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THE JUNE 1990 ELECTIONS IN BULGARIA

INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION REPORT

**INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION TO
THE BULGARIAN NATIONAL ELECTIONS**

June 10, 1990

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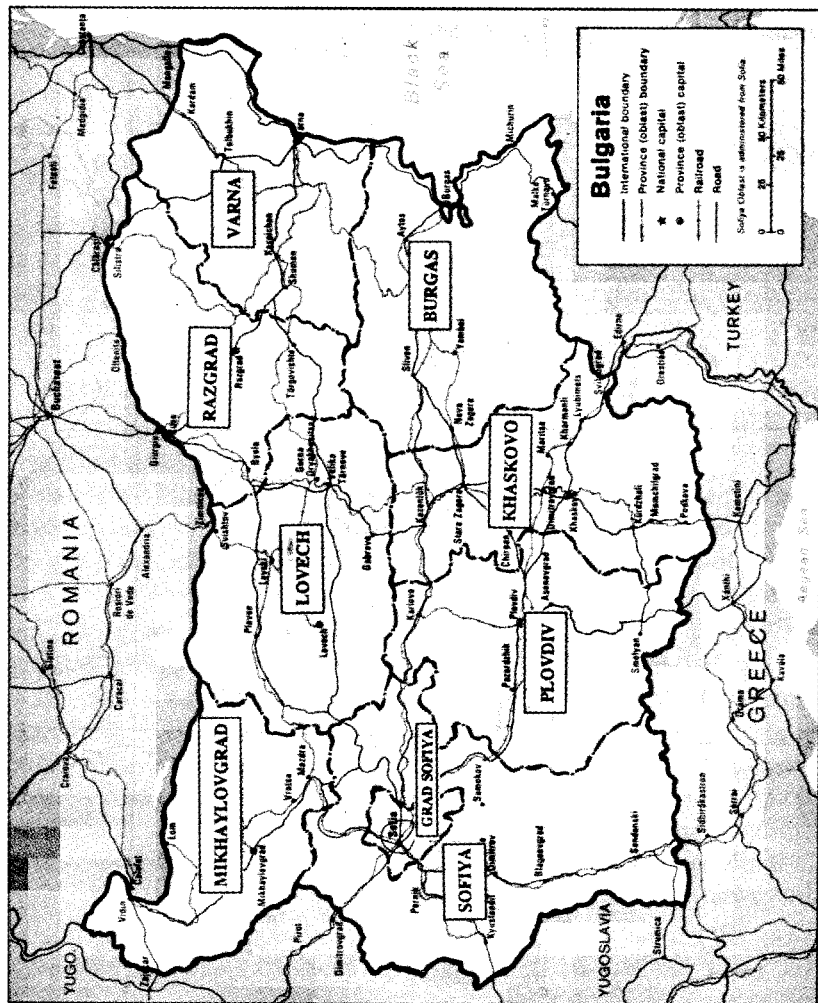
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This is the report of the international delegation that observed the June 10 and 17 elections in Bulgaria. The report is based on information gathered by the delegation's sponsors -- the National Republican Institute for International Affairs (NRIIA) and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) - before and after the elections and by the 12 teams that visited the different regions of Bulgaria on June 10.

The report was prepared under the auspices of the institutes after consultations with members of the delegation. While these consultations indicate a consensus for the conclusions reached herein, the institutes assume full responsibility for the accuracy of the report.

NDI Senior Consultant Larry Garber was responsible for drafting the report. Chapters 2-4 are taken from earlier reports prepared by Garber, NDI Program Director Thomas Melia, NDI Bulgaria Representative Gerald Mitchell and NDI Program Assistant Lisa McLean. The report was edited by NRIIA Program Director Margaret G. Thompson, NRIIA consultant Peter Schramm, NDI President Brian Atwood, NDI Vice President Kenneth Wollack and NDI Public Information Director Sue Grabowski.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A 60-member international delegation, organized by the National Republican Institute for International Affairs and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, observed the June 10 Bulgarian elections. At stake were seats for a 400-member Grand National Assembly, which is responsible for preparing Bulgaria's new constitution within 18 months. Smaller delegations sponsored by the institutes also observed the second round of elections on June 17. The following are the delegation's principal conclusions regarding the election process:

1. *The June elections represented a significant step in Bulgaria's transition from repressive one-party rule to a more democratic society.* The modalities of the election process were the product of extended Roundtable negotiations, which began soon after the November 10 internal coup that removed Todor Zhivkov, Bulgaria's longtime ruler, from power.
2. *Notwithstanding numerous allegations of irregularities, no substantive evidence was presented that calls into question the official results of the June 10 and 17 elections,* which provided the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP - formerly the Bulgarian Communist Party) 211 seats in the Grand National Assembly, the United Democratic Forces (UDF) 144 seats, the Movement for Rights and Freedom (MRF) 23 seats, the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union (BANU) 16 seats, and small parties and independents six seats. The BSP's victory was magnified by the election system, which apportioned half the seats on the basis of single-member constituencies, so that with 47 percent of the national vote the BSP obtained 53 percent of the seats in the Grand National Assembly.

3. *The balloting process generally was conducted in an orderly and peaceful manner.* The political parties and coalitions contesting the elections were represented on most of the sectional election commissions, which were responsible for administering the elections at the polling sites. Moreover, pollwatchers from the Bulgarian Association of Fair Elections (BAFE) and other civic organizations were present at most sites.
4. *With a few exceptions, voters cast their ballots in secret.* Nonetheless, not all voters believed this was the case, and some voters, particularly in rural areas, indicated they were intimidated by threats received, in many instances from local officials, before entering the polling sites.
5. *The ruling BSP enjoyed considerable institutional advantages in mounting an election campaign.* Moreover, the short time period between the November political opening and the elections hindered the newly-formed opposition parties' ability to organize and may have affected the outcome. Still, the election campaign afforded the major parties and coalitions contesting the elections an opportunity to communicate their respective messages to the Bulgarian electorate through public rallies, the media and other means. The campaign generally was conducted peacefully for which all parties deserve considerable credit.
6. *The Central Election Commission (CEC), which included representatives of the major parties and coalitions, organized, in a short period of time, a credible election process.* The efforts of the CEC, and the civil administrators who implemented many of the CEC decisions, ensured that virtually all Bulgarians living in the country were able to vote in the elections, despite problems with voter lists. Throughout the pre-election period, the CEC was responsive to concerns raised by the contestants in the elections, civic organizations and international observers regarding specific aspects of the process.
7. *The CEC expanded the franchise for some categories of Bulgarians living abroad. However, as many as 250,000 Turkish-Bulgarians, who were forced into exile during the last years of the*

Zhivkov regime, were disenfranchised by an administrative rule not required by the election law.

8. *The parallel vote tabulation performed by the Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections (BAFE), a newly formed non-partisan civic organization, provided an independent basis for confirming the official results, thus reducing tensions in the days following the elections.*
9. *The active participation of Bulgarians in the election campaign and in the administration of the elections reveals a strong desire to develop a democratic society. The liberalization of the media and the formation of new political parties and civic groups like BAFE also suggest that the prospects for continued democratic development in Bulgaria are hopeful.*

Not surprisingly, given the short time to prepare for the June elections and the lack of a democratic tradition in Bulgaria, several aspects of the election law and the preparations for the elections were open to criticism. In this context, the delegation suggests the following matters be considered by the Grand National Assembly in preparing a law for the coming local elections and for future national elections:

Voter lists - The quality of voter lists plays an important role in establishing confidence among the electorate in the election process. Hence, in the future, they should be prepared in a manner that assures their accuracy and should be available for public scrutiny.

Ballot format - The use of individual ballots for every party/candidate is costly, places an enormous administrative burden on the electoral authorities and increases the prospects for fraud. A single ballot, which lists all candidates with party symbols and colors, would be an effective alternative.

Ballot distribution - The distribution of ballots by political parties before the elections encourages voter participation, but also creates opportunities to intimidate voters. This could be rectified by having nonpartisan groups distribute ballots for all parties or by making ballots available only at the polling sites.

Constituency boundaries - The constituencies used for the 1990 elections, based on lines drawn more than 45 years ago, resulted in variances in the size of the electorates included in individual constituencies. In consultation with the political parties, a system for drawing constituencies using uniform standards should be developed prior to the next national elections.

Access to media - The election law guaranteed adequate access to television for the three major parties represented in the Roundtable negotiations. A new formula, which balances the need to provide all parties an opportunity to use television with the reality of a country that presently has two major and two minor parties, should be devised. While parties with demonstrated popularity and support ought to be given certain standing, fairness suggests that small parties and independent candidates also be assured some means of reaching the public.

Electoral complaints - The CEC's authority to investigate and adjudicate certain issues was either unclear or quite limited. Thus, to increase confidence in the electoral process, the CEC should be given additional legal authority that would permit thorough investigation of electoral complaints.

Voting abroad - The election law and regulations allowed a significant number of Bulgarians living abroad to vote in the June elections. However, the rule requiring a Bulgarian to be abroad less than two months or more than five years should be reconsidered, particularly if it continues to disproportionately affect a particular group of Turkish-Bulgarians who were forced from their homes in the recent past.

Tally sheets - The mathematical discrepancies on the official tally sheets or "protocols" that increased suspicions following the first round of elections were the result of badly designed forms, unclear instructions and inexperienced election officials. Because this is such a critical aspect of the election process, more attention should be given to designing forms and providing instructions that make mistakes and uncertainty less likely. Also, the procedure of providing political parties and civic organizations unofficial tally sheets should be maintained to ensure an independent basis for verifying the tabulation of results.

Civic organizations and international observers - Public confidence in the June election was significantly increased by the presence of representatives of civic organizations and international observers at polling sites and counting centers throughout the country. The CEC and government bodies should continue to facilitate this presence by providing representatives of these groups access to polling and counting sites, and by permitting them to independently assess the quality and fairness of the electoral process through such means as a parallel vote tabulation.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

On June 10 and 17, 1990, Bulgarians elected a 400-member Grand National Assembly in the country's first openly contested, multi-party elections since 1931. The Assembly has 18 months from election day to draft a new constitution during which time it will serve as the national legislature. The Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP - formerly the Bulgarian Communist Party), which obtained a small majority of seats in the Assembly, will lead the government during this transition period. However, opposition groups are expected to play an important role in developing government policies and in writing the new constitution.

Soon after the elections, President Petar Mladenov was forced to step down. Mladenov had led the November 10, 1989 internal party coup, which resulted in the resignation of long-time Communist Party leader, Todor Zhivkov. On August 1, 1990, the Grand National Assembly elected, by a vote of 270 to 100, Zhelu Zhelev, the leader of the opposition United Democratic Forces (UDF), to be Bulgaria's new president. An almost unanimous Assembly then ratified Zhelev's choice of BSP legislator and former Minister of Interior Antas Samerzhiev as vice president.

The June elections and subsequent developments marked the culmination of an extraordinary series of events in Bulgaria, a country with a limited democratic tradition. The November coup occurred in response to pressures from a small group of democratic and environmental activists, but more important reflected events in

the region, especially President Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms in the Soviet Union. Soon after the coup, the Bulgarian Communist Party (BCP) formally relinquished its monopoly on power and entered negotiations with the UDF, a coalition of opposition parties and interest groups. The negotiations, which were broadcast live on radio, resulted in an agreement to hold elections in June and the adoption of new political party and election laws. In mid-April, a multi-partisan Central Election Commission was formed to administer the June elections.

An intensive two-month campaign followed. The ruling BSP had the advantages of a well-entrenched party structure and the benefits inherent in incumbency. Meanwhile, Bulgaria's newly formed opposition parties and coalitions, in a relatively short period of time, had to develop nationwide structures, designate candidates, organize an election campaign, and instill confidence in a skeptical population that these elections would be different from those administered by the previous regime.

The Bulgarian elections were the last in a series of multi-party elections that transformed the political landscape of Eastern and Central Europe during the spring of 1990, and attracted more international attention than is usually the case for Bulgaria. However, unlike the other elections in the region, the contest in Bulgaria was won by a reformed Communist Party, which obtained a plurality of the votes and a small majority in the legislature. The significance of this development will be considered in the last chapter of this report.

As was the case for the elections in neighboring countries, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and the National Republican Institute for International Affairs (NRIIA) co-sponsored an international observer delegation for the June 10 elections. In doing so, NDI and NRIIA built on months of activities in Bulgaria designed to strengthen the political process after 45 years of repressive one-party rule.

NRRIA Activities in Bulgaria

Following a February 1990 survey visit, NRRIA developed a program in Bulgaria that provided training and infrastructure support to the UDF in an effort to level a playing field heavily favoring the ruling party. Between March and May, seminars and consultations were held in Sofia and major population centers throughout the country. The training sessions, conducted by experts from the United States and Great Britain (Appendix I) focused on political organizing, communicating political messages and ballot security.

NRRIA also sponsored a taped presentation by former U.S. President Ronald Reagan that appeared on Bulgaria's most popular television program one week before the elections. In a four-minute address to the Bulgarian people, Reagan urged all Bulgarians to participate in the forthcoming elections, and to understand the significance of a free and fair election for the emergence of a democratic political system (Appendix II).

NDI Activities in Bulgaria

NDI's pre-election activities in Bulgaria involved comprehensively monitoring all aspects of the election process. To this end, NDI provided technical advice and material assistance to the Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections (BAFE), which formed in mid-April as a nonpartisan organization to promote civic education and to monitor the fairness of the elections. In late April, NDI co-sponsored a two-day seminar for BAFE activists. The seminar focused on recruiting and training volunteers to participate in civic education and election-day monitoring. Participating in the seminar were grassroots organizers and election experts from Chile, Hungary, the Philippines and the United States (Appendix III).

NDI also organized three pre-election fact-finding missions, which visited Bulgaria April 23-26, May 13-17 and May 27-31 and included nationals of seven countries. Each mission met with election and government officials, political party leaders and representatives of nongovernmental organizations in Sofia and other

regions in the country. Based on the information gathered during these meetings, the missions identified potential problems in the election process, encouraged appropriate modifications, and reported on the fairness of the campaign underway in Bulgaria. By visiting eight regions of the country and issuing well-publicized statements at the end of each visit (Appendix IV), the missions also highlighted for Bulgarians the significance of the June elections in the eyes of the international community.

The International Observer Delegation

The 60-member international observer delegation included nationals of 23 countries. The delegation leaders were: Prime Minister Steingrimur Hermannsson of Iceland; Senator Robert Hill of Australia; Governor Madeleine Kunin of Vermont; and Representative Robert Lagomarsino of California, who is also the Chairman of NRIIA. The majority of the delegates arrived in Bulgaria on June 7, in time for the end-of-campaign rallies organized by the BSP and UDF. Briefings the next morning began with a review of the delegation's terms of reference (Appendix V) and presentations by NDI and NRIIA representatives who had visited Bulgaria during the previous months. They described the evolution of the political campaign and commented, in general terms, on the administrative preparations that had been made for the elections.

Professor Zhivko Stalev, chairman of the Central Election Commission (CEC), briefed the delegates on how the CEC operated, described the challenges it faced in preparing for the elections in a compressed time frame and highlighted some modifications that had been made in response to suggestions by the political parties and other organizations. As a specific example, Stalev cited the decision taken the previous day permitting Bulgarians, in effect, to register on election day. The decision was deemed necessary in the face of legitimate concerns about the quality of the voter registries and fears that some people would be disenfranchised.

Representatives of BAFE described the origins of the association, its success in recruiting volunteers, and its civic-education efforts during the campaign. They also presented their plans to monitor the polling sites on election day and to conduct a parallel vote tabulation modeled on similar efforts by groups in Chile and Panama (see Chapter 6).

In the afternoon, Petko Semionev, campaign manager for the UDF, offered his perspectives on the fairness of the election campaign. He emphasized the difficulties the UDF had faced in organizing a nationwide effort in only six months -- especially overcoming limited resources and the psychological fears of prospective voters, particularly in rural areas. Lyuben Gotsev, Semionev's counterpart at the BSP, followed with his observations on the campaign, commenting that acts of intimidation had been committed by supporters of all political parties, but not to a degree that would affect the validity of the elections. The closing panel featured three journalists, who discussed the changing role of the Bulgarian media in the post-November 10 era; Valeri Naidenov, editor of *Duma*, the BSP newspaper, declined to participate because he objected to the alleged partisan composition of the panel.

On Friday evening, the delegation leaders held a press conference to describe the purposes of the delegation (Appendix VI). They explained that members of the delegation would observe the elections throughout the country to obtain a national perspective of the process. The leaders also noted that Bulgarians of every political persuasion welcomed the presence of the delegation and that the nation appeared united in its desire to participate in the election process.

Saturday morning, the delegation divided into 12 teams, with 11 teams dispatched to sites outside Sofia (Appendix VII). Most of the teams included at least one delegate who had visited the region previously. Upon arrival at their destinations, the teams were briefed by representatives of the local BAFE chapter, who also coordinated the teams' schedules. The teams also held meetings with local leaders of the UDF, BSP and either the

Bulgarian Agrarian National Union (BANU) or the Movement for Rights and Freedom (MRF). At the final meeting of the day, local election officials provided an update on their preparations.

The delegation leaders, meanwhile, met in Sofia with President Petar Mladenov; Prime Minister Andrei Lukanov; and the leaders of the BSP, UDF and BANU, Alexander Lilov, Zhelu Zhelev, and Victor Vulkov respectively. During these meetings, the delegation leaders reiterated the importance of emphasizing, even at this late date, the significance of a secret ballot. In response, the CEC was agreed that the secretary of the CEC would highlight this point during a broadcast on national television Saturday evening.

That evening, the delegation was informed of a letter received by the president of BAFE (Appendix VIII). The letter stated that, pursuant to a decision taken earlier that day by the CEC, the results obtained from BAFE's parallel vote tabulation could *not* be released until after the final and official results were released by the CEC, which would likely be days after the voting had been completed. Concerned that the integrity of the parallel vote tabulation would be compromised, the delegation leaders sent a letter to Prime Minister Lukanov expressing concern over the manner in which the decree proscribing the release of results from the parallel vote tabulation had been taken (Appendix IX). The letter also noted that successful implementation of the parallel vote tabulation would be essential to ensure the credibility of the elections for the Bulgarian people and the international community.

Within a few hours of the letter's delivery Sunday morning, the delegation leaders were informed by BAFE representatives that there would be no ban on the release of the parallel tabulation results. The only caveat stipulated that BAFE wait until polling sites throughout the country had closed, which was considered a reasonable directive.

On election day, the observer groups subdivided into two-member teams to visit polling sites in their assigned regions. Overall, the delegation visited more than 350 polling sites, including several where military conscripts were voting. By maintaining close

contact with local BAFE and political party representatives, the teams were informed of problem areas as they developed and, in several cases, were able to corroborate or to refute the allegations being made. Delegation members also were present at polling sites during the counting process, obtaining, where possible, copies of the results and transmitting them to BAFE.

On Monday morning, the delegation regrouped in Sofia for a debriefing session after which a statement was presented to the media at a well-attended press conference (Appendix X). The statement emphasized that the reported observations were of a preliminary character, particularly in view of the many allegations that had been presented concerning election-day abuses and the fact that a second round of elections were to be held for a large number of legislative seats the following Sunday. The statement, while noting the role fear played in the elections, emphasized that the fact "an election has clearly taken place" is "a substantial accomplishment" for Bulgaria and "that Bulgaria is a very different place than it was before the 10th of November."

A small group of NDI delegates remained in Bulgaria during the week between the first and second rounds. The delegates met with CEC commissioners and technical experts and with representatives of political parties to obtain more information regarding the complaints that had been reported. A statement issued by NDI on June 18 presented the group's findings on the handling of the complaints and its observations on the second round of voting (Appendix XI).

