimate attempts to exert pressure on the bodies of the state shall be prosecuted and sanctioned under the laws of the country. The bodies of state shall act in strict accordance with the competencies vested in them by the constitution and the law.

The work of the Grand National Assembly under its legislative program shall have to be improved by placing that program at the core of its work. Other matters, related to executive and regulatory activities, shall be addressed to it only as an exception, and in line with its controlling powers.

The legislative activity of the Grand National Assembly shall be focused on the drafting and passage of the following top priority pieces of legislation: the constitution; the bills on farm land; on local self-government; on the country's administrative and territorial divisions; on the election of local authorities (The Election Bill); and on privatization.

The legislative program shall, in general, incorporate the following bills:

### **I. By the end of the year**

**To be passed by the Grand National Assembly or prepared for the introduction at a plenary session thereof:**

1. Amnesty Bill
2. Penal Code Amendments Bill
3. Pensions Act Amendments Bill
4. Farm Land Bill



5. Bills on local self-government; on the country's administrative and territorial division; on the election of local authorities (The Election Bill)
6. Public Health Act Amendment Bill
7. Resolution on the management and the activity of the Bulgarian Television and Bulgarian Radio.

## **II. January 1991**

**To be passed by the Grand National Assembly  
or prepared for introduction at the plenary session thereof:**

1. State and Municipal Enterprise Disposal, Privatization and Transformation Bill
2. State Budget Bill
3. National Security Bill and Police Bill
4. National Bank Bill
5. Banking and Credit Bill
6. Tax Bill
7. Anti-Trust and Demonopolization Bill
8. Foreign Investments Bill
9. Chamber of Accounts Bill.

Separate drafts of a new constitution of the country shall be submitted by January 20.

## **III. February 1991**

1. Introduction of the draft of a constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria
2. Pensions and Social Security Bill
3. Commerce Bill
4. Labor Code Amendments Bill
5. State Employees Bill
6. Environmental Protection Bill.

## **IV. March 1991**

1. Adoption of the constitution
2. Passage of the Election Bill.

The undersigned political forces hereby pledge their total and active support to Parliament's activity for the timely and effective implementation of this program. They shall seek parliamentary consent on all bills included in the program.

In line with this prioritized legislative program, the local elections shall be held in February or March 1991, and the general elections shall be held not later than May 1991.

A consultative group of representatives of all parliamentary groups in the Grand National Assembly on the agenda and other current matters related to the work of Parliament shall be formed to facilitate the implementation of the prioritized legislative timetable. Within seven days, this group shall recommend the necessary measures to ensure financial, technical, consultative and material support for Parliament's work.

The necessary organizational measures envisaged in the appendix to this agreement shall be further implemented to ensure that Parliament shall operate effectively.

### **THE GOVERNMENT**

A National Government of the Peaceful Transition to Democracy is hereby formed. Its main task shall be to promote the affirmation of the statutory and institutional base of a market-oriented economy and a democratic state structure and the overcoming of the totalitarian system.

The Government shall have a mandate until a new parliament is constituted following the next general elections.

The undersigned political forces hereby pledge their total and active support and assistance to the activities of this Government in and outside Parliament, on the provision that the Government shall abide strictly by the laws and the tasks which it has been assigned; they shall further oppose any and all attempts to restrict its mandate by illegal extraparliamentary means. The Government shall pursue the following main lines of work:

- a) it shall draft and introduce bills and motions for institutional changes in accordance with the coordinated legislative timetable of the Grand National Assembly;
- b) it shall ensure public order and peace in the country;

- c) it shall prepare the holding of the local and general elections;
- d) it shall undertake measures to meet the basic needs of the population and to maintain the functioning of vital economic sectors during the winter of 1990-1991;
- e) it shall undertake initial steps toward an external and internal balancing of the economy by a re-orientation of economic policy priorities, a reduction of the current 1991 balance of payments deficit, a redressing of the imbalance between the money and goods supply, a curbing and control of the inflationary processes and a curtailing of the drop in production;
- f) it shall, without delay and in parallel with the stabilization measures, launch a comprehensive reform of the economic system which shall include a change of economic relationships, the drafting and introduction in the Grand National Assembly of the necessary economic bills, and the structuring of the institutions of a social market economy;
- g) it shall conduct a policy of protection for the socially weak sectors of the population; it shall act to counter unemployment, and shall participate actively in the dialogue with the trade unions and the National Union of Economic Managers; and,
- h) it shall guarantee the exercise without any discrimination and at complete equality before the law of the rights and freedoms of all Bulgarians, regardless of their political convictions or affiliation, and regardless of their belonging to any language, religious or ethnic community.

The Government shall be headed by a neutral personality, unaffiliated with any political force but enjoying the express support of all political forces represented in Parliament. The line-up of the Government shall be determined on the basis of an accord among the political forces in the course of consultations with the nominated Prime Minister.

The main political forces shall nominate their own candidates for government posts. The ministerial posts in the areas of the economy and finance, defense, internal affairs, foreign affairs, justice, foreign economic relations and home trade shall be distributed on a parity basis between the Bulgarian Socialist Party and the opposition.

