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SECTION 01 OF 05 SOFIA 06988

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, BU
SUBJECT: BULGARIA AT THE TURN OF THE DECADE BEGINS
- A ROUND-TABLE DIALOGUE ON POLITICAL CHANGE

REF: SOFIA 6699

1. [REDACTED] - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY. WHEN THEN-FOREIGN MINISTER MLADENOV AND HIS ASSOCIATES ENGINEERED THE NOVEMBER 10 DISMISSAL OF TODOR ZHIVKOV, THEIR INTENT WAS PROBABLY TO PUT IN PLACE A TOP-DOWN SYSTEM OF REFORMS ROUGHLY FOLLOWING THE SOVIET MODEL. PRIORITIES INCLUDED MORE GLASNOST UNDER A SOCIALIST FORM OF GOVERNMENT, ECONOMIC REFORM, AND AN END TO THE MORE-AND-MORE EMBARRASSING AND STIFFLING REIGN OF ZHIVKOV. WITH THE ABRUPT END OF THE SEVERE REPRESSION OF THE EARLIER ERA, HOWEVER, THE WIDE VARIETY OF INDEPENDENT GROUPS IN BULGARIA QUICKLY SEIZED THE INITIATIVE AND, WITH EVER-INCREASING STRENGTH, HAVE PLACED THE GOVERNMENT AND THE COMMUNIST PARTY IN AN ALMOST

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TOTALLY REACTIVE MODE. WHILE THE POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE AVERAGE BULGARIAN IS DEFINITELY INCREASING, THE "STREET SUPPORT" FOR THESE GROUPS IS STILL FAR BELOW THAT IN EAST GERMANY OR CZECHOSLOVAKIA. THE EMBASSY HAS BEEN IMPRESSED, THEREFORE, THAT THE GOVERNMENT AND PARTY HAVE APPARENTLY FELT CONSTRAINED TO RESPOND SO QUICKLY AND POSITIVELY TO THE DEMANDS MADE BY PODKREPA AND THE OTHER GROUPS. THE LATEST EXAMPLE OF THIS APPROACH IS THE GOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT TO HOLD DISCUSSIONS

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ON A ROUND-TABLE BASIS WITH THE INDEPENDENT GROUPS ON JANUARY 2-3 IN RESPONSE TO PODKREPA'S CALL FOR A GENERAL STRIKE. THE CHALLENGE FOR THE INDEPENDENT GROUPS IS TO KEEP THEIR OVERALL UNITY IN THE FACE OF THE VARIED VIEWS AND PHILOSOPHIES REPRESENTED UNDER THE "UNION OF DEMOCRATIC FORCES." THIS INCLUDES THE CRITICAL QUESTION OF TREATMENT OF THE ETHNIC TURKISH AND POMAK MINORITIES. END SUMMARY.

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3. WHAT BEGAN AS A "TOP-DOWN" PALACE COUP ON NOVEMBER 10 WITH THE OUSTER OF TODOR ZHIVKOV HAS ADDED A GENUINE "BOTTOM-UP" DIMENSION WHICH IS DAILY GROWING IN STRENGTH. IT IS EVIDENT THAT THE BULGARIAN POLITICAL LANDSCAPE TODAY IS QUALITATIVELY DIFFERENT FROM A MERE TWO MONTHS AGO, AND THAT THE TERRAIN AHEAD LOOKS MORE BUMPY AND VARIED FOR ALL CONCERNED. AS BULGARIA CLOSES OUT ITS OWN MOST IMPORTANT POLITICAL YEAR OF THE LAST FOUR DECADES AND ENTERS THE LAST DECADE OF THE CENTURY IN A NEW DOMESTIC AND EASTERN EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT, IT MAY BE USEFUL TO TAKE STOCK OF DEVELOPMENTS, WHERE THEY MAY BE LEADING OVER THE NEAR FUTURE, AND ASSESS WHAT THESE DEVELOPMENTS MAY MEAN FOR U.S. INTERESTS HERE.

