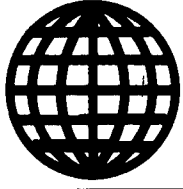


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BSDP Chairman Dertliev on Visit to Greece

92BA0676A Sofia SVOBODEN NAROD in Bulgarian
6 Mar 92 p 4

[Interview with Dr. Petur Dertliev, chairman of the Bulgarian Social Democratic Party, BSDP, after his visit to Greece the previous week, by Tikhomir Eturski; place and date not given: "Social Democracy Is Not Created With Declarations"]

[Text] [Eturski] Dr. Dertliev, what was the purpose of your trip to Greece and what benefits resulted from the visit?

[Dertliev] Whether parliamentary or not, a political group must actively participate in the resolution of national problems. Of late, there has been a noticeable crack in the otherwise excellent relations that exist between Greece and Bulgaria. It was important to us to identify the basis of this difference and to see the extent to which unpleasant aspects could be eliminated. We established contacts with all truly active political forces of our southern neighbor. We established contacts with New Democracy, the Coalition of the Left for Progress, and, naturally, PASOK [Panhellenic Socialist Movement].

[Eturski] What was the main issue discussed in your business meetings and conversations?

[Dertliev] The moment we entered Greek territory, we saw the vestiges of the recently held meetings on the subject of the proclamation of the independence of the Republic of Macedonia. As we know, Greece has major objections about the name of this small republic that recently seceded from totalitarian Yugoslavia. Saloniki was all draped in blue and white, which are the colors of the Greek flag. Fortunately, we arrived after this wave of protest had already abated. Our talks were held in a friendly atmosphere. It became clear that there was apprehension about territorial claims by Macedonia, as well as a feeling of being insulted, if one may say so, by the actions of a partner whose appropriate behavior was relied upon. Naturally, the fact that we recognize Macedonia was a democratic act that should have been at least draped in suitable diplomatic behavior. We should have openly stated that we cannot fail to recognize Macedonia for such and such reasons! Perhaps for the simple fact that a high percentage of the Bulgarian population can trace its origins to that land.

[Eturski] To the best of my knowledge, this applies to your origins as well?

[Dertliev] Yes. And even had we merely said that most people who live in Macedonia are Bulgarian, that would have made the issue more acceptable. As to territorial claims, we said the following in the discussions with our Greek partners: "Well, you are against 'Ilinden' and Macedonianism. But who created them? It was Yugoslavia and great-Serb chauvinism that, as we know, had territorial claims against Bulgaria as well. The subject of the aggression would be Yugoslavia, headed by Serbia, rather than a newly formed small Macedonian republic, all the more so since

this is a time not of erecting new borders but of eliminating existing ones. Such are the views of modern Europe."

[Eturski] A population professing Islam lives on both sides of the Bulgarian-Greek border. Was this aspect of the national problems mentioned in the course of the discussions?

[Dertliev] Our neighbors are concerned about the moral attacks on that population by some circles. However, we were unanimous in the belief that religion, whatever it may be, must never be used in an effort to change the national awareness of the people. There was no discussion of this matter. Nor was there any of the next issue raised by our delegation on an expected "monarchic boom" in the Balkans. Naturally, it would be exaggerated to speak of a "boom," but we believe that Serbia, deprived of its totalitarian supremacy, will try to regain it under the old flag of the Serbian kingdom.

[Eturski] What moment of your visit impressed you most?

[Dertliev] As we were waiting to meet with Mr. Papandreou, all of a sudden we heard noise in the hall. Children were chanting something. It was such a happy exclamation.... It turned out that Mr. Papandreou was unable to walk along the hall because of a crowd of children who had come to see the parliament. Papandreou asked them: "Do you love Greece?" They shouted "Yes!" "When you grow up will you defend democracy?" "Yes!" Actually, this was a school for developing the awareness of the children, where they learned love for the values of democracy and the state.

[Eturski] I can only imagine the type of training that will be given to our children should they spend even a single day in the National Assembly....

[Dertliev] Not only that. I can remember the savage expressions on faces at the time that people who were filled with hatred of the parliament were its members. That was when we were drafting the Bulgarian Constitution. Frankly speaking, it made me sick.

[Eturski] According to a folk saying, "This thing grows where you did not sow it." We learned from the newspaper DUMA that, after the recent visit the delegation of the BSP [Bulgarian Socialist Party] paid to Greece, Mr. Papandreou assumed the responsibility of helping the former communist party join the Socialist International. What can you say about that?

[Dertliev] You see, the International is interested in all left-wing and social democratic movements. That is natural. Bearing in mind the change in their way of thinking, it invites them to attend various seminars and even accepts their people for training, which is sponsored by its foundations. However, some people do not understand that that is merely a polite gesture. At that point, they abuse the attention in a purely bolshevik manner. Such politeness is interpreted as an agreement. However, the people of the International have a "double view" on such parties because they would like for the BSP to become social democratic. However, they know that social democracy is not created with statements. God willing, some people will eventually understand that simple truth.

Funds for Banje Hydroelectric Station Disappear*AU2603154592 Tirana RILINDJA DEMOKRATIKE
in Albanian 18 Mar 92 p 2*

[Article by Niko Cepiku: "Niko Gjyzari Does Not Say Where the \$30 Million Are Hidden"]

[Text] In its program, the Democratic Party undertakes to urgently reorganize heating and lighting for the people. We recently talked to the Investment Department of the General Energy Directorate about the opportunities for large-scale investment of this kind. To our amazement, the gentlemen of this department were pessimistic, not about bringing this investment to fruition, but due to a feeling that few foreign firms will invest large sums in Albania because of the financial scandals caused by the State Bank. Here is the story:

The Teknoimport firm signed a contract with the French company Cegelec, in Tirana on 15 January 1990, to buy technical equipment for the Banje Hydroelectric Station. The total value of this contract, including the insurance premium, was about \$30 million, and, according to the agreement, it would be financed by the Paris-based bank, Credit Lyonnais. The total payments, including loan interest, were about \$54 million.

If this sum had been held by the French bank, the interest to be paid would have been \$10 million less, but in that case the State Bank would not have been able to use the funds as it liked. An agreement was reached, and was kept secret both when it was signed and later: No members of the working group involved in the discussion and signing of the technical contract for the Banje Hydroelectric Station were aware of it. This agreement made it possible to deposit the sum of \$30 million in the State Bank.

After the contract was signed, the delivery of equipment worth about \$5,100,000 was paid for up to April 1991. Between May and November 1991, a period in which the firm delivered equipment at a value of \$2,500,000, the State Bank paid nothing.

Under these circumstances, the firm insistently demanded that our side should meet its obligations. It is only recently that the State Bank has explained that the deposited funds were spent for other, unknown purposes. For this reason, the French firm suspended the production and delivery of equipment in December

1991, and has sent several groups of its representatives to clear up the matter. The firm in question has warned of breach of contract, which would mean that, according to the contract, a penalty of \$13 million would be due to it. This is an additional factor, besides the postponement of the commissioning of this project [line dropped in original] of about \$6 million annually from the export of electricity.

When we left the specialists of the General Energy Directorate, many questions flooded into our minds, and will no doubt enter the minds of many who read this article.

It has been a long time since we read in ZERI I POPULLIT about the Banje Hydroelectric Station, "this great project of the five-year period, on which thousands of heroic workers are engaged." Are ZERI I POPULLIT's journalists perhaps aware that these workers are now without jobs and that construction has halted half way through? Do the workers of Banje know that they are without work because these dollars were used, like the gold, for unknown purposes?

—Do not think these dollars were used to buy food because we are fed by food aid.

—Do not think these dollars were used for heat and light because we have neither.

One wonders whether they were used to finance election posters and newsprint for ZERI I POPULLIT, because the opposition was given these things free.

One wonders whether they were used for the "successful" visits of the Socialist Party's leaders to Europe, as uninvited guests. Or were they paid into personal accounts? Is it that simple? Whatever they were used for, it was illegal. Has the Socialist Party, certain that it will not win the 22 March elections, decided to hand over to the new democratic government the keys to a ransacked bank?

It is evident that only a democratic government, free from any complex of complicity, will be able to provide an answer to the question of the dollars as well as that of the gold. Only the opposition can form such a government. Therefore, the workers of Banje and of the entire country know to whom they should give their votes: to the party that will build hydroelectric stations and not to the party that spent in the streets of Paris and Rome the dollars provided for this purpose.

Prime Minister Discusses Relations With Israel

*AU2603200792 Sofia TRUD in Bulgarian 21 Mar 92
pp 1, 4*

[Report by Georgi Traykov]

[Text] On 20 March, immediately following the return of Prime Minister Filip Dimitrov to Bulgaria, we asked him at Sofia Airport whether the fears voiced by Israeli leaders concerning certain trends in Bulgaria to acquit World War II criminals affected the Bulgarian-Israeli dialogue.

"We held several serious discussions on this issue," Mr. Dimitrov said. "I tried to explain our position. Of course, in practice, there are different ways to achieve the humanitarian goal of an action like this, and they were also commented on. However, our main goal was to convince our hosts that, in this matter, there is no question of any anti-Semitic, pro-Hitler, ethnocentric, or any other motives, and that, in the final analysis, the People's Court, along with a few guilty persons, sent many people to their deaths because of the fact that they might have opposed the Communist Party.

"I believe that our hosts understood our position to a great extent," the Bulgarian prime minister stated in conclusion.

Later on, at a news conference at the Council of Ministers, Mr. Dimitrov stated that U.S.-Israeli relations may provide a model for the new government's foreign policy. He assessed the possibilities of cooperation with Israel as substantial.

Minister Ivan Pushkarov added that he was amazed by the Israeli side's exceptionally high assessment of the Bulgarian military industry. He did not conceal the fact that, if any problems in expanding cooperation exist, they lie mainly in the lack of organization on our part.

"My feelings regarding the miners' claims are mixed," the prime minister said in answer to a reporter's question. "I understand them, but it is high time to make it clear that the government cannot make ad hoc decisions today for the future. (Does this mean that the slogan "Tomorrow begins today" is no longer topical?—editor's note) Bulgaria must live through the crisis. If the miners declare a strike, the situation will most probably deteriorate, but I hope this will be avoided," Mr. Dimitrov said in conclusion.

Official on BSP Politics, Defense Minister

*92BA0674A Sofia 168 CHASA in Bulgarian 3 Mar 92
p 21*

[Interview with Dimitur Yonchev, spokesman of the Parliamentary Union for Social Democracy, by Mariana Svetoslavova; place and date not given: "Lilov Is a Fabricated Person—All That He Is Made Up of Is Made Up of That Which He Had Read"—first paragraph is 168 CHASA introduction]

[Text] Dimitur Yonchev thinks that in the fall we will have a coalition government, with the participation of the Socialists.

[Svetoslavova] Mr. Yonchev, recently in your article you explained that the Bulgarian Socialist Party [BSP] is neither a modern nor a leftist party. Is it communist?

[Yonchev] It fits the definition of postcommunist, which means that, without having become something fundamentally different from the Bulgarian Communist Party [BCP], it is no longer that which it was. We are in a more advantageous position than Dertliev's Social Democratic Party because anticommunism is very strong there.

[Svetoslavova] And what do you see wrong in that?

[Yonchev] Dertliev, with his party, is a thing of the past. To have a modern leftist idea, it is necessary to cross the line between Scylla and Charybdis—between bolshevism and anticommunism. The worlds of today and tomorrow are cosmopolitan. They do not belong to the ideology that divides the world up neatly into "ours" and "yours." But these are well-known things. He is a Camus. The whole problem is that he says that, every morning, uniformed murderers enter a cell. The problem is whether you accept this murder. Within the framework of the ideology, the other person deserves to be killed just because he is not one of your people. There is no worthwhile feature here. Anticommunism, communism, and bolshevism are bugaboos of the past.

[Svetoslavova] In that article, you made a critical analysis of your party, you enumerated many of its blunders. However, you were its deputy chairman. Do you have a right to make such a severe criticism?

[Yonchev] A man is not born all ready to go to work like a bullet is. Things happen. I raised the question of changing the leadership in March of 1990 for the first time. At that time, I was an official in Lilov's Cabinet. At that time, Andrey Lukanov, Strezov, and Lyuben Gotsev together complained a lot about the president, but they didn't have the courage to talk to him.

[Svetoslavova] Weren't you naive to ask Lilov himself to resign?

[Yonchev] Yes, but this was the only place where it made sense to say this. And the reaction was: "Why are you infringing upon the image of the leader?"

[Svetoslavova] And why, in your opinion, didn't he resign?

[Yonchev] He is from another world. He is like a fabricated person, he is made up of that which he has read. Lilov said: I am elected, when they tell me to step aside, I will step aside. But, at the last congress, half of the delegates were in the pay of the party. And it is very easy to play with their feelings. In the already confiscated

party building, there was a motto: Make yourself at home. And that means: Don't pay attention to reality. We are it ourselves.

[Svetoslavova] Does Aleksandur Lilov continue to be influential even now?

[Yonchev] Unconditionally. He suggests the following: I am fighting for the unity of a modern leftist party, and no immoral, unworthy people are fighting for power. At one time, Stalin said: I am defending socialism-communism, and so-and-so sleeps in pajamas. Do you understand? We meet on a moral basis.

[Svetoslavova] Does Aleksandur Lilov pull the strings behind the back of young Zhan Videnov?

[Yonchev] It is very important that Zhan was elected, after Lilov turned directly to the congress and said: "Whoever supports me, votes for Zhan Videnov." So that one line is reproduced very informally. And even the new leadership has not shown precisely what line it will follow and essentially continues the old one.

[Svetoslavova] Does that mean that Lilov has not left politics for good?

[Yonchev] No. I think that the center, which he created, corresponds with the institute Gorbachev heads. The goal is not to descend below the level of the prestige created.

[Svetoslavova] The BSP stubbornly defended all lost causes—both Mladenov's thesis about the tanks, and Lukanov's government. In some sense, isn't your party a victim of these people?

[Yonchev] I am not inclined to mystify the concept of the party. One part of its followers had a personal interest in supporting those who ruled until recently, and others set very great store by a worldly plan. They did not want to take risks in an unstable time. They have common sense, but not the same that fills the halls of congress. I do not think that, with these understandings in the party, even if we had retained all of our positions in the government, we would have done what the future requires of it.

[Svetoslavova] Who runs the BSP now?

[Yonchev] It would be excessively self-confident to tell you that it is the Union for Social Democracy. At the moment, Chavdar Kyuranov leads us; Aleksandur Tomov, I, Velislava Dureva, and others are in the leadership. There are 39 of us altogether. I cannot say that we produce one clear and clean tone and that all understand us and that we are moving ahead harmoniously. We ourselves have created the problem dough, we have kneaded the problems, we are attacking them.

[Svetoslavova] Does your alternative association have its own leader?

[Yonchev] No, thank God. Of course there are people who want to be leaders. But we are very strong and do not permit it. I do not thirst for leadership, but I can always stand in the way. True leadership means work with those of like mind: The other is tyranny.

[Svetoslavova] On 29 January, Andrey Lukanov met with Franz Vranitzky to discuss the ties to the Socialist International. Soon after him, Zhan Videnov came to these discussions. Who really represents the BSP?