Meanwhile, a 10-member NRIIA-sponsored delegation returned to Bulgaria for the June 17 run-off elections. At a June 18 press conference, the NRIIA delegation issued a statement concerning the quality of the electoral process (Appendix XII). An NDI staff member remained in Bulgaria through July 5, providing the institutes with information concerning the formal allegations of election abuses filed by the political parties and electoral coalitions.

Chapter 2

BACKGROUND

This chapter provides a context for understanding the significance of the June elections in Bulgaria. Much of the historical material is drawn from R.J. Crampton's *A Short History of Modern Bulgaria* (1987).

Political History: 1878 to 1944

Bulgaria has a long tradition of external dominance. From 1396 to 1878, Bulgaria was subject to Ottoman rule, separated politically and psychologically from developments in the rest of Europe.

In 1878, following the Russian-Turkish War and the diplomatic intervention of the European powers, Bulgaria obtained functional independence from Turkey, although complete sovereignty was not gained until October 1908. During this 30-year period, Russian influence was considerable, including at times the deployment of Russian officers in the Bulgarian military and, during the 1880s, the appointment of Russian generals as Minister President and Minister of the Interior. The amicable relationship between Russia and Bulgaria -- based on a shared Slavic heritage, Eastern rite Orthodox Catholicism, similar languages and the Cyrillic alphabet -- pre-dates this period, however, and distinguishes Bulgaria from its Warsaw Pact neighbors for which Russia generally has been a belligerent and feared great power.

Bulgaria's involvement in four major wars around the turn of the century resulted in constantly changing national borders and

considerable internal turmoil. Political control of the largely agrarian nation passed among a prince of German extraction (variously Alexander II, Alexander III and Ferdinand), the ministers he appointed, and leaders of the partly elected national assembly (the Subranie), in which majorities were established at different points by Liberals and Conservatives.

The practice of *partisanstvo* -- the distribution of government jobs to the partisan supporters of various parties or factions among the small, well-educated elite -- led to a popular reaction among the peasantry and the founding of the Bulgarian Agrarian Union in December 1899. In the elections of 1908, the renamed Bulgarian Agrarian National Union (BANU) won 11 percent of the votes cast and 23 seats in the Subranie, thus becoming the largest of several opposition parties.

Following World War I, BANU, led by Alexander Stamboliiski, won pluralities in the flawed elections of 1919 and 1920, and consequently led several post-war coalition governments. While the agrarian philosophy inspired the enactment of land reforms and the modernizing of voluntary cooperatives, national and international tensions resulted in renewed chaos during the immediate post-war period. In 1923, Stamboliiski was overthrown in a coup and died a grisly death at the hands of Macedonian nationalists.

The next 20 years saw the concentration of power in the hands of King Boris. After 1935, Boris increasingly, if unenthusiastically, aligned Bulgaria with the Axis powers. Crampton records this lament by Boris in 1939: "My army is pro-German, my wife is Italian, my people are pro-Russian, I alone am pro-Bulgarian." After declining several invitations to enter treaties with virtually all of the European belligerents, Boris finally permitted the Germans to cross Bulgaria from Romania to make war on Greece in March 1941, leading to its *de facto* inclusion in the Axis. However, Bulgaria did not fully collaborate with Hitler (most notably, Bulgaria prevented the deportation of the majority of its Jewish population), and native fascists never held significant political power.

King Boris died in 1943 and was succeeded by his son, six-year-old Simeon II, who ruled through regents until the communist takeover at the end of the war. The effective ruler during these years, Bogdan Filov, managed to sustain Boris' policy of distancing his country from the Nazi war effort. Bulgaria never joined the war against the Soviet Union (remaining legally neutral in the war between Berlin and Moscow) and, as early as 1943, the government was sounding out the Western allies about a separate peace. Yet, small numbers of German military personnel were present in Bulgaria, and the Black Sea ports were used by the Germans for naval construction and repairs. Bulgaria's own war effort was confined principally to the occupation of portions of Greece and Yugoslavia that successive Sofia governments had coveted.

Germany never occupied Bulgaria (as it did Hungary, when the Hungarian government's fealty to the Third Reich wavered), and the Sofia government tried for as long as it could to balance the malevolent interests of the Germans and the Soviet Union in the hope that eventually a treaty could be signed with the British and the United States. But as the German position weakened, the Western allies lost what little interest they had in the fate of the Balkans. Finally, shortly after the Soviet invasion and occupation of Romania in August 1944, Bulgaria's turn came.

On September 8, 1944, the Soviet army invaded Bulgaria and marched quickly to Sofia. The following day, a Fatherland Front administration took power, in which communists controlled the ministries of interior and justice, as well as the presidency. The Fatherland Front, which included Social Democrats and Agrarians, as well as communists, thus became the domestic instrument through which the communists controlled post-war Bulgaria; the Soviet army constituted the foreign instrument.

A lengthy struggle between the communist and the non-communist elements in the coalition ensued. A "people's militia" and "people's courts" sprang up overnight and months of blood-letting followed. Many trials of alleged Nazi "collaborators" led to swiftly executed capital sentences.

From late 1944 through the summer of 1946, the principal opponent of the communist effort to consolidate power was Nikola Petkov, leader of the Agrarians. His peasant constituency was alarmed over the prospect of land collectivization and staunchly supported Petkov's effort to thwart the imposition of Soviet-style Communism, an endeavor that also obtained the support of the Social Democrats.

Largely because the communists were keen to win Western validation of the legitimacy of their government (to obtain trade and aid concessions), Petkov enjoyed some leverage for a time. He tried to create a situation in which the communists would be obliged to campaign on more equitable terms with their democratic rivals, despite the presence of the Red Army and communist control of the police, the media and many institutions important to political organization (such as printing facilities). In the summer of 1945, he won a three-month postponement of the elections scheduled for August and secured the right of opposition parties to present candidates.

Concerned about the prospects for free and fair elections, the United States took the unusual step of sending Mark Etheridge, editor of the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, to assess the political environment. Etheridge's report about inequities in the campaign persuaded the United States to withhold recognition of the government that emerged from the November 10, 1945 elections, which produced an 86 percent majority for the governing Fatherland Front coalition and 12 percent for the opposition parties. The Soviets, meanwhile, sought unsuccessfully to persuade Petkov and the Social Democrats to join the government, creating a stalemate of sorts. Throughout this entire period, the post-war discussion of boundary settlements and peace terms continued in Paris.

During 1946, the army, civil administration and intelligentsia were purged, although the voice of a vigorous, if shrinking, political opposition to the communists could still be heard. In September,

a referendum abolished the monarchy: of the 92 percent of the electorate who voted, 92 percent chose to establish a republic.

On October 27, 1946, new elections took place for the legislature. This time, the opposition coalition, led by Petkov, officially received 22 percent of the votes cast and won 101 of the 364 seats. However, the Fatherland Front won 71 percent, and the Communist Party garnered the lion's share of the seats won by the Front.

Again, the Western powers were not satisfied that a fair election had taken place. Crampton summarizes the October 1946 elections in the following words, which are repeated here because of the echoes heard in 1990:

Petkov told foreign journalists that interference and intimidation had decreased the opposition vote by at least three-fifths. The opposition parties, he said, had not been allowed either a free press or an unrestricted right of assembly, and the meetings they had held had not infrequently been disrupted by communist activists. He complained further that ... protagonists of the government had been allowed to vote more than once - most of the new, pro-communist army officers had been given at least two ballot slips - whilst many anti-government activists had not received their voting cards or had been prevented from reaching the polling stations.

Following these elections, Georgi Dimitrov, a Communist Party leader who had spent the war in Moscow and was prominent in the Comintern, the international grouping of Communist Parties, became Minister President (Prime Minister). Using the police and the judiciary, the communists set about destroying the remaining elements of the opposition by the following summer.

In June 1947, the day after the United States Senate ratified the peace treaty with Bulgaria, Petkov was arrested on farcical charges. A Stalinist show trial took place during August, in which Petkov was permitted neither a defense lawyer nor a defense. On September 23, three days after the peace treaty came into force,

Petkov was executed, and effective opposition to the communist takeover was eliminated. In December, the "Dimitrov constitution," modeled on the Soviet document, was adopted by acclamation in the Subranie, and the formal basis for a totalitarian regime was in place.

The Era of Communist Party Domination

Under Dimitrov and his successor, Vulko Chervenkov, widespread persecutions and internal party purges in the Stalinist style defined Bulgarian politics. Following Stalin's death in 1953, Todor Zhivkov, a "home" communist (in contradistinction to Moscow-trained communists who had spent the war outside Bulgaria) began his bid for power. He became BCP General Secretary in March 1954 as part of a collective leadership. From there, Zhivkov maneuvered into the position of first-among-equals and became Moscow's favorite Bulgarian communist leader. He aligned himself closely with Khrushchev during the latter's regime, launched various reform programs, and survived his mentor's sudden departure from the Kremlin.

During the Zhivkov era, Bulgaria, previously among Europe's most agrarian societies, initiated a massive industrialization program. Literacy levels increased and the population benefitted from the heavy emphasis placed on education. In the 1970s, with Zhivkov's daughter Ludmilla taking the lead as Minister of Cultural Affairs, there was renewed interest in Bulgarian culture.

After 1962, Zhivkov's power went almost unchallenged, with the exception of an apparent army plot against him in 1965. He continually shuffled the Politburo and senior government ministers to prevent the consolidation of rival power centers. For example, in 1977, a major shake-up in the party occurred; 38,500 party members lost their party cards and positions.

In the late 1960s, Zhivkov began a program to assert the country's national identity and to create a "single nationality state." In 1965, Macedonians lost their status as a "minority race," and, in 1969, an agreement was reached with Turkey providing for the emigration of ethnic Turks. By 1979, some 50,000 had emigrated,

at which point the agreement lapsed and relations between the two states deteriorated.

Bulgarian ethnic policy took a bizarre turn in the early 1980s when the government launched an internationally condemned campaign to assimilate the Turkish minority by forcing Turkish nationals to adopt Slavic names. Turkish language newspapers and schools were closed. Amnesty International reported that more than 100 Turkish nationals were killed during this campaign; 300,000 others emigrated to Turkey, most in the summer of 1989.

In the international arena, Bulgaria remained a loyal friend of the Soviet Union in every respect. Its foreign policy since World War II was generally indistinguishable from Moscow's. During the early 1980s, many believed that Bulgaria had undertaken some rather nefarious work on behalf of the Soviet Union. In July 1982, the U.S. State Department formally declared that Bulgaria engaged in "state-sponsored terrorism" because of its involvement in the supply of arms to extremists in Turkey and elsewhere, and for reported protection and encouragement of narcotics trafficking. Curiously, and perhaps coincidentally, by 1981 Libya had become Bulgaria's third largest trading partner after the USSR and the German Democratic Republic. In September 1982, evidence surfaced that linked the Bulgarian secret services to the May 1981 assassination attempt against Pope John Paul II, who at that time had come to personify resistance to Soviet repression in Poland.

In March 1978, copies of a clandestine, unsigned "Charter 78" appeared, modeled on Czechoslovakia's dissident Charter 77. Through the end of the 1980s, however, an alternative political culture never fully emerged in Bulgaria on anything like the scale witnessed in Poland, Czechoslovakia or Hungary. While there were some individual dissidents -- such as Zhelu Zhelev, whose book *Fascism* was a powerful indictment of the Stalinist order -- no effective political dissidence challenged the regime or held it publicly accountable.

November 10, 1989 and its Aftermath

By 1989, with the Soviet Union embarked on far-reaching political and economic restructuring, Bulgaria began to fall out of step with its traditional role model. Ironically, Zhivkov, who had assumed power as the local version of reformist Khrushchev, seemed unable or unwilling to keep pace with Mikhail Gorbachev's experiments with political and economic reforms. This dissonance apparently troubled Zhivkov's younger colleagues in the Bulgarian communist establishment and paved the way for his removal from power.

The first independent groups in contemporary Bulgaria were organized by environmentalists, and their big moment in the international spotlight came in September 1989. The occasion was a long-scheduled meeting in Sofia of official representatives from the 35 signatory states of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) to discuss international environmental matters. Bulgarian environmentalists, encouraged and protected to an extent by the international community present in the country, organized the first public, unauthorized demonstrations in more than 40 years. Demonstrations became larger and more frequent during October, even after the departure of the CSCE delegates, and the roster of grievances quickly expanded.

On November 10, 1989, the day the Berlin Wall was opened, the BCP Politburo forced Zhivkov to resign. Petar Mladenov, for 18 years Zhivkov's foreign minister, orchestrated the departure of his longtime mentor, reportedly with the explicit support of Mikhail Gorbachev, with whom Mladenov visited in early November. An October 27 resignation letter, written by Mladenov to the BCP Politburo during a preliminary face-off, highlights the political conflicts that had developed within the BCP over Zhivkov's policies. Critics believed these policies were forcing Bulgaria into international isolation, where its only ally would be "the rotten dictatorial family regime of Ceauscescu." Following the November 10 coup, seven of the 10 BCP Politburo members were replaced

and 30 members of the BCP Central Committee were forced to resign.

On November 17, the National Assembly abolished a much-hated, anti-dissident provision of the criminal code (Article 273) which permitted government prosecution of those who "spread untrue allegations that are of a character to create dissatisfaction with the government and its undertakings." Critics of the government and of the communist system began appearing on television and in the print media. The discriminatory decrees directed against the Turkish minority were revoked, although this caused a nationalist backlash in January. In addition, the government promised to eliminate the internal security forces that for decades had been used to repress the Bulgarian population.

The new government, meanwhile, blamed the Zhivkov regime for Bulgaria's many problems. In the months that followed, visitors to Bulgaria would be amused to hear longtime Communist Party and government officials proclaim that their entire world view had changed suddenly and completely on "the 10th of November" and that they "now reject all the totalitarian excesses of the previous regime."

The question of multi-party elections proved controversial. Mladenov was quoted in November as supporting "free elections and greater pluralism," but other BCP officials explained at the time that this meant "pluralism of opinions, not of parties," and that the Communist Party would remain the nation's "leading force." Then, on December 11, the day after a pro-democracy rally of 50,000 people in Sofia, Mladenov announced in a major speech that the Communist Party's monopoly on power, hitherto guaranteed by Article 1 of the Constitution, would be abolished.

During December, the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) was formed as an umbrella coalition of opposition groups to negotiate with the government. Roundtable negotiations among the BSP, UDF and BANU began on January 3, 1990. The talks proceeded slowly at first, with the UDF rebuffing a BCP offer to form a government of national unity. The negotiations gained

momentum in February, following the 14th BCP Congress. The Congress elected Alexander Lilov, who had been dismissed from the Politburo in 1983, as leader of the renamed Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP). At the same time, the government that assumed power after the coup resigned. Andrei Lukanov, an economist and former minister of foreign trade, was designated the new prime minister, and he assembled a cabinet that was considered more reform-minded than its predecessor.

Even with these developments, it took two months of difficult negotiations to reach agreement on several points that laid the basis for fundamental changes in the constitution. These issues included, *inter alia*: 1) recognition of Bulgaria's character as a democratic, pluralist state; 2) acceptance of an economy based upon market competition with the state responsible for protecting the weaker social strata; 3) the election of a Grand National Assembly -- recalling the constituent assembly of the same name formed after liberation from the Turks in 1878 -- with an 18-month mandate to prepare a new constitution, during which time Mladenov would remain as head of state while the head of government would be answerable to the Assembly; 4) the adoption of a Political Party Act; and 5) the adoption of a Grand National Assembly Election Act.

With the Roundtable agreement finalized in early April, preparations for the elections began in earnest. The short time period between adoption of the agreement and the June election dates, however, posed a hurdle for all concerned.

Chapter 3

ELECTORAL FRAMEWORK

In the period after November 10, numerous parties and organizations formed and sought to participate in the political process. However, the principal Roundtable negotiations were conducted between the BSP and the UDF, and generally accommodated just these two parties/coalitions and the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union, the traditional party that existed as the sole legal "opposition" during the communist era.

The agreement that emerged from the negotiations reflected compromises by the BSP and the UDF. The UDF accepted Mladenov as head of state for the transition period. More important, the June date for the elections placed the UDF at a considerable disadvantage; the UDF, recognizing the need for time to build a nationwide organizational structure and to transmit its message to the public, had initially sought to have the elections scheduled for November. The UDF threatened to boycott elections that the BSP originally sought to schedule for May 1990, but eventually agreed to the June dates.

For its part, the BSP accepted the concept of a Grand National Assembly, which in practical terms meant it would be twice the size of an ordinary National Assembly and that it would exist for the limited period of 18 months; the BSP had sought to avoid a series of elections, hoping to obtain an extended mandate in early elections for which the opposition forces were not quite prepared. The acceptance of an election system based, in part, on

proportional representation, also represented a concession by the BSP, which believed it would benefit from a perpetuation of the single-member constituency system.

The Election Law

The Grand National Assembly Election Act of 1990 established procedures for electing the 400-member unicameral Grand National Assembly. The act provided for the election of 200 legislators each from single-member electoral districts and from multi-member districts under a party list system.

The 200 single-member electoral districts were based on those used in previous Bulgarian elections, while the 28 multi-member districts corresponded to the administrative districts that were used until mid-1987, when the country was reorganized into nine administrative districts. The number of legislators elected from the multi-member districts varied, ranging from 26 in Sofia to three in the smallest district.

Not surprisingly, given the lack of current demographic data, there were no significant complaints presented by any of the participating parties regarding the drawing of the electoral district boundaries before the elections. However, as discussed in greater detail below, following the elections the UDF charged that critical variances in the number of voters per single-member constituencies benefitted the BSP in the allocation of seats in the Grand National Assembly (see Chapter 7).

In the single-member districts, a candidate needed 50 percent of the votes to be elected in the first round. If no candidate received 50 percent, then the two candidates with the largest number of votes would participate in run-off elections on June 17. Also, if voter turnout in the district was less than 50 percent in the first round, a run-off election was required.

Pursuant to a decision of the Central Election Commission (CEC), which relied on the example of the West German election system, the 200 multi-member seats were allocated in accordance with the proportion of votes received by the party nationwide, subject to one caveat: a party had to receive at least four percent

of the national vote. The latter provision was designed to prevent parties with limited national support from obtaining representation in the legislature. In a similar vein, the Political Party Act, also adopted in late March, authorized the banning of parties "based on ethnic or religious principles."

Once the number of multi-member seats a party was entitled to receive at the national level was determined, the individual seats were allocated by district using the D'Hont method. In effect this meant that a party receiving a large number of votes in a particular multi-member district would have a large number of the candidates on its list elected from that district.

Electoral Contestants

Of the more than 45 parties and groups registered and nominating candidates for the June elections, only four became significant contenders. In part, this reflected the system that evolved from the Roundtable negotiations. The smaller parties, which were not represented in the negotiations, were significantly disadvantaged by the institutional benefits provided to the BSP, UDF and BANU. On the other hand, to have treated all parties equally would have diluted the message of the major opposition coalition, providing the BSP with an even greater institutional advantage in the June elections. In large measure, the system accomplished its major purpose: providing a meaningful choice among competing parties presenting distinct messages to the Bulgarian citizenry.

Union of Democratic Forces

The Union of Democratic Forces (UDF), a coalition of 17 parties and interest groups, formed in December 1989 to present a coherent opposition to the communist government in the Roundtable negotiations. The UDF chair during the campaign period was Zhelu Zhelev, a philosophy professor and author who was imprisoned in the 1960s for his dissident writings. Along with the overall UDF campaign manager, Petko Semionov, a sociologist and leader of the Discussion Club for Glasnost and Democracy,

Zhelev succeeded in maintaining the unity of a rather disparate group through difficult negotiations and an intense campaign.

