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preliminary list\*

### REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

#### ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

#### ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

#### DEVELOPMENT AND STRENGTHENING OF GOOD-NEIGHBOURLINESS BETWEEN STATES

#### Letter dated 24 February 1986 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

With reference to the letter dated 11 February 1986 addressed to Your Excellency by the Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the United Nations (A/41/159) and upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to request you to have the enclosed text and its appendices concerning the oppressive policies of the Government of Bulgaria against the Turkish minority in that country circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under items 71, 92, 97 and 137 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Iltar TÜRKMEN  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative

\* A/41/50.

ANNEX

Material provided by the Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations concerning the oppressive policies of the Government of Bulgaria against the Turkish minority in that country

The letter of the Permanent Representative of Bulgaria (A/41/159 of 12 February 1986) is another futile attempt to deny the massive and brutal oppression of the Turkish minority in Bulgaria. The Permanent Mission of Bulgaria does not seem to have grasped the simple fact that the international community has made abundantly clear its condemnation and abhorrence of the forcible measures designed to "Bulgarize" the Turkish minority.

The Bulgarian letter again indulges in convoluted and distorted historical arguments, none of which can be taken seriously. In its previous letter of 26 November 1985 (A/40/904), the Permanent Mission of Turkey had set the record straight with regard to Bulgarian assertions. The Government of Bulgaria should finally realize that history cannot be re-written to enable it to concoct a plausible version for itself. In any case, a historical debate is beside the point. Historical information is useful only as a background for a better understanding of the present problem, but it cannot change or in any manner justify what is taking place in Bulgaria since over a year.

The purpose of the Permanent Mission of Bulgaria, in replying with a delay of two and a half months to the letter of the Permanent Mission of Turkey, seems to be to create a smoke screen around the inhuman and racist policies of the Bulgarian Government at a time when the Commission on Human Rights is in session in Geneva and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is about to meet in New York. Such tactics are condemned to be counter-productive, since they will only shed more light on the falsification of facts by the Bulgarian authorities. Within the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, for example, even a cursory comparison between relevant United Nations documents, prepared and submitted by the Government of Bulgaria, such as CERD/C/20/Add.19 of 17 May 1978 and CERD/C/118/Add.17/Rev.1 of 18 October 1984, which contain numerous references to the Turkish minority in Bulgaria, and CERD/118/Add.17/Rev.1 dated 10 January 1986, which deletes all such references, would suffice to conclude that the "revised" Bulgarian position is indefensible in view of the previous information provided by the Government of Bulgaria itself on the Turkish minority in Bulgaria. The Government of Bulgaria by repudiating its own documents should not expect the world to be suddenly plagued by amnesia. Bulgaria's efforts to have this crime deleted from the United Nations archives will not succeed unless it reverses its monstrous racial policies.

Various aspects of this grave humanitarian problem were dealt with in detail in the letter dated 26 November 1985 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey (A/40/904), which stressed that all the rights of the Turkish Muslim minority in Bulgaria are violated in an abhorrent manner:

(a) All the members of the Turkish minority have been physically forced to adopt Bulgarian names;

/...

(b) All use of the Turkish language has been banned;

(c) A continuous defamatory campaign has been waged against all Islamic practices, traditions and beliefs;

(d) All those who have resisted those policies have been subjected to physical violence and deported to other locations in Bulgaria, including the concentration camp on the Belene island in the Danube. There are also continuous reports of torture resulting in deaths;

(e) The Turkish minority has been prohibited from emigrating, although Turkey has declared that it is ready to receive as many of its members who would wish to emigrate to Turkey;

(f) All areas of Bulgaria populated by the Turkish minority have been sealed off from the world.

Bulgarian authorities have more recently gone into new extremes against the Turkish minority in their country. For instance:

(a) Observance of all Islamic practices and traditions, including fasting during the month of Ramadan and pilgrimage to Mecca, have been banned;

(b) Members of the Turkish minority in Bulgaria are prohibited from communicating with relatives in Turkey; visa applications of the latter are indiscriminately turned down by the Bulgarian authorities and even telephone calls between the members of such divided families are no longer permitted;

(c) In an unprecedented display of mania, all Turkish names on tombstones in Muslim cemeteries have either been covered with paint or otherwise destroyed.

The Bulgarian Government's unprovoked wrath against the Turkish minority has been and is condemned by the international community, in general, and Islamic nations, in particular. In this connection, the "Resolution of the Sixteenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers on the plight of the Turkish-Muslim minority in Bulgaria", which was circulated as an annex to document A/41/93 of 20 January 1986, should be underlined as a manifestation of international concern over the Bulgarian policies.

Despite the severe restrictions placed on them, numerous members of the Turkish minority in Bulgaria are escaping through various routes and means from the persecution in Bulgaria in order to start a new life in Turkey. As a noteworthy case, the Supreme Court of Greece in Athens rejected last December a demand by the Government of Bulgaria for the extradition of three Bulgarian citizens of Turkish origin. The Greek Supreme Court accepted that in December 1984 the Bulgarian authorities had tried to change the names of those three members of the Turkish minority and that they (and their families) had left Bulgaria in order to avoid persecution.