[Yonchev] No, Lukanov is hardly competing with Zhan because he is not in touch with everything. Lukanov resembles Nixon and Giscard D'Estaing, who have social weight because they have had strong positions and images. But he revealed to Vranitzky what our ambitions in the Union for Social Democracy are. Our registration is within the framework of the party charter, but, by law, it is for the people and the families. It is good that, in the Socialist International, they know what the situation in the party is. As long as we all are continuing to change our clothes together, and we tell ourselves that we are such and such, we won't inspire anyone's confidence.

[Svetoslavova] Does that mean that ultimately there will be a split?

[Yonchev] That would be folly for the leftist idea in the country. It is true that the party, with its habits, is not promising, but there are experiments and movements in it. Such an experiment has need of power. But power comes from all leftist sentiments.

[Svetoslavova] But you think that the members of your party have swallowed the unpleasant truth that economic life has to be based on private property?

[Yonchev] Not quite. Many look at private property with horror because we cannot control it. We are not at that level of social consensus, and the people have reason to be scared.

[Svetoslavova] Inasmuch as the BSP is not of one mind within itself concerning the path of the economic changes, is it in a position to offer an opinion to society, to be a constructive opposition?

[Yonchev] With one or two exceptions, the spokesmen of the shadow government are from the core of the Union for Social Democracy. We are resolute. I think we are a better team than the current government. However, it is not at all difficult for you to put together a better version of it.

[Svetoslavova] But is the shadow government ready to assume control of the country under any hypothetical necessity?

[Yonchev] I think that the current Cabinet still has a few months of life. We will surely be ready by that time.

[Svetoslavova] You are Dimitur Ludzhev's shadow minister. Does everything he does deserve your criticism?

[Yonchev] The horrible thing is that we do not know what he does. What I hear makes my hair stand on end. Recently, in the commission, he said: I have found that our military aircraft have a 90-day supply of ammunition and fuel. According to him, that was necessary within the framework of the Warsaw Pact, when it was envisioned that battles would be carried out as far away as North Africa, but we do not need these reserves any longer. A conflict would last six or seven days, and the political adjustments would begin after that. According to Ludzhev, these reserves only weighed down the Army. In my opinion, it is very important how he visualizes the military conflict in which we would have to be involved. If he cannot visualize it, what would he actually do?

[Svetoslavova] What are the vulnerable actions of our military minister?

[Yonchev] The fact that he is making changes that definitely affect the state of combat readiness and national security. We do not have a concept of national security. We do not have firm priorities—internal and external—or laws. Dobri Dzhurov had power throughout the Army. Now we speak of civilian leadership of the military, but Ludzhev has absolutely the same authority as Dobri Dzhurov. There is actually nothing civilian about it. A law that will precisely define the prerogatives of the minister as a civilian is needed.

[Svetoslavova] And what will you say about the generals subordinate to Minister Ludzhev?

[Yonchev] I am very sad to say it, but some of them should be wearing pleated skirts instead of general's pants. It was not worthy of them, when they saw with the eyes of professionals the destruction of one structure or another to take a waiting stand, to agree that everything that is being done is good. Also, I cannot accept the position of the Army newspaper. The way it was before the 10th, so it remains. It says nothing against its own leadership. Mitko Ludzhev is not a model of a democratic presence. He very easily reproduces what is well known to me. But I agree with him—for two years we kept the Army, and we did nothing.

[Svetoslavova] You give months to the current government. Isn't that little time?

[Yonchev] I reasoned as follows: If the attacks for specific changes begin once the presidential election is over, this means disagreement in the SDS [Union of Democratic Forces]. By the middle of the year, I expect more serious tension because things are not being controlled as Filip Dimitrov tells us they are. The SDS wants to save the present National Assembly for the sake of the configuration, which will never again be repeated. It may well be that, in the fall, we will have ready a compromise for a coalition government, with even our participation. Only in that way will the legislative body be preserved. However, such a government will repeat that of Dimitur Popov.

Interior Minister on Crime Wave, Personnel Policy

92BA0612A Sofia 168 CHASA in Bulgarian 18 Feb 92
p 21

[Interview with Internal Affairs Minister Yordan Sokolov by Milena Dimitrova; place and date not given: "Secret Information Is Constantly Leaking From the Ministry of Internal Affairs"—first paragraph is 168 CHASA introduction]

[Text] Minister Yordan Sokolov criticizes police inaction and says that, if it were up to him, he could make us cry by making the files public.

[Dimitrova] Mr. Minister, are we living in a bandit state?

[Sokolov] In no case do we live in a bandit state. We are simply in a transition period. We would like for democracy to win as soon as possible. In the course of this sharp turn, the crime rate has increased substantially. In turn, the security organizations have found themselves in a state of crisis. From repressive organs feared by all, they must now become defenders of ordinary people. This is not easy because we must begin by changing the awareness of the people.

[Dimitrova] Sinister records, vanished automobiles, robberies, and murders. Mr. Pushkarov's apartment was broken into, and even the fact that he was a personal acquaintance of the minister of internal affairs did not help him. What is the attitude of the criminal world toward you?

[Sokolov] Thank God, neither I nor my family has had unpleasant experiences. I am indignant at criminality manifested in a particularly cruel way. I cannot accept that a reason for committing murder could be some 24 leva a person has saved from his pension or a bunch of old clothing and wrappings, and let us not even mention that houses broken into are causing irreparable harm to family budgets.

[Dimitrova] Dr. Dertliev told us that in Plovdiv a Gypsy sent him a note that said: "I have nine children, I am unemployed, and I steal to be able to survive." The social democrat answered him that, in his position, he would do the same.

[Sokolov] A number of factors are contributing to rising crime. This includes unemployment, the difficult economic situation, and low incomes. However, in a radio broadcast, as I was speaking in support of such reasons, a listener called in, disagreeing. He gave as an example that, if a group of people steal objects or funds totaling 100,000 or 200,000 leva, this no longer makes them poor. Why do they go on stealing?

[Dimitrova] Should we go back to laws of Khan Krum's time?

[Sokolov] I do not favor the legislation of Khan Krum, but I am in favor of legislation that would be restraining

because I find the break in relations between the police, the investigative authorities, and the prosecutor's office alarming.

[Dimitrova] What are you relying on in the struggle against crime?

[Sokolov] I am relying entirely on a modern police force, sufficiently large, to perform protective and preventive functions. It would be utopian to hope that criminal recidivism could be eliminated. However, we have reason to believe that its growth could be stopped.

[Dimitrova] One Bulgarian policeman is responsible for about 900 citizens, is that not so?

[Sokolov] That rate is not so bad compared to the one in the West. The problem is a lack of efficiency because a high percentage of police personnel are sitting in offices instead of walking the streets.

[Dimitrova] But why was it that crime decreased during the elections?

[Sokolov] Obviously, the criminals themselves become excited in exercising their right to vote.

[Dimitrova] In that case, would you recommend holding "elections to the bursting point"?

[Sokolov] I do not believe that we can fight crime with elections. However, it is a fact that, when events that involve the entire nation take place, the criminals quiet down.

[Dimitrova] Have you noticed, Mr. Sokolov, that the police syndrome manifested when the party headquarters were set on fire was also repeated on the night of the presidential vote and on many other occasions? Healthy and strong policemen look indifferently at beatings and blood without interfering.

[Sokolov] I have not witnessed such things. However, it has been reported to me that frequently the police remain idle. They simply adopt passive and mindless behavior, which, in itself, is a violation of public order. There is no justification for that.

[Dimitrova] Which is the most invincible mafia in our country?

[Sokolov] Mafia is a general concept. By definition, it means a connection between criminal elements and the authorities—that is, a penetration of the ranks of the police, the security services, the investigative services, and the prosecutor's office. We cannot shut our eyes to drug trafficking and drug sales or the sale of arms.

[Dimitrova] What makes you confident that you will be able to cope with the hydra of the criminal world?

[Sokolov] I have always been optimistic in life. This is partly due to the belief that our people have never had criminal inclinations. It seems to me that this is a temporary condition, further encouraged by some forces.

I have received four or five reports from the provinces on the way in which local commanders are encouraging organized passiveness with a view to earning political dividends. For example, it is claimed that, if there is democracy, there must be crime, and the people are being encouraged to voice regrets saying that, well, there was dictatorship but then at least there was order. I found it curious that different people from different cities told me the same thing. They would catch a thief, but the chief would order that he be released, allegedly to see whether he was acting alone. Then the criminal would commit a second or a third crime while the chief deliberately tied the hands of his subordinates.

[Dimitrova] Furthermore, the field operatives complain that a policeman does not have the right to interfere or prevent a crime unless the Penal Code stipulates no fewer than five years in prison for that type of crime.

[Sokolov] I absolutely disagree. This is a convenient excuse for inaction.

[Dimitrova] I have heard public order officials yearn for police investigations.

[Sokolov] A police investigation is the equivalent of the old type of investigation. In a number of countries, a policeman has the right to initiate an investigation. It is true that we must give some thought to amending our legislation. It has even happened that a criminal guilty of rape has been released because the measures to detain him could not be applied. Whatever the severity of the crime, a criminal must be detained where the crime was committed.

[Dimitrova] In the past, we had no fraudulent money changers, who cheated the banks.

[Sokolov] A change maker is a new type of criminal. He falls under Article 250 of the Penal Code. In the past, however, it was state security that dealt with this type of crime, and, indeed, it acted with lightning speed. Now it is the ordinary police who are responsible and, very frequently, ineffective.

[Dimitrova] The trade unions attacked you while you were convincing the parliament that you had acted properly.

[Sokolov] I am convinced that the trade unions failed to understand and let themselves be manipulated. Is it not indicative that they did not react when 4,000 policemen were laid off but grumbled at the dismissal of 81 persons, 51 of whom were colonels who took their retirement? Eighteen others were active participants in the revival affair. To me, this was the greatest crime committed by the previous rulers. Please note that we did not dismiss individuals who obeyed orders in the course of the revival process. We fired only those who distinguished themselves by their excessive zeal: These were active participants as proved by the ukase with which they were presented awards. The question raised now is this: Didn't some of them fight against terrorism as well? The

bad thing is that not a single one of them has acknowledged receiving an award for his activities during the revival process. The entire documentation, including the reasons for the awards, was destroyed. In my opinion, this was absolutely done deliberately.

[Dimitrova] Whom do you trust?

[Sokolov] I trust quite a number of people in this department, people who, it is my impression, are loyal and honorable and act like professionals.

[Dimitrova] Are the police loyal to you?

[Sokolov] I shall try to make the police the basic unit within the MVR [Ministry of Internal Affairs] system. Information is steadily leaking out of the offices. In my view, there are ministry personnel who are disloyal. A specific example of this is the article that appeared in the newspaper ZEMYA. How can a police report reach the press before it has reached its proper destination?!

[Dimitrova] Although you are a civilian, you do not give the impression of having a harsh and commanding nature, something that is usually ascribed to the minister of police. Do you consider your qualities and your family a hindrance or a help?

[Sokolov] I do not consider myself strict and savage although, in a Free Europe broadcast, I was accused by Rumén Vodenicharov of being a fascist. My family is united. My wife is a professor of physics and chemistry, and our younger daughter lives with us. The older one is following in her mother's professional footsteps. We also have an 11-year-old granddaughter.

[Dimitrova] What is your personal assessment of the team headed by Filip Dimitrov?

[Sokolov] My assessment is an extremely positive one. We have had clashes. I am amused when I read in the press about the fierce duels that we have fought and how bad our future seems. Apparently, many people would like to see something change in the Council of Ministers. Yet we are united, we are a team of like-minded people. With every passing day, we realize ever more clearly the terrible legacy we inherited.

[Dimitrova] Who is the most outstanding personality on the team?

[Sokolov] What do you mean by strong personality? I rate the prime minister himself very highly; he is indeed guiding the Cabinet very adequately. Personally, I believe that the Council of Ministers is dealing with an excessive number of issues. In other countries, most problems are solved on different levels, and a consensus becomes necessary only when making national decisions or passing laws.

[Dimitrova] Do you intend to make the files public? How will you allow access to the archives?

[Sokolov] These are painful and sensitive problems. I believe that the day will soon come when the files must be opened. It is a question of people who, for one reason or another, were "targets of indoctrination," as the professional term goes.

[Dimitrova] Will you make us cry, the way Stasi disturbed the Germans?

[Sokolov] If that is what the people want, I will not hesitate. However, that is an issue that must be settled by the National Assembly.

[Dimitrova] There are the red and blue berets. According to one weekly magazine, we are the fatherland of terrorism.

[Sokolov] Look here, the berets are not terrorists but are fighting terrorism. U.S. Ambassador Hugh Kenneth Hill is convinced that he owes his life to them. They were his bodyguards for a while, and he was delighted. He was so grateful, he even rewarded them with a substantial sum of money.

[Dimitrova] Did you get the impression during your first months as a minister that you would be able to control the avalanche of crime and meet all the complex obligations related to maintaining order in the country?

[Sokolov] You see, it is true that we are not doing what should be done. These are matters relating to people and facilities. For example, the weapons belong to the Army and are not suitable for police needs. In the new budget, I have asked for a substantial increase in technical facilities. All that remains to be settled is an argument with Minister Kostov on the 350 million leva I requested for the technical reequipping of the police. When the police start chasing a violator, the violator usually drives a more expensive and faster car than his uniformed pursuers.

[Dimitrova] Yes, but soon afterwards that same police car is stolen by the mafia and, once again, the police are helpless. Thank you for your responsiveness, Mr. Minister.

Ministry of Environmental Protection Criticized *92BA0602A Sofia DUMA in Bulgarian 21 Feb 92 p 6*

[Article by Georgi Petrushev and Dimitrina Berberova: "An Unjustified Appetite for Control Wants To Swallow Millions of Leva; Experts Believe That the Ministry of Environment Is Burdened With Excess Functions"—first paragraph is DUMA introduction]

[Text] The 4 February 1992 issue of DURZHAVEN VESTNIK published Decree No. 14 of the Council of Ministers of 24 January 1992. It defines the new basic functions and tasks of the Ministry of Environment [MOS].

Up to now, the Ministry of Environment and its predecessors have exercised superdepartmental control functions in protecting the environment from pollution throughout the entire country no matter who the owner or possessor of a given property is. The circumstance that administrative functions also are imposed on this ministry has created confusion or, more precisely, anxiety.

Thus, for example, Article 3, Item 1 of the decree under consideration states: "It carries out the complex administration of natural protection activity in the country." Later, in Item 4 of Article 4, we read: "It controls and administrates the protected territories, the protection of biological diversity and natural ecosystems..."

Why do the control functions given to MOS in relation to the protected areas and environmental protection as a whole provoke anxiety?

The concept "control" means that MOS will build structures by means of which it will organize, finance, and be responsible for the financing, protection, management, and use of the natural resources in very large areas. Then, because the ministry will be responsible for the protected natural areas and environmental protection affairs, who will monitor how it performs its administrative functions? The necessity arises for the creation of another monitoring agency that will monitor MOS. We consider this unnecessary inasmuch as this ministry and its predecessors were created to carry out precisely those superdepartmental monitoring functions over polluters of the environment, no matter to which department or branch they belong.