The political parties in the coalition were not well developed, and this may have helped the coalition remain united in the weeks before the elections. The UDF presented a single slate of candidates in the elections and developed a coordinated campaign apparatus. The list of parliamentary candidates was decided centrally by the UDF leadership based on recommendations submitted by the constituent parties and groups. The UDF received financial assistance and training from a number of foreign supporters, as permitted by Bulgarian law.

The UDF comprised the following constituent groups:

- Independent Society for the Protection of Human Rights in Bulgaria;
- Independent Federation of Labor (Podkrepa, or "Support");
- Committee for the Protection of Religious Rights, Freedom of Conscience and Spiritual Values;
- Citizens' Initiative;
- Democratic Party;
- Social Democratic Party;
- Federation of Independent Student Societies;
- Bulgarian Radical Democratic Party;
- Federation of Clubs for Glasnost and Democracy;
- Eco-Glasnost;
- Bulgarian Agrarian National Union - Nikola Petkov faction;
- Green Party;
- Club for the Illegally Repressed Since 1945;
- Party of Freedom and Progress;
- Socialist Party (not the governing party);
- United Democratic Center; and
- Democratic Front.

The names suggest the varied interests represented under the UDF umbrella.

Bulgarian Socialist Party

In March 1990, the Bulgarian Communist Party (BCP) renamed itself the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP). The BCP was the oldest Communist Party in Europe and historically had a significantly higher membership per capita than its neighbors in the Soviet bloc. Unlike post-Communist Parties elsewhere in Eastern Europe, the BSP remained well-organized and cohesive, with few members having defected from the ranks of the party. In rural areas in particular, the BSP remained visibly in command and was usually the most powerful social force in a town or village. In the major cities, where the BSP's policies were subject to greater public criticism and its grip on the lives of the population seemed somewhat less certain, the party was weaker.

During the campaign, the BSP used its considerable control over the news media to emphasize differences within the UDF, characterizing the latter as an incoherent amalgam of conflicting interests unable to rule. The BSP also underscored the technocratic experience of its leaders and members. Nonetheless, after years of monolithic control by the Party Central Committee, factions formed within the BSP, undermining the unity of its purpose and platform.

One faction, the Alternative Socialist Organization (ASO), included reformist intellectuals dissatisfied with the pace of change. It presented separate lists of candidates in certain electoral districts. The Alternative Socialist Party split from the ASO, leaving the BSP altogether. Neither group developed a great deal of visibility or popular following, but they took away some of the most radical reformers from the mainstream of the BSP.

Bulgarian Agrarian National Union

Under the previous regime, 25 percent of the Bulgarian Parliament (*Subranie*) seats were allotted to members of the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union (BANU), a party with a long (in Bulgarian terms) and checkered history. From 1948 to 1989, it was the official opposition, cooperating fully with the Fatherland Front and the BCP. Its function was to secure peasant support for,

or acquiescence to, government policy. BANU was granted representation in the parliament and provided buildings and other facilities, and some members held cabinet positions. Indeed, in 1964, the leader of the party, Georgi Traikov, was designated head of state.

Since November 1989, BANU leaders have attempted to re-establish their *bona fides* as a genuine political alternative to the BSP. They withdrew from the government and portrayed themselves as a true opposition party. A minority within BANU, known as the Initiative Group, pushed for even greater reforms. Meanwhile, a splinter group that formed in 1949 and adopted the name Nikola Petkov Club (after the Agrarian Union leader who was hanged by the communists in 1948) joined the UDF. BANU sought constantly to entice the Nikola Petkov faction to rejoin the party, but the anti-communist, anti-BSP group remained with the UDF, providing the UDF with its main link to the rural, agrarian community.

Movement for Rights and Freedom

Although nominally open to all Bulgarians interested in promoting civil liberties and human rights, the Movement is essentially the party of the Turkish minority, which constitute approximately 10 percent of the population. It is headquartered in Kurdzhali, the center of the Turkish community in the southern-central region of the country, and is chaired by Ahmed ("Meddi") Dogan. The Movement presented candidates in those constituencies with significant Turkish populations. It remained on generally uneasy terms with the UDF, having been rebuffed by UDF leaders when it sought to join forces in the election campaign. Indeed, all parties contesting the elections sought to avoid identifying too closely with the Turkish minority for fear of a nationalist backlash.

While the Movement was able to organize rallies and other campaign events, limits were placed on its freedom of activity. Campaign speeches in Turkish, for example, were prohibited by law. The Movement also feared being proscribed on the ground that it

was based exclusively on "ethnic and religious grounds," although this did not come to pass.

Central Election Commission

The election act provided for the establishment of a Central Election Commission (CEC), 228 district election commissions (one each for the 200 single-member constituencies and for the 28 multi-member constituencies) and a sectional election commission for each authorized polling site (more than 13,000 polling sites or sections were established for the June 10 elections). These commissions included officials from the municipal administration and party-designated representatives.

The CEC was formed on April 11. Its chair was Zhivko Stalev, a well-respected professor of law, who was proposed by the UDF, although he was not affiliated with any political party. The other three officers on the commission were designated by the BSP, UDF and BANU respectively, while the remaining 20 members were divided among the three major political parties and coalitions.

The CEC was responsible for enforcing the election law and adopting procedures and regulations for the elections. It had authority to adjudicate certain types of complaints, to register parties and coalitions, and to proclaim the results in the multi-member districts. Commission decisions could be appealed directly to the Bulgarian Supreme Court and, indeed, some were.

The commission held its first meeting on April 18. UDF members of the commission complained that they did not receive proper notice of the meeting. However, with a few exceptions discussed in greater detail below, the commission developed regulations and procedures implementing the election campaign and the balloting process in a fair and impartial manner. More important, as the delegation noted in its post-election statement, the CEC was "responsive to concerns raised by opposition parties and international observers" throughout the pre-election period, thus promoting confidence in the process among all sectors of the society.

The Military

Consistent with communist doctrine and Bulgaria's Stalinist constitution, the military was organized and trained for more than four decades to be subservient to the Party, rather than the government. Political officers conducted regular courses in political education and controlled promotion and assignments. In November, the military sided with those in the BCP seeking Zhivkov's ouster, thus making his removal inevitable. In the aftermath of the coup, public opinion surveys ranked Minister of National Defense Dobri Dhurov, who was believed to have played a key role in the coup, as Bulgaria's most popular political figure.

In January, Dhurov issued a decree designed to depoliticize the military. Political programs in the military were abolished, and the amount of time served by conscripts was reduced from 24 to 18 months. During the campaign, there were no major military exercises and reservists were not called for duty. Nonetheless, the military's role in the elections was a major source of complaints by the opposition.

The military had an impact on the electoral process in two critical ways. First, several military officers, including most notably Dhurov, were ruling party candidates. Dhurov frequently appeared at campaign rallies in uniform and was transported around the country in military helicopters.

Another opposition complaint concerned access to the military bases where the majority of the military's 107,000 personnel resided. An April decree issued by the CEC sought to provide all parties with equal access to the bases. The decree required that the military newspaper publish the platforms of the three major parties, that conscripts be allowed to view special campaign broadcasts on television and that meetings be organized at which all the candidates competing in the region could appear before the conscripts.

For the most part, the decree was implemented, although there were still complaints that officers were directing conscripts to vote for the ruling party. In addition, there was an inherent

resistance to eliminating all vestiges of military subordination to the Communist Party. Thus, military bases still contained various symbols associating the military with the Party. What effect this had on the voting choices habits of the conscripts could not be ascertained.

Civic Organizations

In the months preceding the elections, two civic organizations formed to monitor the electoral process: the Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections (BAFE); and the Citizens Initiative for Free and Democratic Elections (CIFDE). Their respective evolutions reflect the often contentious nature of the Bulgarian electoral process, but also the potential role that civic organizations can play in an emerging democratic society.

BAFE formed as a nonpartisan, civic organization in mid-April. Modeled after similar groups in the Philippines and Chile, BAFE sought to promote confidence in the electoral process by developing voter education programs, mobilizing pollwatchers and conducting an independent, parallel, vote tabulation.

BAFE's initial organizers were students and other young activists, most of whom were sympathetic to the opposition. They preferred, however, to work for a nonpartisan organization rather than a political party. A prominent Bulgarian television journalist, Kevork Kevorkian, served as president of BAFE, and he recruited other prominent Bulgarians from across the political spectrum to serve on BAFE's advisory council.

Kevorkian used small segments of his popular weekly two-and-a-half hour Sunday television program to publicize BAFE's existence and to solicit additional volunteers. The credibility provided by Kevorkian's program, together with an energetic organizing drive, permitted BAFE to field more than 10,000 volunteers on June 10, less than two months after it had formed.

The government's response to BAFE was equivocal. It was allowed to register as a legal entity quickly, to rent office space in the government-controlled Palace of Culture and to purchase equipment with assistance from abroad. At the same time, the

government portrayed BAFE in the media as partisan in support of the UDF. In response, BAFE sought to convince if not the government, then at least the Bulgarian people and international observers that BAFE volunteers, regardless of their personal voting preferences, would perform their assigned duties in a professional and nonpartisan manner.

The association's success and growing influence heightened concerns within the ruling party. Consequently, a rival organization, CIFDE, was established in late May, with Leda Mileva, a BSP candidate for the Assembly, as its president. While BAFE sought members who were nonpartisan, CIFDE specifically recruited members of political parties, who did not have a defined role to play on election day. CIFDE, despite a very late start, had considerable resources, most of which appeared to come from organizations affiliated with the ruling party.

Throughout the election period, the government and the election commission sought to treat the two organizations equally. For example, the CEC adopted a decree permitting volunteers of both organizations access to polling sites on election day and to signed copies of the polling site results.

Chapter 4

PREPARING FOR THE ELECTIONS

The short time frame between the conclusion of the Roundtable agreement and the June 10 elections placed a considerable burden on the CEC, political parties and other participants in the process. During this period, local election officials had to be designated and trained, candidates selected, ballots printed, voter registries prepared and a voter education program implemented. At the same time, the CEC had to demonstrate, through its decrees and grievance process, that it could create conditions for free and fair elections.

Designating the Local Election Administrators

The Bulgarian election system was highly decentralized, with considerable responsibility in the hands of the municipal authorities. These officials facilitated periodic meetings of local contact groups and roundtables to discuss implementation of the national Roundtable agreement, including its provisions for the appointment of district and sectional electoral commissions.

District electoral commissions, which formed in mid-April, selected the polling site officials, prepared voter registries and distributed the election materials. There appeared to be a good faith effort to comply with the mandate of the election law by including members of the various parties on the commissions, and also with the spirit of the law by ensuring that the chairs of the commissions represented differing parties and coalitions. In the Varna region, for example, where there were eight districts, BSP

representatives assumed the chair in three districts, UDF and BANU representatives were chairs in two districts each, and in one district the chair was nonpartisan.

There were more than 13,000 polling sites or sections established for the elections, the majority of which were constituted by the end of April. A chair, deputy-chair, secretary and two to five members administered each polling site. At most of the sites, representatives of the major parties were designated as polling officials. However, in approximately 800 sites, mostly in rural areas, the UDF was not represented on the sectional election commissions, and it was to these sites that the UDF directed the attention of the civic organizations and the international observers.

Voter Registries

Bulgarian citizens who were 18 years or older by June 10 were eligible to vote. According to the law, their names also had to be included on a voter registry prepared by the national government. In addition, a prospective voter needed to present a valid passport/national identification card at the polling site. According to the CEC, there were slightly less than seven million registered voters.

On May 11, 30 days before the elections, registries were published and posted in every voting section. The registries were based on a unified system of civic registration that records the names of all citizens and their places of residence. However, the lists contained many mistakes; names of eligible voters were missing and those who had died or moved remained on the list. In addition, many members of the Turkish minority were registered according to the Slavic names they were forced to adopt during the 1984-85 assimilation campaign, resulting in confusion as many Turks could not recognize their names on the registries.

The CEC cited changes in administrative boundaries and the use of lists containing the names of only those who voted in the previous elections as among the reasons for the disorganized state of the registries. However, some UDF supporters suspected that pro-BSP loyalists responsible for preparing the lists purposely

excluded the names of UDF supporters from the list. Whatever the reason, the CEC realized that the published lists were unacceptable. It thus ordered that new lists be prepared by May 29 and published by June 5, five days before the elections. In addition, the number on a voter's passport/national identity card was to be included on the revised lists.

With a few exceptions, the new lists were published on June 5. However, there were serious complaints again regarding their content. Voters were urged to recheck the lists and, if they found their names omitted, to request the local municipality to record their names by hand, as permitted by law. The deadline for this procedure was June 9, one day before the election.

To avoid disenfranchising those mistakenly excluded from the registries, the CEC issued a decree on June 9 authorizing Bulgarians to vote at the polling site nearest to their residence as listed in their national identity cards. Because the decision was taken so close to the elections, the CEC believed that the possibility of printing and distributing large numbers of counterfeit identity cards was remote.

Designation of Candidates

All Bulgarians 18 years and older were eligible to contest seats in the elections. Political parties and other organizations registered pursuant to the Political Party Act could nominate candidates simply by registering their names with the district election commissions. An independent candidate was required to obtain the signatures of 500 citizens.

The deadline for registering candidates was May 11, and this occurred without major incident. In one instance, however, the UDF sought to change its candidate after the deadline. The CEC held that this was permissible, but the Supreme Court reversed the CEC decision.

More than 1,400 individuals contested in single-member constituencies and more than 1,700, representing 30 parties, contested in multi-member constituencies. Many candidates contested seats in both types of constituencies.

Printing of Ballots

The election law provided for the printing of individual ballots for each contesting candidate and party, and the furnishing of envelopes to assure a secret vote. Ballots were printed according to a color assigned to a political party and contained the name of the candidate(s) contesting a particular seat. Before the elections, parties and candidates were given their ballots for distribution to prospective voters. Ballots also were available at the polling sites.

Given the large number of parties and candidates participating in the elections, more than 100 million ballots had to be printed. At the outset of the campaign, concerns were raised that there would be insufficient paper in the country to accommodate so many ballots and that the printing of ballots would not be completed in time. Indeed, to reduce the amount of ballots needed, several outside experts suggested that the CEC use a ballot containing the names of all the parties and candidates contesting a particular seat. The concerns, however, proved unwarranted; all ballots were printed and available for distribution before election day.

The transparency of the envelopes also was an issue early in the campaign period. It was feared that use of such envelopes, through which the color of the ballots could be ascertained, would contribute to a perception that the vote was not really secret. Responding to complaints regarding this matter, the CEC required that the interior of the white envelopes be lined with a blue dye to make it virtually impossible to identify the color of the ballots inside the envelope.

Voter Education

Given Bulgaria's history of one-party rule and nondemocratic elections, there was a perceived need for effective voter education programs that would explain the balloting process and assure the population that their votes would be confidential. The CEC assumed primary responsibility for the government-sponsored effort, while civic organizations, such as BAFE, also developed their own programs.

Throughout the campaign period, 10-minute public service announcements were broadcast on television and radio demonstrating the mechanics of voting. The CEC also sought to allay fears of ballot manipulation involving, for example, the use of special pens to spoil ballots or the use of ballots that would change colors. While the fears seemed bizarre, they were often heard from UDF supporters in the weeks preceding the elections.

Critics of the CEC voter education effort claimed that insufficient attention was placed on the significance of a secret ballot; indeed, some in the opposition claimed that this represented a deliberate omission, which played into the hands of the ruling party whose support was predominantly in rural areas where the population was less-educated. For example, President Mladenov's statement two days before the elections, which urged a peaceful election day, failed to mention secrecy of the ballot. For this reason, the leaders of the NDI/NRIIA delegation urged that the CEC use its final broadcast on election eve to emphasize the secret nature of the ballot. This was done, although it was impossible to determine what effect this had on voters.

Other Activities of the CEC

Two matters -- the question of voting abroad and the handling of complaints -- illustrate some of the difficulties confronting the CEC in developing an election system and environment that was satisfactory to the participants and to the international community. The CEC task was complicated by the mistrust and suspicion that existed in Bulgarian society after years of totalitarian rule.

Voting abroad

The election law provided that the CEC develop regulations that would permit Bulgarians living abroad to vote in the June 10 elections. The CEC authorized the establishment of polling sites in Bulgarian embassies where citizens were authorized to vote. This differed from the usual practice of having those living abroad cast absentee ballots. Before organizing the polling sites, Bulgaria requested permission from the foreign governments concerned to implement such a process. Most granted permission, but several did

not, notably West Germany and Switzerland, which viewed the establishment of such polling sites, even on embassy grounds, as an infringement on their sovereignty.

The overseas polling sections were then assigned to election districts with the smallest number of voters. As a result, in some districts voters living abroad outnumbered the number of voters actually living in the district.

As for eligibility, the CEC decided to limit the right of voting abroad to those employed by the Bulgarian government, contract employees for Bulgarian enterprises and Bulgarians who were abroad for less than two months or more than five years. The first two categories were automatically included in lists prepared by the embassies, while voters qualifying under the third category were required to express an interest in voting by informing the relevant embassy no later than June 3, one week before the elections. The CEC announced that 60,000 Bulgarians living abroad were automatically included in the registries.

The source of the five-year requirement, which was agreed to by the three major parties and approved by all CEC members with one exception, proved difficult to pinpoint. The principal effect of this provision, though, was to disenfranchise 250,000 Turkish-Bulgarians who left Bulgaria for Turkey between 1985 and 1989 (*i.e.*, during years of significant repression), unless they physically returned to vote in Bulgaria. The sensitivities of the Turkish government were cited as the main reason for this decision. However, it was somewhat anomalous to enfranchise Bulgarians whose ties to the country were quite remote (*e.g.*, those absent Bulgaria for perhaps 50 years), and then not make a special effort to enfranchise those who were so recently forced from the country.

Handling of complaints

Under the election law, the CEC was responsible for handling complaints on election-related issues. Despite being represented on the CEC, the principal opposition group, the UDF, asserted that the CEC was impotent in responding to complaints.

Part of the problem, according to the UDF, involved the designation of specific commissioners to review all grievances filed with the CEC. Reflecting a continuing mistrust of ruling party intentions, UDF commissioners claimed that two BSP commissioners were responsible for reviewing all complaints, and that they were unwilling to share copies of the complaints with their fellow commissioners. The BSP commissioners denied the allegation, although apparently the initial review process involved only "informal consultations" among the commissioners. The consultative process apparently became more institutionalized, however, as election day approached.

The CEC claimed that before the elections it received nearly 1,000 grievances. These ranged from complaints about the formation of sectional election commissions to the destruction of posters to questions about the election registries. Most of these complaints, according to the CEC members responsible for their review, were resolved at the regional level and usually through the local roundtable meetings. Nonetheless, the lack of systematic record-keeping on the disposition of grievances reduced confidence in the CEC as a guarantor of fair elections.

Three weeks before the elections, the government established a group comprising the ministers of justice, interior and foreign affairs and the prosecutor to handle grievances filed against state bodies. Some Bulgarians considered the formation of this group as undermining the authority of the CEC. Others, including UDF activists, believed the government deserved credit for taking this step. If nothing else, these contradictory reactions highlight once again the mistrust that existed in Bulgaria on election eve.

PERMISSION

Chapter 5

ELECTORAL ENVIRONMENT

The election law contained provisions which, in principle, permitted a fair campaign. The dissemination of campaign propaganda and the holding of public rallies were authorized to within 24 hours of the election day. Further, there were provisions in the law regarding access to the media and sources of funding for the competing parties. The CEC and several government ministries were responsible for developing the necessary implementing regulations.

A final evaluation of the fairness of the election campaign in Bulgaria, however, requires analyzing the extent to which all parties were able to communicate their respective messages and the degree to which the government affirmatively acted to eliminate inequities in the process. On the positive side, the campaign featured a broad spectrum of active parties; no legal or artificial impediment prevented any political party from forming or competing in the elections. On the negative side was the disparity in resources available to the parties.