### **THE CARETAKER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

The political forces hereby state that all their representatives appointed to the caretaker bodies governing the regions, municipalities and boroughs should immediately assume the performance of the functions entrusted to them. These bodies have been entrusted with important tasks related to the solution of the problems of the population and the preparations for the coming elections.

### **THE POLITICAL FORCES**

The political forces reaffirm their resolve to subordinate their entire activity in and outside Parliament first of all to the establishment of the norms of the civil society, unconditionally guaranteeing the human rights and freedoms of all citizens of the Republic of Bulgaria.

### **GUARANTEES AGAINST PERSECUTION OF INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

The political forces hereby undertake to attach priority to the introduction of a Penal Code Amendments Bill as a safeguard against the persecution of individuals and their next of kin for their political affiliation or convictions. All necessary legal guarantees shall be established for the prosecution and sanctioning of all forms of discrimination and persecution of citizens on grounds of social background, political affiliation or ideological convictions (their own or their next of kin) in the exercise of their economic, social, cultural, civic and political rights, including the holding of state posts. Personal efficiency and professional qualifications shall serve as the sole criteria for holding such posts. These criteria shall also be embedded in the new bill on state employees.

The political forces hereby undertake to prevent through their activity in Parliament the passage of any discriminatory legislation which might outlaw political parties or public organizations engaged in activities within the boundaries set by the constitution and the law. They hereby reject and oppose all forms of instigation, propaganda, incitement or any other actions seeking the banning or outlawing of

a political party engaged in activities within the boundaries set by the constitution and the law.

### **THE RESPONSIBILITY**

As the successor of the Bulgarian Communist Party, the Bulgarian Socialist Party hereby assumes political responsibility for the government of this country over the past several decades.

The matter of personal responsibility shall be resolved exclusively in accordance with the laws of this country under the legal procedure established by the competent bodies for the administration of justice which shall be guaranteed their total independence. In this connection, the political forces hereby address the office of the Public Prosecutor to speed up the measures which it is undertaking in strict accordance with the laws.

The political forces shall assist the parliamentary commissions in establishing the causes for the economic and political crises, in the adoption of procedures to ensure the mandatory submission of all material and other evidence and the appearance of persons subpoenaed by the parliamentary commissions, which shall wind up their activity by the end of March. The investigatory commissions shall hand over to the bodies for the administration of justice all information concerning persons who have violated the laws, for investigation and the demand of the respective criminal, administrative, property or other responsibility.

### **PROPERTY**

All parties, coalitions, public political (including youth) and trade union organizations and the companies they own shall present detailed statements of their property and the manner in which it was acquired between December 31, 1989 and December 31, 1990, as well as statements of their income (in cash, including foreign currency and in-kind) and expenditures in 1990. Any property acquired on the basis of state subsidies, free of charge or by enforced expropriation in favor of any party, coalition, trade union or organization (except the subsidies for the June 1990 elections) shall be restored to the state, save that amount of property deemed necessary for the meeting of the minimum needs of their activity, in accordance with the agreement among them as per the appended inventories, which shall

be presented within two weeks. The agreement concerning this property shall be submitted for endorsement by the Grand National Assembly and shall come into effect on the date the parliamentary endorsement is issued. All immovable property not covered by the said agreement shall be restored to the state within two months from the coming of the said agreement into effect. All transitions involving immovable property of parties, coalitions, public political and trade union organizations and companies owned by them effected after November 10, 1989, shall be declared before the Grand National Assembly's Commission for Control over Incomes, Expenditures and Property of the Parties.

Parties and other public political and trade union organizations property shall submit their claims for indemnity before the Grand National Assembly's legislative commission, the Commission for Control over Incomes, Expenditures and Property of the Parties, and the respective law courts.

The trade unions shall present complete information concerning the manner in which their property was acquired. The trade unions and the relevant state bodies shall present information as to the use of state and union budget appropriations in the building and management of property co-owned or used by the trade unions.

Should the available information prove insufficient to determine the source of the means by which certain property was acquired or the identity of its owner, the decisions of the Grand National Assembly's Properties Commission shall be taken into account when legalizing ownership and user rights over property used by the trade unions.

The office of the Public Prosecutor shall be expected to investigate the origins of any means used to set up businesses in, and whenever possible outside, the country, involving any former or present members of top-level state, party, economic or trade union bodies.

### **THE ARCHIVES**

The State Archives Fund Act and its enforcement regulations shall be amended to expand their scope of application. Provisions shall be introduced concerning the storage and use of archival documents of the political parties along the following lines:

- documents containing information concerning the activity of state bodies and organizations prior to November 10, 1989, shall be made available for unrestricted use in accordance with the State Archives Fund Act and its enforcement regulations;
- documents containing information on purely party-related matters, such as party membership (documental massifs of party personnel files, files of sanctioned members, party cadre files, resolutions of parties' controlling and auditing commissions), the structuring of a party's bodies and organizations, ties with foreign parties etc., shall be made available to users at the discretion of the relevant party body; and,
- documents of mixed character shall be reviewed by a panel of experts which shall recommend a regime for their storage and use. A panel of experts from the Chief Archives Authority and the corresponding party and departmental archives shall be set up, to perform within a month the documentary expertise needed for the implementation of the proceeding provisions.

