

UNCLASSIFIED

E135

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INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	INR-05	SS-00	CIAE-00	DODE-00	H-01
	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	HA-09	L-03	TRSE-00	PM-10	PA-01
	OMB-01	INRE-00	USIE-00	SP-02	SNP-01	PRS-01	P-02
	T-01	/037 W					

-----276475 301116Z /12

R 281448Z DEC 89
FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9013
INFO EASTERN EUROPEAN POSTS
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

EXCISE

SECTION 01 OF 02 SOFIA 06982

BRUSSELS FOR USEC-AMB. NILES

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
TAGS: PGOV, BU
SUBJECT: RUSEV PESSIMISTIC ON FUTURE OF COMMUNIST
- PARTY

1. [REDACTED] ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY. IN A MEETING WITH CONGRESSMAN LANTOS, BULGARIA'S LEADING PAINTER AND RESTORED BCP CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBER SVETLIN RUSEV ADMITTED THAT THE PARTY'S DAYS AT THE HEAD OF BULGARIAN GOVERNMENT ARE NUMBERED. HE PREDICTED FURTHER PURGES IN 1990: A "SURVIVAL RATE" OF ONLY TEN PERCENT OF CURRENT CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MEMBERS AT THE END OF MAY. HE ALSO PREDICTED FURTHER TROUBLES FOR OUSTED LEADER TODOR ZHIVKOV AS INVESTIGATIONS OF HIS ACTIVITIES BEGIN. FINALLY, HE PREDICTED A SATISFACTORY BUT NOT NECESSARILY RAPID RESOLUTION OF THE COUNTRY'S MINORITY PROBLEMS. END SUMMARY.

[REDACTED]

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3. SVETLIN RUSEV IS PERHAPS BULGARIA'S BEST KNOWN AND MOST WIDELY RESPECTED PAINTER. HIS WORKS HANG IN MANY WEST EUROPEAN COLLECTIONS AND IN GALLERIES THROUGHOUT BULGARIA. IN 1976, HE WAS ELECTED TO THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S (BCP) CENTRAL COMMITTEE, BUT HE WAS EXPELLED BY ZHIVKOV IN 1988 AFTER CRITICIZING THE TOTALITARIAN NATURE OF ZHIVKOV'S GOVERNMENT AND AFTER PARTICIPATING IN WRITTEN PROTESTS AGAINST POLLUTION IN RUSE. IN JANUARY 1989, HE WAS ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S "DISSIDENTS" WHO MET WITH FRENCH

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE JMWPS/CR/RRS Date: 11-21-97

RELEASE
 EXCISE
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DECLASSIFY
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 EXEMPTIONS

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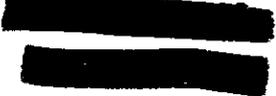
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PRESIDENT MITTERRAND DURING HIS VISIT TO SOFIA. IN NOVEMBER, 1989, AFTER MLADENOV'S ASCENDANCY TO POWER, HE WAS RESTORED TO ALL OF HIS FORMER POSITIONS, INCLUDING THAT OF DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL ART GALLERY. SINCE THEN, HE HAS APPEARED FREQUENTLY ON TELEVISION AND HIS WRITINGS APPEAR REGULARLY IN NEWSPAPERS AND JOURNALS. ON 23 DECEMBER, CONGRESSMAN AND MRS. TOM LANTOS AND POST HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICER CALLED ON HIM AT HIS LARGE STUDIO NEAR SOFIA'S NEVSKI CATHEDRAL.

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4. RUSEV TOLD LANTOS THAT THE OUSTER OF ZHIVKOV WAS A STEP WHICH SAVED BULGARIA FROM THE VIOLENCE WHICH SWEEPED THROUGH ROMANIA. THIS WAS ONLY THE BEGINNING, HE SAID, AS THE NEW LEADERSHIP ALSO PREPARED FOR "FURTHER LIBERALIZATIONS." THE PEOPLE ARE EXPECTING THESE, HE ADDED. THEY HAVE "LOST CONFIDENCE IN THE STATE AND THE PARTY" AND ARE "WELL AWARE OF THE SITUATION." THEY "HAVE BECOME MORE ACTIVE," AND THIS FORMS "PRESSURE AND SUPPORT FOR CHANGE."

5. WHEN LANTOS ASKED WHETHER THE RESTRUCTURING IN BULGARIA WOULD FOLLOW THE HUNGARIAN MODEL OF PARTY



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PLURALISM OR THE SOVIET MODEL OF MERE LIBERALIZATION OF THE SINGLE POLITICAL PARTY, RUSEV SAID THAT SEVERAL PARTIES WERE LIKELY TO DEVELOP IN BULGARIA. ARTICLE 1 (GUARANTEEING THE LEADING ROLE OF THE BCP IN SOCIETY) OF THE CONSTITUTION HAS BEEN EFFECTIVELY ABOLISHED, AND AN ENTIRELY NEW CONSTITUTION WILL FOLLOW. "DEPENDING ON ITS PLATFORM," THE UNION OF DEMOCRATIC FORCES CAN EXPECT TO PLAY A ROLE, AND THE AGRARIAN PARTY WILL BE "VERY ACTIVE, DUE TO ITS LARGE SOCIAL BASE." UNFORTUNATELY, HE SAID, THE INDEPENDENT PARTIES DID NOT SEEM TO HAVE "PEOPLE WHO CAN PRESENT A PLATFORM WHICH IS COMPREHENSIVE." THEY ARE NOT YET "PERSONALLY READY" FOR DIALOGUE. "IN A NORMAL DEVELOPMENT" OF POLITICAL PARTIES, "OTHER FIGURES WILL APPEAR WITH POLITICAL READINESS AND PERSONAL QUALITIES TO UNDERTAKE CHANGES." NONETHELESS, THE INDEPENDENT GROUPS ARE ALREADY PLAYING AN IMPORTANT ROLE BY PROVIDING "PRESSURE" FOR CHANGE AND "ACCELERATING THE PROCESS."