Campaign Overview

The peaceful nature of the campaign was noteworthy, particularly in a society with no experience in democratic politics. The political parties, in large measure, were responsible for this tolerant climate. Periodic meetings among party leaders at the national and regional levels encouraged most party supporters to respect the rights of competing parties.

In most parts of the country, a meaningful, if imbalanced, campaign occurred, with the major parties presenting candidates, organizing rallies and distributing party propaganda. Rallies and campaign meetings took place throughout the country, with only a few reported instances where candidates were prevented from speaking. There were, however, incidents reported of damage to party headquarters and the destruction of posters and other campaign paraphernalia. Coupled with the acts of intimidation by BSP supporters described below, these incidents may have influenced the behavior of some voters, particularly those living in rural areas, who were less likely to be exposed to the opposition campaign.

The parties presented alternative messages to the electorate. The BSP stressed the changes the party had made in the months since November, but also emphasized the experience of the party in governing and the party's role in improving the living standards of many Bulgarians over two generations. Throughout the campaign, the BSP, and most notably Prime Minister Lukanov, reiterated that it would seek a multi-party coalition, regardless of the election results, stating that only a broad-based coalition could handle Bulgaria's multiple problems.

The UDF, not surprisingly, emphasized the failings of the communist system and the BSP responsibility for that system. The UDF promised more rapid reforms of the political and economic systems, stressing privatization as an immediate goal and a strong orientation toward the Western community.

BANU sought to distance itself from its former association with the Communist Party and to present itself as a third force capable of mediating between the two major parties. The MRF's goal was to mobilize ethnic Turks to support a party that would protect their rights.

Campaign Resources

The BSP, having inherited the spoils of 45 years of domination by its Communist Party predecessor, overwhelmed the UDF and other parties in terms of available resources and infrastructure. Under these circumstances, leveling the playing field in the limited period preceding the campaign was virtually impossible. In many instances, the government appeared not to have made a good faith effort to provide, on an expedited basis, materials, including office space and equipment, to the newly-formed political parties. The \$10,000 authorized by the election law for each of the participating parties was received only days before the elections, too late to make a significant difference in the campaign.

Visits to the national and regional headquarters of the political parties highlighted the disparity of resources. The BSP headquarters often occupied the grandest building in a city or town. BANU had adequate headquarters, while the UDF was provided with a dilapidated room or building. In addition, many UDF local leaders complained that the local authorities delayed the supply of telephones, furniture and other basic office equipment. In Vidin, for example, the UDF did not obtain a building until April and only after organizing a human chain around the municipal building for 10 days. Despite the difficulties, the UDF managed to establish a presence throughout the country.

The election law limited the size of political contributions and the amount that a candidate could spend on a campaign, with winning candidates required to file post-election reports regarding their campaign financing. Contributions from "foreign corporate bodies" were prohibited. However, in recognition of the financial difficulties facing the newly-formed parties, the prohibition was suspended for one year from the enactment date of the Political Party Act.

Role of the Media

Following the November coup, the media, which for 45 years was strictly controlled by the ruling party, was partially liberalized. New newspapers and magazines opened throughout the country, and the government-controlled electronic media presented perspectives other than the official line on television and radio programs. Nonetheless, given the realities of a transition period, the opposition never achieved full equality in their ability to use the media.

Television

From the last week in April through the end of the campaign, 20 minutes of free television time three days a week was made available to the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) and to the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF), while the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union (BANU) was allotted 15 minutes of free broadcasting. This free television time assured that the principal political parties were able to communicate their messages to the public, most of whom owned televisions. Smaller parties were assigned more limited time on television, perpetuating the view that the election was a two- (or at most three-) party contest; however as noted earlier, the formula for allocation of television advertisements actually prevented the dilution of the message being presented by the leading opposition coalition. There were no restrictions on what could be broadcast, and the criticisms of the government and ruling party were often quite bitter.

The BSP maintained an advantage in the promotion of its views through tacit control of Bulgarian television. Most observers characterized the news coverage on television as pro-ruling party, although no systematic analysis was conducted. On the other hand, there was a greater diversity in programming than one might have expected.

The most popular television program was "Every Sunday," a two-and-a-half hour news and variety show, hosted by Kevork Kevorkian, a prominent television journalist and vice president of Bulgarian television. The "Every Sunday" program, and Kevorkian

personally, were attacked throughout the campaign period by BSP leaders and by the ruling party newspaper for being pro-opposition. The program, though, made a concerted effort to include interviews with government and ruling party representatives, while Kevorkian refused to identify with any particular party, preferring to serve as president of the nonpartisan BAFE.

Newspapers

The print media was quite partisan. *Duma*, the BSP-affiliated newspaper, boasted the largest circulation. BSP-affiliated regional newspapers were published throughout the country. While strongly oriented toward the BSP, *Duma* and the regional newspapers included some coverage of opposition activities, as well as stories that under the previous regime would not have been printed because they would have been deemed embarrassing, such as reports on abuses in labor camps where Bulgarian dissidents were confined during the 1950s and 1960s.

Opposition parties published national and regional newspapers, which also were distinguished by their partisan nature. These papers proved quite popular, usually selling out quickly, but their circulation was limited in an arbitrary manner: opposition leaders estimated that their press run at state-owned printing houses was approximately 10 percent of that for BSP newspapers. The opposition also complained that its newspapers were unavailable in smaller villages because of interference by the government-controlled distribution networks, and government manipulation of paper and print stocks.

Intimidation and Other Forms of Pressure

Three separate incidents that resulted in the deaths of five UDF activists 10 days before the elections raised considerable anxieties, although investigations established that two of the incidents were accidents. The third, involving the shooting by a military officer of a UDF partisan, appeared to have resulted from a personal dispute. In any event, the officer was arrested, the incident was investigated, and the matter was fully reported in the media.

The opposition complained that local officials identified with the BSP were guilty of intimidation and harassment, although overt physical intimidation did not appear to be a serious problem. A brochure distributed in Vidin, however, threatened that if the UDF was not dissolved "the grandchildren will not know the graves of their grandparents." The brochure was given to the police, but no charges were brought against those responsible for its preparation.

In the environs of Stara Zagora, UDF activists reported frequent examples of intimidation, used most effectively in rural areas and against gypsies. A UDF activist in a small town in the area told members of the NDI/NRIIA delegation that he had been warned that "after the election was over, his house would be burned down and he would be hung."

The BSP also complained that its activists were harassed and intimidated. In one incident, two military conscripts, returning from leave, were allegedly attacked by a group of UDF supporters; one of the conscripts required hospitalization as a result of the injuries he suffered.

Threats emanating from local authorities that public benefits would be denied or that rents would increase if the UDF won were reported even more frequently. The magnitude of such incidents, however, was difficult to estimate. For example, the observer team that visited Rousse, a city bordering Romania on the Danube river, reported: "[t]here was a general sense among opposition leaders that a lowered political culture in the area, especially among elderly and rural residents, would intensify citizens' concern about matters affecting their livelihood such as pensions and unemployment. These reports constituted anticipated fear of change after decades of poverty and political complacency."

Given Bulgaria's recent history, the fears felt by the general population were intensified in the case of ethnic minorities. A Turkish-Bulgarian, for example, indicated that he would not seek officially to change his name back to his given Turkish names "until such time as the BSP no longer controlled the country."

The Last Days of the Campaign

Both the BSP and UDF held their final rallies on June 7 in Sofia. The rally sites were within one mile of one another, but, despite the large crowds, there were no reported incidents of violence. The UDF rally, which an estimated 500,000 people attended, was considered the largest rally in the country's history, and provided the opposition with a sense of optimism as election day approached. However, in Rouse, the NDI/NRIIA team noted that the political campaign seemed "somewhat muted, in comparison to the pre-election activity in Sofia."

Chapter 6

ELECTION DAY

The first section of this chapter describes the balloting process utilized for the June elections. The second section highlights the observations of the teams that visited the different regions of the country, focussing on some of the problems that developed during the first round of elections. The third section covers the counting process, describing how the official and parallel vote counts were conducted. It should be noted that delegation members were provided with credentials from the CEC that assured access to all polling sites and tabulation centers.

Balloting Process

Each polling site was administered by a sectional election commission, which included a chair, a vice-chair and party representatives. In addition, party representatives, journalists and "guests," a category that encompassed accredited representatives of civic organizations and international observers, were authorized to be present at the polling site throughout the day. At virtually all sites visited, representatives of at least two parties were present. BAFE volunteers were visible at approximately 75 percent of the polling sites.

Bulgarians were required to vote at the polling site nearest their permanent residence. There were, however, several exceptions. These included: individuals who were away from home because of a business assignment; conscripted military personnel who were assigned to registries near to where they were serving on

election day; and, as explained earlier, Bulgarians outside of the country on election day.

No more than 1,500 voters were assigned to an individual polling site; at most sites, approximately 700 voters were assigned. There were special arrangements for the disabled and for those serving on vessels at sea.

There were no reports of any significant delays in the opening of the polls, which occurred at 7 a.m. However, at some polling sites, the morning proved to be the busiest time of the day and voter processing was time consuming; hence, some voters had to wait in line for more than an hour before they could vote.

Upon entering the polling site, a voter presented his/her national identity card. His/her name was then marked on the voter registry. According to the CEC decree of June 9, if the voter was not listed but was entitled to vote, the name was added to a supplementary registry. In some polling sites, as many as 10 percent of the names were added to the supplementary lists, further demonstrating the inadequacy of the official lists.

The voter then received an opaque envelope and was directed to a voting booth, which in almost all instances was enclosed to ensure privacy. Inside the voting booth, there were piles of colored ballots; each party was assigned a different color, and its party slate and the candidates contesting in the region were listed on the individual ballots. The voter selected two ballots (one for the single-member constituency and a second for the multi-member constituency), placed them both in the envelope and dropped the envelope in the ballot box located outside the booth. Before leaving the polling site, the voter's passport or identification card was stamped or signed on a pre-designated page. The whole process seldom took more than three minutes, and typically much less.

Prior to the elections, several concerns were expressed with respect to this system. First, as some in the opposition noted, there was no direct safeguard against multiple voting. The UDF had urged that the voter's finger be marked with indelible ink, which

was referred to as the "Nicaragua" method, and pursued this matter vigorously in negotiations with the BSP in May. The BSP refused to concede on this point, arguing that no European country used indelible ink. UDF leaders were reluctant to insist on indelible ink because they feared it would be viewed as a police state method, with those not voting immediately identifiable. Thus, the safeguards against multiple voting became the stamp or signature on the identity card and the presence of party representatives and independent observers at the polling sites. Ultimately, there were few complaints about multiple voting, notwithstanding the modification of the law that permitted even those not included on the official registries to vote.

A second concern centered on the availability of ballots for all parties at every polling site; there were fears that an insufficient number would be supplied or that ballots for certain parties would be removed by supporters of other parties. In general, polling sites were supplied with an adequate number of ballots. To protect against the improper removal of ballots, not all ballots were placed in the voting booth at once. While there were reports in some polling sites of ballot shortages, these were generally resolved in an expeditious manner by the supplying of additional ballots from the district election commissions.

Finally, there was some concern that the last minute modifications in the procedures would cause confusion at the polling sites. While the delegation observed some confusion, particularly among the elderly voters in rural areas, the general impression, as one NDI/NRIIA observer team noted, was that "[u]nderstanding of and knowledge about the mechanics of the process were surprisingly accurate given the recent changes communicated by the Central Election Commission in Sofia."

More than 6.3 million Bulgarians, or approximately 90 percent of the eligible electorate, participated in the first round of elections. This high turnout, in the first contest in more than 40 years where Bulgarians were not obliged to vote, reflected an apparent

recognition by the citizenry that the election was a meaningful civic exercise.

Specific Observations

The delegation witnessed irregularities in some regions and heard about irregularities in many others. However, the problems listed below, for the most part, involved isolated incidents, which the delegation did not consider sufficient to invalidate the election process. Reports by BAFE volunteers also revealed a large number of irregularities, but no pattern of deliberate manipulation.

Wherever possible, attempts were made to investigate specific allegations. However, relying on second-hand information can be problematic at best. Many allegations were made, which upon investigation turned out to be unfounded. For example, on election day, the NDI/NRIIA team in Sofia received from the UDF a list of polling sites where purportedly there were no UDF ballots. However, delegation members who visited those sites in response to the UDF complaint were told by sectional election commission members, including UDF representatives, that no such problem existed at any time during the balloting process.

Voter secrecy

Several complaints centered on the extent to which the secrecy of the ballot was guaranteed. In the Bourgas area near the Black Sea, for example, the transparency of the envelopes was a major issue on the day before the elections, raising fears that voters would believe their votes were not secret. The district election commission assured the observer team that a sufficient number of lined opaque envelopes had been distributed, but on election day the team visited several sites where transparent envelopes were in use. At one of these sites, voters folded the envelopes to ensure the confidentiality of their vote until the proper envelopes arrived. In other areas, the transparency of the envelopes did not seem to concern the voters, who took no special precautions to safeguard the secrecy of their vote.

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At some polling sites, the voting booth was transparent so that voters could be seen inside. In other sites, the booth was placed

so that the members of the sectional election commission could look inside. However, in most places, the booths provided an adequate degree of privacy to assure a secret ballot.

There were a few reports of voters intentionally casting BSP ballots in public view, as was the tradition under the previous regime. As a member of the Vidin team noted, this was an "indication of a need to show officials they planned to vote red" [i.e., for the BSP].

Intimidation

While little political campaigning or obvious coercion was exerted at polling sites, more subtle forms of coercion were uncovered. For example, in Stara Zagora, the UDF alleged that the local BSP official instructed peasants in the region "to place their names in the envelopes along with their ballots." A team of observers who visited the polling site in question at the end of the day observed several envelopes containing slips of paper identifying the voter. Not surprisingly, the envelopes contained BSP ballots, which were counted as valid by the election commission.

In many towns and villages, the local mayor or other officials were present in or around the polling sites, contributing to the fears that local BSP authorities would retaliate against those not voting for the BSP by denying them such necessities as heating oil during the winter months. In a village near the Bulgarian-Yugoslav border, the mayor appeared to be trading liquor for votes. The team visiting a polling site in this village also observed a man sitting very close to the voting booth; his presence was viewed by UDF representatives as a "none-too-subtle-reminder to the voters of just who was really in charge" at the polling place.

Overall, the ability to assess intimidation proved complex. As the delegation commented in its June 11 statement: "Given its modern history, it is difficult to detect intimidation in Bulgaria, and it is even more difficult to measure its effect in votes. We can only say it was a factor."

Military voting

As discussed earlier, conscripts were assigned to polling sites located off their military bases and with at least some non-military members serving on the sectional election commissions. On election day, conscripts were given a period of several hours, during which time they were supposed to vote. In most instances, this is what happened. However, in several cases, conscripts were transported *en masse* to polling sites accompanied by their superior officers, suggesting an attempt to intimidate the conscripts into voting for the ruling party.

Voting without proper identification

One of the more serious incidents of fraud uncovered by the delegation involved the distribution of certificates in the district of Rakitovo, which purported to authorize voting by individuals who lacked identity cards. Despite there being no authority in the election law for such certificates, objections raised by the UDF representatives were rejected at the sectional election commissions. The matter was eventually presented to the CEC for consideration, but the CEC declined to delay the declaration of a winner in that constituency pending an investigation.

The Counting Process

Most polling sites closed at the scheduled time of 6 p.m. However, in one region, confusion over the closing time resulted in some polling sites remaining open until 7 p.m., although there were no voters waiting in line.

Following the closing of the polls, the site was cleared of all people except the members of the sectional election commission, party representatives, journalists and "guests." The ballot boxes were then opened, the envelopes counted and the number of envelopes compared to the number of people who signed the registry. The ballots were then counted, with the number of votes for each candidate and party recorded on separate tally sheets or "protocols."

The protocols were prepared in duplicate and signed by all members of the sectional election commission. The election law originally allowed for only the chairman of the polling site to receive a copy of the protocol. However, in response to a suggestion by an NDI pre-election observer delegation, a procedure was devised whereby representatives of parties and civic organizations were given unofficial copies of the protocol, which they could then compare with the official results released by the central and district election commissions.

The counting process continued at the polling sites for approximately three hours, with great attention being paid to details. Where the numbers on the protocols differed, a recount was conducted of the number of voters who signed in, the number of envelopes contained in the ballot box, and the number of votes obtained by each party. Unresolved disputes were noted on the protocols.

Official tabulation

The chairman of the sectional election commission brought the protocol for single-member constituencies to the appropriate district election commission, where the results were tabulated and announced. The chairman then brought the protocol for the multi-member district to the appropriate district election commission, which collected and tabulated the protocols. The results of these tabulations were sent to the CEC. After determining which parties met the four percent national threshold, the CEC announced the official results in the multi-member districts.

Most of the single-member constituencies were officially announced on Tuesday, June 12. In 119 constituencies, a candidate received a majority, with the BSP winning 75 seats, the UDF 32 seats, BANU no seats, the MRF nine seats and four seats captured by candidates representing small parties. In the remaining 81 constituencies, a second round of voting was scheduled for the following week.

Tabulating the results for the multi-member constituencies took slightly longer than anticipated, with the official results not

announced until Thursday, June 14 (Appendix XIII). The BSP garnered 47 percent, entitling it to 97 of the 200 multi-member seats. The UDF trailed with 36 percent and 75 seats; BANU received eight percent and 16 seats; and the MRF obtained six percent and 12 seats. While there was some suspicion concerning the late announcement these results, the delay appeared attributable to the newness of the election system and the scrutiny with which each protocol was reviewed by the CEC.

The parallel vote tabulation

Notwithstanding the delay in releasing the multi-member results, concern over possible manipulation was greatly alleviated by the release on Sunday night of unofficial results generated by two parallel vote tabulations, one organized by BAFE and a second by INFAS, a West German polling firm. The significance of these efforts in calming tensions during the days following the elections deserves special mention.

From the outset, the parallel vote tabulation was viewed as a critical component of BAFE's activities. Similar systems have been used recently in other countries experiencing transition elections to deter fraud and to provide an independent basis for verifying the results.

The BAFE system relied on volunteers observing the count at approximately 10 percent of the polling sites (1,302 were included in the sample) selected in a random manner. Once the counting was complete, the volunteers took the copy of the signed unofficial form containing the results to the BAFE regional office. From there it was sent by facsimile machine to BAFE headquarters in Sofia. At BAFE headquarters, the results were entered into computers. By cumulating the sample, the national results in the multi-member constituencies were projected with a relatively small margin of error.

Originally, INFAS was contracted by Bulgarian television to develop an exit poll as it had in several other countries in the region. The UDF objected to the use of the exit poll on three grounds: 1) questioning voters regarding their party preferences, in

the context of these elections, could be intimidating for some voters; 2) it was not clear who would be conducting the interviews; and 3) there was a fear that the exit poll results would be publicized on election day and that this would influence those voters who cast their ballots late in the day. The CEC accepted the UDF position and proscribed the use of exit polls, leading to a bitter dispute between INFAS and the UDF.

The BSP, which all along had been troubled by the BAFE operation, then raised questions regarding the propriety of announcing unofficial results prior to the release of the official results. BSP officials argued that there would be confusion among the public and that confidence in the integrity of the process would be undermined if the official results conflicted with the BAFE figures. In response, the CEC, meeting in an informal session on the day before the election, sent a letter to the presidents of BAFE and the CIFDE proscribing the release of results from parallel vote tabulations until after the complete, official results were announced by the CEC.

The letters were delivered on Saturday afternoon and an announcement of this new rule was broadcast on television later that evening. BAFE responded by sending messages to all its regional coordinators stating that they were to proceed with the parallel vote tabulation as planned. Meanwhile, as described earlier, in response to a letter of protest from the NDI/NRIIA delegation leaders to Prime Minister Lukanov, the CEC decision was modified. There would be no ban on the release of the parallel tabulation results.