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4. WHILE NOT ALL THE EVIDENCE IS IN, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE MLADENOV LEADERSHIP THOUGHT, IN THE WAKE OF THE NOVEMBER 10 ZHIVKOV OUSTER, IT HAD (1) SAVED ITS COLLECTIVE SKIN, (2) BOUGHT TIME TO MAKE THE FIRST NECESSARY PERSONNEL CHANGES IN THE TOP PARTY STRUCTURES TO ENSURE ITS CONTROL OF POWER, (3) BEGUN TO SET THE STAGE FOR CORRECTING IMMEDIATE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, AND (4) BOUGHT TIME TO STAY AHEAD OF THE CURVE IN TERMS OF NASCENT DOMESTIC UNREST/DISCONTENT BROUGHT ON IN PART BY DEVELOPMENTS IN EAST GERMANY AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA. THE PARTY'S NEW LEADERSHIP APPEARED ON NOVEMBER 10 TO HAVE ONLY THE MOST BARE-BONES OF A POLICY PROGRAM OUTLINE: DEMOCRATIZATION AND PLURALISM OF OPINION WITHIN SOCIALISM A LA THE SOVIET MODEL OF CONTROLLED POLITICAL REFORM. MLADENOV'S ADVOCACY OF PLURALISM AND GLASNOST, HOWEVER, WHILE INTENDED TO GAIN POPULAR SUPPORT FOR THE PARTY AND HIS LEADERSHIP, ALSO HAD THE UNINTENDED EFFECT OF ENERGIZING AND GIVING LEGITMACY TO THE ACTIVITIES OF THE VARIOUS INFORMAL AND NON-OFFICIAL GROUPINGS AND MOVEMENTS EMBOLDENED BY EVENTS ELSEWHERE IN EASTERN EUROPE.

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5. IN SETTING AND ANNOUNCING DECEMBER 11 AS THE DATE FOR THE NEXT CENTRAL COMMITTEE PLENUM TO DISCUSS

THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND DECEMBER 14 WHEN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WOULD MEET FOR SIMILAR REASONS, MLADENOV AND COMPANY PRESUMABLY THOUGHT THEY HAD THE LUXURY OF TIME TO SET THE PACE FOR CHANGE (PERSONNEL AND OTHERWISE) WITHIN THE PARTY AND TO GIVE THE APPEARANCE OF MOVING, VOLUNTARILY,

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SUBJECT: BULGARIA AT THE TURN OF THE DECADE BEGINS

TO A MORE DEMOCRATIC PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM. MLADENOV MAY HAVE MISCALCULATED. IN AN EARLY DECEMBER INTERVIEW IN MOSCOW, MLADENOV EQUIVOCATED ABOUT GIVING UP THE LEADING ROLE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY IN ANY FUTURE "SOCIALIST" BULGARIA.

6. THIS EQUIVOCATION PLUS THE EXAMPLE OF THE "STREET" IN PRAGUE AND EARLIER IN EAST GERMANY MAY HAVE GIVEN OPPOSITION GROUPS IN BULGARIA THE IMPETUS TO PUSH MORE RAPIDLY FOR CHANGE IN BULGARIA, AND IN A MORE COORDINATED MANNER THAN HAD BEEN THE CASE EARLIER. WHILE MAINTAINING THEIR INDIVIDUAL STANDS ON CHANGE

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FOR DEMOCRATIC REFORMS, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOMS, THE GROUPS FORMED AN UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION: THE UNION OF DEMOCRATIC FORCES (UDF) IN A COORDINATED EFFORT TO BRING PRESSURE TO BEAR ON THE PARTY FOR FASTER DEMOCRATIC CHANGE. PERHAPS IN AN EFFORT TO DEFLECT SOME OF THE PRESSURE FROM THE "UNION" AND TO SPLIT THE NASCENT COORDINATION OF THE GROUPS,

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THE PARTY CALLED A SURPRISE CENTRAL COMMITTEE PLENUM DECEMBER 8, AT WHICH SOME PERSONNEL CHANGES IN THE POLITBURO AND THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE WERE EFFECTED, REMOVING KNOWN ZHIVKOV CRONIES AND HARDLINERS.

7. MLADENOV'S TACTIC, IF THAT INDEED IS WHAT IT WAS, DID NOT WORK. AT THE DECEMBER 10 MASS PUBLIC MEETING HELD DELIBERATELY TO PUT PRESSURE ON THE PARTY AND THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, THE LEADERS OF THE UDF EASILY GAINED THE CROWD'S ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORT FOR A RADICAL (FOR BULGARIA) POLITICAL PROGRAM. IT INCLUDED, AMONG OTHER POINTS, A CALL FOR THE RESIGNATION OF THE POLITBURO AND CENTRAL COMMITTEE; REPEAL OF ARTICLE ONE OF THE CONSTITUTION GIVING THE COMMUNIST PARTY THE LEADING ROLE IN BULGARIA; FREE ELECTIONS; AND A DEMAND FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A ROUND TABLE, AT WHICH THE PARTY/GOVERNMENT AND THE OPPOSITION GROUPS WOULD ENTER INTO NEGOTIATIONS ON HOW TO END BULGARIA'S ECONOMIC/SOCIAL/POLITICAL CRISIS.