For 60 years, the administrative activity in protected natural areas in Bulgaria were carried out successfully by the Forestry Department, and, in that regard, we almost do not have ecological problems. Complete chaos prevails for those protected objects that are outside the control and responsibility of the Forestry Department. Unique creations of nature that have survived for millennia are now perishing irreversibly after only a few years. Consider the situation in the Sreburna reservation, the sand dunes on the Black Sea coast, the barbaric construction of estates and residences in the region of Ropotamo, and the preservation of individual protected species found outside the forestry fund—for example, the swamp snowdrop. No one has prevented the agencies of MOS and its regional inspectors from exercising the required control. However, unfortunately up to now, this has not been done.

We do not have any guarantees that in the future anyone will protect, preserve, and monitor the protected natural areas better than the Forestry Department. At the present time, the Committee on Forests performs this activity without involving the financial resources of the state budget and with the active work of 150 technical instructors and 72 specialists with higher education. In

the words of the head of the corresponding administration in MOS, they will need 100 million leva for this activity, which they propose to carry out.

One must bear in mind that, if the administrative functions of MOS begin to be carried out, in practice the most valuable forest areas will be cut off (for the time being 12 percent of the forestry fund, with the prospect of reaching 21 percent). These are the nature reserves, the nature parks, the protected natural areas, and the natural landmarks. They represent the crown of the forestry wealth, with which Bulgaria may stand proud before the world.

It seems to us to be unnecessary to burden MOS with administrative functions. Would it not be better, and possibly even ultimately necessary, for the Ministry to be occupied with monitoring the polluters of the environment in Bulgaria, which is more and more unprotected?

Financial Problems Cause Demise of Publication

*AU0104173692 Sofia DUMA in Bulgarian 24 Mar 92
p 2*

[DUMA PRESS report: "DEMOKRATSIYA 91 Fades Into History After Six-Month Life"]

[Text] The DEMOKRATSIYA 91 newspaper, whose official publisher is the Green Party, has ceased to exist after operating for six months under very difficult conditions, the newspaper's management told reporters on 23 March.

The sole reason for this is financial, the chief editor, Tsvetozar Tomov, stated. In his opinion, the newspaper to a certain extent has been written off without much thought by its publisher. Subsidies had been envisaged in our financial calculations; sponsors cannot be found, and, at the moment, our debts amount to approximately 800,000 leva.

It is a sad day for us; it is a tragedy that an extraparlimentary party is left without a daily newspaper, Ivan Gorinov, spokesman for the Greens, stated. From the commercial point of view, it is unjust that political newspapers receive financial relief. However, it would be good if they were required to only be self-supporting and not be expected to make a profit.

Gorinov stated, "I am distressed that the president of a private group, whose newspapers used to protect us, is now predicting doom for political publications."

Dimitrov Visits Military Equipment Exhibition

*AU0204083792 Sofia DUMA in Bulgarian 26 Mar 92
p 2*

[Article by Vasil Popov: "Kalashnikov Shoots With NATO Ammunition Today"]

[Text] One of the most recent modifications of the world-famous Kalashnikov-74 submachine gun is

equipped with a 5.56-mm caliber and is capable of firing with ammunition produced by the NATO armies. Along with the other members of the large family of weapons, the Kalashnikov-74 is displayed at the "Armaments and Combat Equipment 1992" exhibition, which shows goods produced by the Bulgarian military-industrial complex.

Specialists assume that numerous Bulgarian goods developed in the fields of electronics and communications equipment, such as equipment for secret communications, for electronic and computer exchange, defensive perimeter systems with sensors for military and other installations, multiprocessor systems for operation and control of the airspace and for anti-aircraft defense, and special equipment for aircraft and helicopter airports are likely to make a breakthrough on the international market.

Countries situated on the shores of seas or oceans can order mines to prevent the landing of enemy troops from Bulgarian enterprises. The camouflage-protecting system currently being developed in our country offers protection within the optical, thermic, and radar range and can compete with the Swedish "Barracuda," which is considered to be the world's best. Following the Chernobyl nuclear accident, dosimetric equipment was installed, which is capable of detecting very low doses. A computer guaranteeing reliable work under conditions of hardship such as dust and humidity and that can also be used in motion has been built and can compare with the world's best.

Bulgarian technologies for the production of canned and condensed food for prolonged periods of storage also evoke interest at the exhibition. As a result of replacing the military reserves by these goods, an annual amount of 20 million leva could be saved. The exhibition also shows two dirigible parachutes for landing. One of them, the UP-9M, which was used for over 100,000 jumps, is considered as unprecedented in the world.

The military attaches of several diplomatic missions accredited to Sofia showed great interest in the exhibition. Prime Minister Filip Dimitrov paid a visit to the exhibition yesterday.

Labor Bureaus, U.S. Assistance on Unemployment *92BA0677A Sofia DUMA in Bulgarian 5 Mar 92 p 6*

[Interview with Nikolay Nikolov, acting chief of the National Labor Exchange at the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, MTSZ, by Nikolina Yambolieva; place and date not given: "There Is No Work on the Labor Market, but Maybe There Will Be Something Else"—first paragraph is DUMA introduction]

[Text] The unemployed, registered officially during February, number over 430,000, while the jobs available number 11,000. There is no movement on the labor market; the buyer—that is, the employer—is missing.

Only the "currents" at the labor bureaus, whose intermediary role remains theoretical, are moving. Forecasts are predicting a new avalanche of unemployed by the end of the year. Will the bureaus continue to register, reregister, and pay compensation, without getting more actively involved in the process? This is the topic for our interview with Nikolay Nikolov, acting chief of the National Labor Exchange at the MTSZ [Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare].

[Yambolieva] Considering the stagnation in the labor market, how can the active policy of bureaus be expressed, and what is the criterion for it?

[Nikolov] We are being blamed with good reason. One of the indicators for the level of activity is the number of individuals who have acquired new and additional training or new professions. Last year this amounted to only 1 percent of the unemployed. The money spent on this is very little; in the first place, we do not have any, and, in the second, the demand is low. We limited ourselves to training people who were likely to find jobs. The possibilities offered by Statute 110 of the MS [Council of Ministers] for concentrating on independent economic activities were not used. According to it, compensation payment could be made in a lump sum, and a loan would not have to be repaid immediately.

We try to carry out all kinds of activities with respect to changing professions, using the experience we have and that shared with us by foreign experts. Many of the unemployed continue to want to do the same kind of work as previously. Considering the future structural changes in the economy, many professions will disappear, and new needs will emerge. People have to be ready for this. It is true, however, that last year we did little work with the unemployed, and another reason for this is insufficient staffing of the bureaus.

[Yambolieva] How will you then deal with the expected new wave [of unemployed]?

[Nikolov] Structurally speaking, our system is as follows: 122 bureaus and 135 branches have been set up. Each bureau serves two or three obshtini, while there is a branch in each obshtina. The network will be improved and corrected depending on future territorial divisions and labor resource movement.

We still need to learn—especially how to organize flow and schedules. In Plovdiv, thanks to the participation of U.S. experts, the lines at the bureaus were eliminated. Foreign experts, for example, do not see any reason for reregistration every 15 days. This is done in countries where payments are made every week or every two weeks. We will change things in the future; the unemployed will register once a month. We will take compensation payments outside our system, maybe by mail or in some other way.

Bureaus will carry out only registrations and determine the amount of compensation and the rights and prospects of the unemployed. More people will be freed to

interact much more actively with the unemployed to study their possibilities. We must improve registration forms—that is, there must be better information in the computer regarding everyone's professional skills. That way, whenever there is a request made by an employer, we can find the appropriate person, and, by studying market trends, we can train people for future needs.

We would like to regionalize policy, and we will set up regional centers. The information system must be where the work force is. This will allow the market to be coordinated in the given region and provide a greater range of services. It is difficult for the small bureaus to find specialists such as lawyers, psychologists, and others to provide additional services like investigation and consultation for the unemployed. Funds for active policy will also be distributed to the regions according to precisely defined regulations and criteria. This way, regional centers will have the ability to set up reserves for extreme situations, but they will be responsible for spending the funds.

On the national level, the main thing should be analysis of the market situation and trends, and development of forecasts on the basis of which action programs could be built.

[Yambolieva] Which region of the country and which type of unemployed have the greatest problems?

[Nikolov] Until now, Plovdiv and its oblast were in the most difficult situation. In some towns, unemployment already has reached 20 to 25 percent, or even 30 percent. This is true for townships where previously people worked outside, on national projects or in agriculture. There are no such projects now, and agriculture is in the process of restructuring; companies' branches and shops are being closed. A tender spot, for example, is the Kirkovo obshtina. With the closing of the TKZS [Labor Collective Farm], 6,000 additional persons are expected to lose their jobs, which will amount to over 50 percent of the work force.

There is potential pressure among young people up to age 30, who now make up almost 50 percent of the unemployed. Many of them have no idea what a labor market is or how they could manage by themselves, and they also still live with the old idea that the state is required to secure jobs for them. At the same time, young people are more flexible and adaptive to labor market conditions, but we must train them and give them the opportunity to develop independent activities.

[Yambolieva] You have referred several times already to independent business as a solution, and it requires not only motivation but also money....

[Nikolov] For now, the obshtini are still not committed to seeking a solution to the unemployment problem, and everywhere in the world this is accomplished through a partnership among the obshtini, employers, and trade unions and the participation of our system as an intermediary.

Every obshtina must decide what to do according to its natural and other given factors, and, around companies, there will be opportunities for satellite businesses to develop in order to provide services for the main one. In Great Britain, for example, there is a program under which the unemployed are provided with municipal space for such independent activity.

[Yambolieva] What else will change on the exchange, and on what does this change depend?

[Nikolov] We must separate compensation payments from the active policy for training and retraining, as is done in other countries. Our fund is still called "Professional Training and Redirection." Another thing is to establish a control system. We do not have control functions; we only register findings. The place for such a system is still not clear. At this time, private companies hire unemployed people without contracts and pay them less than the minimum wage, but no one dares complain because tomorrow maybe this will not be available, either. On the other hand, we cannot prove this. We also know of unemployed—in the small cities, especially—who receive compensation but work. In other places, there would be drastic penalties for the employer in such cases. So we need legislation quickly in the field of employment and a control system to penalize violators.

Podkrepa Labor Confederation Publishes Program
92BA0615A Sofia PODKREPA in Bulgarian 14 Feb 92
pp 3-4

[Policy statement of the Podkrepa Labor Confederation: "Program of the Podkrepa Labor Confederation Adopted at the 2d Regular Conference on 8-12 February 1991"]

[Text] The principles of our trade union organization are based on the trinity of the fundamental principles of structuring, the main goals its members set for it, and the means of their implementation.

For their part, they lie in socially historic space and time.

The charter of the organization is concerned with the structure of the organization and the interrelations between its individual levels. However, the basic principles must be enunciated clearly in its program.

The main goals of the trade union are historically and socially defined. They may be defined in relation to the specific socioeconomic situation, but they always have to be precisely formulated. This is the basic task of the Program Declaration.

The tactic for achieving the goals is priority of the policy, carried out by the elective bodies. However, any policy needs specific points of departure and principles. They also are a part of the program of the trade union.

As we adhere to these basic principles, taking account of the experience, the achievements, and the mistakes of our three-year history and looking forward into the

future, we, the members of the Podkrepa Labor Confederation, do formulate our new

PROGRAM DECLARATION

The Basic Motives for This Are:

First. For the most part, the Podkrepa Labor Confederation fulfilled its first program. Trade union pluralism in Bulgaria is a historic fact, with irreversible and incontrovertible consequences.

Second. In the initial period of construction, the basic task of the Podkrepa Labor Confederation was the defense of the inalienable right of all people for trade union association. Now, when the process of transition from a totalitarian to a civilian society is politically guaranteed by elected democratic institutions, a basic priority of the organization is the protection of the interests of its members.

At present, there is an objective transition from protection of trade union rights to protection of trade union interests.

Third. The social position of the Podkrepa Labor Confederation has changed greatly. From a small rights-protecting organization, protecting the basic principles of trade unionism, it has turned into a structure with hundreds of thousands of members, reflecting the determining social attitudes in the country. It is precisely for this reason that it is necessary to globalize the program. The Podkrepa Labor Confederation is obliged to concretize its views and goals with respect to the basic problems of the social process, leading to a civilian society.

Fourth. The functions of the confederation also are changed in the transition to a market economy. From a destructive, subversive approach toward centralized economic structures, it is necessary to turn toward a positive, creative formation of the new market areas by thoroughly opening up the system and the economic apparatus. The Podkrepa Labor Confederation is a catalyst and a corrective for economic reform because the strategic interests of its members are connected with the success of this reform.

Fifth. The social situation is greatly changed. From a condition of full employment, income leveling, and relative price stability, processes of a deep recession are developing today, leading to enormous unemployment, great differentiation in incomes, and increased inflationary expectation in the absence of a real private sector in the economy. This also changes the priorities in our purposes. The problems of the near future are the reasons for market restructuring of the economy in order to lead the country out of the economic recession, and to guarantee relatively high employment, stable incomes, and a socially justified stratification of society.

As we take account of these changes in society, as well as of the necessity of natural succession, we, the members of the Podkrepa Labor Confederation:

Reconfirm the Basic Principles of the Confederation

Independence from the government, the employer organizations, and the political parties.

Representation of the trade union interests of all levels before the social partners in the country and abroad.

Democracy in structuring and functioning, proceeding from the acceptance of the basic principles of freedom and pluralism of the trade union association.

Our Motto Is Immutable:

Bread, Peace, Freedom

TRADE UNION PROGRAM

The principle of mandatory double membership is a fundamental principle of the structure of the Podkrepa Labor Confederation at all levels. The representative functions of the trade union may be realized only in this way. Simultaneous membership in the branch (professional) and regional structures solves the problem of the complete representation in the process of branch contract negotiation. All organizational and financial problems, which often have become "bones of contention" in the organization, are solved in this way. The rallying point of the professional and the regional delegation is the regional trade union.

Two basic program goals of the confederation are solved by means of the principle of mandatory double membership:

First. The building of strong centers for trade union protection in the entire regional structure of the Podkrepa Labor Confederation.

Second. The creation of highly specialized expert groups for branch contract negotiation for the corresponding professional structures.

At the same time, the principle of representativeness in the Confederation Council is solved unconditionally because the standard for membership in it is divided equally between the regional and the professional structures.

Dual membership is being transformed into a new principle—of full equality of horizontal and vertical structures in the representation and finances of the organization. Basically, the membership dues are centralized in the regional and professional organization. The budgets of the trade union sections, the regional trade unions, and the township organizations are formed there. Withdrawal and movement of the sums is performed in the bank way.

An important principle in the organizational plan is the decentralization of strike funds. They are formed at the level of professional and regional organization in an amount determined by the congress. Strike funds are handled on the basis of the principle of trade union solidarity. The strike funds are absolutely independent

of government agencies, and that mandatorily has to be regulated by law. The strike funds must be secret and inviolable.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation has set itself new institutional goals for choosing the basic directions of its activity.

It is necessary to set up quickly:

First. A center for economic and trade union research.

Second. A center for trade union training.

Third. A national mutual aid fund.

Fourth. A national credit insurance institute.