### **PUBLIC ORDER**

The political forces hereby pledge to abide by a self-imposed moratorium on mass open-air political events during the first month of the Government's activity and call on all other political and public organizations to do likewise.

They condemn the involvement of children and minors in organized political activities, strikes or other events which contravene the law.

In accordance with the procedure established by the Political Parties Act, they see as necessary the adoption of measures to curb any and all shopfloor political activities, including those engaged in by any trade union organizations. Any trade union or other public organizations, which engages in political activity, should register as political parties (or suspend such activities).

Any and all attempts on the part of political organizations to exert pressure on administrative or economic managers shall be curbed and sanctioned. At the same time, the political forces advise an abstention from arbitrariness (unlawful dismissal, persecution and the like) with respect to any participants in trade union or other mass undertakings.

The competent authorities shall in future impose sanctions for any violations of the law, the occupation of public buildings, the blocking of public thoroughfares and "wildcat" strikes.

The political forces hereby declare that they shall support all actions ensuring public law and order and the well-being, rights and freedoms of all citizens.

Any and all attempts by a political party, organization or movement to influence or involve in political activity employees of the Armed Forces, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the judiciary or the office of the Public Prosecutor shall be ruled out and shall entail sanctions.

No organized political activity within these bodies of state shall be allowed on the part of their own employees in the form of any nonpolitical organization.

Any dissemination of information related to the security of the country, particularly information originating from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, outside the established legal channels shall be considered inadmissible, and persons guilty thereof shall be prosecuted through the courts.

The Grand National Assembly's National Security Commission shall review the status and activities of the national security agencies and shall issue recommendations on suitable changes, which shall be embedded in future national security legislation.

## **SOCIAL CONFLICTS**

The political forces and the trade unions hereby reaffirm the need to carry out a radical economic reform.

The political forces hereby undertake to abstain from organizing, supporting or inciting any public events (rallies, meetings, demonstrations, strikes, etc.) in contravention of the law or to the detriment of the rights and freedoms of other citizens, and from events which threaten to paralyze key sectors of the national economy. The political forces pledge to oppose all attempts at such action by all available means.

The trade unions undertake to refrain from effective strikes in industries and sites crucial to the normal functioning of the national economy for the period preceding the adoption of the new



constitution. Solutions to all trade union problems shall be sought on the basis of social partnership within the framework of the trilateral system of industrial negotiations.

### **THE POLICY ON THE NATIONAL ISSUE**

The political forces believe that the ongoing processes of democratization and humanization of this country's society and the integration of nations within Europe necessitate:

- a) the establishment of a concept on the national issue and a corresponding sovereign, sensible, lasting, consistent and pragmatic state policy which shall not be affected by a change in government;
- b) a redressal of the errors which resulted from the inconsistent and improper conduct of the policy on the national issue over the past several decades;
- c) the attainment of a political consensus among the political forces in the legislative solution of aspects of the policy on the national issue free of any partisanship or narrow party considerations;
- d) recognition of the political, ethnic and religious plurality of the nation, guaranteed by democratic legislation;
- e) fulfillment of Bulgaria's undertakings under international human rights treaties and instruments insofar as they do not run counter to the interests of national security, public order, morals or the well-being of citizens;
- f) the guaranteeing of the national security, territorial integrity and sovereignty of Bulgaria as a single-nation and unitary state;
- g) a ban on any propaganda of political activity promoting religious or ethnic-based autonomy or any other form of territorial differentiation, or fanning nationalistic, chauvinistic or extremist passions;
- h) consideration in law and administrative order enforcement for the provision of Art. 10 of the National Assembly's Declaration on the National Issue of January 16, 1990;
- i) a prohibition of any pressure on citizens in their self-identification with any ethnic or religious community. The Parliamentary Commission on Human Rights and the National Issue shall within a month rule on all instances in which religious

- self-identification provided a reason for the exertion of such pressure; and,
- j) consistent action to enhance the economic, social and intellectual prosperity of the regions of strategic importance to the nation's unity, until the attainment of complete equality of all citizens in terms of rights and opportunities.

### **TELEVISION AND RADIO**

The political forces hereby agree that by December 21, 1990, the Parliamentary Commission for Television and Radio shall introduce at a plenary session of the Grand National Assembly a draft of the interim statutes of Bulgarian Television and Bulgarian Radio:

- before January 10, 1991, the Commission shall debate and propose to the Grand National Assembly suitable nominees for chairmen of Bulgarian Television and Bulgarian Radio; and,
- before February 10, 1991, the Commission shall introduce in the Grand National Assembly a Bulgarian Television and Bulgarian Radio Bill.

The political forces hereby agree to suspend all political activity within Bulgarian Television and Bulgarian Radio in accordance with the decisions of the National Roundtable and the Political Parties Act.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

The timetable of the plenary sessions shall be determined in advance in accordance with the agenda.

The agenda of the Grand National Assembly's plenary sessions shall be established in advance, and no procedural motions to introduce changes therein shall be allowed.

Parliamentary discipline shall be strictly observed during the debate on bills in plenary sessions, and the floor shall be given only to persons assigned by the parliamentary groups.

The parliamentary commissions shall draw up a timetable for their activities.

