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ACTION EUR-00

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INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	INR-05	SS-00	CIAE-00	EB-00	DODE-00
	H-01	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	HA-09	L-03	LAB-04	TRSE-00
	PM-10	PA-01	OMB-01	NRRC-01	SIL-01	INRE-00	SP-02
	SNP-01	PRS-01	SCT-03	P-02	T-01	DPR-01	/047 W

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P 181437Z DEC 89
FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8939
INFO EASTERN EUROPEAN POSTS
USIA WASHDC 6342

EXCISE

SECTION 01 OF 02 SOFIA 06857

USIA FOR EU PENDERGRAST

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
TAGS: PREL, PHUM, PGOV, BU
SUBJECT: INFLUENCING CHANGE IN BULGARIA

1. ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY. WE WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENTAL GUIDANCE ON ASSISTANCE OR ADVICE WHICH THE INFORMAL GROUPS NOW FORMING IN BULGARIA CAN RECEIVE FROM U.S. PRIVATE AND SEMIOFFICIAL ORGANIZATIONS INTERESTED IN FOSTERING DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT IN EASTERN EUROPE. END SUMMARY.

3. WHILE WE HAVE BEEN ASKED FROM TIME TO TIME FOR XEROX SUPPORT AND OTHER LIMITED MATERIAL ASSISTANCE, THE EMBASSY HAS NOT BEEN ASKED FOR ANY KIND OF ADVICE OR GUIDANCE FROM THE VARIOUS INFORMAL GROUPS WITH WHICH WE HAVE CONTACT. HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THE DEVELOPING POLITICAL SITUATION HERE MAY

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 RELEASE
 EXCISE
 DENY

IM/PS/CR/IR RRS Date: 11-21-97

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 (b) CLASSIFY as () S or () C Sec.
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RESULT IN APPROACHES TO US AS BULGARIA GEARS UP FOR WHAT WE HOPE WILL BE ITS FIRST FREE ELECTIONS SINCE WWII. WE WANT TO HELP BRING THAT ABOUT AND INSURE THAT THE INDEPENDENT GROUPS ARE GIVEN AS LEVEL A PLAYING FIELD AS POSSIBLE.

4. APART FROM THE BCP AND PERHAPS THE AGRARIANS, OUR ASSESSMENT IS THAT AT THE PRESENT TIME NONE OF THE INDEPENDENT GROUPS HAS THE EXPERIENCE, RESOURCES OR PERSONNEL TO MOUNT AN EFFECTIVE

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NATIONWIDE ELECTION CAMPAIGN. IT MAY BE THAT AS IN OTHER EE COUNTRIES, PUBLIC HOSTILITY TO 45 YEARS OF COMMUNIST RULE COULD MORE THAN OFFSET THE LACK OF RESOURCES AND EXPERIENCE OF NASCENT POLITICAL GROUPINGS. HOWEVER, THE FACT REMAINS THAT THE LACK OF MEANS TO DISSEMINATE INFORMATION AND LACK OF EXPERIENCE IN THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS AND IN THE ORGANIZATION OF MASS MOVEMENTS WILL PROBABLY BE THE GREATEST HINDRANCES TO THEIR ELECTORAL SUCCESS.

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5. IF, AS MLADENOV HAS PROPOSED, ELECTIONS ARE HELD IN MAY, THE TIME IS SHORT FOR ANY OF THE INFORMAL GROUPS TO ORGANIZE EFFECTIVELY. WE BELIEVE IT IS IN THE USG INTEREST -- SHORT AND LONG-TERM -- TO BE ABLE TO INFORM SUCH GROUPS ABOUT THE KINDS OF ASSISTANCE AND ADVICE THEY MIGHT EXPECT OR EXPLORE FROM U.S. ORGANIZATIONS (PRIVATE AND SEMIOFFICIAL) INTERESTED IN FOSTERING DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT IN EASTERN EUROPE.

6. IN THIS GENERAL CONNECTION, WE HAVE BEEN INFORMED BY

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IN THIS SAME CONNECTION, GEORGE SOROS HAS WRITTEN OUR PAO, WITH AN OFFER TO PROVIDE SIMILAR EQUIPMENT TO INFORMAL GROUPS, AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THESE GROUPS HAVE EXPRESSED DEFINITE INTEREST.

7. IN ADDITION TO SUCH POSSIBILITIES, WE BELIEVE THERE IS MERIT INFORMING INDEPENDENT GROUPS ABOUT THE FUNCTIONS AND PROGRAMS OF THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY AND THE NATIONAL COMMITTEES OF THE DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN PARTIES. FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE, THE IDEAL FIRST STEP WOULD BE SHORT-TERM VISITS BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE INFORMAL ORGANIZATIONS TO EXPLAIN THEIR PROGRAMS AND HOW THEY CAN BE OF HELP. ALONG THIS SAME LINE, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO KNOW IF THE U.S. TRADE UNION MOVEMENT WOULD BE PREPARED TO ENGAGE IN SIMILAR EFFORTS WITH PODKREPA AND, MUCH LESS LIKELY FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE, THE REGULAR BULGARIAN TRADE UNION ORGANIZATION, WHICH NOW ASSFKS ITS FULL POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE FROM ANY PARTY.

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8. IN TERMS OF INSTITUTION BUILDING, THE SIGNS ARE THAT THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WILL BECOME, IN SOME FASHION, A PERMANENTLY FUNCTIONING LEGISLATURE. LIKE OTHER LEGISLATURES IN EE, THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HAS NO EXPERIENCE OR CONCEPT OF STAFF WORK,

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USIA FOR EU PENDERGRAST

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INFORMATION GATHERING, GENUINE COMMITTEE HEARINGS ON DRAFT LEGISLATIONS, ETC. IT WOULD BE USEFUL, AT SOME EARLY POINT, TO BE ABLE TO OFFER SEMINARS ON HOW CONGRESS FUNCTIONS AND PERHAPS SEND NA DEPUTIES FOR STUDY VISITS TO THE U.S. AS AN ACYPL DELEGATION (THE DESK MIGHT CONTACT WALT RAYMOND AT USIA IN THIS REGARD). THE EMBASSY PLANS TO EXPLORE THIS POSSIBILITY WITH CONGRESSMAN LANTOS DURING HIS VISIT LATER THIS MONTH.

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9. WHILE SOME OF THESE IDEAS MAY HAVE VALIDITY,
WE RECOGNIZE THAT OTHERS MAY BE NON-STARTERS FOR
A VARIETY OF REASONS, INCLUDING THE LACK OF FUNDING.
HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THAT THE DEVELOPMENTS HERE MERIT A
COORDINATED, CLOSER LOOK AT WHAT WE CAN DO, OVER
THE SHORT TIME, IN A PRACTICAL WAY TO PROMOTE

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DEMOCRATIC CHANGE HERE AND TO EXPAND OUR CONTACTS
WITH EMERGING DEMOCRATICALLY-INCLINED FORCES.
THE EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE THE DEPARTMENT'S
COMMENTS ON THE FOREGOING, WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS
ON PRACTICAL STEPS/PROGRAMS WE COULD DISCUSS WITH
APPROPRIATE GROUPS HERE.
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