6. THE NEW BCP LEADERSHIP CONTAINS A REFORMIST, "LIBERAL" ELEMENT WHICH MAKES RUSEV CONFIDENT THAT IT WILL REMAIN "IN CHARGE" FOR NOW. MLADENOV, LILOV, AND LUKANOV HAVE SHOWN THEIR GENUINE DESIRE FOR CHANGE, AND, "FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE INTELLIGENT WING OF THE PARTY HAS TAKEN THE LEAD." THE ARMY ALSO SUPPORTS REFORM, HE ADDED. "WITH THE LEADERSHIP

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WELL AWARE OF THE COUNTRY'S PROBLEMS, "THIS IS THEIR CHANCE TO CONTROL THE SITUATION AND MAKE A NAME FOR THEMSELVES IN HISTORY AS REFORMERS." WHEN PRESSED, HOWEVER, HE ADMITTED THAT THE PARTY'S DAYS ON TOP ARE NUMBERED: FIVE YEARS FROM NOW, "ANOTHER PARTY WILL HAVE THE LEAD, I THINK." "SOCIALISM HAS

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PROVED TO BE MORE POPULAR THAN COMMUNISM," HE ADDED. "IT GIVES GOOD RESULTS, SUCH AS IN SWEDEN."

7. WHEN LANTOS TURNED TO ZHIVKOV'S TROUBLES, RUSEV SAID THAT HE WAS A MEMBER OF THE INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE WHICH WILL EXAMINE ZHIVKOV'S RECORD. "FOR NOW, WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE TO USE," BUT, "FROM WHAT I HEAR, EVERYTHING HE HAS WAS NOT EARNED." FOR EXAMPLE, "WE KNOW HE RECEIVED 1.6 MILLION LEVA IN

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AUTHOR'S FEES FOR VOLUMES OF SPEECHES WHICH HE DIDN'T WRITE." HE ALSO KEPT THE HARD CURRENCY PROCEEDS OF FOREIGN SALES OF HIS BOOKS EVEN THOUGH STATE PUBLISHING HOUSES PAID ALL COSTS. HE ALSO APPROPRIATED MANY RESIDENCES FOR HIS SOLE USE EVEN THOUGH THEY HAD BEEN BUILT FOR THE ENTIRE POLITBURO AND CENTRAL COMMITTEE. NOW, ZHIVKOV IS IN BOYANA, ACCORDING TO

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[REDACTED]

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RUSEV. HE IS NOT UNDER HOUSE ARREST, BUT HE HAS TO BE PROTECTED FROM THE PEOPLE, WHO ARE VERY ANGRY WITH HIM. SOON, RUSEV PREDICTED, "HE WILL GO TO TRIAL.

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8. ON THE MINORITIES ISSUE, RUSEV NOTED THAT THIS WAS "THE MOST DIFFICULT INHERITANCE" FROM ZHIVKOV. "I ATTENDED A MEETING BETWEEN INTELLECTUALS AND ZHIVKOV. HE SAID HE HAD DECIDED THAT THIS (THE ASSIMILATION CAMPAIGN) WAS A DECISION OF HISTORIAL IMPORTANCE. I DON'T KNOW WHETHER HE BELIEVED HIS OWN WORDS." IN ANY CASE, "NOBODY EXPLAINED THE CONSEQUENCES TO HIM."

9. RUSEV SAYS THAT TWO PROPOSALS WERE ADVANCED BEFORE THE NAME-CHANGE CAMPAIGN OF 1984-85. THE FIRST, "THE MORE INTELLIGENT ONE," WAS TO IMPROVE THE ETHNIC TURKS' SOCIAL STATUS--TO "MAKE IT CLOSER TO OURS." IT WOULD NOT HAVE ENTAILED NAME-CHANGES. IT WAS FAVORED BY LILOV, STEFAN MIHAILOV, AND OTHERS. THE SECOND PROPOSAL, WHICH BECAME OFFICIAL POLICY, WAS CHOSEN, WITH THE BACKING OF ZHIVKOV, BALEV, KUBADINSKY, AND OTHERS, BECAUSE IT WAS THOUGHT TO BE FASTER AND THEREFORE BETTER. "THEY DIDN'T CONSIDER THE INTERNATIONAL CONSEQUENCES," RUSEV SAID. "THEY EXPECTED SOME REACTION, BUT NOTHING LIKE WHAT HAPPENED. THEY FAILED TO CONSIDER, FOR INSTANCE, THAT NAME-CHANGES ARE COUNTER TO THE KORAN." IRONICALLY, THE MINORITY HAD NO CLAIM TO BEING TURKS UNTIL THE NAME-CHANGE, HE ADDED. AT THAT POINT, THEY REALIZED THAT THEY ARE TURKS."

10. COMMENT.

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POLANSKY

END COMMENT.

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification ***

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