8. AT THE DECEMBER 11 CENTRAL COMMITTEE PLENUM, MLADENOV, PUBLICLY STATED THAT THE PARTY WOULD NO LONGER INSIST ON ITS LEADING ROLE IN SOCIETY, BUT WOULD LEAVE IT UP TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY TO MAKE THE LEGAL CHANGES TO BRING THIS ABOUT. IN ITS TURN, THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF STANKO TODOROV, NOTING A CONSTITUTIONAL STIPULATION THAT AT LEAST THIRTY DAYS WERE REQUIRED BETWEEN A PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION AND THE VOTE ON SUCH A CHANGE, PASSED A DECLARATION THAT THE CHANGE WOULD DEFINITELY BE MADE IN THE UPCOMING JANUARY

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SESSION. WHILE THERE SEEMS LITTLE DOUBT THAT SUCH A CHANGE WOULD BE VOTED AT THE NEXT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SESSION, NOW SET FOR JANUARY 15, SOME IF NOT ALL OF THE OPPOSITION FORCES MAY HAVE SMELLED A TRAP; AT

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THE VERY LEAST, THEY WERE NOT SATISFIED, EVEN THOUGH MLADENOV ALSO ANNOUNCED AT THE PLENUM THAT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD BEFORE THE END OF MAY, 1990.

9. PRESUMABLY THE OPPOSITION GROUPS SAW THIS AS FURTHER EVIDENCE THAT THE PARTY LEADERSHIP HAD NO SERIOUS INTENTION OF CONCEDED MORE THAN THE BAREST MINIMUM GROUND TO THEM IN ANY FAIR POLITICAL COMPETITION. LITTLE IF ANYTHING WAS SAID BY MLADENOV OR OTHER POLITBURO MEMBERS AT THE PLENUM ABOUT THEIR READINESS TO ENGAGE IN A SPECIFIC AND SERIOUS POLITICAL DIALOGUE WITH THE UDF OR ITS CONSTITUENT ORGANIZATIONS. IN ANY CASE, THE DEMONSTRATION OUTSIDE THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON DECEMBER 14 CLEARLY FRIGHTENED THE LEADERSHIP DUE TO ITS VOCAL NATURE, CLEAR DISDAIN FOR THE BCP AND MLADENOV HIMSELF, AND THE DETERMINATION SHOWN BY THE PARTICIPANTS.

10. ONLY SUBSEQUENTLY, AND AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF DEVELOPMENTS IN ROMANIA AND THREATS BY PODKREPA AND ITS PRESIDENT, KONSTANTIN TRENCEV, TO CALL FIRST A TWO-HOURS STRIKE ON DECEMBER 27 AND THEN A GENERAL STRIKE ON DECEMBER 28, DID THE PARTY BEGIN TO SHOW SOME POSITIVE SIGNS OF ENTERING INTO A DISCUSSION WITH "OTHER" SOCIAL AND PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS. AT THE SAME TIME, THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE ON DECEMBER 24 ISSUED A STRONG STATEMENT ATTACKING TRENCEV AND PODKREPA FOR THEIR "EXTREMIST" VIEWS, AND WARNING

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SECTION 03 OF 05 SOFIA 06988

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SUBJECT: BULGARIA AT THE TURN OF THE DECADE BEGINS

DARKLY THAT DEVELOPMENTS COULD TAKE THE COURSE OF
EVENTS IN ROMANIA.