In view of the fact that countless independent reports on the tragic situation of the Turkish minority in Bulgaria were carried by the world media in the course of 1985 (see A/40/904, appendix I), Bulgarian assertions such as "we are an open tourist country" and "foreign diplomats enjoy full freedom of movement in Bulgaria. Not one of them has been able to ascertain a single incidence of violence" are hardly convincing.

Furthermore, the Bulgarian letter pathetically contradicts itself by boastfully stating, on the one hand, that in 1985 more than 2,300 foreign journalists went to Bulgaria, and, on the other, by asserting that "all writings in the ... mass media about violence, murders, rapes, etc., have no foundation in reality". Perhaps the explanation of the irrational and weird Bulgarian frame of mind can be found in the following quotation from The Economist of 25-31 January 1986:

"Bulgaria has mobilised its scientists in an effort to support its government's claim that the country's 800,000 or so ethnic Turks are in fact full-blooded Bulgarians. An article in a national daily, Otechestven Front, has analysed the results of 'anthropological tests' supposedly conducted over the past 30 years by anthropologists from the Sofia Institute of Morphology in three districts which contain many members of Bulgaria's Turkish, Macedonian and Greek minorities. The scientists' findings: the Bulgarian nation is pure and uncontaminated, and has remained unchanged since the Middle Ages.

"According to the anthropologists, the Bulgarian people took shape in the ninth and tenth centuries as a blending of Slavs, Thracians and Asiatic tribes. This mixture evolved into a homogeneous entity, the people now called Bulgarians. The foreign invasions of the past 1,000 years left no racial mark, it seems. The implication is that members of the Turkish minority are merely Bulgarians who happen to speak Turkish.

"Experts at the Bulgarian Institute of Brain Research - Yugoslavia's Tanjug news agency reports - have meanwhile been studying the Bulgarian brain. Their preliminary findings, just released, show that it has been toughened by centuries of hardship and has developed its own peculiar way of thinking. But the researchers also found evidence to suggest that Bulgarians are not using their grey matter enough. The Institute's director is said to have called on 'owners of Bulgaria's 9m brains to keep thinking as much as possible'. They might start by reflecting on the validity of the sort of research into racial purity which went out of fashion with Nazi Germany."

The text of an extensive report on Bulgaria by a foreign journalist that was published in The New York Times of 8 December 1985 is attached as appendix I as another example illustrating the hollowness of the Bulgarian arguments.

The questions faced by the Turkish minority in Bulgaria are too grave to be covered up or explained away. The plight of these people is reflected in the excerpts from their letters contained in appendix II. The Bulgarian authorities should rest assured that these letters are authentic, as are the additional Bulgarian documents contained in appendix III.

Bulgaria obviously has grave misconceptions on the accession to international instruments that is a prerogative of sovereign States. A State does not violate international law or disrupt international order by not being a party to certain international instruments. However, when sovereign States duly adhere to international instruments, they undertake commitments that should be honoured in good faith. As noted in the previous Turkish letter, Bulgaria is making a mockery of this fundamental principle by violating in bad faith its contractual obligations concerning the Turkish minority in that country.

The Bulgarian contention of Turkish intervention in its internal affairs obviously cannot be upheld in any context. The persecution of the Turkish minority in Bulgaria violates that country's treaty obligations and international humanitarian norms. Therefore, it is a humanitarian question of international concern and a matter of particular interest to Turkey.

The Bulgarian allegation that Turkey is engaged in an anti-Bulgarian campaign is unwarranted. In view of the persecution of the Turkish minority, the efforts of Turkey to bring this gross violation of human rights to the attention of the relevant international forums and the world public opinion should not have surprised Bulgaria. However, Bulgaria should not only be concerned with the opprobrium of the world opinion, but also with the internal consequences of its actions and policies. No matter what measures are taken by the Government of Bulgaria, it is evident that a minority of 1.5 million people will not disappear and will not lose its true identity. But by taking such inhuman measures against its own citizens, Bulgaria may have lost forever the chance to develop a genuine harmony and conciliation in the country.

The Government of Turkey has no need to discredit the Government of Bulgaria, whose own actions have severely damaged its international image. Its contractual rights and obligations make Turkey an interested party to the humanitarian tragedy unfolding in Bulgaria. Not only the Government of Turkey, but all who profess to care about human rights cannot and should not be expected to remain indifferent in the face of Bulgaria's continued violation of the Charter of the United Nations, the international instruments on human rights and the relevant bilateral treaties between Turkey and Bulgaria.