In fact, we are obliged to demonstrate the models for forming the trade union policy and social security set in the program.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation is for legal regulation of the criteria for determining the representative national trade union structures.

In our opinion, the criteria should be:

First. Trade union structures in no fewer than two-thirds of the branches.

Second. No fewer than 100,000 trade union members.

Only the representative trade unions and their structures should be able to conclude labor contracts. The Podkrepa Labor Confederation insists that the proposed criteria be included in the Law for Changing and Amending the Labor Code. We cannot agree with the "transparent" attempts of the government to limit the right of the trade unions for collective bargaining in the business enterprises. All such steps will be viewed as a violation of Convention 98 and Convention 87 of the International Organization of Labor, which have been ratified by Bulgaria.

In our opinion, collective labor bargaining in the conditions of the new labor relations of the market economy will undergo development in the following directions:

First. The accent in collective labor bargaining must be on branch bargaining. Agreements on a national level will have to do with the most general problems in regulating labor relations and will be concluded comparatively rarely. The achievement of high levels of working conditions in the branches of industry automatically affects all members of the trade unions in the branches.

Second. Branch negotiation does not exclude collective bargaining at the company level. The Podkrepa Labor Confederation insists on freedom of collective bargaining, the possibility for all trade union representatives to negotiate and conclude collective labor agreements in the companies. We will request legal regulation of the possibility of concluding more than one labor agreement

in an individual company and for arranging for a procedure for adding the workers in a company to one of the collective labor agreements that have been concluded.

Third. We know that collective bargaining remains the most important sphere of trade union activity, the best means of protecting our trade union members. This is because the Podkrepa Labor Confederation insists on sufficient legal regulation of the rights of the labor unions for collective bargaining.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation was the first trade union organization in Bulgaria to raise the issue of conducting trade union elections. We do not fear and do not run from such elections because we know well our position in society. They will only help us because the permanent agreement with the trade union structures of postcommunist Bulgaria constantly hinders our work. However, such elections may be carried out solely, and only if there is legal regulation in the future law for the trade unions.

The principle of independence of government agencies and social organizations may be realized only as a result of full financial independence of the confederation. We are for the right of every trade union to obtain the free use of immovable and movable property from the government, according to their socially demonstrated positions and needs. This position does not contradict our conviction that the trade unions must not receive subsidies from state and township budgets.

Now and in the future, the Podkrepa Labor Confederation will collect its financial means from membership dues, from gifts from physical and legal persons, and from economic activity. We are for carrying out economic activity in accordance with the legislation in effect concerning normatively established preferences—exemption from payment of local fees and taxes, exemption from tariffs, and tax concessions.

The basic program problem of the Podkrepa Labor Confederation concerns trade union space. The great question today is not if more than one trade union organization has a right to exist, but where they have a right for trade union association and pluralism. The existing sublegal administrative limitations for building structures of the Podkrepa Labor Confederation in the Army, the police, labor corps, the security forces, the cooperatives, and in part of the government and the justice administration in our opinion are illegal and anticonstitutional. Whenever labor relations exist, trade union pluralism is necessary and guaranteed by Convention 87 of the ILO [International Labor Organization] rights for trade union association.

We declare that property relations and labor relations are two essentially different relations, which are independent of one another because they guarantee two different types of income—income from capital and income from labor. In both cases, it is necessary to guarantee the right of association because, for those who

are in an employer relation, such an association essentially is a trade union. This type of association also needs a corresponding institution that will guarantee the rights and freedoms of those who work in cooperatives, private companies, corporations, and so forth. This institution is the free and democratic trade union, such as we are.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation is for strengthening the monitoring and signal functions of the trade unions, especially in the area of labor protection and compliance with labor legislation by means of their specialized agencies or along the line of representation in the authorized institutions.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation is for new regulations for settling collective labor disputes:

First. Basic jurisdiction in the case of applying labor legislation.

Second. It is necessary to create a comprehensive organization of the mechanism for solving collective labor disputes, which will not contain a large number of imperative prohibitions for exercising the right to strike.

Third. The decision to organize a strike should not be bound by the will of more than half of the workers in the company.

Fourth. Simplifying the procedure for negotiations between the employer and the workers and the elimination of the obstacles for reaching a decision to strike.

Fifth. The organization of effective strike actions should be forbidden in only a very limited number of industries and activities. This limitation of rights is to be compensated by suitable means.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation will resort to effective strike actions only and solely in the case where the normal means of social partnership have not led to a result.

SOCIOECONOMIC PROGRAM

Employment and Unemployment, Qualification and Requalification

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation is for creation of a labor market as one of the basic tasks of the economic reform. The absence of an irrefutable and mutually satisfactory form of social partnership for the moment stagnates the development of the processes in this area.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation insists on:

First. Acceleration of the acceptance of adequate legal organization with respect to employment, qualification, and requalification. We consider that the formation of a new, active government policy, oriented toward activities and measures for protecting and expanding job positions, may begin with the adoption of an employment law. The government has to use economic measures to stimulate the development of industry, the service area, and the private sector of the economy, as

well as in the area of intellectual work, which will open new labor markets in which wage labor will obtain its rightful place. We insist that employers who carry out such a policy have legal tax and insurance incentives, preferential credit, and inclusion in government building projects.

Second. A clear and precise qualification and requalification program on a regional, industrial branch, and national level in the case of structural measures to close and discontinue inefficient or ecologically harmful industries.

Third. Expansion of the area of coverage and including the activity of different institutions on individual levels of the labor market. We are for tripartite collaboration in controlling the processes of employment through the National Labor Exchange and its local departments.

Fourth. Bringing the system of mechanisms and regulators of the qualification system into accord with the needs and requirements of the labor market and the experience of countries with developed market economies. We are for decentralization and a free market of qualification services because only in this way will market reorientation of the labor force be guaranteed.

Fifth. Full legal and financial independence of the funds for assistance and requalification of unemployed people with participation of the trade unions in their control and distribution.

Sixth. Introduction of the principle of voluntary insurance on the part of the workers and mandatory insurance on the part of the employers for unemployment. We are for preventative financial aid from the budget for similar funds.

In the conditions of creeping unemployment, the trade unions may tolerate a temporary use of systems for private employment, but only if all social securities and guarantees in the collective labor contracts are observed.

Payment for Labor

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation always has declared itself for a real labor market. In the months of economic reform, the labor cost was artificially lowered. From the beginning of the labor negotiation, we are striving to restore its actual parameters. In the conditions of the market economy, the costs of all goods are determined by supply and demand. Because of this, the Podkrepa Labor Confederation is striving for full elimination of any limitations with respect to payment for labor. We are against the so-called tax on the increase in the mass of the wage funds, imposed under the pressure of the International Monetary Fund. That is not the way to control inflation.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation insists:

First. Wage negotiations are to be carried out in all businesses and budget organizations, irrespective of the type of property—government, private, cooperative, or

mixed—because the establishment of the initial pay in the case of negotiation is determined in relation to the changes in the social minimum.

Second. The minimum wage is not to be lower than the existence minimum for the country, which will prevent the bulk of the population from falling under the poverty limit. The monthly calculation of the social minimum is to continue by agreement of a tripartite basic mechanism, which is to take account of all aspects of the economic transition taking place in the country.

Third. Priority is to be given to collective bargaining on a branch level. For this reason, the price of labor will be determined more objectively, and the interests of larger groups of workers will be defended. We want the agreements on the branch level to be minimal and obligatory for all workers in the branch, and associations of the legitimate employers to be put together irrespective of the form of ownership.

Fourth. For the organizations and the units of budget support, one side in the branch negotiation is to be the corresponding government agency as a representative of the interests of the owner. In these units, the wage negotiation has to account for specific features. Bearing in mind the limited capabilities of the government budget at the present stage, the Podkrepa Labor Confederation will protect the position of those organizations that use their own revenues for income-expenditure transactions outside the budget in order to obtain the right to redistribute part of the revenue for wages. We are for full indexing of the wages of government workers in accordance with the rates of inflation.

Fifth. On a change in the wage system. We are for priority of hourly wages over piecework because, in this way, the employers will be forced to pay a real price for labor irrespective of whether they have created the conditions for its realization. For the same reasons, we insist on converting to weekly and even daily payment for work bonuses.

Sixth. On eliminating government limitations on additional payments for extended work because they acquire a uniquely minimum nature, and on trade associations to offer the possibility, depending on the state of the labor market and its business strategy, of determining the dimensions of this type of additional payment independently.

Seventh. On eliminating the vicious practice of compensating for worsened working conditions with additional bonuses. The goal of the Podkrepa Labor Confederation is to bring the national standards for working conditions up to the international standards because, for this reason, the relative amount of similar bonuses in the nominal wages have been sharply reduced. This tendency calls for direct government stimulation by means of mechanisms of tax and credit policy.

Leave and Working Time

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation will fight for the establishment of a minimum paid annual leave of 15 work days, as is standard in Western Europe. By means of collective bargaining, the trade union will guarantee an even greater length of paid annual leave.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation is for ensuring an additional paid 12-day leave annually for all working women.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation is for the creation of effective legal guarantees for the timely use of the annual paid leave within the framework of the calendar year for which it is granted.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation insists that the length of the unpaid leave that may be assigned by an employer in the case of a shutdown in production because of a lack of raw materials, materials, and deteriorated market conditions, be specified.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation insists on introducing flexible and alternative forms of employment widely in practice in West European countries. These forms will be part of the policy of the Podkrepa Labor Confederation with respect to the growing unemployment.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation considers that putting an end to the tendency to lower the standard of living of the population must be an important task in the social sphere. We insist that this indicator be determined for households and not individually. For a similar reason, both taxation and social assistance have to be oriented toward the household.

Social Security

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation is for a new, modern social security system consistent with the experience of the Western countries. This system not only has to consider the current realities in the country, but also set the beginning of an insurance fund in accordance with the principles of the market economy.

To implement this goal, the Podkrepa Labor Confederation will insist on:

First. Creation of social security funds as separate legal entities. The funds should be financed from the following sources: mandatory payments from employers because the size of the payments should be high enough to guarantee normal living conditions in the case of the occurrence of an insured social risk; voluntary payments by the workers that will increase the amount of the payments. The Podkrepa Labor Confederation will insist that the social security funds acquire funds from the properties of the state organizations, as well as a fairly high percent of the revenue from the privatization of state and township enterprises. These funds should be financed and controlled on a tripartite basis.

Second. The tripartite system should be applied even with respect to monitoring the expenditure of resources from the social security funds. In performing the monitoring, the interests of the workers take precedence over those of their representatives—the trade unions.

Third. The system of negotiating between the social partners with respect to the problems dealing with the essence of the ensured risk.

Fourth. The payments from the social security funds will be for specific insured social risks and may not be used for other purposes. There should be a clear delimitation between the insured social cases and other reasons for which payments are also to be made. Thus, for example, payments for maternity, especially at the time of leave for childbirth and for raising children, as well as child allowances, should be assumed by the state.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation insists that the actual means of creating the new system of social security be explained. Objective analysis shows that it is possible to begin building it in three areas: health insurance, pension insurance, and temporary disability insurance.

The first area in which ways must be found to institute a new system is pension insurance. The capabilities of the government budget to even maintain pensions above the minimum standard of living are very limited, so that it would be a Utopian dream to think that the government will be able to guarantee even a normal differentiation between the individual pensions consistent with the work factors. Consequently, a mechanism has to be found for relieving the government budget and granting the possibility for the workers, including pensioners, to increase their incomes by the creation of mechanisms for building a pension social security system that gradually will be separated into an independent system.

The second area of social security is security in the case of temporary disability. The creation of differentiated payments on the part of the employer and the workers in relation to the social situation ensured must be considered here. The Podkrepa Labor Confederation is for the employer assuming the full amount of the payment in the case of work accident and occupational illness. In the case of the other insured social risks, the participation of the workers in the insurance payment could be contemplated. This participation should be differentiated for different insured situations.

The third area in which the new social security system should be applied is with respect to the health insurance fund. The Podkrepa Labor Confederation will insist that this fund be financed with the participation of the employers.

It is clear to us that the immediate separation of the funds from the state budget could lead to cases in which fund receipts are not sufficient to cover all payments.

This is because the Podkrepa Labor Confederation will insist that, in such cases, the funds be supplemented from the state budget.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation is for establishing the amount of the minimum pension for time served and age, in accordance with the minimum standard of living for an adult, because, at the moment, the minimum pension is nearly a third of the minimum standard of living.

The concept of categorizing labor, which in its present form and combined with the existing normative order is unacceptable for many of the members of the Podkrepa Labor Confederation, needs a fundamental reexamination.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation will insist that the principles established in this program are legally regulated in the future social security law. The timely acceptance of this law would reduce the social tension among a large part of the Bulgarian people.

Protection of the Interests of the Workers and the Government Employees in the Process of Privatization

We are faced with beginning the privatization process fundamental for economic reform. On the way in which it proceeds will depend the condition of the Bulgarian economy and the fate of the social peace in the country.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation is for privatization that is carried out on market principles and creates a structure of real owners capable of increasing the effectiveness of the Bulgarian economy. At the same time, the Podkrepa Labor Confederation is for privatization that maximally supports the interests of wage labor.

Therefore, it insists on an economic order and privatization practice in which:

First. The workers and employers are enabled to participate in the privatization of their establishments under preferential conditions. This is to be guaranteed irrespective of the privatization technique—that is, not only in the case of the purchasing of stocks and shares, but also in the case of selling the grounds, establishments, or parts thereof.

Second. The plans for conversion and privatization of state and township establishments are to be agreed upon with the trade union.

Third. The workers and employers are to have the right of initiative for instituting privatization.

Fourth. Privatization techniques in which branch interests are protected and the preservation of as many jobs as possible is guaranteed will be used.

Fifth. Part of the stocks, shares, and monetary revenues are allocated for the social security funds.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation will not support a legal order that does not answer these requirements, and

even less will support institution of privatization without a clear legal framework and without guarantees for its controllability.

Participation in the Administration of the Business Establishments

The participation of the workers in the administration of business establishments is a matter of discussion in world practice. In Bulgaria, the discussion ranged from "self-administration of the labor collective" to complete deprivation of the workers' right to participate in the administration of business establishments—the Trade Law. At the present moment, the answer of the confederation to the fundamental question of the necessity for participation in the administration of the business establishments is positive, especially because this will guarantee the possibility of labor control in establishing privatization.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation is for the acceptance of the law for participation of the workers in the administration of the business establishments in which different forms of participation will be regulated:

First. Creation of a company council, which will have authority in the area of labor laws in the company. (But this does not mean that the company council will conclude the collective labor agreements because they have another purpose.)

Second. Participation in administrative and supervisory councils of trade associations.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation well understands that the forms and means of participation in the administration must not contradict the economic interests and effective administration of the company.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation is for the guaranteed right of trade unions to have representatives in the commissions for concluding managerial contracts. Consideration of the opinion of the trade unions would be an important condition for preserving social peace and for good operation of the business establishment.