11. FOR ITS PART, PODKREPA BEGAN A THREE-DAY
ROUND-THE-CLOCK VIGIL AT THE SAINT SOFIA CHURCH
AND TOMB OF THE FALLEN SOLDIER SITE NEAR THE
ALEXANDER NEVSKY CATHEDRAL CALLING ON PEOPLE TO
SUPPORT THE STRIKE ACTION AND REJECTING THE IDEA
THAT ITS ACTIONS COULD RESULT IN BLOODSHED. WHILE
THE CROWDS, WITH NO UNIFORMED MILITIA IN SIGHT,
DID NOT SEEM TO EXCEED MORE THAN SEVERAL HUNDRED
PEOPLE, AT ANY ONE TIME, THEY WERE CLEARLY AND
ENTHUSIASTICALLY IN SUPPORT OF THE PODKREPA
DEMANDS. THEY JEERED ON DECEMBER 26 A LIVE TV
TRANSMISSION OF COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ECONOMIC ADVISOR
IVAN ANGELOV EXPLAINING WHY A STRIKE WOULD CRIPPLE
THE ECONOMY AND CHEERED CALLS FOR THE RESIGNATION
OF THE POLITBURO. MANY SIGNED PETITIONS IN

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SUPPORT OF THE STRIKE ACTION AND ALSO DEMANDS FOR
TAKING ELECTRONIC AND PRINT MEDIA RESOURCES OUT
OF THE HANDS OF THE PARTY AND GOVERNMENT.

12. ON DECEMBER 27, RABOTNICHESKO DELO AND OTHER
PAPERS CARRIED AN ACCOUNT OF THE DECEMBER 26
POLITBURO MEETING, AT WHICH IT WAS DECIDED TO
"PROPOSE TO THE LEADERSHIP OF THE NEWLY EMERGING
INFORMAL AND INDEPENDENT PUBLIC STRUCTURES AND
MOVEMENTS TO CONDUCT 'ROUND TABLE' CONSULTATIONS
ON THE BASIC QUESTIONS OF RESTRUCTURING" IN BULGARIA.
THE POLITBURO ALSO PROPOSED A MEETING OF THE
LEADERSHIPS OF THE BCP AND THE AGRARIAN PARTY "AS
THE RULING (UPRAVLYAVASHCHI) PARTIES" TO ANALYZE
THE COUNTRY'S EXISTING SITUATION AND TO DISCUSS
URGENT PROBLEMS AND MEASURES FOR THE CONTINUING
DEVELOPMENT OF RESTRUCTURING IN BULGARIA.
"ROUND TABLE" CONSULTATIONS WERE ALSO PROPOSED WITH
THE FATHERLAND FRONT, CENTRAL TRADE UNIONS,

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KOMSOMOL AND OTHER PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS. THE POLITBURO ALSO PROPOSED THAT THE "MEETINGS" BEGIN IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE NEW YEAR, BUT DID NOT MAKE CLEAR WHETHER IT INTENDED TO MEET SEPARATELY WITH THE DIFFERENT GROUPS OR ALL WOULD MEET TOGETHER.

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13. WE DO NOT KNOW AS OF THIS WRITING WHETHER THE DECEMBER 27 POLITBURO ANNOUNCEMENT AVERTED ANY TWO-HOUR STRIKES ON THE SAME DAY; WE ASSUME IT PROBABLY DID SO. AT ABOUT 6 P.M. AT THE PODKREPA VIGIL SITE, TRENCHV ANNOUNCED TO THE CROWD OF SEVERAL HUNDRED IN THE GLARE OF TV LIGHTS AND FALLING SNOW THAT THE "GOVERNMENT" HAD AGREED TO PODKREPA'S DEMANDS FOR ROUND-TABLE NEGOTIATIONS.

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AS A CONSEQUENCE, PODKREPA WOULD DESIST IN ITS CALL FOR A DECEMBER 28 GENERAL STRIKE. FOR ITS PART, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CARRY ON ITS 8 P.M. TV NEWS BROADCAST PODKREPA'S POSITION FOR CONSULTATIONS. THE CROWD IMMEDIATELY CHEERED THE NEWS, ALONG WITH REPEATED SHOUTS OF PODKREPA.

14. IN SUBSEQUENT BRIEF CONVERSATIONS AT THE RALLY, TRENCHV AND ECOGLASNOST PRESIDENT BERON TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT DURING THE CONSULTATIONS WITH THE PARTY/GOVERNMENT, WORKERS IN SUPPORT OF PODKREPA WOULD WEAR "SYMBOLIC" STRIKE ARMBANDS. PROCEDURAL TALKS COULD BEGIN ON DECEMBER 28, THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS THEMSELVES WOULD BEGIN ON JANUARY 2; AND BERON EXPECTED TWO WEEKS OF HARD BARGAINING. INTERRUPTIONS BY WELL-WISHERS OF TRENCHV AND BERON PREVENTED ANY DISCUSSION OF THEIR STRATEGY AND PLATFORM FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS. WE ASSUME THEIR DEMANDS WILL FOLLOW THE PROGRAM "APPROVED" AT THE DECEMBER 10 MASS MEETING (REFTEL).