**APPENDIX I\***

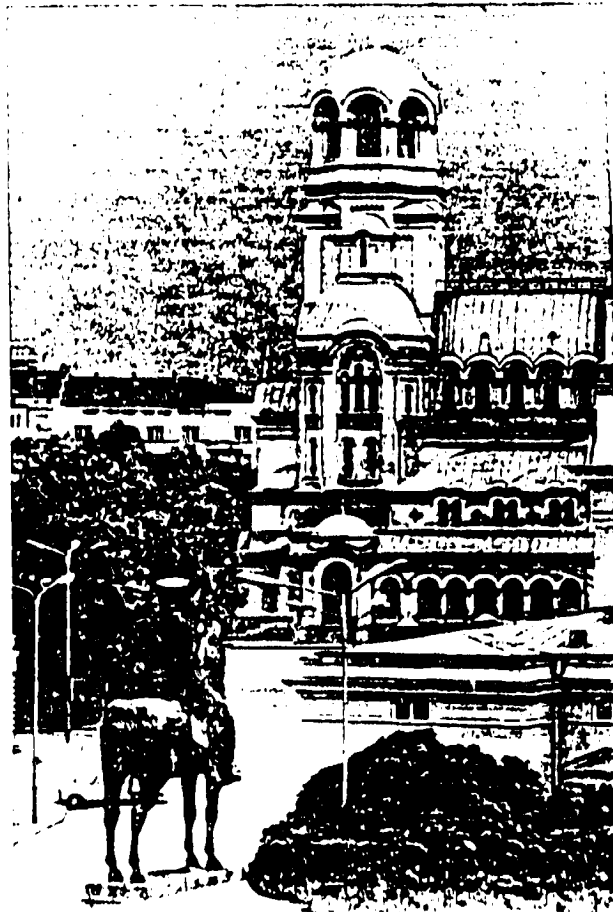
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\* Available in English only.

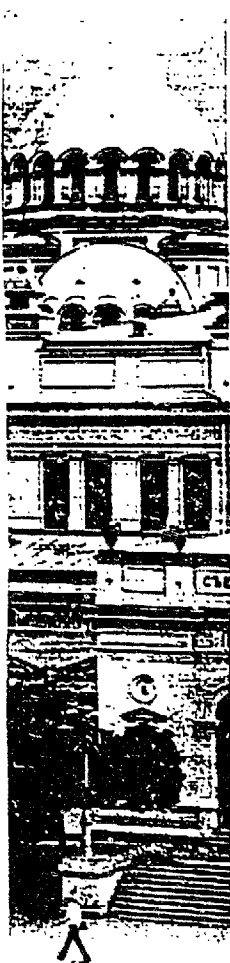
# The New York Times Magazine

December 8, 1985

## GOING BACK: **Bulgaria, 20 Years Later**



*The author, twice  
barred from the  
country, finds  
improved living  
conditions. But the  
nation is wrenched  
by foreign intrigue  
and domestic  
oppression.*



**By David Binder**

RETURNED WITH A certain uneasiness to Bulgaria, where I had served 20 years earlier as a correspondent. In part, my discomfort grew from memories of wretched hotel food, which invariably made me break out in boils, and the rather hostile attitude of Bulgarian officials functioning under a mandated policy of anti-Americanism. Primarily it was based on the fact that the People's Republic had issued a ukase barring me from the country for life. Twice.

The reason given for the action was a joke I had used in an article to illustrate the attitudes of Rumania toward neighboring states. The joke took a cut at Todor Zhivkov, then Bulgaria's Prime Minister. It appeared first in 1963 in the daily paper, prompting the initial ukase. When it appeared a second time, in this magazine, the Bulgarians reiterated the lifetime ban. I had not tested the ban until now, and although I had no trouble getting a visa, I was a bit hesitant.

Not surprisingly, I found many changes in Bulgaria, from the easy availability of food, clothing and housing to the smooth handling of foreign correspondents — for a fee — by a special state agency. The furnishings of the Sofia hotel where I stayed hinted that life was more comfortable now: the bathroom taps were metal instead of the leaky plastic of yore; the restaurant food did not induce boils; the Gamza burgundy was excellent.

Pleasantly situated in a broad valley, Sofia is described by Bulgarians as "the greenest city in Europe" and streets are lined with black

(Continued on Page 158)

David Binder, who served as The New York Times's East Europe correspondent from 1955 to 1967, is



# BULGARIA

Continued from Page 155

locusts, maples, birches, elms and horse chestnuts. Looming to the south is Mt. Vitosha, the queen of the Rila range; to the north are the long spines of the Balkan Mountains.

The city was established as *Serdica* in the second century by the Roman Emperor Trajan on the site of an ancient Thracian settlement; elements of Roman fortifications have been carefully preserved to this day. The architecture of the capital is a congenial mixture of Viennese, Byzantine and Turkish styles, although a Parisian critic recently described the mustard-tinted former royal palace as "a French town hall."

With its screeching yellow streetcars, its cobblestoned avenues and one-roofed shacks housing thousands of Gypsies, Sofia seems an appropriate setting for old-fashioned international intrigue, but scarcely the ideal spot for masterminding a far-flung plot to murder a Pope.

Nonetheless, that is what an Italian magistrate has charged. In 1982, Mehmet Ali Agca — the lone Turkish gunman seized after attempting to kill Pope John Paul II the previous year — swore that Sergei I. Antonov, chief of the Bulgarian airline office in Rome, and two other Bulgarians had directed the plot. Worse still was the sugges-

tion by the Italian magistrate, Ilario Martella, that the assassins were acting as agents of the Bulgarian Government.