Social Partnership

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation was the first trade union organization to proclaim tripartism as its guiding principle. In this way, it ensures both independence from the state and the employer unions, and the effective action of the mechanisms of social partnership. In the present conditions of a total state monopoly of ownership, the tripartite system in Bulgaria has essential differences from the accepted West European model of social partnership. In the period of the transition to a market economy, the state and its structures are a mandatory element, a side in the process of the reconciliation of the interests between the employers and the unions. In this sense, any decision made on a tripartite basis has to be of a mandatory nature for the government institutions, for the same reason that it is mandatory for the unions and the employers.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation insists on:

First. Setting up representative (management) associations of employers, irrespective of the format of ownership of national, branch, and regional level.

Second. Dialogue solely and only with legitimate employer structures, and for us that means with those who are responsible for their actions, capable of making independent decisions.

Third. Partnership with the corresponding government agencies that ensure the general economic, legal, and social conditions for the functioning of government and private business enterprises.

Fourth. A model of a mechanism for tripartite collaboration encompassing the three levels of agreement of interests—national, branch, and regional.

Fifth. The creation of representative expert commissions on a national and branch level, which will perform the preventative functions for preventing the collective labor disputes that arise as a result of the process of converting and privatizing the government business establishments.

Sixth. The formation of expert problem-solving commissions for the problems of revenues, employment, social security, and labor legislation, in which the urgent problems of reform in the economic and social sphere are to be discussed on an ongoing basis.

Policy Toward the Local Self-Governing Bodies

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation considers that the interrelations of the trade union structures and the local self-governing bodies must be based on the principles of mutual collaboration. A number of the problems the trade union structures in the businesses have to solve may be placed before the township agencies on the basis of the principles of social partnership.

This is particularly valid for the township structures and regional organizations that are being built up. The best thing that may be achieved is representation of the trade union structures within the township councils. The problems that are beyond the competence of the corresponding local self-governing body are handled directly in this way.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation considers that the time has come for concluding regional (township) collective labor agreements. They may include problems of local significance when the corresponding regional (township) government agencies and regional (township) trade union structures accept their specific responsibilities and obligations for solving them.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation declares itself for creating corresponding social partnership agencies on a local (regional and township) level, through the work of which the spirit of collaboration between the government agencies, trade unions, and employers will acquire real dimensions.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation is directed in its activity by the standards of the ILO and the sole internationally institutionalized mechanism of social partnership. We consider that putting into effect the national legislation for the existing international legal standards is the only way to create modern and civilized labor relations.

Ecological Policy

In the area of ecological policy, the Podkrepa Labor Confederation supports the efforts of all institutions and organizations that are fighting to protect the environment. Ecologically clean factories, although they require large investments, are an invaluable step toward the future, in which the harmonic existence of man and nature is a guarantee for the development of society.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation will cooperate actively with government and private agencies that invest in the business enterprises engaged in recycling waste raw materials and industrial materials, and sees new jobs in these industries and a manifestation of the ecological concern for preventing the growing contamination of the soil, air, and water.

The Podkrepa Labor Confederation will assist, in accordance with its capabilities, in the retraining of workers in business enterprises, the closing of which are imminent for ecological considerations, because it strictly monitors the government agencies in charge of similar restructuring to have and carry out a corresponding program.

The educational programs of the Podkrepa Labor Confederation include ecological training of its members because, in this way, we are striving to increase ecological awareness and adherence to ecological standards by the trade union structures.

THE PODKREPA LABOR CONFEDERATION AND DEMOCRATIC VALUES

There is no normal country in the world in which free trade unionism is not a part of the democratic process and the market economy. Only the unsound thinking of so-called monetarists can oppose the trade unions in the market. This is because we do not accept the accusations that firm protection of the interests of our members represents a turning back toward socialistic practice and destroys the economic reforms.

In our relations with the political parties and organizations, we will be guided by our immutable hostility to communist ideology and totalitarianism. For us, it is not so important who rules but how they do so. Contacts with everyone, blessings only for those who do not infringe upon our interests and democratic values.

We will build our relations with the other trade union organizations on the basis of loyalty and the criteria of representativeness. We will not maintain ties to procommunist trade union formations.

The basic rule in our relations with the employers is the social partnership and tripartism. This is the civilized practice in every normal country. The Podkrepa Labor Confederation will do everything possible to have it established in Bulgaria as well.

Free labor is unthinkable without family happiness and human moral values. The Podkrepa Labor Confederation always has defended the right of everyone to profess whatever religion he wishes. Religious tolerance is our basic principle.

All Bulgarian citizens, irrespective of their ethnic and religious affiliations, have similar socioeconomic interests.

In protecting these general interests, the Podkrepa Labor Confederation is called upon to overcome artificially established ethnic and religious contradictions and to turn into one of the basic consolidating factors for the Bulgarian nation. The free world always has been supported by private ownership. It has to become a basis of democracy in our country, also. This is why we will defend its sanctity and inviolability.

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The Podkrepa Labor Confederation accepts that the dynamics of social development make it difficult to predict all specific parameters of the economy. For this reason, we are not committing ourselves to a precise econometric evaluation. Our conviction is that the thesis nature of the program declaration provides the possibility for the collective administrative body of the confederation to change the program goals in relation to the specific situation. However, our principles and motivation remain unchanged:

Bread, Peace, Freedom

Problem of Drug Addiction, Treatment

92BA0675A Sofia DEMOKRATSIYA in Bulgarian
27 Feb 92 p 4

[Article by Aneliya Khristova: "Young People Are Becoming Drug Addicts in Order To Escape Military Service"—first paragraph is DEMOKRATSIYA introduction]

[Text] Outpatient services are lacking, and the clinic in Sukhodol is suffocating.

There are 15,000 Bulgarians who wake up in the morning thinking about their next dose of narcotics. A large part of them use morphine and lydol, and recently the number of drug addicts taking heroin has begun to increase. One gram of heroin costs 500 leva, and that is only the daily dose of the beginners. Thus, it becomes clear that you have to have a fat bank account in order to be a drug addict....

A while ago, the special services convinced us that drugs are expensive and beyond the means of Bulgarians.

Therefore, you see, we have very few drug addicts in our country—barely 1,300-1,500. While they tried to distract us with fairy tales, some were building laboratories for producing opiates—the Plovdiv laboratory, for example. We were thinking that everything was in the hands of the customs officials, and we followed with great interest how many kilograms of narcotics they intercepted. The foreign marketing agents tested the attentiveness of the customs agents, when, from time to time, they left some packages of flour, instead of heroin, in cars. Besides the security of the hiding place, in this way the traffickers also tested the reliability of the channel. It is no secret that the customs officials have coordination between each other and that sometimes they let traffickers pass in order to get to the last stop of the channel. However, these actions entail a certain amount of risk because the marketing agents may divert a certain part of the drug to “Magurata” and the “Khemus” Hotel, or to other, less obvious places.

Let us remove our heads from the sand and see why we need these facts. The number of drug addicts in our country is not at all small. Even more disturbing is the fact that it is a matter of young people who need treatment. The experts maintain that it is almost impossible to cure them completely unless the patients have great will power and overcome the dependence themselves. The motivation for you to become a drug addict differs greatly. Our country has the prerequisites that push young people toward narcotics. In my conversation with several soldiers who are drug addicts, I learned that the lack of an alternative military service led them to an absurd situation. The young people began to take narcotics in order not to serve. They went to the clinic in Sukhodol “to be cured.” And, in spite of the fact that they did not have a drug dependence, they were “bumped along” every day in order to prove to them that they were drug addicts, and they started a trade in ampoules in the clinic so as to be more convincing.

Fairly often, drug addicts enter the Sukhodol clinic with the declaration “I want to be cured.” However, many times there are completely different things behind it. Sometimes the pressure of friends is so strong that it is the only thing you need to get yourself out of the morass. Another time, you do something stupid so that you get a “staph” infection, so you run to the clinic as the only refuge in the world. Lack of money also is a motivation for you to isolate yourself from opiates for a while. But that would not be very useful at the Sukhodol clinic—it has to deal with the true drug addict, for whom there is no alternative except for the drug. Outpatient services would be able to help the beginning drug addicts, if we may so call them. They would be able to help even Nikolay K. from the capital, jolting for only two years, but, in order to stop, he does not need complete isolation, which the clinic in Sukhodol offers. Nikolay is 20 years old, he began out of curiosity, and he maintains that he does not want his life to be decorated with narcotic hallucinations. Outpatient service would make his situation easier because it provides the possibility of living among his friends and being cured. The limitations that the patient and the specialists agree upon sometimes are a burden even for the doctor himself, when he understands that his patient is not a drug addict in the true sense.

Outpatient services are necessary also for the prevention of drug addiction. Of course, hospitals of the Sukhodol type must not be ignored in this regard. As lecturer Lozanov, the director of the clinic, states, if 20 percent of the 80 persons now being treated succeed in stopping drugs within six to 12 weeks, it is a success, which world practice would acknowledge. However, even when a drug addict has stopped intoxicating himself, he remains a drug addict in essence and attitude. The great problem is to remove the motivation that induces a person to reach for the opiate because he who is cured is still at risk inasmuch as the social environment has not changed.

Budget, Privatization, Foreign Investments Viewed
*92CH0367B Prague HOSPODARSKE NOVINY
in Czech 10 Feb 92 p 9*

[Interview with Jan Strasky, deputy prime minister of the Czech government, by Marcela Doleckova; place and date not given: "About Budgets, Privatization, and Foreign Investments: Too Many Jurisdictions"]

[Text] Jan Strasky, deputy prime minister of the Czech government who is entrusted with managing the economic ministries, agreed to an interview with HOSPODARSKE NOVINY.

On the Budgets

[Doleckova] Instead of the expected surplus of around 1 billion Czech korunas [Kcs], the Czech budget ended with a deficit of around Kcs7 billion in 1991. What went wrong?

[Strasky] The Czech government allowed itself to be manipulated into a position in which the valorization planned for September was not implemented until December. As a result, I have realized that it is impossible to valorize and to trim the budget at the same time. Therefore, under no circumstances will we take any steps to valorize at the end of this year.

[Doleckova] So you will be taking them in March or April....

[Strasky] If it proves to be necessary; but this will only be seen during the course of the year. In any case, we should agree how to balance the 1991 deficit on a level beyond all three budgets.

[Doleckova] In an interview with the HN [HOSPODARSKE NOVINY] (30 January 1991) the deputy chairman of the SNR [Slovak National Council], I. Carnogursky, stated that Kcs30 billion are spent annually merely to keep the Federation running.

[Strasky] I am unfamiliar with his statement, but the amount seems too high to me.

[Doleckova] Let me phrase it differently: Do you believe that the amount that is left in the budgets for the Federation is proportionate?

[Strasky] I am sure it is. It is proportionate to the state of the jurisdictions, and I am convinced that the Federation does not waste any more money than the national governments.

[Doleckova] The 1991 deficit was primarily caused by the republics. How did it happen that the Federation is responsible for the entire budgetary system, yet it has no jurisdiction over the republics' expenditures?

[Strasky] There have been many discussions on various levels about whether the Federation should have greater authority to influence the budgets. The last financial council came to the conclusion that, at the very least, the coordination function of the financial council should be

strengthened. The worst scenario would be if the republics started trying to outdo each other. The beginnings of such a development are already visible.

[Doleckova] What beginnings?

[Strasky] For instance, I had the Slovak teachers in mind. We could say that we will outdo them, that we will raise some one else's salary.

[Doleckova] Do you believe it is best if the republican budgets are theoretically allowed to use the allocated sums in any way they choose?

[Strasky] I do not believe this to be the best solution.

[Doleckova] Your alternative solution....

[Strasky] I believe that under the given circumstances the only thing to be done is to ensure that the financial council has a greater coordinating role. I believe that the financial council should be an agency where all three entities can come to an agreement on all fundamental actions that have a budgetary impact.

[Doleckova] If, despite restrictive measures, last year's budget ended with an deficit, what will happen with this year's budget, which has been declared to be balanced? Yet you have not yet eliminated valorization, and it is said that we will face the worst economic times in 1992.

[Strasky] There are two sides to this question. First, whether it will be possible to trim expenditures in such a way as to balance the budget and, second, whether it will be possible to respond to expenses commensurately with the development of income in the course of the year. I believe that one must respond to the income during the year and adjust expenditures accordingly. In relation to the Czech budget, I would like to add that abandoning restrictions, i.e., placing a specific demand on the back burner, in our case, would be in the ecologic sector. I do not mean to say that that is where we will be making cuts, but fundamentally there are two types of budget items. On the one hand, those that are in fact obligatory, such as various legal claims by citizens where the approval of the Czech National Council is needed in order to make cuts. The government can actually only make decisions on expenditures in areas that are not regulated by laws and one of these areas is ecology. We expect expenditures of around Kcs20 billion in this area, and some of it could be cut if we recorded a negative development in incomes.

[Doleckova] But that would mean discontinuing investment in the ecology and that would give rise to further impacts.

[Strasky] Of course.

[Doleckova] Nevertheless, one of the leading economic ministers in your government, the minister of industry, frequently talks about spurring on supply through the budget.

[Strasky] We even received material in the economic council from Minister Vrba which included a major stimulus for investment and could, of course, change the unemployment curve. Nevertheless, the stimuli could not be financed by the budget, and I have to say that J. Vrba acknowledged this after some discussion and withdrew the material. Of course, we constantly find such inclinations in the industrial sector.

On Privatization

[Doleckova] It seems that there is pressure to slow down the rate of privatization from some economic circles.

[Strasky] I am absolutely convinced that the process of privatization deserved to be accelerated from the very beginning. The Kcs50 billion that were allocated to settle the debts of enterprises are, in my opinion, a toll for the political vacillation in regard to the economic reform in 1990. Ultimately the money was spent just so that the enterprises could be privatized at all. If the basic diagnosis that we made after the revolution is that the state was mismanaging the economy, we should not now say that the state is managing the economy in the best way possible and is to lead it back to health. That is our main argument with Minister Vrba. It is a conflict between professionalism and the political understanding of this question. Vrba believes that, as a professional, he knows how to restore this economy while it is still in the hands of the state, and that it should not be admitted into the market arena until it has been restored and is healthy.

[Doleckova] Of course, coupon privatization did not proceed according to plan. The doors have been opened to all kinds of alternative projects which both slow down the process of privatization and concentrate extraordinary power in the hands of state officials.

[Strasky] Although all privatization methods are equal they do not have the same impact. Standard methods, by their very nature, take longer. Coupon privatization was originally intended to be a mass method which would not implement decision making on how to restructure the economy, which companies to allow in, etc., etc., until the new ownership relations were in place. The practical course of privatization was impaired by the determination to make expensive studies of individual branches, and that these studies would then be used as the basis for making decisions while the enterprises were still owned by the state.

[Doleckova] Where did this idea come from?

[Strasky] At the risk of giving a frivolous answer, most of the actions of this type have occurred at the Ministry of Industry.

[Doleckova] Due to the enormous interest shown by the citizens in coupon privatization, an increase in supply is being considered and, obviously, this could again postpone the initiation of the first wave.

[Strasky] I do not think that the supply for the first wave necessarily has to be increased. After all, one could rely on a second or even additional waves.

[Doleckova] Theoretically this idea sounds good, but for the economic sector, as well as for the state pocket, the period of waiting for privatization is extremely unpleasant. So I am coming back to an alternative suggestion: wouldn't it be more beneficial to ignore alternative projects?