For its part, INFAS did not conduct its exit poll and instead organized a parallel vote tabulation, relying on the results from 250 pre-selected polling sites. At 9:30 p.m. on election night, Kevork Kevorkian, who was hosting Bulgaria television's election coverage, asked BAFE and INFAS representatives to explain on the air their respective methodologies. He then invited them to return at 11:30 p.m. with preliminary results.

Soon after midnight, the BAFE and INFAS representatives appeared on television to offer their preliminary results, which, notwithstanding the different methodologies employed, showed a virtually identical BSP plurality (Appendix XIV). The quality of the BAFE sample is best illustrated by the fact that the results released that night on television were accurate to within less than a half percent of the official results announced four days later (*id.*). The INFAS projection also was quite close to the actual results (*id.*).

Chapter 7

AFTERMATH OF THE ELECTIONS

On election night, outside the Palace of Culture in Sofia, which was being used as the press center, a large crowd of primarily young UDF supporters gathered for what they thought would be an opposition victory celebration. As it became apparent that the UDF had not succeeded in defeating the ruling party, there was a growing belief that the election had been stolen.

UDF leaders were uncertain how to respond. They had received reports of irregularities throughout the day and now possessed the results of various parallel vote tabulations, including one conducted internally by the UDF. At a 5:30 a.m. Monday morning press conference, Semionev, the UDF campaign manager, presented a long list of irregularities in an apparent attempt to delegitimize the elections. However, he closed by stating: "we are familiar with the role of an opposition and are willing to accept the results.... We consider it a victory that 35 percent voted for the UDF, including most of the youth -- so time is with us. While the UDF stands for a peaceful transition from totalitarianism to democracy, we will insist that all violations brought to our attention be investigated." Semionev's ambivalence reflected divisions within the UDF. Indeed, it was not until Thursday that the UDF formally conceded defeat and committed itself to participating in the second round of elections.

The Complaints Process

The NDI/NRIIA delegation's June 11 statement urged that complaints filed with the CEC be fully investigated. Thus, during the week after the elections, a small group of delegates reviewed the complaints submitted to the CEC as part of an effort to determine how the grievances were being handled.

Four categories of complaints were identified. First, there were complaints that the electoral law was being misinterpreted by the CEC. In the week following the elections, the Supreme Court reversed at least one CEC decision. The case involved a complaint by a UDF candidate, who claimed that the proper basis for determining whether a candidate in a single-member district obtained the requisite 50 percent majority was the actual votes cast, and not the valid votes. The Court ruled that the former standard should be used, thus requiring a second round of elections in that district.

A second category of complaints centered on allegations that certain irregularities constituted violations of criminal law. The CEC claimed it could not adjudicate these matters, which under the law were the responsibility of the prosecutor's office. However, there was no evident inclination in the prosecutor's offices to investigate the many complaints that fell into this category.

A third category involved disputes regarding the accuracy of the protocols. The UDF claimed there were mathematical discrepancies on many of the protocols between the number of valid votes recorded and the cumulated number of votes for all the parties. However, these discrepancies were explicable by the fact that not all voters placed two ballots -- for the multi-member and single member candidates -- in the envelopes. As the delegation observed on election night, misunderstandings and inadequate instructions regarding the recording of invalid ballots and empty envelopes exacerbated the problem.

Despite a careful review by UDF activists, not one instance was presented where the results reported for a particular party on an official protocol signed by the sectional election commissioners

was different from the results contained on the forms given to the political parties. Similarly, BAFE's review of the data generated by its parallel vote tabulation failed to uncover any discrepancies with the results reported on the official protocols.

The final category of complaints involved those where a candidate or party alleged that the cumulative effect of the irregularities was such that it materially affected the outcome of the elections. The UDF, for example, submitted on June 14 a letter to the CEC listing specific incidents of irregularities in the balloting and counting processes. However, there was no attempt in the letter to establish that the results in a particular constituency had been affected by the irregularities.

In any event, the CEC did not have jurisdiction over this category of complaints. Instead, under Article 78 of the election law, the Election Verification Commission to be established after the Grand National Assembly convened was assigned the responsibility of reviewing such complaints.

The Verification Commission was established soon after the Assembly met for the first time on July 10. A legislator elected as an independent but aligned with the BSP was chosen as chair of the 55-member Commission; BSP, UDF and BANU representatives served as vice chairs. The commission has committed to reviewing CEC documents and all complaints of irregularities, including those submitted by the political parties and civic organizations.

Second Round of Elections

Eighty-one seats were contested in the second round of elections. Given the UDF's criticism of alleged problems that occurred during the first round, it was not clear whether UDF would mobilize its supporters for the second round. However, late in the week, the UDF decided to contest the elections in an effort to deny the BSP the 29 seats it needed to reach an overall majority in the Grand National Assembly. BANU and MRF leaders, meanwhile, urged their supporters to vote for the UDF in those constituencies where the two top vote-recipients in the first round were BSP and UDF candidates.

Perhaps the most dramatic development during the week between the elections was a UDF broadcast on Thursday night of a tape showing President Mladenov telling Defense Minister Dhurov during a December rally: "why don't we bring in the tanks." The tape signified for many that BSP leaders were willing to use force to repress peaceful demonstrations and, therefore, could not be trusted. Mladenov denied making the statement and claimed the tape was doctored.

The June 17 elections were again conducted in a peaceful environment. Turnout was high, this time in the 85 percent range. Pollwatchers from the political parties and the civic organizations were present at all polling sites. While there was some confusion regarding the slight modifications in the election procedures that had been made following the first round and localized reports of irregularities, the overall impression was of a procedurally well-administered election. However, as the NRIIA team noted in its June 18 statement: "some irregularities were the result of intentional misconduct."

The counting process for the second round was conducted in a more expeditious manner than for the first round. By Monday, results were available showing that the BSP had won in 39 of the constituencies, giving the party 211 of the 400 seats in the Grand National Assembly. The UDF won in 37 constituencies, giving it 144 seats overall.

Assessment of the Results

The elections highlighted certain trends among the Bulgarian electorate. There was, for example, extreme divergence between the large cities and the countryside. In Sofia, the UDF won 24 of the 26 single-member constituencies and 53 percent of the overall vote. In Plovdiv and Varna, Bulgaria's second and third largest cities, the UDF won in all eight of the single-member constituencies. In rural areas, however, the BSP dominated.

In the weeks following the elections, some UDF supporters claimed that the allocation of seats demonstrated that the constituencies used for the June elections had been drawn to

guarantee a BSP victory. The most obvious indicator of the disparities in the constituencies was that the BSP obtained 47 percent of the national vote, but 57 percent of the single-member constituencies. Thus, the difference between the 114 seats won in single-member constituencies and the 97 seats won under the proportional system, according to the argument, represented a "bonus" of 17 seats, reflecting a bias in the drawing of constituencies that favored the rural areas where the BSP was strongest.

The above numbers, however, do not establish a deliberate attempt to manipulate the results by the drawing of unequal constituencies. The single-member system generally produces a bonus to the largest party. Moreover, the fact that there is a strong rural bias in the drawing of Bulgarian constituencies should not be surprising, particularly since the constituencies had been drawn more than 45 years ago; it is only in recent years that efforts have been made in other democratic countries to redress the historical bias favoring rural areas.

A second phenomenon was the defeat of several leading BSP candidates -- including Minister of Defense Dhurov, Minister of Culture Kratyo Goranov, BSP Vice-Chair Georgi Pirinski, and BSP spokesperson Filip Bokov -- in the single-member constituencies. Because individuals could be nominated as candidates for both single-member constituencies and on the proportional lists, these prominent BSP figures were nonetheless elected to the Grand National Assembly. Indeed, the rule permitting the dual listing may have led the BSP to designate some of its more visible candidates in hotly contested districts, as opposed to providing them with safe seats. The defeat of BSP notables demonstrates a certain sophistication on the part of the electorate and suggests that survey data, which consistently showed Dhurov to be Bulgaria's most popular political figure, was not necessarily reliable.

The MRF's success also was the source of considerable discussion. MRF was not part of the Roundtable and did not receive much infrastructure support and access to media. Despite

the disenfranchisement of Turkish-Bulgarians and the limits placed on the campaign activities of the MRF, the Movement obtained the overwhelming support of the electorate in regions with large ethnic Turkish populations, thus becoming the only group that did not participate in the Roundtable negotiations to enter the Grand National Assembly with a significant bloc.

BANU failed to win a single-member constituency seat and fared considerably poorer in the proportional representation elections than party leaders expected. The electorate obviously did not respond to BANU's effort to present itself as a third force nor was the electorate overwhelmed by the institutional and historical advantages that BANU possessed.

Continuing Protests

On the day after the June 10 elections, students at Sofia University went on strike in protest over alleged irregularities in the election process. The strike later spread to universities in other cities. While the strike disrupted some traffic, it was for the most part confined to the universities. The strike, however, fueled a moral pressure that in the weeks after the elections produced several consequences.

In addition to demanding an investigation of election irregularities, the student strikers sought the resignation of President Mladenov for his videotaped remarks suggesting a willingness to call in tanks to quell a peaceful demonstration in December. Mladenov's resignation was the major point of discussion during a lengthy televised debate in early July between BSP leaders and the student strikers. The debate was facilitated by BAFE and moderated by Kevorkian,

In response to the student demands, a committee of experts was appointed by the government to determine the authenticity of the videotape made at the time of the December demonstration. The experts concluded that the tape was authentic. Thus, on July 5, Mladenov, the man who had led the internal coup against Zhivkov and whose tenure as president for the duration of the

Grand National Assembly was guaranteed by the Roundtable agreement, was forced to resign.

With Mladenov's resignation, the student strikes terminated only to be replaced by the establishment of a "City of Truth" directly across from the BSP headquarters in downtown Sofia. The organizers of this effort sought to pressure the BSP leaders to assume moral responsibility for the repression of the previous communist regime.

One specific demand called for the removal of the body of Georgi Dimitrov, the leading figure in the Bulgarian Communist Party during the 1930s and 1940s and the first communist head of government in the 1940s, from a mausoleum in the center of the city. To the surprise of many, the government acceded to the demand and, in the middle of the night, removed and cremated Dimitrov's remains. Several days later, a memorial service was held for Dimitrov, which was attended primarily by elderly Bulgarians.

Election of A New President

The Grand National Assembly met for the first time on July 10 in the city of Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria's historic capital. A group of Bulgarian nationalists protesting outside the building sought to prevent the seating of the MRF legislators on the ground that they represented an exclusively ethnic movement, which was proscribed by the Political Party Act. However, the protests were peaceful, and the MRF legislators assumed their seats.

Returning to Sofia, the Assembly elected officers and appointed the Election Verification Commission. It then began the task of electing a new president to replace Mladenov, while "City of Truth" protestors gathered outside the Assembly building.

The first four votes for a new president, conducted by secret ballot, failed to produce the requisite two-thirds majority. Both the BSP and UDF had sufficient votes to block candidates proposed by the other side. Then, on July 30, the BSP withdrew its candidate and threw its support to Viktor Vulkov, the BANU leader. In the subsequent ballot, Vulkov fell three votes short of the two-thirds majority.

Following protracted negotiations between the major parties, Vulkov withdrew his candidacy and the UDF nominated Zhelu Zhelev, its coalition leader. On August 1, with Zhelev as the sole candidate, the Grand National Assembly elected him president by a vote of 270 to 100. After taking the oath of office, Zhelev nominated Antas Samerzhiev, a BSP member who had been minister of interior until the previous week, as vice president. He was elected by acclamation, with only seven Assembly members dissenting.

Chapter 8

REFLECTIONS ON THE BULGARIAN ELECTORAL PROCESS

The international delegation organized by NDI and NRIIA reviewed the three critical phases of an election process -- the election campaign, the balloting procedures utilized on June 10 and 17, and the tabulation of the results. Thus, even when balloting and counting processes are conducted fairly, the character of the election campaign must be assessed before arriving at a judgment on the significance of the overall process. In the context of a country emerging from decades of repressive rule, reaching a conclusion regarding the fairness of the campaign is not an easy task.

The ruling party in Bulgaria had the advantages of incumbency, more developed organizational expertise and infrastructure, control of the electronic media and easy access to the rural segments of the population. At the same time, the major opposition groups were firmly united, were able to campaign freely, had significant access to the media, and could blame the ruling party for Bulgaria's many failures. In these respects then, the June elections in Bulgaria were similar to recent transition elections in other countries where contradictory pictures complicated the task of the international observers present for the elections.

In rendering a judgment regarding the fairness of the campaign, one's starting point often is determinative. Absolute equality of opportunities for political parties and movements, or

even relative balance, is seldom possible in circumstances such as those that existed in Bulgaria. Yet, if the focus centers on the ability of different political coalitions or parties to communicate freely their messages to the electorate, a more positive conclusion emerges.

The matter is complicated even further where a ruling party, whose democratic credentials are suspect by a large segment of the population, wins an election it administers. When the opposition prevails in this type of transition election, as in Chile and Nicaragua, alleged irregularities committed by the ruling party become moot, since they obviously did not affect the overall outcome. In the case of Bulgaria, however, the flaws in the process cannot be ignored, but they also do not automatically invalidate the entire process.

Still, the question lingers as to why Bulgaria was the only country where a reformed Communist Party succeeded in scoring a victory in multi-party elections. A few impressions are offered.

Time was a critical factor. The elections occurred just seven months after the political opening in Bulgaria began. Before the November coup, there was no opposition movement or even an organized dissident community. Given this lack of a democratic political culture, the brevity of the period preceding the elections was insufficient to eliminate the effects of a totalitarian culture that developed during the 45 years of Communist Party rule. As one Bulgarian social scientist has commented: "[t]he ways of thinking have not necessarily changed since November 10."

The election system was a factor. The BSP benefitted by insisting that at least half the Grand National Assembly be elected from single-member constituencies. This is not to say that the system is flawed and should not be maintained. Indeed, the allocation of seats as a result of these elections -- with two large national parties, a minor national party and a strong regional party obtaining significant representation -- suggests that serious consideration be given to retaining, perhaps with minor modifications, this type of election system for future elections.

Fear also was a factor. Feelings of uncertainty, fear of losing jobs or pensions, or suffering rent increases were often-heard concerns expressed primarily, but not exclusively, by the elderly and by those living in rural areas. However, as the delegation noted in its post-election statement: "[t]he unfortunate reality that fear is still a factor in the country is not cause to invalidate this election. But it does mean that the government has a serious challenge [in seeking] to erase this fear so that there will be no doubt that future elections will be decided by fully informed voters who are free to vote their consciences."

More perniciously, intimidation was a factor. Threats, some overt and others psychological, were reported in many regions, although again not to an extent that called into question the overall election results. Countering intimidation will require a government ready to investigate and prosecute instances of intimidation. It also will require an effective civic education campaign that instructs citizens to vote their consciences.

In the end, the judgment concerning the overall fairness of the election process lies with the Bulgarian people, who despite complaints about specific aspects of the process, seem to have accepted the overall results. Moreover, it is fair to say that Bulgarian political life has undergone a transformation since the November 10 coup. Through a hectic but condensed political process, Bulgaria has moved quickly from a repressive one-party state to a pluralist society where different political tendencies are openly expressed. Credit for this transformation should be given to the leaders of the BSP, UDF and other political activists, who have managed to overcome tremendous challenges and to avert violent conflagrations.

Special mention should be made of the UDF election team, which with no experience organized a professional political campaign, while maintaining unity among groups with disparate agendas. Candidates contested seats in every constituency, the campaign reached virtually all regions of the country, and UDF-designees were present at almost all polling sites. Given the

circumstances, even the election outcome can be considered a tremendous success.

The MRF leaders also deserve a great deal of credit for overcoming tremendous odds and obtaining significant representation in the Grand National Assembly. They accomplished this without the television time, money and other advantages afforded the BSP, UDF and BANU. It remains to be seen whether their parliamentary strength will permit MRF representatives to play an active role in preparing the new constitution, and particularly in influencing constitutional provisions affecting the rights and liberties of minority groups.

The development of nonpartisan organizations, such as BAFE, also bodes well for the emergence of a democratic civic culture in Bulgaria. The more than 10,000 BAFE volunteers performed their pollwatching tasks with professionalism and good spirit, presenting a sharp contrast between these elections and those that occurred previously. Their presence at polling sites throughout the country provided voters with added confidence in the electoral process. Moreover, the diligence with which the BAFE volunteers reported on irregularities is proof that, among this sector of the population, fear is less of a concern.

From the outset, the parallel vote tabulation was the cornerstone of BAFE's activities. In the end, it played a quite different role than originally envisioned. Unlike in the Philippines and Panama, the parallel vote tabulation did not reveal that the ruling party was stealing the election. Unlike in Chile and Nicaragua, the parallel vote tabulation was not used to pressure the government to recognize an opposition victory. Rather, the BAFE parallel vote tabulation proved critical in convincing UDF supporters, who knew that BAFE was not another BSP-front organization, that the BSP had won the elections.

Given the suspicions that existed after more than 45 years of totalitarian rule, it is questionable whether the results would have been accepted by the opposition without the association's quick independent results. Moreover, election night tensions might have

increased, and a deterioration in the situation, in a manner similar to Romania, could have developed. Instead, a second round of voting occurred a week later, with the participation of all eligible parties.

Equally significant for Bulgaria's democratic future, BAFE's activities demonstrate that it is possible for nonpartisan, civic organizations to emerge even in a deeply polarized society. This is not to say that BAFE volunteers were oblivious to the partisan implications of the elections or ambivalent regarding the outcome. Indeed, some BAFE volunteers were disappointed that, for many Bulgarians, the association was identified as the bearer of bad news.

The involvement of young Bulgarians in BAFE, and more generally in the different political parties, is also cause for considerable hope. In the end, Bulgaria's democratic future rests upon the commitment and dedication of these young activists, many of whom were participating for the first time in political activity.

Finally, a comment on the role played by the international observers in the Bulgarian election process. The election law that emerged from the Roundtable negotiations included provisions allowing "guests" inside polling sites during the balloting and counting processes. Initially, the government sought to define the term "guest" as applying only to a group of invited legislators from a limited number of countries. However, pressure from the political parties, BAFE, the CEC and the international community convinced the government that it was not in the country's interest to impose restrictions on persons visiting Bulgaria at the time of the elections. In the end, the government and the CEC cooperated fully with the many observer groups that were in the country.

The observation effort, however, did not begin on election day. NDI organized three pre-election fact-finding missions to report on different aspects of the campaign period and the preparations for the elections. The recommendations of these missions, in several instances, were adopted by the authorities. More important perhaps, the periodic presence of these missions assured the

Bulgarian public that the fairness of the elections was a matter of international concern.

International observers have a special responsibility to act in a professional and impartial manner. In the Bulgarian context, this meant reviewing the entire election process from the promulgation of the electoral law through the post-election complaints, fielding an election-day presence in as many regions as possible and monitoring carefully the counting process. The observers also evaluated the performance of the election officials, party representatives and civic organization volunteers. The approach adopted by the NDI/NRIIA delegation and other observer groups helped assure that the Bulgarian authorities responded to the concerns expressed by the delegation leaders. Moreover, the delegation's public statements were well-received by Bulgarians and the international community.

Conclusion

While the June elections represent a positive step, the NDI/NRIIA delegation is mindful that a full democratic transition does not rest on the occurrence of a single election. The challenges facing Bulgaria are enormous. On the political side, the new government together with the Grand National Assembly must write a new constitution and adopt laws governing local elections.

For most Bulgarians, meanwhile, their familiar, daily living conditions are the dominant concern. The deteriorating economic situation must be addressed quickly and creatively. Failure in this regard may result in enormous negative consequences for Bulgaria's democratic future.