The Bulgarians promptly rejected the charges as preposterous. But even if the "Bulgarian connection" is proved false (the outcome of Agca's interminable trial is as unpredictable as Agca's testimony, which has included — among other assertions — his claim that he is Jesus Christ), the incident further tarnished the image of a country that has already been implicated in a number of cloak-and-dagger activities.

There was, for instance, the case in 1978 of the notorious umbrella killer who fired from his bumbershoot a minuscule platinum pellet containing a powerful poison into the leg of Georgi Markov, a dissident Bulgarian writer living in London. Mr. Markov, who had assailed President Todor Zhivkov in broadcasts transmitted by Radio Free Europe to his homeland, died four days later at age 49. His assassin was never found.

Then there are the charges that Bulgaria's large export company, Kintex, is an international arms trafficker. Deputy Foreign Minister Lyuben Gotsev acknowledged to me in an interview that "there have been cases

in which Kintex arms have been found in the hands of people who are, as you say, hostile to the United States" — people, according to American intelligence agents, such as Arab terrorists in Lebanon and Libya.

In addition, the United States Drug Enforcement Administration says that Bulgarian authorities harbor international dealers responsible for shipments of heroin and other narcotics from the Middle East to northern Europe.

Dormetically, the Government is waging a remorseless campaign to force homogeneity on what has been a typically multi-ethnic Balkan salad of Turks, Moslem Pomaks, Gypsies, Armenians, a handful of Albanians, Greeks and Rumanians, not to mention several hundred thousand Macedonians.

In the recent drive to "Bulgarize" the Turkish minority, at least 200 civilians and soldiers were killed. (Amnesty International has reported the figure at 500.) The aim, as described by the Communist Politburo member Stanko Todorov, is to make Bulgaria a "single-nationality state" — something southeastern Europe has not known in its 3,000 years of recorded history.

**B**ULGARIAN AUTHORITIES call criticism on any of these points part of an "anti-Bulgarian campaign." With a studied air of resignation, Deputy Foreign Minister Gotsev said that a clipping service had collected 4,033 articles from United States periodicals on Sergei Antonov — the Bulgarian now being held and tried in Italy — adding, "Antonov has not even been sentenced and yet we are called assassins, terrorists."

The Bulgarian official who has become the international spokesman on the Antonov case is Boyan Traikov, director of the Bulgarian Telegraph Agency. A tall, long-faced man, suave in a pink shirt, Mr. Traikov receives me in his vast office on Sofia's Lenin Boulevard and recites his lines smoothly, calling the Traikov case a fantasy: "It is of purely formal significance that Agos, traveling from Turkey to Western Europe has passed through Bulgaria. He has been here, seen the people, streets, hotels," seen enough, in essence, to be able to fabricate the "Bulgarian connection" scenario.

The campaign, he says, smiling under heavy eyebrows, "is not directed exactly toward Bulgaria, but toward the Soviet Union." He continues: "It is the thinking in the West about Bulgaria as the most faithful, the most orthodox — they call us a satellite.

"We are not so important as to be the object of such great attention around the world. The campaign is aimed at the Soviet Union and the Socialist system. Like billiards, you hit one ball to hit another." His allusion to the "Bulgarian connection" thus embodies the supposition of its believers: that the Soviet K.G.B. ultimately pulled the wires in the plot to kill the Pope, while the Bulgarians served as mere marionettes.

At least on the surface it would seem this country, the size of Pennsylvania and with a population of nine million, is indeed Russia's most faithful ally. The capital boasts not only a statue of Czar Alexander II and the Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, erected in gratitude for the 1878 liberation of Bulgaria, but also a huge monument to the Soviet Army, a large statue of Lenin and numerous avenues named for Russian figures. No Soviet troops or rockets are based here, but the Russian Embassy has more than 300 personnel, according to Western diplomats, who believe still more Russians function as military and police advisers.

Sovietization of Bulgaria began immediately after Marshal Pyodor I. Tolbukhin's troops took over the country in 1944. Thrust into power under Soviet guns, the Bulgarian Communist Party, numbering fewer than 11,000 members, began the bloodiest of all Communist take-overs in Eastern Europe. In less than a year, it passed 2,138 death sentences. Late in 1945, Bulgaria's most famous Communist, Georgi Dimitrov, became the Party Secretary and Prime Minister. After a brief flirtation with Yugoslavia's Tito in 1947 and 1948, however, he was reduced to simply a political puppet of Stalin. He died in 1949 and was succeeded by his brother-in-law, Vulko Charvachkov, a Moscow-trained Stalinist.

In 1954, a year after Stalin's death, Bulgaria acquired what is known as a "home Communist," a party member whose political experience was Bulgarian, not Russian. This was Todor Zhivkov, a printer who, in the last years of World War II, had become political commissar of the partisan Chavdar Brigade that fought Bulgarian fascist government forces.