[Strasky] Theoretically I would be in favor of it, but the fact is that we are now bound by subsequent steps. For example, a large foreign study is being made of the steel industry and the government is now faced with the question whether it would be better to wait for the results of the study and leave the final judgment to private owners. We have a similar situation in the mining industry and energy, where it is not merely a matter of privatization but also a question of monopoly.

[Doleckova] The phenomenon of privatization investment funds has appeared in the privatization process. There is now the fear that there will be an undue concentration of owners.

[Strasky] Opponents of coupon privatization first complained about the lack of interest among investors and the dispersion of owners, now they are complaining about too much interest and the danger of undue concentration. Generally there is a predominant tendency to consider privatization investment funds as some kind of alien systems but I believe that citizens' participation in the funds will remedy this. As far as the number of privatization funds is concerned, it is certainly larger than expected but it may ultimately correspond with the structure of interest. However, of course, the question is whether the funds, especially the small ones, have a sufficiently strong business incentive and capability. In my opinion, this should be a serious warning to citizens to really wait for the greatest amount of information before they make any decisions.

[Doleckova] If all DIK's [coupon investors] were to take the warning to heart, they would have to wait till the last moment before placing their order. Would this not give rise to technical problems again?

[Strasky] I believe that from the sociological aspect there is a group of people that decided it was in favor of the funds from the outset. These people should not wait till the enterprise's privatization projects have been made public.

[Doleckova] But this may not be the case, and it could happen that 8 million people will order shares during the short span of two weeks. Will the post offices be able to handle this?

[Strasky] This was discussed for a long time in the government and the conclusion was that they can.

[Doleckova] Further confusion is caused by the fact that ministry officials are being hired for the privatization funds.

[Strasky] I'll give you my personal opinion. I believe that the participation of state officials has not been negative in this stage.

[Doleckova] But what about the next stage? Apart from management, the most likely individual to be well informed about the quality of an enterprise is a ministry official.

[Strasky] I am afraid that, from this aspect, it will be impossible to reach a fair or clear solution. The information in our society is dispersed in a complex way: from banks to revenue offices. In this case, the only people we could permit to invest would be the little old ladies from the Orlicke Mountains. Nevertheless, I think that before people start making their own decisions, we should set some minimum limits so that a state official will not be exposed to the pressure of conflicts of interest. But it is also important to make a distinction between the board of the funds and the supervisory councils, which, in fact, are in the citizens' interest. However, high-level state officials should not be on the boards of the funds.

On Foreign Investments

[Doleckova] Do you believe that foreign investments are beneficial and that the inflow to date is sufficient (last year it amounted to about Kcs1 billion)?

[Strasky] At all events, I consider foreign investments to be essential. There is no point in philosophizing about whether they are good or bad. And, of course, the inflow to date is not sufficient. Now a discussion has started as to how they should be structured.

[Doleckova] Is a state official capable of directing foreign capital, and is a state official a sufficiently objective and incorruptible individual?

[Strasky] I can answer that in one word: no. On the other hand, the process is not that simple: the services of various international consultancy agencies are being used. However, with the help of these agencies, an owner would certainly be able to make a better judgment than a founder.

[Doleckova] Nevertheless, the process is continuing, passions are flaring up, and there are ideas about a variety of bribes worth millions in currencies other than the koruna.

[Strasky] bribes are not the exclusive prerogative of state officials. However, a future owner, or a representative who is under pressure from owners, will make decisions with greater responsibility and I would also say with greater historical perspective than a state official from a ministry that is about to be closed down.

[Doleckova] What will the Czech government do to turn the Czech lands into an investor's paradise?

[Strasky] The best thing the government could do would be to accelerate privatization. And, as far as the structure of foreign capital is concerned, we have so far come to some agreement that we will "protect" what we have started to call the "family silver" against the input of foreign capital. In this area, to the contrary, we should do everything we can to ensure that enterprises are included in privatization without foreign capital.

[Doleckova] Sometimes one hears the opinion that foreign investors are targeting the Czech lands largely because Prague and the Federation are enticing them there.

[Strasky] The Federation is totally blameless in this matter because, in essence, it no longer has any jurisdiction over the economy. I believe the difference is due to two things. First, Prague is better known, and usually everyone starts here and, second, I would look for the reason in the fact that enterprises in the Czech countries are apparently more attractive to foreign capital.

[Doleckova] Why do you think they are more attractive?

[Strasky] I am afraid that this gets into deep-seated problems in connection with the Federation. I think an example would illustrate this best. Many, many years ago I provided credit for the Chlumcan ceramic factories which were building an identical branch in Slovakia. The two factories produced identical tiles on the same assembly lines that were imported from Italy, and yet their quality differed substantially. It was this example, now thirty years old, that made me realize what tradition was. Such things necessarily play a significant role, yet neither the Czech nor the Slovak citizens can be blamed for them.

[Doleckova] If this development were to continue, then the relatively unfavorable situation in the Slovak economy would deteriorate even further.

[Strasky] We have taken this inference pretty far, but it is really only proof that there are enterprises there that are incapable of survival. And the lack of interest should merely lead to the question as to whether it is necessary to maintain and develop such enterprises.

Statistics 'Misleading' for Lack of Comparison

92CH0367A Prague SVET HOSPDARSTVI in Czech
30 Jan 92 p 1

[Article by Karel Kriz: "Falsified Statistics: Commentary"]

[Text] Last week the Federal Office of Statistics published the provisional results for the Czechoslovak economy in 1991. A "battle" erupted over the interpretation of the individual figures between the protagonists of the radical reform on the one hand, and their opponents on the other.

At first glance, the data that appeared in the press testify to the fact that there was a sharp decline in economic performance: industrial production dropped by 23.1

percent, gross domestic product (GDP) by 14 percent, and retail sales by 39.9 percent. On the other hand, the rate of inflation increased by 57.9 percent last year, and the unemployment rate had already reached 6.6 percent by 31 December 1991, which means 524 thousand people out of work. So, are those people correct who present a hysterical interpretation of the present economic situation?

Despite what was stated above, the present statistics are definitely misleading in the sense that they are necessarily based on the preceding period. Last year, for the first time in 52 years, we found ourselves without a system of planned economy and thus in a totally incomparable situation. The comparison of time periods made sense in the past and will again in the future, but not in the "watershed" year of 1991.

The following eight macroeconomic indicators are among those most frequently used in Western economies: growth of gross domestic product (GDP), growth of industrial production, rate of inflation, unemployment rate, money supply, balance of trade, balance of payments, and the balance of the state budget.

Using these statistics, we will briefly explain why 1991 will definitely be lost in respect to statistics, and why the basis of the new time period will be 1992: the growth in GDP is an indicator which was not realistically determined by socialist statistics. They used the general indicator "national income," which, in contrast to GDP, does not include services. This was because the communists did not consider this extremely significant sector to be productive. A retroactive calculation of GDP is extremely inaccurate. The second indicator—growth of industrial production—is a comparable indicator; however, our present statistics are unable to measure the performance of the dynamic private sector. Because it solely operates with estimates and subsequently with numbers confined merely to enterprises with more than 100 employees. Yet in developed countries small businesses play a significant role in production. What about the rate of inflation? This year the latter was characterized by a jump in inflation from the beginning of the year when prices were liberalized. This jump in inflation, in fact, set loose the communist inflation, which had accumulated in the form of hidden inflation during the preceding years (waiting in line, shortage economy). The unemployment rate used to be zero, but this was only due to the fact that everyone had to be employed by decree—and that is certainly not a synonym for working.

Money supply is the only truly comparable indicator, as long as we take into consideration the hidden issuing of money through interenterprise indebtedness. The development of the balance of trade and the balance of payments provide very little information when (as used to be the case) foreign trade is not liberalized. The development of the balance of the state budget also provides very limited information when the state may arbitrarily change tax regulations during the year and may operate with supplementary taxes.

Conclusion: There is no doubt that the economy in Czechoslovakia declined last year and, if the truth be told, thank heaven for it. However, comparing 1991 with what preceded it (including 1990) and what followed it is totally illogical.

Czech-Slovak Reciprocity in Historical Perspective
92CH0394A Bratislava KULTURNY ZIVOT in Slovak
30 Jan 92 pp 1, 6

[Article by Dusan Kovac: "Slovaks and Czechs: Looking Back"]

[Text] The current problems in Czech-Slovak relations and the Czecho-Slovak statehood have many causes. The most obvious and serious ones are economic reasons. Unquestionably, however, the causes have an historical dimension, and therefore also their historical perspective.

Following the collapse of the communist regimes in Central, East, and Southeast Europe, manifestations of nationalism and national conflicts became the concomittant phenomena of revolutionary events. In the former Soviet Union and the former Yugoslavia this manifested itself in an exceptionally dramatic fashion. It is obvious that the national conflicts in postcommunist countries had some common features and common causes. Primarily because the communist regime's hypocritical internationalism covered up the existing conflicts and made them a taboo subject. Problems were not solved, only covered up. Such policy suppressed the problems, and after the fall of the totalitarian regimes there was an explosion. It is also true that the instinct of self-preservation of the bankrupt communist ideology makes it resort to mimicry—it takes on the appearance of nationalism, often an extreme one. Communism and nationalism are in this specific situation very close to each other. It is not surprising at all how many former communists have today found refuge in extreme nationalist groups.

Contacts in Year Zero

Common causes of nationalistic conflicts certainly do exist. But they cannot be absolutized. A deeper look will show quite clearly that each specific conflict is in fact unique, each has its own historical roots, and therefore each also has its own solution. It is not possible to find a common model for solving nationalistic and constitutional problems in the entire region. Nor is it possible to apply some West European model, not to mention the fact that in West Europe, too, the thus far apparently solid and traditional models are failing; tendencies toward disintegration are appearing even where a few years ago we would not have even dreamed of it happening.

Thus we understand the Czecho-Slovak issue not just as an issue of the postcommunist era, but as a European issue, linked to the transformation process of European society.

At the same time, however, the Czecho-Slovak issue is unique. There is a special relationship between Czechs and Slovaks, different from the relationships among all other European nations. This relationship is given by the fact that they are at once different and closely related. Czechs and Slovaks are two nations, but they are very closely related. Czech and Slovak are two languages, but mutually totally intelligible. The historical development of both nations took a different course. It was precisely the historical development that formed Czechs and Slovaks into two independent nations. But in the historical development of Czechs and Slovaks there are many common points of contact. Beginning with the 16th century they lived in the same Hapsburg state, even if in different countries and under different circumstances. Between Czechs and Slovaks there is not even such sharp denominational difference as there is between Serbs and Croats. It is therefore a very specific relationship. And the manner in which Czechs and Slovaks resolve their relationship is very important for their future coexistence; but it is also of interest to today's Europe.

There have been contacts between Czechs and Slovaks for centuries. At present, however, of interest are only their contacts since the time when national consciousness began developing in both nations, namely the period which we call out of tradition, but which is certainly by and large historically incorrect, "national rebirth." This national rebirth in its initial stages, and in a certain sense up to the time of the Austro-Hungarian compromise of 1867, progressed in both nations at an approximately equal rate and with comparable results. At a certain stage we can even talk about a common process. After all, Slovaks Jan Kollar and Pavol Safarik were among the most prominent representatives of the Slovak and Czech rebirth. The process of forming the national consciousness proceeded at approximately the same rate and drew from the same sources—the thoughts of French Enlightenment and German philosophy, mainly Herder and Hegel.

At the time when a nation was understood above all as a linguistic and cultural community, that is until the middle of the 19th century, the quite natural question arose as to whether Czechs and Slovaks are two nations or one, or even one branch of the all-Slavic family, as Kollar expressed it. The situation was also complicated by the use of biblical Czech by Slovak Lutherans. Biblical Czech was used as a liturgical as well as a literary language. However, Lutherans constituted only a quarter of the Slovak population. And the Czech of the Kralice Bible was a classic language. The retreat from a classic to a living language was a natural process, characteristic for the literature of the first half of the 19th century. The living language in Slovakia—that, however, was Slovak. The establishment of a literary Slovak language, which was begun by Catholic Bernolak and completed by Protestant Stur—that was not just a political inevitability but also a natural development of a national entity. The Czech reproach "Why did you break away?" was inappropriate and tactless. In the linguistic and broader

cultural sense the question of national unity with the Czechs ceased to exist. When toward the end of the century there was an attempt from the Czech side to reestablish the literary Czech language in Slovakia (at least in technical literature), there was no possibility of it having any hope of success. That was the first serious misunderstanding, which could be characterized as a Czech failure to understand the substance of the issue. The Czech accusation of the Slovaks of separatism, which at first was only a kind of outcry, a rhetorical question, an accusation that was unjust, tactless, and incorrectly formulated, became the prism through which Czechs looked at Slovaks. This stereotype survived in the Czech mind even through the next period and survives to this day.

Theory of Political Czechoslovakism

Toward the end of the 19th century, when the concept of a linguistically and culturally single nation of Czechs and Slovaks had practically disappeared, the theory of political Czechoslovakia began to take shape. The external impulse to the rise of this theory was the difficult situation of both nations, which came about as a result of the dual monarchy and the signing of the dual alliance treaty between Germany and Austria-Hungary in 1879. As a result of the dual alliance Germany began to exert ever more influence on the internal situation in Austria-Hungary. Not only did German nationalism in Cisleithania increase, but in Hungary the efforts to centralize and Magyarize escalated. This situation gave a direct impetus to a closer cooperation between Czechs and Slovaks: close cooperation led to a common political program. The main author of political Czechoslovakism was T.G. Masaryk—Slovak on his father's side, Czech by choice. Masaryk was the main author of political Czechoslovakism, despite the fact that he wrote almost nothing about this subject and did not leave any comprehensive work from which we can deduce his conception.

Masaryk's road to Czechoslovakism led through the criticism of the historic Czech state rights. In the Czech public's mind the idea of Czech state rights was alive, it was part of the nationalist movement. During the unfavorable situation at the end of the 19th century this idea quite often manifested itself in a radical form. This radicalism that some of the press exhibited was a manifestation of a certain crisis and lack of solutions. Masaryk knew this. He was not satisfied with merely criticizing displays of radicalism, he also looked for real solutions. He knew that even if the situation changed and it became possible to implement the historic Czech state rights, a Czech state surrounded on all sides by hostile neighbors and with every third citizen a German would not be a real solution. And, if the Hungarians were to succeed in implementing their Magyarization plan and close up the Czech basin from the East, it would be a tragedy for the Czech nation. Alliance with Slovaks was vitally important for the Czechs. It was an opening up toward the East, it was the creation of a counterweight to the Germans in this area. Help to Slovakia was a part of a real and realistic Czech policy.

The Slovaks accepted Czech help gratefully. In the situation in which they found themselves at the end of the last century, Czech help was for Slovaks one of a few possible solutions. The majority of Slovaks, however, were not willing (an exception were only some Hlasists) to raise and discuss the question of Slovak distinctness. For Slovaks it was a question that was already answered. Slovaks rejected the theory of a political nation because of their historical experience. Even the Hungarian theory of a single Hungarian nation was in principle a political theory. Under its guise, however, a brutal linguistic and ethnic denationalization was being carried out. Slovaks rejected Czechoslovakism also because this theory, as it was to be realized in practice, called for a union of two equal subjects. However, at the turn of the century the difference between the Czech and Slovak nations in the economic and cultural spheres was great. Under those circumstances, Czechoslovakism could not have meant the creation of a new common entity, but only a one-sided process to the disadvantage of the Slovaks.