Finally, Bulgaria must institutionalize the rule of law for all sectors of society, including the Turkish minority and gypsies. Both groups have suffered in the past from governmental abuses and from the failure of the government to prevent persecution by individuals.

1. *Is there a need for a new law?*
2. *What is the purpose of the law?*
3. *Who is responsible for the law?*
4. *What are the benefits of the law?*
5. *What are the costs of the law?*
6. *What are the risks of the law?*
7. *What are the alternatives to the law?*
8. *What are the consequences of the law?*
9. *What are the principles of the law?*
10. *What are the values of the law?*

11. *What are the objectives of the law?*
12. *What are the outcomes of the law?*
13. *What are the impacts of the law?*
14. *What are the effects of the law?*
15. *What are the results of the law?*

APPENDICES

*Appendix I***NRIIA TRAINERS PARTICIPATING IN POLITICAL SEMINARS****FEBRUARY 4-9, 1990 (SOFIA)**

WILLIAM D. HARRIS
 President
 Harris & Co.

FRANK DONATELLI
 President
 Bond Donatelli, Inc.

MARCH 9-17, 1990 (SOFIA/PLOVDIV/LOVITCH/VALIKA TURNOVA)

WILLIAM D. HARRIS
 President
 Harris & Co.

NEIL NEWHOUSE
 Vice President
 Wirthlin Group

CINDY HAYS
 Vice President
 TELAC

GEOFFREY HARPER
 Conservative Party
 United Kingdom

APRIL 25-MAY 1, 1990 (BOURGAS/VARNA)

WILLIAM D. HARRIS
 President
 Harris & Co.

GLEN BOLGER
 Director of Survey Research
 National Republican Congressional
 Committee

CINDY HAYS
 Vice President
 TELAC

MAY 10-13, 1990 (SOFIA)

WILLIAM PARKS
 Vice President for Production
 Cinemasound

WILLIAM DALBECK
 Wirthlin Group

JUNE 4-9, 1990

ROBERT DAHL
 Executive Assistant to Commissioner Josefiak
 Federal Election Commission

**TRANSCRIPT OF RONALD REAGAN'S ADDRESS
TO THE BULGARIAN PEOPLE**

Televised June 3, 1990

I am sorry that I cannot be in Bulgaria personally to deliver this message, but circumstances have made it impossible for me to travel at this time. I have had to postpone my trip to Europe, but I wanted to take a few moments to wish you well in your first democratic election in over 45 years.

As you know, I have always been a strong supporter of the democratic form of government - one which is elected by the people, for the people. I understand you all know of my history as a critic of communism. I am, therefore, thrilled that you now have the opportunity to exercise your democratic right to vote for the individuals who will represent you in your next government.

This is a momentous time for you, and I want you to know that the free world supports the steps you have taken towards a truly democratic government. We all care about Bulgaria and the future which is facing you. Many countries will have international observers in Bulgaria, watching the process on election day and ensuring that the process guarantees a secret ballot, and reporting to the rest of the world about this historic event. The international press will be there to cover this exciting time in history.

I urge each of you to take this opportunity to stand up for the democratic values you hold. It is a cherished right, which some who have always had it take for granted. But you who have not been able to vote a secret ballot for years, and many of you who are younger and who have never known the excitement of the democratic process, now is your time.

We in the United States are very excited about the opportunity you have and want you to know that you are not alone. The winds of change have swept through Europe, Central America, and Asia. Nicaragua, East Germany and Hungary have

Appendix II

in the last month elected a democratic government. Just this weekend the Burmese people elected a new government even though the leaders of the democratic movement have been imprisoned and held in house arrest. History is with you as you take this giant step.

I wish you well on June 10th. I am sorry that I cannot tell you in person how excited I am that Bulgaria is shortly going to experience such an unprecedented event. My congratulations to the Bulgarian people for your hard work and dedication to democracy, and I hope that on June 10th you will each cast a secret ballot for the candidate of your choice and start on the road to a completely democratic society.

NDI PARTICIPANTS IN BAFE TRAINING SEMINAR

April 20-22, 1990

GENARO ARRIAGADA
Vice President
Christian Democratic Party
Chile

SUSAN BROPHY
Administrative Assistant to Rep. Byron Dorgan
U.S. House of Representatives
United States

GLENN COWAN
The FMR Group, Inc.
United States

LARRY GARBER
NDI Senior Consultant
United States

VILMOS SOOS
Democratic League of Independent Trade Unions
Hungary

PATRICIO TAN
Regional Coordinator
National Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL)
Philippines

*Appendix IV***NDI PRE-ELECTION SURVEY REPORT**

April 23-25, 1990

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 June 10, 1990 elections for a Grand National Assembly. The participants in the mission were:

- GENARO ARRIAGADA, a lawyer who is Vice-President of the Christian Democratic Party of Chile and was Coordinator for the Command for the No that defeated General Pinochet in the 1988 Chilean plebiscite;
- GERALD DANAHER, Legal Adviser to Fianna Fail (The Republican Party) in Ireland, former National Director of Elections and political campaign manager for several parliamentary elections;
- HARVEY FELDMAN, a retired U.S. diplomat who served in Bulgaria as Deputy Chief of Mission and Charge d'Affaires from 1975 to 1977 and who is currently a freelance author, lecturer and consultant;
- LARRY GARBER, a senior consultant with NDI and the author of *Guidelines for International Election Observing*; and
- DR. PATRICIO TAN, a medical doctor who was recruited in 1984 to be the regional coordinator for the newly-formed Philippine National Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL) for national and local elections from 1986 until 1988 on the island of Negros, one of the poorest and most volatile regions in the Philippines.

The mission was assigned the following tasks: 1) to assess the recently enacted election law; 2) to identify the nature of any impediments to free and fair elections; and 3) to determine which issues might require further investigation by subsequent missions. Thus, during its visit to Bulgaria this week, the mission met in

Sofia, Plovdiv and Varna with government officials (including representatives of the Foreign and National Defense Ministries), members of the Central Election Commission, political party leaders, representatives of the newly formed Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections (BAFE), and other political activists.

A complete report on the delegation's findings will be issued in the near future. At this stage, the delegation wishes to highlight the following points regarding the electoral process now underway in Bulgaria:

1) The new election law, which resulted from extensive negotiations between the parties to the roundtable, is, in general, quite impressive and, if properly implemented, should permit the first free, multi-party elections in Bulgaria in more than 55 years. Subsequent agreements of the Roundtable regarding access to the media and to the military barracks during the campaign are particularly noteworthy, although the implementation of these agreements according to their precise terms should be carefully monitored. In this regard, a matter of concern raised by opposition representatives involves the active participation of the armed forces in the election campaign, contrary to the provisions of the election law calling for the nonparticipation of the military in political matters.

2) Concern also was expressed regarding the allocation of government resources. While the government has provided some buildings and equipment to newly formed or newly legalized political parties and organizations, continued efforts in this matter are necessary to level the playing field after 45 years of domination by the ruling party.

3) Preparations for administering the elections have begun with the establishment of a Central Election Commission and regional elections commissions. As set forth in the law, the commissions include representatives of all political parties and, in the cities visited by the delegation, an attempt was made to appoint individuals acceptable to all political parties. In the end, a successful election, which is recognized as legitimate by the

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Bulgarian people, will require that the members of each commission work together in a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation.

4) With respect to the actual balloting process, the delegation is concerned that the system of providing different colored ballots for each candidate and party will require the preparation of an inordinate number of ballots (more than 100 million ballots according to one estimate). This could create potential shortages and lead to accusations of manipulation.

The delegation recognizes that the proposed system is suggested by the election law, which was agreed to by all the parties, and that a change in the system would require agreement among all the parties. Nonetheless, the delegation notes that a system using a common ballot (with the names of the candidates or parties, symbols and colors on a single ballot) would be administratively simpler, less expensive, ecologically sounder and less subject to manipulation.

Admittedly, a change at this time would require a civic education program to ensure that all voters are adequately informed regarding the proper way to cast their ballots, but such information programs have been quite successful in countries where the standard of education is much lower than in Bulgaria.

5) The delegation also wishes to emphasize the importance of ensuring that all parties and the Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections are able to obtain a copy of the protocol of the results (or some other signed form) at the polling site level to allow for a review of the official results by the political parties. Instructions should be given to all election officials to ensure that this occurs on election day.

6) Finally, it should be noted that several members of the delegation participated in a training seminar with members of the newly formed Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections, sharing with them the experiences of other countries where similar nonpartisan organizations played a critical role in monitoring the election process, thereby increasing voter confidence in election processes

occurring after years of non-democratic rule. The delegation hopes that the Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections will develop into an effective monitoring organization and obtain the respect of all segments of the Bulgarian population.

NDI plans to organize two additional pre-election survey missions and to co-sponsor a large, high level, international delegation, along with the National Republican Institute for International Affairs for the June 10 elections. This delegation hopes that these elections will mark the emergence and institutionalization of a democratic system in Bulgaria where free and fair elections are the norm and the human and civic rights of all citizens are respected.

April 26, 1990
Sofia, Bulgaria

NDI PRE-ELECTION SURVEY REPORT

May 13-17, 1990

The following statement is offered by the second pre-election fact finding mission to Bulgaria sponsored by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) in anticipation of the June 10, 1990 elections for a Grand National Assembly. The participants in the mission were:

- LARRY GARBER, senior consultant with NDI and author of *Guidelines for International Election Observing*;
- JOYCE GOULD, Director of Organization for the British Labour Party;
- THOMAS MELIA, Program Director for NDI;
- ANTONIO NADAIS, Assistant Professor of Constitutional Law and Political Science at the Lisbon Law School and Legal Advisor to the judges of the Portuguese Constitutional Court;

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- DEBORAH SEILER, chief consultant for the California Assembly Committee on Elections, Reapportionment and Constitutional Amendments; and
- TIBOR VIDOS, Executive Director of the Alliance for Free Democrats (SZDSZ) of Hungary.

The mission was assigned the following tasks: 1) To assess the extent to which the election law and related provisions are being fairly implemented; 2) To evaluate conditions in Bulgaria at the outset of the election campaign, particularly in areas where minority groups reside; 3) To survey the capabilities of parties, coalitions, and organizations with respect to their election day monitoring capabilities; and 4) To present a brief report on present political conditions in Bulgaria.

During its visit to Bulgaria this week, the mission met in Sofia, Haskovo, Kurdjeli, Razsgard, and Sumen, with members of the Central Election Commission, political party leaders, representatives of the Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections (BAFE), government officials at the district and municipal levels and other political activists.

A complete report on the findings of the first two pre-election delegations will be issued on May 25. At this stage, the delegation wishes to highlight the following points regarding the electoral process now underway in Bulgaria:

1) We have been heartened by the willingness of leaders of all political parties and important election administrators to meet with us and share their views. This is in itself a positive sign as it represents an acknowledgement of the constructive nature and legitimacy of international interest in this historic election process.

2) As the first delegation noted in its statement of April 26, 1990, the election law that emerged from political negotiations at the Roundtable is impressive and positive. Generally, the framework for free, fair and meaningful elections now exists. The key to any assessment of the elections that will be conducted according to the law, however, lies in its proper implementation

and in public confidence that the election process is fair. Given the facts of Bulgaria's modern history and the nature of the state today, most of the responsibility for conducting the elections and establishing such public confidence rests with the governing Bulgarian Socialist Party.

3) We are particularly pleased that the Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections has been accepted by the Roundtable partners. The Association, at both the national and local level, has impressed us with its non-partisan and increasingly professional work in support of a fair and meaningful election process. The fact that its activists receive training from international experts in non-partisan election monitoring, and that these international contacts are also recognized, is an additional positive sign. The success of such a movement and the cooperation it enjoys among political forces and administrators reflects well upon the Bulgarian people.

4) Several things have recently occurred, according to the timetable established in the election law, and these events are also encouraging. Voter registries were compiled, printed and displayed to the public at election sections as prescribed in the law. Although numerous errors in the registry have been noted, there is time for these to be corrected. We recommend, as a step to promote public confidence in the integrity of the voter registry (particularly in light of some concerns that have been expressed regarding the possibility of double-voting) that revised copies of the voter registry be made available at the regional and national level to all the participating parties and to the Association for Fair Elections well before election day.

5) The nomination process has been completed on time, and we heard no serious complaints about irregularities.

6) The degree of decentralization in the Bulgarian election system is interesting, and means that a great deal of responsibility rests with these local authorities, including the municipal civil authorities who are charged with implementing the political agreements. Local contact groups and roundtables have met and are meeting to discuss implementation of National Roundtable

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agreements, and these seemed, in the places we visited this week, to be generally constructive and satisfactory to all parties. It is heartening to see the participants able to remain in regular communication with one another on basic local issues and procedural questions.

7) Election commissions at the regional and sectional level have been established on time, and seem generally to include representatives of the major competing political forces. We have been told that training of these local councils will begin in the days ahead. We believe it would be beneficial to invite the local representatives of the Association for Fair Elections to participate as well, so that they can profit from the technical information and report on the fact of the training.

8) Arising in some cases from local roundtable agreements, some official newspapers at the local and regional level are publishing statements or platform excerpts by opposition parties without charge, and this is very much in the spirit of the election law and the National Roundtable agreements regarding equitable access by contestants to the mass media.

9) The election law is not discriminatory on the basis of gender, race, or religion, and we have heard no major complaints about discriminatory application of the law's provisions in the election campaign. However, given recent Bulgarian history of officially sponsored hostility toward, and discrimination against, minority communities, the government, the governing party and the election administrators have an obligation to take actions that will enhance public confidence in the integrity of the election process in minority communities.

10) We note that one of the important recommendations made by the previous delegation has been adopted and that official written protocols stating the results of voting at each section will be made available at the conclusion of ballot counting on election day to all party representatives and the Association for Fair Elections. This will enhance confidence in the reported results of the election and will facilitate verification of the vote by private

groups, such as the Association for Fair Elections. We note the Association is organizing a program of vote verification with the help of international experts, a step that will further enhance public confidence in the officially reported election results.

11) Although the previous delegation expressed concern about the seemingly cumbersome balloting process, which is to be used, we now believe the system can work if two things are done according to the schedule now envisioned. If the ballots are printed and distributed equitably to all parties sufficiently in advance of election day to enable parties to circulate them to supporters, then public understanding of, and confidence in, the process will be enhanced.

12) While our overall assessment of the prospects for free, fair and meaningful elections is generally positive, we remain concerned about several things, the handling of which will ultimately determine whether the government that emerges enjoys the respect and confidence of the Bulgarian people and the international community.

13) The inequity of resources available to the competing parties is glaring and, given the pervasive nature of state ownership, steps need to be taken immediately by the responsible authorities, including the governing party, to rectify the situation.

14) Our visits around the country and our interviews indicate that a hierarchy exists in respect of the material resources available to parties, with one party enjoying tremendous advantages, some others possessing very little, and some appearing to fall in between. This refers to money, infrastructure (including paid staff, office space and telecommunication capacities) and access to media. The inequity in the distribution of certain kinds of paper is especially worrisome as it makes it virtually impossible for some parties to make posters, print leaflets, or produce newspapers -- all basic tools of democratic political campaigns. We note that a Roundtable agreement providing for state financing of parties has been signed, which is good. The money should be transferred to the parties immediately by the government as there may be some suspicion

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that the governing party, which is least in need of additional financing, is inhibiting the ability of other parties to compete fairly.

15) We are also troubled by the reports we have consistently received regarding harassment of citizens and potential voters by local officials who threaten the most vulnerable elderly, rural and impoverished people with withdrawal of state services if certain parties are successful on election day. Actual violence seems uncommon, although psychological intimidation is apparently a widespread problem. While we have no information to suggest that there is a centrally directed campaign of harassment, we do think it is incumbent on all national party leaders to issue appropriate guidance to their local officials to refrain from these activities.

16) We are concerned about the prospects for equitable campaign opportunities among military personnel. Agreement in principle has been reached at the national level to provide equal access to these voters, and it is vital that local military commanders and election officials undertake to implement this agreement. We recommend that the Association for Fair Elections be permitted to enter all military bases during the campaign period to assess whether in fact all parties and candidates are able to present their platforms fairly, as well as to visit military voting sections on election day. Information about the composition of section election commissions on military bases should be made available to the parties and the public by the Ministry of Defense and the Central Election Commission. Finally, we are concerned that voting locations for military personnel may not in all cases be placed sufficiently outside the military environment to foster public confidence that there is an effectively free choice in voting. A military club adjacent to a base may not be adequate.

17) The arrangements for overseas and absentee voting and the assignment of these votes to particular regions requires early clarification. It may be possible that too large a bloc of voters from outside a district may effectively dilute the influence of voters residing in a region or district.

18) The delegation also believes that clarification is needed regarding the disposition of the ballots and envelopes from the time of their printing and especially at the conclusion of election day. Provisions should be made to guarantee the security of the ballots and the protocols and assurance that this has been done should be conveyed to the public. Here again, the Association for Fair Elections can play a role in education and assuring the public, if adequate information is made available.

19) Finally, we believe that more should be done as the election approaches to explain through the mass media, in a generally objective, non-partisan way, how, where, and when to vote. Assurances about the secrecy of the ballot would be important in such a civic education program.

NDI plans to organize one more pre-election survey mission, and to co-sponsor a large, high-level, international delegation, along with the National Republican Institute for International Affairs for the June 10 elections. This delegation hopes that these elections will mark the emergence and institutionalization of a democratic system in Bulgaria, where free and fair elections are the norm, and the human and civic rights of all citizens are respected.

May 17, 1990
Sofia, Bulgaria

NDI PRE-ELECTION SURVEY REPORT

May 27-June 1, 1990

The following statement is offered by the third and final pre-election fact-finding mission to Bulgaria sponsored by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) in anticipation of the June 1990 elections for a Grand National Assembly. The participants in this delegation were:

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- GIUSEPPE BARBAGALLO, Judge on the Council of State, the highest administrative court in Italy;
- HARVEY FELDMAN, retired U.S. diplomat who served as Deputy Chief of Mission in Bulgaria, 1975-1977;
- LARRY GARBER, senior consultant with NDI and author of *Guidelines for International Election Observing*;
- DANNY MCDONALD, commissioner of the U.S. Federal Election Commission and advisor to the OAS observer mission in Nicaragua, 1989-1990; and
- MASSIMO TEODORI, member of the Italian House of Deputies since 1979 and a leader of the Radical Party.

The delegation was assigned the following tasks: 1) to assess the extent to which the election law and related provisions are being fairly implemented; 2) to assess the fairness of the election campaign; 3) to survey the capabilities of the parties, coalitions and organizations with respect to their election day monitoring capabilities; and 4) to reach an explicit understanding with the authorities concerning the role of Bulgarians and international observers.

To obtain the necessary information, the delegation met with members of the Central and district election commissions, campaign managers and candidates of the political parties, government officials in the Ministries of National Defense and Foreign Affairs, representatives of free election movements, journalists based in Bulgaria and others informed about the current Bulgarian political situation. These meetings occurred in Sofia, Vidin, Bourgas, three small villages near Bourgas, and on military bases in Sofia and near Bourgas. The delegation thanks all those with whom it met and believes the forthright manner in which the discussions were conducted reflects the very significant changes that have occurred in Bulgaria since November 10, 1989. Finally, the delegation pays particular thanks to the representatives of the Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections, who helped schedule some of the meetings and made necessary logistical arrangements for the delegation.