Mr. Zhivkov succeeded as the first governing Communist in Europe, having ruled as party secretary for 31 years, and having survived the years of Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Andropov, Chernenko and nine months of Gorbachev — as well as a military coup attempt in 1989.

To be sure, Mr. Zhivkov has paid public dues with such remarks as, "The Soviet Union and Bulgaria breathe with the same lungs and the same blood flows in our veins," and such actions as sending a token force to aid in the Soviet-bloc invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 (neighboring Rumania did not).

But to suggest that Mr. Zhivkov's Bulgaria is an unwavering Soviet satellite may be to exaggerate. A year ago, Mr. Zhivkov's long-planned trip to Bonn was called off at the last minute by Mikhail S. Gorbachev. This annoyed the Bulgarian leader, who re-

sponded to the humiliation with a series of visits to and from the heads of state of Rumania, Japan, Finland and France, thus asserting a degree of independence from Moscow.

In October, Mr. Gorbachev visited Bulgaria, this time as Soviet party chief. In private talks, he let Mr. Zhivkov know that the Soviet Union was no longer going to accept the second-rate goods Bulgaria was dumping in the Soviet market, while selling higher-quality products to the West. Putting the squeeze on further, he said Moscow was cutting back on its shipments of subsidized oil to Bulgaria.

Western diplomats maintain that the Soviet Union has never treated Bulgaria as a valuable partner. "The Soviets don't consult, they don't even inform their own allies," one ambassador observed.

Certainly, the Russians contemplate Bulgaria with a mixture of suspicion and envy. This Slavic nation, which sided with Germany in two wars, has accepted the Soviet system and improved upon it, so that agriculture and some industries are more productive than in the motherland.

Meanwhile, the Russians have remonstrated in private with the Bulgarians about the antimorality campaign, pointing out that the tensions it has raised could have serious repercussions among Russia's own fast-growing Turkish population. The Soviet press has maintained a disapproving silence about the Bulgarian drive.

**C**ERTAINLY THE push to "Bulgarize" the minorities is the most dramatic event within the country since Mr. Zhivkov's rise to power. The campaign, which, according to some Bulgarians, was conceived in a secret party directive in 1971, has been massive: Although 250,000 Bulgarian Macedonians were recorded in the 1946 census, by 1975 none were listed — nor were there any headings indicating other national minorities.

Not content simply to drop minority listings, over the last four years, the Government has forced some 5,000 ethnic Albanians, along with thousands of Gypsies and Armenians, to take Bulgarian names. The People's Socialist Republic of Albania has lodged a formal protest.

In August 1984, the push gathered force, in anticipation of a national census scheduled for this month — when the Government is expected to declare the country ethnically pure, with no hints of any cultural diversity.

Last December, the Government focused its efforts on Bulgaria's one million ethnic Turks, starting in the southern district of Kurdzhali. There was bloody resistance in Momchilgrad and the state militia, the military and the Zapsi, or special reserves, were called in. Dozens of people were killed. In early January, the drive was expanded to the north. Whole districts were sealed off to foreigners.

Armed forces typically would surround a village and then force the inhabitants, at gunpoint, to line up and sign name-change petitions. Stopped by a roadblock on the outskirts of Yablanovo, on the northern rim of the Balkan range, a foreigner questioned a soldier. Yes, said the young rifleman, Turks had been killed in the rural town, and so had some soldiers. In all, about 30 died, he said, brandishing his AK-47 and sputtering, "Rrra-tat-tat-tat."

The Government has closed all Turkish schools (there had been 1,199 Turkish schools in 1951) and the one Turkish newspaper, *Yeni Isik*; Turkish-language radio broadcasts have been taken off the air and fines imposed for speaking Turkish in public. Increasing numbers of Turks have fled to Rumania and Greece.

A good deal of historical revisionism has accompanied the campaign. In 1944, Todor Zhivkov proclaimed that "all possible opportunities had been created for the Turkish population to develop their culture and language." As late as last year, Bulgaria told a United Nations committee that it had national minorities. But in early March, Stanko Todorov of the Politburo declared in the Turkish village of Novachevo: "At the end of 1984 and the beginning of 1985, a process was carried out with a new force spontaneously and comprehensively restoring the Bulgarian names of our compatriots who had Turkish-Arabic names. This process was concluded in the whole country in two to three months. The workers considered their past, recognized their Bulgarian roots and their Bulgarian national belonging." Ethnic Turks, he boasted, were really descendants of Bulgarians who had been "forcibly Turkicized" under Ottoman rule.

Clearly, some are not willing to accept this new version of their past. An explosion rocked the railway station in Plovdiv in August 1984, but it was not until May 16 of this year that Kostadin Lyutov, the state prosecutor, acknowledged that a woman had been killed in the blast; he added that seven others were killed by an explosion on a train on March 9. Some observers suggest that the death toll might be as high as 30 from bombs in a supermarket, a tramway, a disco and a hotel.