Political Czechoslovakism therefore came into being in the period before World War I only as a potential idea. In practice, Czech help to Slovakia was being implemented, meetings in Luhacovice were organized, but the idea itself was not publicly discussed, it was not presented or opposing views given. During his meeting with Vajansky, Skultet, and other Slovaks, Masaryk sensed that raising this question would do more harm than good.

Work on behalf of this idea was therefore being carried out, but the idea itself existed only in a disguised, latent form. However, the ambiguity of the issue naturally created room for certain mistrust. In the Slovaks (mainly supporter of the Turciansky Svaty Martin declaration) we can detect a certain caution in their attitude toward the Czech help, which was given life by some pronouncements of the Hlasists. The Czech mistrust is best expressed by Masaryk's sentence in his letter to Kramar: "They think that we shall support them and they'll just go about being Slovaks." Same as the theory of Czechoslovakism, this mistrust has also existed more in a latent form. Until 1914, we always, and generally correctly, emphasized mutual cooperation, Czech help to Slovakia, Czechoslovak unity, Luhacovice meetings. That was diplomatic. But we must not forget the seeds of mistrust, because from them sprang new stereotypes of thinking (Slovaks: they want to cheat us, they have something up their sleeve; Czechs: they want us to help them, but at the same time they are "being their Slovak selves," i.e., separatists). Since these stereotypes have endured for centuries, they are worth pondering.

Everything that was hidden until 1914 was given the opportunity to come into the open after the outbreak of the war. The stagnant waters moved. Both the Czech and the Slovak questions were given the opportunity to move from the realm of hopes into political practice. It is not surprising that Masaryk was the one best prepared for this situation. His activities in the struggle for a common Czecho-Slovak state grew from his prior political activities. During this stage of historical development, Czechoslovakism proved to

be productive. It became a weapon against Austria-Hungary. Its aggressive power manifested itself during the struggle for a common state until the moment when that state became a reality. The creation of the common state laid bare its weak points. Some Slovak politicians, mainly from the ranks of the former Hlasists, accepted Czechoslovakism. But basically Slovak political thinking was autonomist, federalist. Slovaks were demanding autonomy from Hungary, and gradually the demand for autonomy was being pushed in Slovakia also during the first republic.

The birth of the common state was the optimal solution of the Czech and Slovak question. Both nations fought for the common state. But the conception of the common statehood was different on both sides. To put it simply, Czechs conceived the common state as more or less unitary—a state without a hyphen. Slovaks conceived the state as a union of two independent subjects—a state with a hyphen. The argument about the name of the state was not just some cabaret intermezzo, the way some of the press wrote about it. It was an argument about the conception of common statehood, that is, a basic argument. An argument, which the new name of the state did not resolve. The name of the state is no longer being talked about, but the argument about its character continues.

Two Different Conceptions of the Common State

The two different conceptions of the common state on the Czech and the Slovak side became obvious immediately after the establishment of Czechoslovakia. It became a problem only in the second decade of its existence. Both Czech and Slovak politicians realized that in this strategic location only a strong state can endure. But the idea of a strong state was different on the Czech and the Slovak side. In the Czech way of thinking a strong state was unitary, centralized, in the Slovak way of thinking Slovakia's autonomy was to strengthen the common state. That was Hlinka's program. True, these models only represent a typological schema. Not all Czechs and not all Slovaks fit into this schema. That, I trust, is clear. Every abstraction already is a simplification. This applies primarily to those Slovak politicians who accepted the Czech model of the state. In the first period of Czechoslovakia's existence actually a majority of Slovak politicians thought of centralism as inevitable. It is indisputable that this issue matured during the 20 years of pre-Munich Czechoslovakia. However, the post-Munich autonomy, forced by circumstances, satisfied nobody. Not even Slovaks, because autonomy was shortly followed by the Vienna Award. Nor was the Slovak state, established by Hitler's will and under his "protection," a solution that was in accord with Slovak traditions and Slovak political thinking. Dissatisfaction with the regime of the Slovak state gradually increased, culminating in the resistance and the Uprising. It was not basically dissatisfaction with Slovak statehood, but dissatisfaction with its concrete form, with the totalitarian system and its servility to Nazism. That is why Slovak resistance demanded a democratic system and restoration of Czecho-Slovakia, but on new principles, simply, on the principle: an equal with an equal.

If we then look at the development of Czecho-Slovak statehood as a process, the basic mistake in solving the Czech-Slovak relationship did not occur at the time the republic was established or during the existence of pre-Munich Czechoslovakia. At that time the internal and external situation was very complicated. The basic mistake occurred after 1945, when neither Benes nor later the communist regime accepted the principle expressed in the Slovak National Uprising: an equal with an equal. This principle unequivocally means a new constitutional structure of the republic. All international as well as internal reason for rejecting Slovak autonomy disappeared after the war. But the opportunity was not used. And the situation was not rectified even by the formal federation after 1968. All the old problems remained and new ones arose. New problems, new disappointments. Dissatisfaction with the centralist state was almost universal in Slovakia. The totalitarian regime did not offer the opportunity to air perceived problems. That deepened the internal crisis all the more.

The most traumatic outcome of this historical development is the mutual mistrust between Czechs and Slovaks. The mistrust on the Czech side developed historically into the stereotype: Slovaks always want something, they keep making new demands, and we must give in to them. In the end this will lead to the breakup of the state. The Slovak stereotype has a different form: Czechs want to preserve the centralized state in which they will have the key positions. They are always searching for pretexts to avoid Slovak demands. The atmosphere of mistrust was not successfully dissipated by negotiations. Rather on the contrary. The mistrust in the society and the media is greater than the mistrust between individual politicians.

The delicacy and paradoxicalness of the situation, in which Czechs and Slovaks find themselves, rests in the fact that the majority of Czechs and Slovaks are in favor of the common state. In spite of that, there is a real threat that it will break up. The Czecho-Slovak state could break up against the will of the majority of its population, which in its own way would be a world rarity. This possibility is quite real, however, and will take place the moment when both sides fail to agree on the state setup. The situation is further complicated by the severe economic impact on Slovakia by the economic reform now in progress. What makes the Czecho-Slovak situation unique is that it actually cannot be resolved by a referendum. The problem is not whether both nations want to live in a common state, but how to structure that state. And it is difficult to resolve the question "how" by a referendum. It seems that the solution of the problem can only be the will to search for compromises, and this will must exist on both sides.

The compromise in the Czecho-Slovak question is actually the creation of a dual state. Its concrete form, concrete division of powers and mutual relations—those issues provide scope for many possibilities. In any case, however, a dualistic model of a state is very fragile and inexpedient. Federation, based on the national principle, is a very unstable state formation. But that does not mean that such a federation is not possible, and that it could not be permanent. It is possible, but it requires

that several fundamental conditions are met: a permanent will to discuss and compromise, political culture of a high order, and democracy. And, above all, recognition that this common state makes sense for both sides, that it is necessary and advantageous for both sides.

To talk about historical perspective in Czech-Slovak relations does not just mean to keep going back to the past. It means to see these relations much more in the historical process, in development, and broad relations. Nations look for their place and the meaning of their existence, their mission, in the historical process. Not only big nations, but also small ones are pondering their mission. And no nation, not even the smallest one, can look for its mission only in relation to itself. By that it would condemn itself to degradation, to being a malleable toy in the hands of the powerful. Justifying "national amorality" by saying that small nations do not decide the fate of the world and must take care only of themselves would in the end result in tolerating "national prostitution," collaborating with anyone, and thus in national degradation. No nation that has an inbred national pride can agree with such a theory.

During the century that is now slowly drawing to an end, we were witnesses to a great struggle between democracy and totalitarianism. This struggle was dramatic, and totalitarianism manifested itself in it in monstrous forms. At the end of the century, totalitarianism in Europe and in most of the world has lost its position. But concurrently a new problem has emerged in Europe, which is beginning to be dominant for the future of Europe, and possibly even the world—it is a struggle between integrating forces which aim at removing the focal points of tensions and warding off the possibility of disastrous wars, and disintegrating forces which as a result of national egotism are creating new tension points and new, unfortunately bloody, conflicts.

Czechs and Slovaks contributed their share to the struggle of democracy with totalitarianism. We are not idealizing our history. We do not insist that everything in it is glorious. Nevertheless, we can state that our contribution to the gigantic struggle of our century was not small.

I do not know if we realize sufficiently that the manner in which we resolve our mutual relations is important not only for us. We can contribute to European integration, but also to holding it back. How our mutual relations will develop only we, Slovaks and Czechs, will decide. It is up to us whether we shall support the process of European integration, or "contribute" to the destabilization of Europe. The historical process goes on. We find ourselves in the midst of these events. And from within, from the very core of the apparent chaos, it is sometimes difficult to find the way. One thing is certain. Same as we now judge our forebears, so we shall be judged by our descendants. And it is up to us only, whether they will be ashamed of us or be proud of us.

Macedonian Education Minister on Ethnic Issue

92BA0585A *Skopje NOVA MAKEDONIJA*
in *Macedonian* 26 Feb 92 pp 11-12

[Interview with Prof. Dr. Dimitar Bajaldziev, Macedonian minister of education, by Biljana Jovanovska; place and date not given: "All Problems Have Priority"—first two paragraphs are NOVA MAKEDONIJA introduction]

[Excerpts] Maximum use must be made of all opportunities for the parallel drafting of three laws dealing with education, considering the relatively changed circumstances—candidate training for education personnel, as well. The teaching vocation, from primary to higher education, will no longer be entrusted to chance passersby.

Prof. Dr. Dimitar Bajaldziev became the head of the Ministry of Education and Physical Culture last month. Considering the more than one-month vacuum in the ministerial office, his assuming this function once again makes many pressing problems in the realm of education topical. Hence the great interest shown by education and scientific circles and the public at large regarding his views on various sensitive problems and the steps that will be taken by the ministry in solving material difficulties, coming legal regulations, and illegal secondary school classes taught in the Albanian language....

[Jovanovska] A few months ago, the Ministry of Education and Physical Culture had virtually stopped functioning. Meanwhile, a number of pressing problems had accumulated in the education area, so that now intensive involvement in their solution is expected of you. On what area will you initially focus your influence as minister? Which problems will be given priority?

[Bajaldziev] All of the problems that have accumulated during this rather long period in this neuralgic and sensitive area have priority. Above all, however, the problems that have accumulated must be reviewed once again, so that the right solutions may be found sooner. I am considering the problem of the poor material situation in education, particularly in the areas of preschool and primary education, where the status of educational workers is extremely unenviable. Another topical problem is that of the excessively broad network of education organizations, the need to draft new legal regulations, and the problem of the numerous authorities in charge of managing educational activities—the SIZ [expansion unknown] on the different levels, the regional units, and so forth. The elimination of the townships as sociopolitical units and the reorganization of local self-governments have increased the number of problems in that area, and now this has been directly shifted to the ministry. In addition to all of the other problems, we now have problems that were previously the responsibility of the townships, or, if you wish, we have another 34 problems that were difficult to resolve by the individual townships and that now must be resolved by a single ministry that has already greatly improved its

efficiency. However, in adding up the topical problems in this area, we should also remember the problems we have inherited in connection with the education of Albanian secondary-school students. These are problems that in the past were routinely resolved in accordance with existing legislation. Since 17 November, we have had a new Macedonian Constitution, which now requires a number of changes in different areas. This essentially applies to the current issue of the so-called wild classes and illegal schools that provide instruction in the Albanian language. [passage omitted]

[Jovanovska] A few days ago, you reported on the steps taken by the government to legalize the "wild" secondary school classes taught in the Albanian language. When will these classes become part of the regular educational process, and, in general, is this possible, considering that only slightly more than three months remain before the end of the school year?

[Bajaldziev] The publication of the measures that had been drafted by the ministry and those that were issued by the government triggered a negative reaction in some circles. We have amended them repeatedly in order to make them consistent with the specific situations that prevail in an environment that is sensitive at all times. Inspections of these classes revealed that, in some areas, there have been unsatisfactory developments for the past one or even two years. We keep considering how best to implement the steps without angering one party or another. That is why I would like to point out that it is not a question of legalizing, which you mentioned, but of introducing some kind of order.

In those classes that will implement the conditions we mentioned, as well as some other conditions, students will attend classes on Saturdays also, and we may even extend the length of the school year so that the students may complete their educations.

[Jovanovska] What will happen to the classes that use the Kosovo curriculum?

[Bajaldziev] Unfortunately, such classes were found in the village of Radolishta, in the Struga area. In that village, there is even a second high-school grade in which classes are taught according to the so-called Kosovo alternative curriculum. It is a surprise that so far there has been no trouble in such classes, and now, when we are trying to bring about some kind of order, there has been excitement and a reaction in some circles. After all of these trips and consultations, most rigorous steps will be taken in Radolishta, where we shall put an end to a situation that has existed for the past two years. It is a question of a small class with a few students, who will be tested to determine their legitimate enrollment and their level of knowledge, and those who have attained the corresponding educational standard as stipulated in the laws of the Republic of Macedonia will be included in the regular education process. Naturally, when we find inconsistencies we shall intervene, although not with political measures but with expert scientific actions

based on the views of the Macedonian Pedagogical Institute, which is the best qualified institution in that area.

[Jovanovska] As a jurist, could this put you in the position of violating the laws?

[Bajaldziev] As a jurist? From the juridical point of view, we must see whether, to begin with, something is legal or illegal, and, if the evaluation indicates that some corrections are needed, they will be made. Starting on 17 November, we have corrected a situation of the so-called legal vacuum, and, wherever possible, we have insisted on observing the Constitution of the Republic. Conversely, any law that violates the new Constitution will not be applied. I have no problem with determining whether we are working in violation of the spirit, standards, and principles of the Constitution. This was a problem that had taken years to resolve with the old legislation, which included various solutions that, regrettably, led to the appearance of a rather stressful atmosphere and to a number of inconsistent situations and dilemmas about what should be done. In that sense and in the spirit of our new times, as stipulated in the Constitution, we are now facing a difficult situation that will require taking faster steps in order to protect several generations of students from hardship. Naturally, in all such matters, we must patiently consider the use of the languages of the ethnic groups and thoroughly deal with the various arguments, so that we may clearly see what is necessary in terms of the languages of the ethnic groups and which questions are excessive in nature. Why must we constantly insist on separating Macedonian and Albanian students and erecting fences between them? If, in the course of our discussions, we show respect for one another and use the right arguments, I am prepared, in the case of some more sensitive issues, to even summon eminent experts from elsewhere in the world to act as arbiters and to give us their opinions on what should be applied and implemented in educating ethnic groups, how to safeguard the dignity of the people, and what is unnecessary duplication. In the final analysis, this could become a new Balkan invention: how to occupy the same space with huge barriers separating us.

[Jovanovska] Could we then expect a renewed demand for opening a pedagogical academy in the Albanian language, something that was recently requested by the Union of Albanian Intellectuals?