Friends of Bulgaria are extremely heartened by developments since November 10 and hope the June elections will be truly free and fair. Only if this occurs, regardless of who ultimately prevails, will the new government have the legitimacy in the eyes of the Bulgarian population and the international community that is necessary in order to institutionalize political and economic reforms. It is in this spirit that, with less than 10 days to go before election day, the delegation wishes to highlight the following points regarding the election campaign and the administrative preparations for the elections:

1) Considering Bulgaria's recent past, the political campaign has been remarkably open. For the most part, political parties and candidates have been able to communicate their messages to the Bulgarian people through public rallies and meetings, the mass media and other means. In particular, the agreement regarding the allocation of media time to the three major parties has contributed significantly to ensuring that the population has had an opportunity to hear contending messages presented in a balanced format. However, the delegation received reports of sporadic incidents of violence, intimidation and threats, which contribute to the fears and uncertainties felt by many Bulgarians. For this reason, it is important that all parties make every effort to ensure that the final week of the campaign is conducted in a peaceful manner and that the government responds quickly, and in accordance with the appropriate legal procedures, to incidents involving breaches of the peace.

2) As noted by the first pre-election delegation, the election law is basically sound. However, perhaps because of the need to approve the law quickly, several significant points were left to the Central Election Commission. Unfortunately, even at this late date, several questions regarding interpretation of the election law and how it will be implemented remain unanswered or still need clarification. For example, it is still unclear who will be permitted to vote overseas, affecting a large number of potential voters. This is true, for example, with respect to Bulgaria's Turkish minority,

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which left their homes as a result of repression, and are now living on the Turkish side of the border. Without questioning the good faith of the government or the election commission, the real danger is that, to the extent uncertainty over the law exists, it will breed suspicion and mistrust, thus calling into doubt the legitimacy of the elections.

3) The short time period available has also affected preparations for the elections. Some voter registries were missing numerous names, while others included the names of those who had moved or died. Recognizing the problems, the Central Election Commission ordered that revised lists be prepared, but these are only now being finalized and some lists apparently will not be publicly released until June 5, five days before the elections. This schedule places considerable burdens on prospective voters, the political parties and others monitoring the election process, as they will have a very limited time to review the lists and voice any objections. While some mistakes are inevitable, it is extremely important that voters be confident in the integrity of the process and that there is no serious attempt to subvert the process.

4) The number of candidates participating in these elections is impressive: more than 1,400 individuals are contesting in the single-member constituencies and more than 1,700 individuals, representing 30 parties, are contesting in the multi-member constituencies. There were several minor complaints concerning the registration of candidates, but these were resolved in an expeditious and judicious manner.

5) The delegation heard no complaints regarding the composition of the central and district election commissions. However, in a few regions, for example Vidin, opposition activists complained that the sectional election commissions, which are responsible for administering the polling sites, did not include their representatives. Because there is no centralized list containing the names of the individuals serving on the more than 12,500 sectional election commissions, it is impossible to determine the percentage that lack significant opposition representation. An effort should be

made during the next week to compile this information, and those sectional election commissions lacking such representation should be targeted for coverage by non-partisan organizations and international observers, which are authorized to be present during the balloting and counting processes. The presence of representatives of these organizations will enhance public confidence in the process.

6) The delegation commends the Central Election Commission and television for allocating time to show voters how the balloting process for these elections will function. Of particular importance in these presentations, given Bulgaria's recent history with elections, is an emphasis on the individual's freedom to choose and on the secrecy of the ballot. In general, the more informed the voter, the smoother the process will operate.

7) As noted by the earlier delegations, an adequate framework exists for providing military conscripts information regarding the election process and the views of the competing parties. Implemented fairly, it can be a model for many countries. In many regions, in accordance with the decision of the Central Election Commission and a directive of the Minister of National Defense, there have been meetings for conscripts outside the bases to which all candidates have been invited, and the platforms of the three major parties have been published daily in the army newspaper. Nonetheless, the opposition continues to express concern regarding the influence of officers over the choices made by their subordinates, particularly in areas where officers are candidates. The fact that conscripts will generally be voting off-base and that civilians designated by all parties comprise the sectional election commissions should help establish a climate in which conscripts will feel free to vote according to their conscience. In any event, these polling sites should be carefully monitored and the results from these sites evaluated to determine their deviation from the population as a whole.

8) The delegation was assured that the requisite number of ballots would be ready in time for their distribution to political

parties at least three days before the elections and to the sectional election commissions on election day. We hope there will be no failure to meet the deadlines, since that would raise serious questions regarding the fairness of the elections. The process of ballot distribution should be carefully monitored because it presents an opportunity for the intimidation and harassment of prospective voters.

9) There is confusion over the responsibilities and, indeed, the membership of the public councils authorized by the Roundtable agreement of May 13. This matter needs urgent clarification, in a manner that does not threaten the independence, competence and capability of the central and district election commissions. Similarly, the mandate of the inter-agency ministerial group should be explained so as to avoid suspicions.

10) The open and expeditious manner in which the results are counted, tabulated and reported on the election night is critical for assuring public confidence in the integrity of the process. To this end, the official processing of results should be explained to the public before the elections. Also, the parallel vote tabulation being organized by the Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections, while unofficial, will provide a critical check on the credibility of the official results being released by the Central and district election commissions. The Association should be provided the necessary data to permit the implementation of this parallel vote tabulation operation.

11) As indicated above, nonpartisan organizations can contribute significantly to a fair elections process. The Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections, which formed in mid-April, has grown quickly into a competent organization, which should have a large presence at polling sites on election day. Questions, however, have been raised regarding the nonpartisan character of the Association. It is therefore important that international observers, who also have a responsibility for maintaining a nonpartisan position with respect to the elections, evaluate the nonpartisan

bona fides of the Association with respect to its actions before, during and after election day.

12) While this is the last pre-election mission organized by NDI, Messrs. Feldman, Garber and McDonald will remain in Bulgaria during the next week, monitoring the preparations for election day and obtaining further clarifications of the election law. They will prepare a supplementary report for the 60-member international observer delegation being organized by NDI and the National Republican Institute for International Affairs, which will be led by Prime Minister Steingrimur Hermannsson (Iceland), Senator Robert Hill (Australia), Governor Madeleine Kunin (Vermont, U.S.) and Congressman Robert Lagomarsino (California, U.S.). The delegation will be arriving in Bulgaria June 7 and will be visiting more than 10 cities and neighboring villages on election day.

13) In conclusion, the delegation notes that, notwithstanding, the problems referred to above, a great deal has been accomplished in a very short time period. The election commissions, the political parties, nonpartisan organizations, and many ordinary Bulgarian citizens, have worked extremely hard to prepare for these elections. Their continued cooperation is essential to carry out a successful election. With less than 10 days left before the elections, Bulgarians are anticipating the upcoming elections with hope for a democratic future.

June 1, 1990
Sofia, Bulgaria

Handwritten notes and stamps, including a date stamp that appears to read "JUN 1 1990".

TERMS OF REFERENCE**INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION
TO BULGARIAN NATIONAL ELECTIONS**

The National Republican Institute for International Affairs (NRIIA) and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) are organizing a 60-member international delegation to observe the June 10, 1990 parliamentary elections in Bulgaria. The delegation includes parliamentarians, political party leaders, democratic activists, jurists and election experts from across the democratic political spectrum and from approximately 20 countries.

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 for 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 June 10 Bulgarian elections. The delegation, therefore, must attempt to document observations and in all instances to distinguish factual 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 the briefings in Sofia on June 7 and 8, the delegation will divide into teams that will visit the different regions of Bulgaria. Based on the findings of these teams, the delegation will present a national perspective on the election process in a statement that NRIIA and NDI expect the delegation to issue on Monday, June 11 in Sofia. In addition, the Institutes would like each team to prepare a short report based on their 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 with the process. 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 Institute's work in Bulgaria in the past three months, 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 the 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 election?

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 and counting processes?

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, etc.)? Were the resources and opportunities available to all contestants comparable or equitable?

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 the use of 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 the public opinion surveys play in the effort to prepare for these elections?

G. What role did nongovernmental groups play in this process?

V. ELECTION DAY

A. How was voter eligibility at the polling site established?

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 the results announced in accordance with the prescribed procedures and without reasonable delays? Were these results disseminated to the public expeditiously? Were there unofficial parallel tabulations of the results? Were they consistent with the official results?

D. Did the political parties accept the official results? How were 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, the election process; promoting civic education, etc.)?

May 29, 1990

Appendix VI

ARRIVAL STATEMENT

INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION
TO BULGARIAN NATIONAL ELECTIONSSofia Bulgaria
June 8, 1990

We are an international delegation of 60 observers from 23 countries who are present in Bulgaria this week to witness the elections to the Grand National Assembly. The delegation includes parliamentarians, political party leaders, election administrators, journalists and democratic activists. Many of them have participated in other election missions, and a number have visited Bulgaria in the recent past.

We are here in strict accordance with Bulgarian law to examine the development of the electoral process, including the voting and counting on election day. It is important to emphasize that we are just observers, and not participants. We are not here to arbitrate, and we take no position on the outcome of the election. Nor are we here to interfere in the internal affairs of Bulgaria. We simply want to see for ourselves that the people of this country are able to cast a secret ballot in a fair and meaningful election.

This perspective is consistent with the practice of international missions to elections in other countries, and is widely accepted as the standard for observer conduct. It has also been accepted by the Central Election Commission, the government and the major political forces.

Our mission has several purposes. We wish our presence to be symbolic of international support for a free and fair election, and for a genuine and complete democratic transition. We also hope our presence will provide Bulgarians with confidence in the election process, because many of them are suspicious and distrustful after so many years of one-party rule. We are also here

Appendix VI

ARRIVAL STATEMENT

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TO BULGARIAN NATIONAL ELECTIONSSofia Bulgaria
June 8, 1990

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to learn about the electoral process from firsthand contacts with Bulgarians, including voters and local administrators, so that we may provide a complete assessment to the international community afterwards.

Given the momentous changes that are underway in this country and the region, it is not surprising that these historic elections have attracted the attention of the world. It is also worth noting that Bulgarians of every political persuasion have welcomed and encouraged this interest, and that there are numerous other delegations present, as well.

In just two days, the citizens of Bulgaria will vote in their first competitive, multi-party election in more than half a century. Though debate continues even on this eve of the election regarding certain aspects of the process, virtually the whole of the nation is clearly united in one regard: their desire and their determination to participate. And while only six months have passed since the communist party relinquished its monopoly on power, these elections promise a new era for Bulgaria, one which we hope will be distinguished by its democratic character, respect for the rights of all citizens, and strengthened by Bulgaria's increasing integration into the international community.

We have met today with a broad spectrum of Bulgarians to solicit their views on the electoral process and the campaign that has taken place. Tomorrow our delegation will divide into 12 teams, 11 of which will travel to towns in every part of the country. These teams will meet with local political leaders and election administrators in these regions. On Sunday, we will observe the balloting and counting processes around the country.

The delegation will seek to evaluate three distinct elements of the election process. With respect to the election campaign, delegates will ascertain whether Bulgarians believe that the political environment and the election laws and regulations allowed all participants in the process to communicate their views to the public. Regarding the procedures on election day, we will analyze whether voters were able to cast their ballots in secret and without

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fear of intimidation. Finally, in analyzing the counting process, we will attempt to determine whether the ballots have been accurately tallied, relying on a review of official results, as well as the results of the parallel tabulations of the vote being conducted by private nonpartisan groups. Throughout the weekend, our teams around the country will remain in communication with our office in Sofia and the delegation leaders.

On Monday, June 11, the delegation will regroup in Sofia for a full debriefing and comparison of observations. On Monday at 11:00 a.m., we will offer a preliminary statement to the press at a press conference here at the Sheraton Hotel.

The delegation has been organized by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the National Republican Institute for International Affairs (NRIIA), which are affiliated with their respective political parties in the United States. The two institutes conduct programs in support of democratic development around the world and have each been active in Bulgaria since the start of the year. They have sponsored a number of observer missions similar to this one, jointly and separately, in the Philippines, Haiti, Panama, Paraguay, Pakistan, Honduras, Chile, Nicaragua, Taiwan, South Korea, Namibia, Bangladesh, Hungary, Romania and, as we speak, Czechoslovakia.

The institutes have had staff in Bulgaria almost continuously since March, and so we in the delegation have benefited from a full review of the campaign during these previous three months. Pre-election surveys of the election administration and the campaign environment have been conducted, and have highlighted a number of issues of interest. These reports will enable this delegation to provide a comprehensive assessment of the whole process.

TEAM ASSIGNMENTS

**INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION
TO THE BULGARIAN NATIONAL ELECTIONS**

June 10, 1990

BLAGOEVGRAD

Harvey Feldman

Ady Halperin

BOURGAS

Norman Atkins
Giuseppe Barbagallo
Gerald Danaher

Susan Johnson
Laslo Kurti
Lisa McLean

HASKOVO

A.C.H.M. de Kok
Kathryn Dickey

Joyce Gould
Jorge Sagasti

KURDJALI

Roger Bodman
Marcus Kunian
Jack Laughery

James Moody
David Norcross
Tibor Vidos

PLEVEN

Oscar Godoy
Cindy Hays

Stephen Schlesinger
Vilmos Soos

PLOVDIV

Edward Cole
Nduka Irabor
Neil Newhouse

William Rompkey
Patricia Wald
Addison Wilson

Appendix VII

ROUSSE

Mary Scott Guest
Joachim Maitre

Tawfique Nawaz
Deborah Seiler

SOFIA (Delegation Leadership)

J. Brian Atwood
Larry Garber
William D. Harris
Steingrímur Hermannsson

Robert Hill
Madeleine Kunin
Robert J. Lagomarsino
Margaret G. Thompson

SOFIA

Glenn Cowan
Stanislaw Dembinski
George Hamilton
Gitobu Imanyara

Danny L. McDonald
Thomas O. Melia
Gerald Mitchell
Matt Reynolds
Frank Vega

STARA ZAGORA

Chip Andreae
Thomas Kahn

Leonid Krivenko
Jeff Lovitky

SUMEN

Rika DeBacker
Antonio Nadais

Peter Schramm
Christopher Smart

VARNA

Genaro Arriagada
Ann Bradley
Isaac Bantu

Paul Mannweiler
Alec Poitevint II
Kasim Rasidovic

VIDIN

Susan Brophy
Arild Hiim

Eduard Tourache
Samuel Watson

**LETTER FROM PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE
TO PRESIDENTS OF BAFE AND CIFDE**

June 9, 1990

TO: Kevork Kevorkyan, President of BAFE

Leda Mileva, President of the Association for Citizen's Initiative for Free and Democratic Elections

On request of the Chairman of the Ministry Council, we inform you that according to the Elections Act and instructions of the President of the Republic, it is not allowed any kind of exit polling to be conducted near polling stations on election day.

It is necessary that you inform your representatives that the conducting of exit polls and the broadcasting of any kind of information on the outcome of the elections before the official announcement of the Central Electoral Commission should be prohibited. The local authorities have been advised accordingly. At the same time they have been instructed to support the public forces and organizations to control the electoral process. One suggests that all the information on cases of illegal manipulation of the voters should be immediately reported to the District Electoral Commissions and the Central Electoral Commission to enable them to undertake the necessary actions.

Chief Secretary of the Ministry Council

(Signed, sealed with the seal of the Ministry Council)

*Appendix IX***LETTER TO PRIME MINISTER
FROM DELEGATION LEADERS**

June 10, 1990

Dear Prime Minister Lukanov:

Thank you very much for your kind hospitality at your residence yesterday. During lunch, you suggested we contact you regarding matters that come to our attention causing concern. In this spirit, we would like to express apprehension over the issuance of an instruction concerning the release of election projections based on parallel vote tabulations. Based on our collective experiences observing elections around the world, we view the successful implementation of this operation as essential for ensuring the credibility of the elections in the eyes of the Bulgarian people and the international community.

Parallel vote tabulations such as the one being used by the Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections are designed to provide public confidence in the tabulation of the results in countries where suspicion and mistrust exist. As you acknowledged at lunch, this is certainly the case in Bulgaria.

The Association's tabulation operation is based on the actual results obtained by Association volunteers from 10 percent of the polling sites. The polling sites are selected based on a random sample. They can provide an accurate projection of the overall results, with an approximately 3 percent margin of error.

We would like to emphasize that a parallel vote tabulation is quite different from an exit poll. The latter relies on voters responding to questions regarding how they voted. In the circumstances of Bulgaria, such questions may be viewed as

intimidating and the answers provided as suspect. Thus, we understand the rationale for prohibiting the use of exit polls, particularly since it would appear, in any event, to violate Article 51(1) of the Grand National Assembly Election Act. There is no provision in the law proscribing a parallel vote tabulation and the plan for such a tabulation has been known for quite some time.

We have reviewed the Association's methodology, which was developed with the assistance of experts who have worked on similar operations in other countries and who are members of this delegation, with considerable care. We are convinced that it is being implemented in an effective and credible manner. In addition, this delegation will be conducting its own verification of the Association's operation. Finally, the Association has assured the delegation that it will indicate that the results it releases are unofficial and that they represent a projection with a margin of error.

It is in this context that we were disturbed to hear that the Central Election Commission instructed that a letter be sent informing the President of the Association that the release of "election forecasts" based on parallel vote tabulations was prohibited. More significantly, last night's television program, which provided last minute instructions to section election commissions, made a special point of mentioning this instruction.

We can only believe that this was done to create in the minds of polling officials the understanding that the parallel vote tabulation itself is prohibited, thus encouraging them to deny Association members access to the results at a polling site. If this in fact occurs, the parallel vote tabulation will be that much less reliable. We hope that you will reinforce with election officials throughout the country that Association representatives are entitled to be present during the counting process and to obtain signed copies of the results.

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We would greatly appreciate an opportunity to review our concerns with you today at your earliest convenience.

STEINGRIMUR HERMANNSSON	ROBERT HILL
Prime Minister	Senator
Iceland	Australia

MADELEINE KUNIN
Governor
United States

ROBERT LAGOMARSINO
Member of Congress
United States

cc: Professor Zhivko Stalev

POST-ELECTION STATEMENT**INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION TO
BULGARIAN NATIONAL ELECTIONS**

Sofia, Bulgaria
June 11, 1990

We are pleased to offer this preliminary statement on behalf of the international delegation organized jointly by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs and the National Republican Institute for International Affairs. This delegation consists of 60 members from 23 countries, many of whom have participated in observer missions before and several of whom have been part of pre-election surveys here.

We divided into twelve teams over the weekend, eleven of which traveled to towns in the countryside for two-and-a-half days following intensive briefings in Sofia. These teams generally concentrated their observations in the smaller towns and villages, and stayed in touch with the delegation leadership which remained in Sofia. Altogether, we visited some 350 voting sections. We coordinated our schedule with the Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections, which mobilized more than 10,000 volunteers to establish a presence at most voting sections in the country. We have also cooperated with other international delegations in Bulgaria this week to maximize our effectiveness and coverage.

It is most important to note that our assessment of the election process in Bulgaria began with pre-election survey missions more than two months ago, and it is not yet completed. Some of our delegation and staff will remain in the country through next week's run-off elections, and we will later produce a comprehensive report on the entire process that has led to these elections. Yet it seems worthwhile to offer some preliminary judgements at this point, on the morning after the history-making elections of June 10.

Pre-election missions identified some of the hurdles relating to inequities in resources available to the various parties, inadequate administrative procedures and questions of intimidation and political pressure. The authorities were responsive to some of these concerns, and always accessible and cordial to our delegations. Yet the legacy of 45 years of what the country's present leaders acknowledge has been totalitarian rule cannot be forgotten in a few months, and in Bulgaria it has not been.

One of the most difficult issues which an observer delegation must consider is whether the voters were intimidated into voting a different way than their conscience would otherwise dictate. Overt intimidation -- written or verbal threats, a heavy and threatening military or police presence or actual physical abuse -- can be detected. But intimidation can also be psychological and sociological, a subtle but insidious deterrent to free voting that is not as visible. A long history of dictatorship can affect the behavior of a voting population. When this is the case, only the most aggressive reassurances by a government can overcome the fear people feel.