Working groups shall be set up for the bills included in the legislative timetable, and shall receive the necessary financial, technical and organizational support.

Leaders of political forces represented in the Grand National Assembly, who have signed the present agreement:

On behalf of the Green Party, LUBOMIR IVANOV; on behalf of the Bulgarian Socialist Party, ALEXANDER LILOV; on behalf of Movement for Rights and Freedoms, AHMED DOGAN; on behalf of the Bulgarian Agrarian Nation Union, VIKTOR VULKOV; on behalf of the Fatherland Union, GINU GANEV; on behalf of the Fatherland Party of Labor, DIMITER ARNAOUDOV; on behalf of the Radical Democratic Party, ELKA KONSTANTINOVA; on behalf of the "Nikola Petkov" Agrarian Union, MILAN DRENCHEV; on behalf of the Federation of Clubs for Glasnost and Democracy, PETKO SIMEONOV; on behalf of the Bulgarian Social Democratic Party, PETER DERTLIEV; on behalf of the Independent Society Ecoglasnost, PETER SLABAKOV; on behalf of the Democratic Party, STEFAN SAVOV; on behalf of the Union of Democratic Forces, PHILIP DIMITROV; on behalf of the Social Democratic Party-Non-Marxists, YANKO YANKOV.

SVETOSLAV STAVREV signed on behalf of the Confederation of Independent Trade Unions in Bulgaria in recognition of their adherence to the agreement.

Appendix XII

Electoral Regions

1. Blagoevgrad
2. Burgas
3. Varna
4. Veliko Turnovo
5. Viden
6. Vratsa
7. Gabrovo
8. Tulbuhin
9. Kurdjali
10. Kyustendii
11. Lovech
12. Mihailovgrad
13. Pazardjik
14. Pernik
15. Pleven
16. Plovdiv City
17. Plovdiv Region
18. Razgrad
19. Rousse
20. Silistra
21. Sliven
22. Smolen
23. Sofia South
24. Sofia Center/East
25. Sofia North
26. Sofia Region
27. Stara Zagora
28. Targovishte
29. Haskovo
30. Shumen
31. Yambol



*Appendix XIII*

**Decision on Access to the National Mass  
Media During the Election Campaign**

Grand National Assembly of Bulgaria  
August 21, 1991

On the strength of Article 86, paragraph 1 of the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria and in connection with Article 57 of the Act on the Election of National Representatives, Municipal Councillors and Mayors, the Grand National Assembly

**D E C I D E D:**

During the election campaign, the national mass media, Bulgarian Television and Bulgarian Radio, shall conduct their activity in compliance with the Basic Provisions of the interim status of Bulgarian Radio and Bulgarian Television, approved by the Grand National Assembly. The Bulgarian News Agency shall objectively cover the election campaign of the parties, coalitions and independent candidates and present their platforms and addresses.

The news broadcasts, the daily and weekly political review programmes of Bulgarian Radio and Bulgarian Television shall cover in an objective and balanced manner, with authentic news and reports, the election campaign of the parties, coalitions and independent candidates.

During the election campaign, Bulgarian Television and Bulgarian Radio shall allot time for topical debates twice a week. The parties and coalitions shall take part in the debates according to their representation in Parliament (90 minutes on television and 120 minutes each for the two radio programmes).

Parliamentary parties and coalitions shall be given the possibility for initial and final television and radio debates of 90 minutes duration each.

Time for debates shall also be granted twice over the entire election period to extraparliamentary parties and coalitions, which have registered lists in at least one third of the constituencies.

On the first and last day of the election campaign, Bulgarian Radio and Bulgarian Television shall broadcast, under equal program conditions and within a time limit of up to five minutes, the election addresses of all parties and coalitions that have registered lists in at least one third of the constituencies.

Twice a week Programme One of Bulgarian Television and the *Horizont Programme* of Bulgarian Radio shall ensure, in the same hour range, the broadcasting of clips and reports produced by Bulgarian Television and Bulgarian Radio crews at the order of and under the control of the parties and coalitions having registered lists in at least one third of the constituencies.

The clips and reports shall not exceed a duration of three minutes and shall illuminate different aspects of the platform of the party in question.

Attacks on political opponents are inadmissible.

The right to reply is regulated under the provision of Article 58 of the Act on the Election of National Representatives, Municipal Councillors and Mayors.

Regional radio and television centres and local radio centres shall be used by the parties, coalitions and independent candidates having registered lists in the respective constituency and according to the provisions applicable to the national mass media.

The broadcasting of foreign radio and television transmissions in Bulgarian on national frequencies shall not be permitted during the election campaign.

Objections to breaches of this decision shall be submitted to the Central Election Commission and to the regional and municipal election commissions, which shall pronounce decisions on the complaints within a term of three days.

In compliance with the provisions of Article 57 of the Act on the Election of National Representatives, Municipal Councillors and Mayors, the Central Election Commission takes decisions which shall be binding for the national mass media.

The Central Election Commission shall set up an expert group of representatives of the parliamentary parties and coalitions, which shall monitor the implementation of this decision and of the Act of the Election of National Representatives, Municipal Councillors and Mayors.

The expenses of Bulgarian Radio, Bulgarian Television and the Bulgarian News Agency linked with the coverage of the election campaign shall be carried by the state budget.