15. AS OF THIS WRITING, THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND ITS GENERAL SECRETARY, MLADENOV, AND PERHAPS ANDREY LUKANOV WOULD APPEAR TO BE LOSING THE POLITICAL BATTLE. THEY ARE BEING CONSTANTLY PRESSED TO MAKE FURTHER CONCESSIONS, NONE OF WHICH SATISFIES THE INDEPENDENTS. THE LEADERS OF THE CURRENT AGRARIAN PARTY, WHICH CONTINUED TO HOOK ITS STAR TO THE BCP BANDWAGON BY ATTACKING TRENCHV AND PODKREPA FOR THEIR STRIKE CALL, ALSO WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE LOST MUCH CLAIM TO AN INDEPENDENT ROLE FOR THEMSELVES AND SUPPORT FROM THE PUBLIC. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN IF THE BREAKAWAY AND RADICAL FACTIONS OF THAT

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E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
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SUBJECT: BULGARIA AT THE TURN OF THE DECADE BEGINS

PARTY CAN GAIN CONTROL AND OUST THE TRADITIONALISTS. MLADENOV COULD BE IN SOME TROUBLE WITHIN THE PARTY FOR FAILING TO LEAD. HE WAS, BY IMPLICATION, SHARPLY ATTACKED AT THE DECEMBER 11-12 BCP CC PLENUM BY POLITBURO MEMBER STOYAN MIKHAILOV FOR LOSING A MONTH OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY AFTER THE NOVEMBER 10 PLENUM AND FOR USING OLD METHODS OF WORK. ON DECEMBER 26, BTA ANNOUNCED THE HOLDING OF AN ORGANIZING MEETING ON JANUARY 12 OF AN "ALTERNATIVE SOCIALIST ORGANIZATION" AS A FACTION WITHIN THE BCP. ITS ORGANIZER IS NIKOLAY VASILEV, A SOFIA UNIVERSITY ANTHROPOLOGIST WHO WAS EXPELLED FROM THE BCP AND THEN REINSTATED BY MLADENOV IN MID-NOVEMBER 1989. VASILEV DELIVERED A STINGING ANTI-BCP SPEECH AT THE DECEMBER 10 MASS DEMONSTRATION. OTHER GROUP MEMBERS ARE SAID TO INCLUDE ACTIVIST FILMMAKER ANGEL WAGENSTEIN, IVAN KRUSTEV, IVAILO DICHEV, AND OUSTED BUT REINSTATED BCP MEMBER AND ART CRITIC KOPRINA CHERVENKOVA. (ALL OF THESE ARE CONFIDENTIAL

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SAID TO BE MEMBERS OF THE DISCUSSION CLUB, ALSO.)

THE GROUP'S ANNOUNCED PROGRAM INCLUDES THE WHOLESALE RESIGNATION OF THE SITTING CENTRAL COMMITTEE, PUTTING A CARETAKER LEADERSHIP IN CHARGE OF PREPARATIONS FOR THE MARCH 19 PARTY CONGRESS, AND DOING AWAY WITH DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM AS A GUIDING PARTY PRINCIPLE.

16. AT THE SAME TIME, THE PARTY PRESS HAS BEEN CARRYING ACCOUNTS OF PARTY MEETINGS AT THE CITY AND REGIONAL LEVELS INDICATING LOCAL LEADERSHIP CHANGES, SOMETIMES UNDER APPARENTLY ACRIMONIOUS CONDITIONS. IT IS PERHAPS SIGNIFICANT THAT, IN ADDITION TO PRESSURE WHICH IS BUILDING FROM INDEPENDENT GROUPS ON THE OUTSIDE, DISSENT IS GROWING WITHIN THE PARTY, WHICH IS ALREADY LOSING SOME OF THE INTELLECTUALS WHOM MLADENOV HAD ATTEMPTED TO DRAW BACK INTO THE PARTY.

17. COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ADVISOR ANGELOV TOLD THE AMBASSADOR ON DECEMBER 21 THERE WAS A LIKELIHOOD OF A CENTRAL COMMITTEE PLENUM VERY EARLY IN JANUARY AT WHICH FURTHER CHANGES IN THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE COMPOSITION WOULD TAKE PLACE AS WELL AS PROCEDURAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE MARCH BCP CONGRESS. ANGELOV EXPRESSED THE PERSONAL VIEW THAT 75-80 PERCENT OF THE PRESENT CC MEMBERSHIP SHOULD BE REPLACED IF THE PARTY WAS TO HAVE ANY REAL HOPE OF LEADING THE COUNTRY. SIMILARLY, CC MEMBER SVETLIN RUSEV TOLD CONGRESSMAN LANTOS ON DECEMBER 23 THAT HE EXPECTED 90 PERCENT OF CC AND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MEMBERS TO BE PURGED IN THE COMING MONTHS.

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18. PODKREPA AND ESPECIALLY ITS FOUNDER, DR. KONSTANTIN TRENCHEV, AS WELL AS THE UDF APPEAR TO BE THE BIG WINNERS SO FAR, AND SEEM TO HAVE THE MOMENTUM THE PARTY HAS LOST. HOW TRENCHEV AND OTHERS WILL FARE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS REMAINS THE KEY QUESTION, ALONG WITH WHETHER THEY CAN MAINTAIN A CLEAR UNITY OF STRATEGY AND POLICY GOALS. ALTHOUGH THEY STILL HAVE A VERY LONG WAY TO GO, THEY HAVE COME MUCH FURTHER AND FASTER THAN MOST OBSERVERS HERE THOUGHT POSSIBLE.

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19. AT THE SAME TIME, WE DO NOT/NOT KNOW HOW OR WHETHER THE OPPOSITION GROUPS UNDER THE UDK PLAN, FOR EXAMPLE, TO TACKLE THE ETHNIC TURKISH QUESTION IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. ZHEYLO ZHELEV, CHAIRMAN OF THE UDF, HAS SAID IN PRINT AND PRIVATELY THAT THE PARTY/GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE A BOLD INITIATIVE IN RETURNING THEIR NAMES AND ALL OTHER RIGHTS AND ATTRIBUTES, THEREBY GAINING THE TRUST OF AT LEAST ONE MILLION BULGARIANS AND INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT. OTHERS IN THE UDF MAY NOT/NOT BE PREPARED TO GO SO FAST, NOR DOES THE PARTY/GOVERNMENT APPEAR PREPARED TO TAKE SUCH STEPS NOW. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN HOW THIS ISSUE WILL BE ADDRESSED, IF AT ALL, IN THE ROUND-TABLE NEGOTIATIONS, SCHEDULED TO BEGIN ONLY ONE WEEK BEFORE THE PLANNED JANUARY 9 BULGARIAN-TURKISH FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING IN KUWAIT.

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20. GIVEN THE SUCCESS OF THE UDF AND PODKREPA IN BRINGING THE PARTY/GOVERNMENT TO ROUND-TABLE

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NEGOTIATIONS, THE EMBASSY BELIEVES IT WOULD BE IN THE USG INTEREST TO WELCOME, PERHAPS IN THE FORM OF A Q&A AT THE DEPARTMENT'S NOON BRIEFING, THE START OF THE NEGOTIATIONS AS AN ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT TOWARD DEMOCRATIC CHANGE IN BULGARIA. THE FOCUS OF THE COMMENT SHOULD BE ON THE RESPONSIBLE, REPRESENTATIVE NATURE OF THE UDF AND ITS CONSTITUENT ORGANIZATIONS IN SEEKING PEACEFUL, DEMOCRATIC CHANGES. DEPENDING ON THE SUCCESS OF THE ROUND-TABLE TALKS AND THE EMERGENCE OF CLEAR UDF LEADERS, THE EMBASSY BELIEVES EARLY THOUGHT SHOULD BE GIVEN, PERHAPS BY APPROPRIATE PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS AND/OR THROUGH IV GRANTS, TO INVITING SOME OF THEM TO VISIT THE US. AN OBVIOUS EXAMPLE WOULD BE DR. TRENCHEV, WHO ALREADY HAS CONNECTIONS WITH THE AFL/CIO. IN ADDITION, WE SHOULD ALSO MOVE AHEAD WITH PREPARATIONS FOR THE NED/NDI VISIT. IF, HOWEVER, THE ROUND-TABLE NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE UNTIL THE MIDDLE OF JANUARY, IT WOULD BE WISE, AND

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PERHAPS NECESSARY, TO PROPOSE DATES SOMEWHAT LATER IN JANUARY.
POLANSKY

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