There were incidents on election day that could be interpreted as overt intimidation. The delegation heard about vote buying, a mayor who drove voters to the polls, letters sent from officials to voters, threats that voters would lose their pensions or jobs if the opposition won, military officers present at places where conscripts voted and voting booths arranged in such a way to convey the impression to voters that officials would know how people voted. In a democracy with some history, some of these examples might be considered benign. This is not the case in Bulgaria, a society that was until recently oppressed by its own government. Overall, we did not see intimidation of such a nature as to invalidate the national election, although we believe that investigations are necessary to determine whether irregularities affected the results of specific constituencies.

Given its modern history, it is difficult to detect intimidation in Bulgaria, and it is even more difficult to measure its effect in

votes. We can only say it was a factor. That is why we urged the government to reassure voters that they should have no fears because the ballot was secret. Though this was attempted by electoral authorities the day before the election, we must conclude that this was insufficient to overcome 45 years of harsh communist rule and the lack of a political culture disposed to free choice in the rural areas. In Sofia, by contrast, we witnessed a major attitudinal reversal over the three-month campaign and a freedom of expression which resembles any democratic capital.

A great deal has taken place in this country. Substantial negotiations in the Roundtable framework produced agreement on a wide variety of issues, large and small, including the procedures for these elections. Parties and other independent groups have formed and become active in many fields. The press has become freer and more diverse and, during the campaign, the major political parties were provided significant access to television.

Despite the challenges of preparing for an election in a short period of time, the Central Election Commission has been responsive to concerns raised by opposition parties and international observers in the past few weeks and as recently as the morning of election day. For instance, it was agreed that a parallel vote tabulation could be conducted by independent observers to enhance confidence in the officially reported results; it was decided that citizens could effectively register to vote on election day so as to minimize the exclusion of voters due to the poor quality of some voter registries; media time and other resources were provided to opposition parties and coalitions. In sum, despite the problems that existed throughout the campaign, all major parties were able to communicate their messages to the public.

An election has clearly taken place. This is a substantial accomplishment, and it indicates that Bulgaria is a very different place from what it was before the 10th of November 1989. A vital appreciation for the rule of law is growing and will further define the democratic character of the society when mature.

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The unfortunate reality that fear is still a factor in the country is not cause to invalidate this election. But it does mean that the government has a serious challenge to erase this fear so that there will be no doubt future elections will be decided by fully informed voters who feel free to vote their conscience.

We know that complaints have been filed with the Central Election Commission about significant irregularities. We have been assured by the Commission, the proper body for such questions, that these complaints will be investigated fully. This is important because a fair election process requires the vigorous investigation by a properly constituted body with the power and the inclination to prosecute violations. Even where it does not affect the outcome of a particular election, such investigations and prosecutions are necessary to ensure that the rule of law is upheld. We want to underscore that it is the government in power that has the responsibility to assure that this occurs. Moreover, the government needs to address itself visibly to the widespread fear that reprisals will be taken against opposition activists or voters. We see it as part of our role to continue our review during this post-election phase.

In conclusion, we would like to express our hope and our expectation that Bulgaria, a nation that has long been isolated from the world community and not always well treated by its neighbors, will find its democratic future strengthened by growing contacts with other nations. Many vital and difficult tasks remain to be addressed. These include political and social reforms, significant economic restructuring and a greater respect for the rights of minorities -- specifically, the Turkish community which has suffered a great deal and whose exile community was effectively disenfranchised. The local elections that are envisioned for later in the year will provide a further opportunity for Bulgaria to demonstrate that political pluralism can be a meaningful reality for a society in transition.

Nations that observe and respect well established international human rights standards find themselves more warmly welcomed by

the expanding democratic world community. As a first step in that process, we hope that all contesting parties will make clear as soon as possible their intention to cooperate in the further development of democratic institutions in this country.

STATEMENT BY NDI POST-ELECTION FACT-FINDING MISSION

Sofia, Bulgaria

June 18, 1990

For the past three months, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) has been monitoring closely the Bulgarian electoral process. Three pre-election fact-finding missions visited the country between April 23 and June 1, and NDI co-sponsored a 60-member international delegation that observed the June 10 elections for Bulgaria's Grand National Assembly. Consistent with the approach developed during this period, NDI maintained a mission in Bulgaria from the June 10 round of voting through the second round on June 17. The following individuals participated in this mission:

- LARRY GARBER (U.S.), NDI's senior consultant for electoral processes and author of *Guidelines for International Election Observing*;
- DANNY MCDONALD (U.S.), Commissioner on the U.S. Federal Election Commission and advisor to the OAS observer mission in Nicaragua 1989-90;
- THOMAS MELIA (U.S.), NDI Program Director; and
- TIBOR VIDOS (Hungary), Executive Director of the Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ).

All participated in pre-election fact-finding missions organized by NDI and were members of the international delegation to the June 10 elections. As in previous missions, they were assisted by NDI's representative in Bulgaria, Gerald Mitchell, and NDI's Eastern European Program Coordinator, Lisa McLean.

The tasks assigned to this mission included: a) examining the official tabulation of results following voting on June 10; b) evaluating the manner in which the Central Election Commission addressed complaints arising from the conduct of voting on June 10 and the tabulation thereafter, whether filed by parties,

individuals or independent bodies; c) monitoring administrative preparations for the second round of voting on June 17; d) assessing the political situation in Bulgaria during this period; e) observing the voting on June 17 and the initial tabulation of results; and f) preparing this report on the mission's activities and conclusions.

From June 11 to June 16, interviews were conducted in Sofia with commissioners and expert advisors at the Central Election Commission (CEC), political party leaders, and the senior staff of the Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections (BAFE). On June 17, the team coordinated its activity with BAFE and other international observers in Bulgaria, visiting polling places and counting centers in the Sofia, Plovdiv and Velingrad regions, where contests has been especially close or where complaints had arisen during the first round.

The following observations supplement and update previous mission statements:

1) The CEC is to be congratulated for the important contribution it has made in administering in a diligent and nonpartisan manner the entire election process. In a short period of time, the Commission developed a system, which while not free from flaws, provided Bulgarians an opportunity to cast a secret ballot in a multi-party election. The impreciseness of the election law has made inevitable the need to modify constantly the applicable procedures. This occurred also during the week between the first and second round of elections, causing confusion and inconsistencies at the polling sites. The final delegation report will include recommendations regarding specific aspects of the election law and procedures.

2) After careful review of the major complaints presented formally or informally by the political parties and BAFE regarding the first round of the elections, the mission concludes that the irregularities and inconsistencies seem not to have materially affected the official results of the June 10 elections as released by the CEC. This conclusion is reinforced by the fact that the

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national results obtained by the BAFE parallel vote tabulation are virtually identical to the national results released by the CEC.

Further, no party has presented conclusive evidence demonstrating that tampering occurred in the reporting or tabulating of the results for individual parties or candidates. The majority of complaints presented by the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) concern discrepancies between the number of valid votes recorded at a particular polling site and the cumulated number of votes for all the parties. However, these discrepancies are explicable by the fact that not all voters cast ballots in both the multi-member and single-member elections, and were caused by misunderstandings and inadequate instructions regarding the counting of invalid ballots and empty envelopes. Significantly, in the vast majority of cases, the representatives of all the political parties present at the polling site signed the protocol without comment.

Finally, with respect to the announcement of the results, the mission does not believe that there were unwarranted or inordinate delays, despite the expectation that the results would be available Monday afternoon. The tabulation of results and official announcements were made on Tuesday, June 12, for the single member constituencies, and on Thursday, June 14, for the multi-member constituencies. Particularly in view of the novelty of the election system in Bulgaria, the official counting was accomplished rather expeditiously, while permitting adequate oversight to ensure that no manipulations had occurred. In this regard, it is important to note that suspicions concerning possible manipulation were greatly alleviated by the early release of unofficial results generated by the parallel vote tabulations referred to above.

3) Notwithstanding concerns about irregularities on June 10 and the complaints that have been submitted, the principal political forces have acknowledged the legitimacy of the results as reported and those who qualified participated actively in the run-off election on June 17. The political parties and BAFE are to be congratulated for attempting to document the irregularities that

occurred on June 10 and to present them to the authorities. However, as the international delegation noted in its statement, only if the submissions are handled meaningfully, in accordance with the appropriate procedures, will confidence in the government system and respect for the rule of law develop in Bulgaria.

To date, complaints regarding irregularities of June 10, including allegations of intimidation, have been submitted to the CEC by the four major parties that will be represented in the Grand National Assembly and by BAFE. Some of these complaints have been addressed by the CEC, and its decisions in at least two cases have been upheld by the Supreme Court. Other complaints, pursuant to Article 78 of the Election Law, will be considered by the Election Verification Commission established by the Grand National Assembly. While the rules for the operation of this Commission are not yet clear, the mission expects that appropriate procedures will be developed in the same spirit of mutual respect that was evident during the round-table process.

4) At this point in time, it is difficult to reach definitive conclusions regarding the conduct of the June 17 elections. In all polling sites visited, the political parties and other civic organizations were present in large numbers. There were few complaints regarding the administrative preparations to the runoff, a considerable accomplishment given the brief period following the announcement of the first round results. However, there were complaints, once again, regarding intimidation and election day campaigning.

The most serious problem observed by the mission was the constituency of Rakitovo, where individuals sought to vote with certificates provided by local officials, but without valid passports. There appears to be no authority for the issuance of these certificates and, despite objections, individuals holding these certificates were allowed to vote in the June 10 elections. This matter has now been presented formally to the CEC. If it is determined that this abuse materially affected the result in this constituency, where the Minister of Interior is a candidate, then a

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new election might be necessary. In any event, this matter and other allegations in this region should be fully investigated by the appropriate authorities.

5) The June 17 runoff elections mark a further positive step in Bulgaria's transition to democracy. However, as previous missions have emphasized, considerable work is still required for a modern, pluralist political culture to materialize. Regardless of who actually leads or participates in the next government, the presence of two large parties and two smaller parties in the Grand National Assembly which is responsible for drafting a new constitution within 18 months, should ensure that issues fundamental to the future of Bulgarian society are debated with vigor. The experience with a free press and other forms of free expression during the campaign also will contribute to Bulgaria's democratic development. Finally, the emergence of civic organizations such as the Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections, which again fielded thousands of volunteers and conducted a highly credible parallel vote tabulation, provides cause for optimism that Bulgaria's long tradition of nondemocratic rule is drawing to a close.

(For further information, please contact Gerald Mitchell in Bulgaria, local phone 520-358 or in Washington, Thomas Melia, 202/328-3136)

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POST-ELECTION STATEMENT

**NRIIA INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION
TO THE BULGARIAN RUN-OFF ELECTIONS**

Sofia, Bulgaria
June 18, 1990

We are an international delegation sponsored by the National Republican Institute for International Affairs. We are part of a larger group that last week observed Bulgaria's national elections. These remarks are offered as our preliminary impressions of the 17 June run-off elections. Furthermore, by means of this statement, we wish to re-emphasize the conclusion of last week's delegation, as well as add points to our own.

Four teams consisting of two delegates each remained in-country for the final voting. Using Sofia and Rousse as their base of operations, the teams witnessed a broad cross-section of both rural and urban voting. Delegation members witnessed the balloting, counting and tabulation process throughout the day.

The three essential elements that must be examined in an effective election observation are the environmental factors surrounding the conduct of the campaign, the balloting mechanics, and the counting/tabulation process.

The administration and execution of the voting and counting/tabulation were found by this delegation to be largely free of any systematic or centralized fraud. However, delegation members witnessed and heard accusations by various parties of localized irregularities. Some such irregularities were undoubtedly due to the unfamiliarity of the voting process. The delegation feels, however, based on conversations with various voters, that some irregularities were the result of intentional misconduct.

The delegation's greatest concern lies with the conduct of the pre-election campaign. When questioned by observers, voters often responded that election day conditions were "normal." Upon

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further questioning, it was found that voters cautiously revealed they were being subjected to various forms of intimidation, both subtle and overt. Overt intimidation--direct threats of the loss of jobs, housing, and educational opportunities, as well as physical harm--was alleged in many of the polling stations visited. The subtle intimidation comes as a result of a country oppressed by its own government for forty-five years. Inaction by the government in assuring the population that their vote would be truly secret, we feel, affected the actual vote of many Bulgarians. This type of subtle intimidation was particularly evident in rural areas, where local officials can often communicate their positions to the voters without the need for explicit oral or written statements.

The delegation is further concerned with the inequity in the allocation of campaign resources. Opposition candidates and parties had little time to prepare a viable organization and few means to communicate their message to the electorate. Taken in contrast with the vast state resources available to the ruling party, the delegation cannot declare the campaign environment to have been completely fair.

We have great respect for individual Bulgarian voters who offered their impressions to our delegation, often in the presence of those who represented the ruling party. We congratulate the people of Bulgaria for their willingness to participate in their first step toward democracy. We urge all persons concerned with the democratic future of Bulgaria to continue with the process so recently begun.

All individual members of this delegation wish to thank the Bulgarian people for their warm Bulgarian-Slavic hospitality.

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OFFICIAL RESULTS FROM THE CENTRAL ELECTION COMMISSION BY REGION

REGION	BSP	UDF	BANU	MRF
Blagoevgrad	41.12%	41.03%	7.36%	8.45%
Bourgas	47.35	33.94	7.55	8.32
Varna	42.83	41.63	8.75	3.85
Veliko Turnovo	50.13	35.93	12.27	.00
Vidin	62.10	29.69	6.83	.00
Vratsa	58.55	29.37	10.30	.00
Gabrovo	39.66	42.33	14.56	1.34
Kurdzhali	18.38	6.14	2.39	64.92
Kustendil	51.51	37.21	9.58	.00
Lovech	46.70	38.42	12.11	1.39
Mihajlovgrad	59.27	29.15	9.74	.00
Pazardjik	51.00	34.19	8.65	3.94
Pernik	49.63	41.49	6.58	.00
Pleven	52.80	35.11	8.84	2.04
Plovdiv	43.61	45.41	6.62	2.09
Razgrad	38.33	9.49	4.84	38.65
Rousse	43.96	36.16	9.27	8.24
Silistra	50.60	12.47	7.63	27.21
Sliven	57.41	32.79	6.90	.00
Smolyan	50.69	30.91	13.19	3.47
Sofia (city)	38.90	53.78	4.57	.00
Sofia (district)	47.36	37.83	12.78	.00
Stara Zagora	50.83	38.57	7.15	1.39
Tolbuhin	54.58	22.26	10.15	10.71
Turgovishte	54.62	15.73	8.34	19.50
Haskovo	52.90	27.49	7.53	7.74
Sumen	50.47	16.36	7.97	21.16
Yambol	58.84	31.27	8.50	.00
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TOTAL*	47.15%	36.20%	8.03%	6.03%

**OTHERS" = 2.59%

Appendix XIII

**APPORTIONMENT OF SEATS
IN THE GRAND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
AS DETERMINED BY THE CENTRAL ELECTION COMMISSION
FINAL SECOND ROUND RESULTS**

Party Name	Prop. Percent	Prop. Seats	Maj. Seats	Total Seats
BSP	47.15	97	114	211
UDF	36.20	75	69	144
BANU	8.03	16	0	16
RFM	6.03	12	11	23
OTHERS	2.59	0	6	6
	—	—	—	—
TOTALS	100.00	200	200	400

Prop. = proportional

Maj. = majority

**BAFE AND INFAS PARALLEL VOTE RESULTS
COMPARED WITH OFFICIAL RESULTS**

Party	BAFE	INFAS	Official
BSP	46.99%	48.5%	47.15%
UDF	36.13%	32.3%	36.20%
BANU	8.19%	8.1%	8.03%
MRF	6.31%	8.7%	6.03%

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BAFE RESULTS BY PARTY
AS OF JUNE 10, 1990 AT 11:14 PM
 (announced on television)

Number of protocols received: 290, representing 22.29% of the sample.
 Number of registered voters: 124,164, representing 20.026% of the sample.

Party	Number of Votes	Percentage
Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP)	50,603	46.66%
Union of Democratic Forces (UDF)	36,997	34.11
Bulgarian Agrarian National Union (BANU)	8,813	8.13
Movement for Rights and Freedom (MRF)	8,730	8.05
National Labor Party	1,246	1.15
Alternative Socialist Association (ASO)	264	0.24
Alternative Socialist Party (ASP)	465	0.43
Bulgarian National Radical Party	85	0.08
Bulgarian National Democratic Party	123	0.11
Bulgarian Revolutionary Youth Party	14	0.01
Bulgarian Christian Democratic Party	38	0.04
Non-Party for Democrats	163	0.15
United Peoples League	7	0.01
Liberal Party	161	0.15
National Party of Labor (POP)	5	0.00
National Patriotic Movement	7	0.01
Organization of Heart Disease	15	0.01
Parliamentary Movement for Restoration of Turnovo Constitution	133	0.12
Political Opposition Bloc	121	0.11
Republican Party	0	0.00
Free Democratic Party	10	0.01
Social Democratic Party - Non-Marxist	38	0.04
Union of Non-Party Members	105	0.10
Union of Non-Party Warrants	32	0.03
"ERA-3"	54	0.05
Union of Handicapped Persons	167	0.15
Christian Republican Party	55	0.05
Spilled Ballots	2,920	2.69%
Actual Voters	112,461	90.57%

BAFE RESULTS BY REGION

Region	BSP	UDF	BANU	MRF
Blagoevgrad	42.23%	45.44%	6.77%	3.88%
Bourgas	49.42	32.73	6.86	7.87
Varna	43.28	40.52	10.07	3.43
Veliko Tarnovo	51.78	33.66	13.00	.00
Vidin	64.78	26.73	7.33	.00
Vratsa	58.46	28.66	11.11	.00
Gabrovo	39.42	39.10	17.45	1.94
Kurdzhali	17.57	4.72	4.34	66.43
Kustendil	56.21	31.60	11.00	.00
Lovech	45.29	40.52	11.16	2.06
Mihajlovgrad	56.59	31.50	9.92	.00
Pazardjik	56.11	31.90	8.83	1.10
Pernik	50.28	40.18	7.86	.00
Pleven	55.19	32.18	9.49	2.06
Plovdiv	44.18	46.69	6.27	.97
Razgrad	26.91	7.62	3.41	57.21
Rousse	44.46	37.77	9.72	6.16
Silistra	55.02	10.52	7.46	24.70
Sliven	60.06	28.33	7.70	.00
Smolyan	38.76	39.28	10.07	10.44
Sofia (city)	38.89	53.83	4.58	.00
Sofia (district)	47.50	36.93	13.21	.00
Stara Zagora	52.32	37.62	6.05	2.19
Tolbuhin	51.25	26.85	9.28	10.07
Turgovishte	59.00	16.51	9.46	13.37
Haskovo	53.17	28.74	7.05	7.47
Sumen	51.34	14.24	7.41	23.25
Yambol	57.90	30.71	10.25	.00

NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) conducts nonpartisan political development programs overseas. By working with political parties and other institutions, NDI seeks to promote, maintain and strengthen democratic institutions and pluralistic values in new and emerging democracies. NDI has conducted a series of democratic development programs in more than 30 countries, including Argentina, Bangladesh, Bulgaria, Brazil, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Haiti, Hungary, Nicaragua, Northern Ireland, Panama, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Romania, Senegal, South Korea, Taiwan, and Uruguay.

NATIONAL REPUBLICAN INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

The National Republican Institute for International Affairs was established in December 1983 to enable the Republican Party of the United States to carry out programs of international development. The Republican Institute is committed to the belief that free, competitive, and sound political parties are cornerstone institutions within any democratic society. The primary objective of the Institute is to foster the process of democratic self-rule through closer ties and cooperative programs with political parties and other non-governmental organizations overseas.

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