The election campaign, in keeping with the present decision, shall start after expiry of the term for the registration of candidates under Article 52, paragraph 2 of the Act on the Election of National Representatives, Municipal Councillors and Mayors, and shall end 24 hours before election day, in compliance with Article 60, paragraph 2 of the same act.

The present decision was adopted by the Grand National Assembly on August 21, 1991 and is stamped with the official seal.

**CHAIRMAN OF THE GRAND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY:**  
(signed) N. Todorov

True to the original,

**HEAD OF THE "OFFICE" DEPARTMENT: (D. Gaoubich)**

*Appendix XIV*

**Instructions on Voting by the Military**

Regarding the conduct of the election campaign among Bulgarian Army personnel and its participation in the administration of the elections for national representatives, municipal councils and mayors.

The elections set for October 13, 1991 are an important political event and are of enormous significance for the continued transition to democracy in our country.

For the organized participation of the Bulgarian Army personnel in the election campaign and the administration of the elections, the following shall be performed:

1. The Bulgarian Army shall exercise its franchise in compliance with the Act on the Election of National Representatives, Municipal Councillors and Mayors.
2. Generals (admirals), officers and non-commissioned officers on re-engagement service, civilian employees and workers in the Bulgarian Army shall be entered in the election lists according to their place of residence in conformity with their address registration by election day. By October 10, 1991 they shall obtain Bulgarian citizen's passports with which to certify their identity during the voting process. The requirements for address registration dating at least 60 days prior to election day does not apply to them.
3. They are not entitled to transfer to the army units the election day activity of the political parties, election coalition and independent candidates whose political platforms they support.
4. Commanders and chiefs shall ensure conditions for the participation in the elections of conscripts, including persons on 24-hour duty detail.
5. Conscripts shall be entered only in the election lists for the election of national representatives in the election sections nearest to the army unit.
6. They shall be ensured garrison leave on election day. They shall certify their identity before the chairman of the sectional



- election commission or the person authorized by him with their military identity card only. Granting furlough which includes election day to conscripts shall only be by way of exception, in cases past deferment.
7. Conscripts born in 1973, first shift, shall be issued military identity cards by October 5, 1991.
  8. No election campaign shall be conducted in the army units, including the distribution of any kind of election materials of the political parties, election coalitions and independent candidates.
  9. Commanders and chiefs, in coordination with the interim executive councils of the municipalities and the regional election commission, shall enable conscripts to participate in two meetings with the candidates for national representatives of all parties, election coalitions and independent candidates registered in the given district. During the dates of the meetings, conscripts, including new recruits, shall be granted garrison leave.
  10. All conscripts in the army units shall be granted the opportunity in their leisure time, in keeping with the set daily time schedule, to follow according to their own choice, the election broadcasts of the political parties, election coalitions and independent candidates aired on Bulgarian Radio and Bulgarian Television. TV sets and radio receivers in good working condition shall be placed in the recreation rooms and other suitable premises, together with people in charge of their operation.
  11. In the army units, commanders and chiefs shall explicate among conscripts only the Act on the Election of National Representatives, Municipal Councillors and Mayors, documents received by the Defense Ministry, coordinated with the Central Election Commission, in connection with the elections, as well as technical and procedural questions concerning the participation of conscripts in the voting process.
  12. During furlough, conscripts are entitled to free access to all materials and election manifestations of the political parties, election coalitions and independent candidates.

13. Generals (admirals), officers and non-commissioned officers on re-engagement service can be nominated only as independent candidates for national representatives, municipal councillors and mayors. Candidates shall be granted paid service leave from the date of their registration until election day.
14. Commanders and chiefs shall establish contacts personally or through persons authorized by them with representatives of the political parties and election coalitions and with the candidates for national representatives, registered in the respective election district, on all questions linked with the election campaign and the administration of the elections.
15. The Bulgarian Army paper shall publicize the election platforms and the appeals of the parties and coalitions running in the elections. The parties and election coalitions shall submit their platforms and appeals to the paper's editorial office within a term and on a scale determined by the Central Election Commission.

Defense Minister of Bulgaria, Army General MUSTAFCHIEV

Central Election Commission Chairman DANAILOV

Appendix XV

**Decision No. 317 on the  
Funding of the Election Campaign**

The Council of Ministers  
September 16, 1991

**DECIDED:**

1. By September 18, 1991, the Ministry of Finance shall, within the framework of the 1991 state budget, provide 7,200,000 *leva*, which shall be allocated gratuitously to the parties, coalitions and independent candidates having won parliamentary seats in the elections for national representatives.
2. Parties, coalitions and independent candidates registered by the Central Election Commission for participation in the elections for national representatives can use funds from the state budget for their election campaign as follows:
  - a) parties and coalitions having won over 50,000 votes in the Grand National Assembly elections are granted 3,600,000 *leva* in advance, distributed in proportion to the gained votes, according to official data provided by the Central Election Commission;
  - b) the parties and coalitions specified in "a" can also make use of short-term, interest-free loans from the budget, whereby the sum total of the budget funds received by them for a separate party or coalition may not exceed 3,600,000 *leva*;
  - c) the other parties, coalitions and independent candidates can make use of short-term interest-free loans of up to 300,000 *leva* correspondingly for a party or coalition and 10,000 *leva* for an independent candidate.
3. The funds under item two are allocated one time as follows:
  - a) by the Council of Ministers to the parties and coalitions against security in property or otherwise;