[Bajaldziev] To this day we have not received an official request from them, but there will soon be discussions with representatives of that union. If it is a question of providing instruction in the Albanian language in all areas and, therefore, having unnecessary duplication, to be honest with you, I am not prepared to conduct such discussions because this would take the educational system into an impasse.

[Jovanovska] What about similar demands raised by the Democratic Union of Turks, the PTsERM [expansion

unknown; probably Alliance of Reform Forces for Macedonia], and the other parties?

[Bajaldziev] Such demands already exist and will continue to exist. We are also trying to determine the necessary minimum, and we shall make an effort to display maximum understanding of the feelings of ethnicity. I repeat, any duplication in the education process of the Macedonian language with the languages of the ethnic groups would be fatal for Macedonia, and contemporary civilized practices throughout the world show that this is being done nowhere else. To insist on complete education in the language of the ethnic groups, regardless of quality, would be counterproductive to those groups, as well. We shall try to make all such circles understand that we are not curtailing their rights but insisting on efficiency and on doing what is permissible.

[Jovanovska] Could it happen that, in your position, attention might become totally focused on what could be conventionally described as problems of the education of ethnic groups, leaving less space and time for all of the other problems of the educational process?

[Bajaldziev] One can sense the extent to which we are already preoccupied with those problems. What we have been discussing so far is part of the most pressing issues that require patient, extensive, and skillful work for their resolution. In no case should this mean that we shall not adequately deal with all other relevant issues in that area. [passage omitted]

[Jovanovska] Finally, are there differences between the views on education and physical culture that you held in your previous position as a university professor and your present function as the number-one man in Macedonian education?

[Bajaldziev] In principle, there are none because even as a university professor I was not a stranger to those problems. In my previous position as prorector for education for the past 18 months, I dealt with the scientific problems of training so that I was in frequent touch with the educational administration. In my present position, however, the problems appear to be much more numerous and more difficult. Do not forget that we have in the Republic some 25,000 workers in public education, on all educational levels, about 2,000 institutions, and slightly under a half-million secondary school and university students. A very small settlement may not have a militia station or may frequently be without a hospital, but the moment it has no more than five or six students, these students must become part of the educational process. This also creates major problems that must be resolved.

Belgrade TV Director on 9 Mar Events

92BA0723A Belgrade NIN in Serbo-Croatian 13 Mar 92 pp 18-19

[Interview with Cedomir Mirkovic, acting director of Belgrade Television, by Slobodan Reljic and Dragan

Cicic; place and date not given: "Tragically Important Television"—first paragraph is NIN introduction]

[Text] "Television is important throughout the world, especially in a stabile democracy. However, in countries such as ours, television is the main firing range; it is precisely here that it is necessary, every day, to lock horns, to change the result of some previous contest, to strike a balance, to shift positions, to get confirmation."

A year ago, the work of [Belgrade] Television under the administration of the previous leadership led to the largest postwar demonstrations in Belgrade. Convulsions at Television were provoked this year once again on 10 March. In the overheated atmosphere created by, among other things, the sudden interruption in the delayed broadcast of the rally, center stage came to be occupied by the acting director of Belgrade Television, Cedimir Mirkovic. The man said to have been almost arrested while students in Terazije shouted his name, the leader who clashed with the acting general director of Belgrade RTV [Radio and Television] while people from labor unions offer him their unanimous support, talks with NIN.

[NIN] Has what happened on 9 March been definitively established?

[Mirkovic] The public is most interested in the fact that the television broadcast of the rally by opposition parties at St. Sava Plateau was interrupted before the finish.

[NIN] As well as the fact that the broadcast was sent out with a one and a half hour delay?

[Mirkovic] I issued a statement to TANJUG to the effect that it is Television's obligation to report on the events of 9 March professionally, objectively, and correctly. The question of whether to broadcast everything or just some details live or with a delay remained to be settled later with the organizers and government representatives.

The technical equipment was present at the Plateau even before the commemorative gathering and rally, and thus on the morning of 9 March we on the board of directors reached an agreement on how to go about doing our job. Since the position from earlier agreements by the leadership of Radio, Television, and state organs was that the gathering should not be broadcast live, we felt at the board meeting that we could implement that position, but also our own intention. Thus, regardless of the fact that I personally was of the opinion, as were nearly all the members of the Television board, that it would be better to broadcast these events live, we felt that a so-called delayed broadcast was also satisfactory.

[NIN] You said that it was the position of state organs that the broadcast should not be live? How did you learn of these positions?

[Mirkovic] Television is a state institution, and it is run by the government through the Administrative Committee. This is a complicated system of subordination,

and agreements generally come from the top, and based on current practice, this comes through the general director of Belgrade RTV.

[NIN] That is the channel....

[Mirkovic] Yes, messages come through the general director, or we ourselves formulate them based on the positions and criteria of the Administrative Committee, which has been in operation for a short time now. One should not think that these are instructive positions decided on in an unknown fashion. Rather, they are positions that are drawn from criteria established at meetings of the Administrative Committee or in talks with state organs....

[NIN] How often does the Administrative Committee meet?

[Mirkovic] The Administrative Committee was formed sometime around the New Year. It has had several meetings. I am not a member. It consists of 15 people, including very respectable intellectuals, academicians, university professors, people who occupy prominent positions in parties. To be sure, there is only one member of an opposition party on it right now. At present, the committee does not concern itself with details, but rather with the general line.

[NIN] To what extent does this committee concern itself with the way in which news is reported?

[Mirkovic] Thus far, the committee has concerned itself with that superficially. But according to the Law on Radio and Television, this committee is practically the governing body for radio and television. The general director, practically speaking, is the person who implements the committee's decisions.

[NIN] This means that the committee will scarcely concern itself with editorial policy?

[Mirkovic] Yes, I expect so.

[NIN] The most controversial event of 9 March was that interruption at the end of the delayed broadcast. The director who interrupted the broadcast is on one side, while you are on the other side. Does this mean that you are in conflict with the state?

[Mirkovic] I do not believe that I am in conflict with the state, insofar as the decision to carry the gathering live, continuously, and in its entirety was made at the Television board meeting, which was moreover attended—at my invitation—by General Director Dobrosav Bjeletic. The decision was made in a normal atmosphere. In all honesty, Bjeletic expressed certain fears.

However, the coverage of the events on 9 March caused a great deal of neuroticism. I cannot give you any details about this right now, because at the Television board meeting we agreed not to come forward with individual

and loose interpretations. We will conduct an analysis and notify the responsible institutions. And the public as well, I think.

I will also tell you that the board's assessment was that the coverage of the events of 9 March was on the necessary professional level, that despite the incident—and the curtailment of the broadcast was an incident in the opinion of the board—Television's obligation was fulfilled to the greatest extent.

[NIN] It is possible that the obligation was fulfilled even with that incident?

[Mirkovic] Well, I would not want to interpret this prior to these analyses, but it seems to me that even now one can say that the fact that the incident must be linked to those who were not interested in Television as a mitigating factor for political and other tensions.

[NIN] Since a new attitude is currently taking shape at Television, is the Mirkovic-Bjeletic conflict a conflict between two conceptions, or could it be a personal conflict?

[Mirkovic] I would not have anything to say about that, because in interviews such as this one risks having one's position, one's stances, moves, assessed more mildly than is necessary. Someone else would have to comment on that. But there is no personal conflict, at least as far as I am concerned. I do not even believe that there is a conflict between conceptions here, if one understands "conception" to mean something consistent, one's concept of the philosophy of news coverage, if this means one's understanding of the media. I can tell you only the parameters that guide me and the majority of the board. We think that Television must take into account the multitude of its obligations.

[NIN] You did not answer the question about whether this is a conflict between conceptions and whether you could continue to be director of Belgrade Television in the event that, say, Bjeletic, with his understanding of journalism, becomes the head of your institution after the open competition that is currently under way?

[Mirkovic] Once again, I will respond diplomatically. Not in order to circumvent Bjeletic, whom you mention, but because in an institution as important as television, the majority of those who have a prominent role represent—perhaps I am making this a little too literary now—a sort of actor in the drama that is broadcast on Television, from that which is happening in society. Thus, we all have somewhat symbolic roles. Naturally, each person plays the role that he has accepted and that corresponds to his mentality, intellectual bent, education, and understanding of democracy.

But to return to the sense of the question. Before I competed for any post (and the competitions are already in progress), I would try to find out what people are working in other leading positions. Working in television is too hard and, if you understand me properly, too

thankless for a person to invest himself in the long term if he knows that he will have to waste his energy on tense interpersonal relations as well.

[NIN] How much independence do journalists and editors have at Television in terms of the significant authorities held by certain responsible, outside bodies?

[Mirkovic] One should not regard Television as some small department that can be managed first one way, then another. I am not saying here that Television, as a new enterprise, will not have to give up a specific privileged position that in practice proves to be both its advantage and a handicap. It will have to adapt to the demands of the times.

[NIN] You say that Television should not be regarded as a small department where it is possible to carry out major changes over a short period of time. If you look at the changes in the news department, however, it appears, in fact, that it is easiest to change things over night precisely at Television....

[Mirkovic] There is a paradox here that can be explained by the laws and rules applicable to public opinion, but it seems to me that Television must also be protected against these laws. Television cannot be easily reduced to a news program. Thus, the negative assessments of individual sectors are very easily applied to all of Television. And to make matters worse—I am speaking now as an interim director responsible for the entire service—assessments of the news program have for some time been extremely negative. At this time, I will not go into what was inherited from the past and what has been achieved in more recent times. I am telling you that all sorts of things that are happening concerning Television are the result of symbolism, the application of something else to all of Television.

[NIN] In any event, Television is reflected in its news program....

[Mirkovic] The news departments both at newspapers and at Television have inherited the most negative features from the period when controlled political reporting prevailed. Particularly troubling is the fact that the news services did not move forward even during the period of labor pains for multiparty democracy. A great deal of dirty political laundry has been left behind at the news services. I even think that politics itself, pure politics, has taken a further step forward, at least in the domain of some sort of fair play.

A large number of journalists on the news program—generally the best ones—have scattered to other departments of Television. You have several potential news departments through documentary, educational, entertainment, and other programs. People have found shelter from the storm there.

[NIN] There have been plenty of scandals in the news program, including the one with Miodrag Popov, who was suspended....

[Mirkovic] There were attempts to suspend Popov, but I blocked that. The thing for which they wanted to suspend him—stopping an anachronistic and threatening commentary—is the best thing that he has done during the several months since I have been director. This is why I felt that he should not be suspended, at least not officially. His positions on the news program are another matter.

Otherwise, I am very dissatisfied with the state of our news program in every regard—in terms of its professionalism and in terms of the culture of news reporting, and in terms of its scope, openness, and many other things.

[NIN] Who wanted to suspend Popov?

[Mirkovic] His chief and responsible editor.

[NIN] Throughout all of East Europe, television has been a very important factor in changes. It is interesting, however, that in Serbia Television has been a prime problem for some time now. Why is this?

[Mirkovic] I think that television is so tragically important because we have rudimentary societal and political institutions. In this way, television has become the main firing range. Naturally, you and I both know that television is important around the world, especially in countries with a stable democracy. However, in countries such as ours, television is the main firing range; it is precisely here that it is necessary, every day, to lock horns, to change the result of some previous contest, to strike a balance, to shift positions, to get confirmation.

[NIN] What do you think of the idea of splitting Television channels up among the government and the opposition?

[Mirkovic] The presence of the ruling party and of the opposition on Television must be regulated by agreements to be reached by consensus. Only in this way will there be a decrease in political tensions. Here too, however, I see an effort to divide all of public life according to political criteria. Perhaps I insist on this in part because of the fact that I myself am not a member of any party, but it seems to me that this is something essential. It would suit me better if there were three channels with equal visibility: the first, main channel would be the state channel, politically neutral, while the other two would be shared by the parties according to certain criteria.

[NIN] You came to the post of acting director of Television as part of the unpopular team that arrived over night. Still, at one time Dobrica Cosic singled you out from that group. Last night, speaking at the Terazije fountain, Mihajlo Kovac of the Democratic Party asked the students there to support your election as director of RTB [Belgrade Radio and Television]. In the halls of Television, people say that you have the support of 90 percent of the employees, you have been supported by

the RTB Independent Labor Union.... Is this incident connected to the open competition for your post?

[Mirkovic] There is a certain connection between these neuroses and the competition, but not the simple one imagined by the man on the street: The competition was announced, so that now there is a struggle for primacy.

I came to this post as part of some sort of "package," and if I may say so, a little bit against my own will. I was contacted abroad, where I was on a business trip. Since I had heard that this had been agreed to by the man whom I was to "succeed"—Velimir Lukic—I accepted without knowing who else was in this "package."

[NIN] Could the support of the opposition or labor unions influence the outcome of the competition?

[Mirkovic] I don't think so. Perhaps in a negative sense—by temporarily classifying you as part of certain fronts, which always evokes a certain amount of suspicion.

Croatian Bachelors To Pay Higher Taxes

92BA0720A Zagreb VJESNIK in Serbo-Croatian
13 Mar 92 p 2

[Article by Goranka Jeresko: "With the Announcement About Taxing Bachelors: Salvation in Marriage?!"—first paragraph is VJESNIK introduction]

[Text] Will the generation that has been languishing in employment bureaus and patiently enduring poverty for years be "rewarded" for this with a tax on bachelors? Perhaps a tax on bachelors will be an incentive for establishing a marital union, and for those that have not done that up to now to become normal men, and those who do not have children to decide on that step. In this way, Father Ante Bakovic, deputy minister of renewal, explains and "argues for" the attempt to introduce a tax on bachelors in Croatia, adding that "other European countries also have this."

If the proposal were not serious and did not come from the deputy minister, some would laugh at it as yet another of the exhibitions of the newly structured renewal of Croatia. This way, it is necessary to say something on that theme, when a large number of young men languish in employment offices, without a residence and with the perspective that, at least during their fertile period, they will not even be able to buy one. As a reward, for patiently enduring poverty, this generation will get nothing less than—a tax on bachelors. According to Bakovic, the tax is planned for those older than 30 years, and progressively—every year increasingly higher, until the "single guy" is fed up and decides to put a ring on his finger, because "no one is so sick that he couldn't get married," says Bakovic in contradicting the remark that it would be punishment for those who cannot marry because of illness. It is indeed rightfully worthwhile to ask who, in a country destroyed by war, in which the number of 400,000 unemployed has already been

exceeded, and more than 200,000 destroyed homes all over our nice country have "joined" the river of homeless, dares to "play" with the nerves of its citizens, inventing a tax that will lower them from poverty one step nearer to total indigence. For a change, wouldn't someone concern himself with the problem of expensive children's shoes, trousers, diapers, when one already wants, underhandedly and with poor arguments, to push for an increase in the birth rate in Croatia?

With the general inflation in taxes, it is only a question of days until someone also remembers to tax those who

have been married several times, with the explanation that it is a matter of a "turnover tax" or even a tax on immorality. Why should one even be surprised at the completely serious proposal of one assembly representative at the last meeting last year, according to which those who do not have children would have to pay a higher level of contributions for a family allowance. Here he did not remember, unfortunately, that with his concern for Croatian posterity he is punishing those who cannot have children, or that this is interference in the basic freedoms and rights of man; we, as a democratic and social state, have assumed this as an obligation.

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