Off the record, Bulgarian officials charge that ethnic Turks are responsible; publicly, the bombs have touched off an explosion of hatred. "Our Turks don't believe in God, they believe in whisky," a middle-ranking government official remarked with a sneer. Later, in an outdoor cafe facing Sofia's Eagle Bridge, a 29-year-old graduate student told me vehemently that all Turks "deserve to be punished." Others trotted out rationalizations typical of such ethnocentricity: the minority populations were reproducing at a fast clip, while the Slavic population was stagnating. The fact that the original Bulgarians — the Bulgars — were a Turkic people did not stop their xenophobic responses.

Still, the Zhivkov Government is palpably nervous about the ethnic Turk issue.

What was it Boyan Traikov had said to me? "They think we are a totalitarian police state, that no bird can pass over without being seen, that telephone conversations are being tapped, foreigners followed. But there is no such system of control."

Nonetheless, as a passenger in the cars of Western diplomats, it was clear to me that many were followed by unmarked automobiles of the Dazhyna Sigurnost, the state security force.

Telephone taps? One day I called the Turkish Embassy from the hotel and was told to come to the chancery on Boulevard Tolbukhin. Guarding the embassy, in addition to a policeman, was a muscular youth in a camouflage uniform with a broad leather holster, from which the grip of a ten-shot Skorpion machine pistol protruded. He was a member of the Zapsi, the special reserve unit employed in suppressing the Turks. Neither the policeman nor the Zapsi trooper bothered me, but next morning at 7:05, my phone rang and, when I answered, a male voice, plainly Slavic, snarled: "Tolbukhin!"

"Tolbukhin?" I inquired.

"Yes," came the reply, and then the line went dead.

My uneasiness returned. This was a warning. Yet, several days later when I set out into the mountains to find some ethnic Turks no one seemed to be following.

The Turks were not hard to find, but they were frightened. A group of construction workers told me everyone in their village had been compelled to accept Bulgarian names last December. There had been resistance and one man had been killed, others had been taken away to a camp for political prisoners on Belene, an island in the Danube.

Whenever anyone passed on the road, the men fell silent. With a look of disgust, one proffered his new internal identity pass, with his new Bulgarian name. The workers' Bulgarian foreman had warned them not to talk to strangers, one explained, adding that if they were caught they could be put off the job.

Nonetheless, they ticked off their complaints and fears: mosques had been closed; perhaps ethnic Turks would be denied higher schooling; they were not getting the full wages due them. Why the campaign of repression? "Because they fear we Turks will demand a federated state," said one. Would he emigrate if he could? "I was born here and I'll die here."

**T**ODOR ZHIVKOV BOASTS OF making Bulgaria "the Japan of the Balkans." It is an overreaching claim, but a returning traveler cannot fail to be impressed by the transformation of what had been, 20 years ago, essentially a peasant society.

Today, Bulgaria generates 25 percent of its electrical power in nuclear plants and is planning to use 50 percent in the year 2000. There are traffic jams in city streets and shop windows are filled with consumer goods. Evidently, decades of diligence — Bulgars are known as disciplined workers — are paying off in terms of improved living standards for many citizens. The average wage is about 250 leva a month (\$240 at the official exchange

rate), but there are usually two or more wage earners in a family.

Thus the extremely harsh winter of 1984-85, with its power outages and food shortages, came "like a bit of a shock," in the words of a middle-aged office worker. Bulgarian Socialism, with its mania for fulfilling plans, had not taken account of such vagaries as bad weather or other natural calamities. Prospects for this winter are grim, as well: already, every day there are power outages for two hours.

One young West German technician who travels around the country servicing advanced machine tools told me: "They are 15 to 20 years behind us and they will stay there because they have no way of developing their own products." He was scornful of the lack of incentive — Bulgarian electronics engineers earn little more than ordinary factory workers — but spoke admiringly of some enterprises that were "as clean as those in Stuttgart and working beautifully."

Bulgarian farming is relatively prosperous, with large and growing agro-industrial complexes specializing in the cultivation of grapes, fruits and vegetables and raising cattle. Gradually, Bulgarian agricultural products are penetrating Western markets, although it appears that the better wines are not exported.

Nearly 28 percent of the agricultural output comes from the 13 percent of the land the Government lends to farmers as private plots. One Sunday, I saw Bulgarians tilling these small plots in the fertile Struma River Valley, their backs bent in classic peasant posture as they hoed. But they had driven to the fields in their own cars, mostly Soviet Fiat-licensed Ladas, a new kind of mobility for farmers in the Balkans. Encouragement of private farming is also partly the work of Mr. Zhivkov.

Todor Zhivkov became party chief in 1954 by announcing the "personality cult" of his predecessor, Vukko Chernomir. But now there would seem to be a Zhivkov personality cult. Through his largesse, his hometown of Pravets, formerly a small farming village, is today a model town, with a new high school, hotel, computer factory and a state-of-the-art dairy farm. A bust of the most famous native son dominates the square in front of the town's Culture Palace, which also contains a museum tracing Mr. Zhivkov's life in photographs. His collected works, with titles like "Some New Views and Approaches Concerning the Framing and Implementation of the Techno-Scientific Policy," have reached Volume 29, and cover only the years of his rule to 1979.