- b) by the respective regional people's councils to the independent candidates who have filed a written application and against security in property or otherwise.
- 4. Applications for the granting of funds to the Council of Ministers and to the regional people's councils must be filed by September 25, 1991 at the latest, the sums being transferred by October 2, 1991.
- 5. Applications filed after September 25, 1991 will not be considered.
- 6. After the elections, the parties and coalitions shall receive additional funds or reimburse the obtained budget sums depending on the parliamentary seats won by them.
- 7. The sum total, which a party or coalition can obtain gratuitously from the budget, is defined as the number of parliamentary seats gained in the elections multiplied by 30,000 *leva* for each national representative.
- 8. The independent candidates who are elected national representatives receive additional funds amounting to the difference between 30,000 *leva* and the sum obtained in advance, and those who are not elected shall reimburse the full amount of the sum received in advance.
- 9. The receiving of additional funds or the reimbursement of the obtained sums is effected within one month after the announcement of the election results.

## Appendix XVI

## Results by Percent of Parallel Vote Tabulations \*

	<b>BAFECR</b>	<b>CIFDE</b>	<b>Podkrepa</b>	<b>BSP</b>	<b>BBS</b>	<b>UDF</b>	<b>CEC</b>
<b>Size of sample count</b>	90.1% of 1,350 polling sites	83% of 250 polling sites	93% of 609 polling sites	250 polling sites	250 polling sites	1,000 polling sites	12,454 polling sites
UDF	35.60	34.8	34.49	34.91	35.5	36.19	34.36
BSP	33.24	33.1	32.89	33.02	32.0	33.35	33.14
MRF	7.23	7.8	7.94	7.41	6.8	6.38	7.55
BZNS-E	3.77	3.87	3.83		3.5	3.85	3.86
BZNS-NP	3.58	2.95	3.22		3.4		3.44
UDF-C	3.25	3.21	3.8		3.4		3.20
UDF-L	2.82	3.05	2.87		2.9		2.81
IND		1.18	1.04				0.95
Others		10.06	10.64		5.57		10.69

\* See page 128 for explanation of titles used in chart.

Organizations that conducted parallel vote tabulations as depicted in table on page 127:

**BAFECR:** Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections and Civil Rights  
**CIFDE:** Citizen's Initiative for Fair and Democratic Elections  
**Podkrepa:** "Support" in Bulgarian, an independent trade union  
**BSP:** Bulgarian Socialist Party  
**BBS:** British-Balkan Surveys  
**UDF-M:** Union of Democratic Forces Movement

Official results from:

**CEC:** Central Election Commission

Parties contesting the October 13 elections:

**UDF:** Union of Democratic Forces (Movement)  
**BSP:** Bulgarian Socialist Party  
**MRF:** Movement for Rights and Freedom  
**BZNS-E:** Bulgarian Agrarian National Union-United  
**BZNS-NP:** Bulgarian Agrarian National Union-Nikola Petkov  
**UDF-C:** Union of Democratic Forces Center  
**UDF-L:** Union of Democratic Forces Liberal  
**IND:** Independent Candidates  
**Others:** Total votes accumulated by other parties

## Appendix XVII

## Urban and Rural Party Vote Totals\*

Political Party	Sofia	Large Towns	Small Towns	Villages	Overall
UDF	53.75	42.26	34.47	21.34	35.20
BSP	28.63	29.16	35.32	35.93	32.52
MRF	0.15	2.59	5.06	16.50	7.26
BZNS-E	1.30	2.59	4.00	6.26	3.92
BZNS-NP	1.29	2.90	2.55	5.72	3.57
UDF Center	2.34	4.50	3.75	2.22	3.40
UDF Liberal	3.89	4.16	2.46	1.13	2.83

\* Based on the BAFECR parallel vote tabulation percentages

Union of Democratic Forces  
 Union of the Bulgarian Socialist Party  
 Movement for Rights and Freedom  
 Bulgarian Agrarian National Union-Nikola Petkov  
 Union of Democratic Forces Center  
 Union of Democratic Forces Liberal

*Appendix XVIII*

**Names and Biographies of Cabinet Ministers**

November 1991

**FILIP DIMITROV, Prime Minister**

MP. Born on March 31, 1955 in Sofia. Graduated, Department of Law at the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridsky" in 1977. Attorney since 1979; Member, Committee on the Religious Rights; Founder, Green Party in Bulgaria; Deputy Chairman, National Coordination Council (NCC) of UDF since August 1990. On December 11, 1990, he was elected a chairman of the NCC of the UDF.

**STOYAN GANEV, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs**

MP. Born on July 23, 1955 in Pazardjik. Graduated, Department of Law, Sofia University in 1973. Ganev has a Ph.D. in Constitutional Law from Moscow University in 1985. Since 1985, Ganev has been a lecturer on Constitutional Law at the Sofia University. Chairman of the United Democratic Center. Co-chairman of the Parliamentary Group of UDF in the GNA.