The road to Pravets is Bulgaria's newest four-lane highway, and on a mountaintop overlooking the town is Bulgaria's new state guest house where, according to one visiting diplomat, Mr. Zhivkov entertained Finland's President Mauno Koivisto with a daring giraffe show.

The leader, it would seem, bears little similarity to the man I saw briefly 20 years ago at a state funeral in Bucharest. Russia's Anastas Mikoyan and China's Zhou Enlai and all the other Communist leaders chatted among themselves, laughing and making small talk — all, that is, but Todor Zhivkov, who sat alone on a chair against the wall. No one spoke to him and, having just been barred from his country, I decided not to myself.

For a brief period, some observers wondered whether a Zhivkov dynasty was in the offing. After his daughter, Lyudmila, graduated from university in 1966, he drew her into the party, and by 197 she had become chairman of the state committee for culture; four years later, at age 36, she was elected to the

Politburo. She died in 1981 in an automobile accident. Typical of the Balkan rumor mill that works overtime in the absence of a free press, talk spread that Lyudmila had been "poisoned by Soviet doctors" for advocating nationalism.

She is commemorated by the Lyudmila Zhivkova National Palace of Culture, Sofia's largest and perhaps ugliest building. It serves as a backdrop to a memorial dedicated four years ago to 13 centuries of nationhood.

Such nationalism is also apparent in the schools. One Western diplomat tells the story of his son, who was enrolled in a Bulgarian high school. One day, in a military course, an officer-teacher pointed to a map of Europe. "You are not here because of the NATO military threat," he said. "You're here for this!" He rolled down a map showing medieval Bulgaria encompassing large areas of present-day Greece, Yugoslavia and Albania. It is just such extreme nationalism, and the dream of restoring the medieval empire of

"Greater Bulgaria," that brought woe and shrinkage upon the nation in the first place.

Yet, it would seem that most of the young Bulgarians I met do not share such nationalistic dreams. Like their contemporaries all over the world, they are interested in jeans and rock music; one spoke of his dream to become a country-western singer, in Bulgarian. The young people say "ciao" and "merci" instead of "dobryden" and "blagodarya." Some, like the sweet-faced young woman I saw at noon on a weekday in Sofia's Sveta Nedelya church, light votive candles in the chapels.

**S**TILL, THERE IS THE puzzle: Why does the Zhivkov Government indulge in such an atavistic nationalist paroxysm, going so far as to force its citizens to change their names? Why does a country that aspires to enter the high-tech age risk international opprobrium by engaging in trafficking in drugs, arms and cloak-and-dagger intrigues?

At least part of the answer lies in Bulgarian history. In the Middle Ages, the Bulgars created an empire stretching from the Black Sea to the Aegean and, for a time in the 9th and 13th centuries, to the Adriatic. Modern Yugoslavia's capital of Belgrade was, for a time, a Bulgarian citadel. So was Greece's Salonika. But for five of the last six centuries, there was no Bulgaria, only the Ottoman Empire, and what the nation's greatest writer, Ivan Vazov, called the Turkish yoke. Freedom movements were growing when Bulgaria was liberated in 1878 by the troops of the Russian Czar. "The Bulgarians never liberated themselves," remarked a Macedonian from Yugoslavia, who is a keen observer of this country, "and after the Russians liberated them, they only won one war, a short one in 1915."

"Bulgarian history is discontinuity," he said, adding that, "they chose the wrong side in three wars," suffering defeat in the Second Balkan War, and again in World War I and II, when Bulgaria sided with Germany.

Having made wrong choices at three critical junctures in the space of less than three decades, "there is no fixed reference point," observed the Macedonian. "For Bulgarians, who is to say the choices they make now are not wrong?" ■

Letter No.1

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Letter No. 1

(Translation)

"... The evening prayers had been forbidden during the month of Ramadan. At the subsequent religious holiday, children who had received the traditional candy baskets from their elders had been hit on the head with these very baskets. At the following religious holiday, they have forbidden out of hand the traditional sacrifice of sheep ... "They have made all institutions to issue declarations forbidding every practice and tradition pertaining to Islam and Turkhood. They have fired all those who attempted to resist ...

"In the press and on the television, unabashed anti-Turkish fabrications and programmes with the participation of poor people who are threatened to 'disappear' unless they perform satisfactorily, and a lot more in the same vein ...

"In Kircaali, on 29 June 1985, Saturday, a young man by the name of Sabri Ragit Mümin, who was born in 1942 and was father of two, was barbarously gunned down for having spoken Turkish and was ordered to be buried in the following two hours ...

"Fathers are punished for their children who speak Turkish at schools. Those of us who display a minimum of courage are brutally punished and sent away to concentration camps. Forced exiles still continue.

"We are required to sign declarations that our sons to be born will not be circumcised.