**NIKOLAI VASILEV, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Education and Science**

MP. Born on July 21, 1946 in Smolyan. Graduated, Philosophy at the Sofia University in 1971. Since 1974, Vasilev has been a lecturer in Philosophy and Anthropology at the Sofia University. Philosophy Ph.D. received in 1988. Professor of Philosophy since 1990. Since February 1990, a chairman of the Alternative Socialist Party (now the Alternative Social Liberal Party). Member of the Academic Council of the Sofia University, Deputy Director of the National Institute for Research of Social Change.

**DIMITAR LUDJEV, Minister of Defense**

MP. Born on March 27, 1950 in Bourgas. Graduated, Political Economy and Sociology at the High Economic Institute in Sofia in 1973. Senior Associate Fellow at the Institute of History of the Bulgarian Academy of Science. Member of the Club for Democracy. Ex-minister. MP in the GNA.



**IVAN PUSHKAROV, Minister of Industry and Technologies**

MP. Born on December 1, 1938 in Chelopech, Sofia district. Graduated from the High Economic Institute in Sofia in 1964. Ph.D. in Economy. Senior Associate Fellow at the Economic Institute of the Bulgarian Academy of Science. Member of the Bulgarian Social Democratic Party. Ex-minister. MP in the GNA.

**IVAN KOSTOV, Minister of Finance**

MP. Born 1949 in Sofia. Graduated, High Economic Institute in Sofia and Mathematics at the Sofia University. Ph.D. in Economy. Has been a lecturer. Ex-minister. MP in the GNA.

**YORDAN SOKOLOV, Minister of Home Affairs**

Born on January 18, 1933 in Sofia. Graduated, Department of Law at the Sofia University in 1956. An attorney since 1958. Has been a member of the Attorney Council. Member of the CEC for the June 1990 elections. Since 1990, a consultant to the President.

**SVETOSLAV LUCHNIKOV, Minister of Justice**

Born on February 3, 1922 in Rousse. Graduated, Department of Law at the Sofia University. Luchnikov became a lecturer, but was dismissed in 1949 for political reasons. For some time, he occupied low-skill jobs. Later, he became legal advisor and chief economist at the Center for Application at the State Committee of Science and Technical Progress. Since 1990, he has served as collaborator at the Council on the Normative Statements at the Council of Ministers and as lecturer on Trade Law at the Free University in Sofia.

**STANISLAV DIMITROV, Minister of Agriculture**

Born on June 19, 1926 in Sofia. Graduated, Department of Law at the Sofia University. Dimitrov has worked as an attorney and as a legal advisor to the State Insurance Institute. Since 1960, he has been an attorney. Member of the Democratic Party.

**VEKIL VANOV, Minister of Labor and Social Care**

MP. Born on October 17, 1937. Graduated, Economy of Industry at the High Economic Institute in Sofia. Until September 1973, Vanov was an Associate Fellow at the Research Planned-Economy Institute; since 1973, he has been an associate fellow at the Economic Institute of the Bulgarian Academy of Science. Ph.D. in Economy.

**NIKOLA VASILEV, Minister of Health**

Born on November 16, 1949 in Sofia. Graduated, Medicine in Sofia. Has practiced at several hospitals in Bulgaria. Ph.D. in Medicine.

Docent at the Institute of Gynecology in Sofia. Ex-Deputy Minister of Health.

**ELKA KONSTANTINOVA, Minister of Culture**

MP. Born on March 26, 1932. Senior Associate Fellow at the Institute of Literature of the Bulgarian Academy of Science and Doctor of Literature. Chairperson of the Radical Democratic Party. MP in the GNA.

**ALEXANDAR ALEXANDROV, Minister of Transport**

Born on November 11, 1952 in Sofia. Graduated, Department of Transportation at the High Technological Institute in Sofia. Alexandrov has practiced as an engineer, a designer, and an implorer. In 1984, Alexandrov graduated from a post-graduate course on economy, organization and management of motor transport. Since May 1991, he has served as chairman of the interim executive council of the municipality of Poduyane in Sofia. On October 25, Alexandrov was elected a Deputy Mayor of Sofia. Member of the BSDP.

**VALENTIN VASILEV, Minister of Environment**

Graduated, High Institute of Architecture and Building in Sofia in 1978 and later the Department of Journalism at the Sofia University. For 16 years, Vasilev has been working in the field of ecology as a hydroengineer. In the last six months, Vasilev has been a chief of the Ecology Program on the Bulgarian Radio and the Bulgarian Television.

**NIKOLA KARADIMOV, Minister of Territorial Development, Housing Policy and Building**

Born in 1942 in Plovdiv. Graduated, Department of Architecture at the High Institute of Architecture and Building in Sofia in 1967. Karadimov has worked as a designer and as an expert to the Supreme Council of Building. Since 1987, Karadimov has served as a director, a chief director and now head of the office on Strategy and House Planning at the Ministry of Building, Architecture and Town Planning. Representative at a group on the housing problem at the Economic Commission for Europe. Member of the Union of Architects in Bulgaria.

*Appendix XIX*

**Recommendations for the Next Elections**

**BULGARIAN ASSOCIATION FOR FAIR ELECTIONS  
AND CIVIL RIGHTS**

1. The simultaneous administration of elections for national representatives, municipal councillors, mayors of municipalities and mayors of populated areas clearly creates too many difficulties for voters and election commission members in the voting process and in the processing of the election results. The simultaneous holding of parliamentary and municipal elections should also be avoided in order to enable citizens to ponder their interests and preferences concerning the two principally different types of government, and to enable parties to present suitable candidates and to conduct adequate election campaigns. This conclusion is also supported by the fact that, in view of the numerous balloting for mayors on October 20, 26 and 27 and November 3, the 1991 local and parliamentary elections, for all practical purposes, were held separately.
2. The use of combined ballots for all coalitions, parties and candidates running in a given district (as an alternative to single multi-color ballots) would solve serious organizational and technical problems of the election process, would restrict or eliminate some typical violations, and would ease the expenses of the state. Absolutely no reasons for doubts exist any longer that the Bulgarian voter cannot cope with this system.
3. Participation in the elections for national representatives should not be restricted by the introduction of terms of residence. It is inadmissible to require an address registration of voters and candidates within a term preceding the adoption and promulgation of the election law. A single and uniform criterion is needed for the inclusion of names in the election lists — either address registration or place of residence — rather than a confusing and compromising combination of the two.
4. The state's obligation to provide full and accurate election lists cannot obviously be achieved without the appointment of a standing election administration — selecting officials of the

municipal councils who will be concerned with maintaining and updating the lists throughout the year. A serious analysis is needed of the shortcomings in the work of the services of GRAON, Information Services and Sofinformatika. The criteria and procedure should be specified for deleting from the election lists the names of Bulgarian citizens absent from the country for prolonged periods, so that lists will provide a real image of the number of voters. The national and municipal mass media should be obliged to inform citizens of the time and place of the posting of election lists and of the procedure for making corrections in them.

5. It is necessary to differentiate between the deadline for the registration of parties and coalitions for participation in the elections and the deadline for the registration of regional and municipal candidate lists. The parties, coalitions and candidates should have more time for registering candidates and for the possible appeal of decisions of the election commissions on this question. The advisability of the requirements of address registration and/or place of residence of the candidates for mayors should be carefully evaluated.
6. In cases of a single candidate for mayor in a populated area and the simultaneous administration of elections for municipal councillors as well, some mayors were elected with a minimum number of votes. This problem could be solved with the use of combined ballots or by placing the ballots for municipal councillors and mayors in different envelopes.
7. More concrete legal guarantees are needed for lucidity in the work of the election commissions and for the obligatory and timely informing of low-ranking commissions, political forces and the public of the adopted decisions. The civic education of election commissions should be viewed and entered in the law as one of the basic obligations of commissions at the accordingly higher level.
8. The status of observers (rights and obligations) should be endorsed by the law or by a decision of the Central Election Commission and suitably publicized. Properly regulated should also be the access of observers to the municipal and regional election commissions and the CEC, their right to file complaints

- and applications in the case of noted violations and to receive copies and transcripts of all official decisions and protocols.
9. The election law and/or CEC instructions should on all accounts formulate the admissible and inadmissible deviations of ballots from the specimen. Control should be provided on the part of the election administration on the production and transportation of ballots which should be checked by the SECs when accepted at the election sections.
  10. The procedure for determining and submitting the election results could be improved through:
    - changing the protocols so that they do not contain ambiguities and contradictions nor cause confusion among the election commissions;
    - simplifying the procedure for determining and accounting for invalid ballots; and,
    - providing premises in all cases and announcement in advance of the procedure for safekeeping protocols and elections papers in the process of the transporting the protocols from the SECs to the RECs and MECs. The law should establish clearly formulated deadlines and the inadmission of unnecessary or deliberate delays in the delivery of protocols, which should note the time of the ending of the voting, of the signing of the protocol and of the submission to the superior commission.
  11. Public control on the election process would be more effective if the law obliged the CEC to provide the political forces and observers with:
    - information on the number and addresses of the election sections and the number of their voters; and,
    - official results of the voting at all levels in a suitable form — on magnetic carrier, paper, etc. — immediately after their release.
- It is necessary to designate a state body which will centrally gather and publicize full and official information on the local elections — parties, candidates, results, balloting — by municipalities and populated areas.

We have sufficient reason to repeat some of our proposals contained in the 13-point plan of July 8, 1991:

12. The election law should permit and facilitate Bulgarian citizens abroad to vote where they are. The simplest solution of this problem is to register voters and have their votes cast by mail.
13. The Penal Code should be complemented in conformity with the law of developed Western countries with new provisions providing punitive measures for attempts to delude voters through the spreading of false information, to intimidate them, to buy and sell votes, etc. The size of penal responsibility for crimes against franchise and for administrative violations (in keeping with the administrative penal provisions of the current election law) should be increased so as to render them adequate to the consequence of the respective deeds and to the changed prices.
14. The state-run mass media should be compelled to allot more time and paper space to the civic education of voters.
15. Greater consistency should be ensured in the application and interpretation of the law. In order to guarantee the stability of the election process, the normal work of officials and the edification of voters, a term should be specified (for example, one week prior to election day) during which no decisions should be taken which change provisions issued earlier on the application of the election law.

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