"And particularly our problems with the funerals and burials:

"... In Asenovgrad, after a resistance of four months, our dead today are buried in Bulgarian cemeteries. The people have, at the beginning, resisted a lot. They have carried their deads' coffins to cemeteries which are kilometers away. Some have even carried their dead all the way to Sofia, just to prevent them from being buried in Bulgarian cemeteries. But this resistance has eventually been brought under control by Police force.

"... We are slaves who have no rights other than to work hard and relentlessly. We are not even allowed to shed tears, or to be shed tears for ...

"... When the situation of Sali, who engaged in a hunger strike at the concentration camp in Belene, worsened at the 70th day, they brought him back to his house in Haskova. When he regained consciousness, Sali asked his relatives to see to it that he be sent back to Belene. According to the latest information, he is in some hospital in Pleven. His fate is unknown! ...

/...

"... We also strongly urge that the free world be informed that at the kindergarden of the Dolvoden village, near Plovdiv, they attempt to discourage children from speaking Turkish by gluing their mouth with Tikso (a plastic adhesive material) ...

"We have lots of worries and problems.

"Since we are in the path of God, we hope one day we will embrace salvation. So may God wish."





2

But

10

Handwritten signature: *Handwritten signature*

Arten  
Kolon  
Türkiye

/...

Letter No. 2

(Translation)

"Dear President Kenan Evren,  
Dear Prime Minister Turgut Özal,  
Dear Comrade Necmettin Karaduman,  
Dear Comrade Vahit Halefoğlu,  
Dear Comrade Yildirim Akbulut,

Dear Motherland Turkey,

"We address this letter that consists of a few lines to you ... We are faced with great difficulties, particularly since early 1985. They have Bulgarized us by force. They have made us change our names under the threat of arms, yet deep down we will always remain as Turks. There are nearly 2 million of us here. There is no life for us in Bulgaria any more. Many of our youths have fallen victim and this situation continues ... Do not leave us at the mercy of these infidels. We beg Turkey from the bottom of our hearts: take us from here.

"Our people is very hardworking. Rest assured that, if we emigrate to Turkey, we will love it as our own country and work around the clock to embellish it like a rose garden ... Never believe the Bulgarian Government. Every single word that they utter is a lie. They assert that we have changed our names voluntarily. Never believe them. We are Turks and we will die as Turks.

We are aware that Turkey will never abandon or forget us ...

"With our love and greetings,

Senders: Turks of Bulgaria

"(Names of 12 villages and signatures of representatives)

"Save us from Bulgaria ... They have even changed the names of our forebearers at graveyards. They now bury Turks in the same cemeteries as Bulgarians.

"We cry out, we beg you, motherland Turkey, with all our hearts: save us from here ... Save us from the infidels ... We love you and you alone, beautiful motherland Turkey.

"Sister Hava,

"If this letter reaches you, please send it to Kenan Evren. That is my wish."

/...

[illegible]

Letter No. 3

Letter No. 3

(Translation)

"... I was a worker in the (...) and they sent me back to have my name changed. At the border, the Bulgarian police took me to the police station and told me to sign a declaration. When I did not agree, they started beating me. I do not remember what they did with me. I regained consciousness the following day. But the beating went on for 24 days. I did not sign anything. They took my passport and gave me another one with a Bulgarian name. I have two elder brothers. Since ten months we do not know where they are; maybe they were killed ...

"... The entire Turkish people of Bulgaria awaits your help. I have seen with my own eyes that all villages and towns are under siege. Recently, they have started to have people sign under duress declarations that they do not want to emigrate to Turkey. There are lots of people under arrest. They release some. They send the corpses of others to their homes. They have prohibited the use of our mother tongue. Circumcision ceremonies are also forbidden. They do not allow people to go to mosques anymore, either ..."

1. allı o andır bizi  
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 3. İticanm. İticanm!  
 4. deniz denizim. [P  
 5. genel allıcmı  
 6. gelir b.

Mektup avaray  
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Saglam ve sen ölmüş  
kaynallı aklı, öp. ve  
küpükler

Bize gendernis oldunuz kymadli  
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 Saigili abla sizin mektubunuzun  
 hem okuduk hem elastik, bi  
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 fakati sizden kabit etmis  
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 saigili sayga yubeldi;  
 Okuduniz kymadli.  
 Onu sizin gend  
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[illegible]

Letter No. 4

(Translation)

"... We heard that, on 22 January (1985), they were going to siege Sumnu. Actually, we had heard that many other towns had been sieged earlier, but honestly we had not fully believed such news, since it had not yet happened to us. But that night, at around midnight, they indeed rang the bell. We started shivering, held each other in fear and thought that they had come to change our names, because we had heard that this is how they carry out their campaign. For a long time, we didn't answer the door, but they persisted. Finally, Halim opened. They told him that he had to go with them for military service for 10 days and that therefore he prepare his luggage immediately. We were outraged and paralyzed, but Halim didn't react, to prevent anything worse ...

"... They took them for 10 days but didn't release them at the end of this period ... We went to see him. They allowed him to speak and be with us for a few hours. They were wearing uniforms. Yet none of them had been given any weapons. Their names were changed while they were there. We understand that, in all Bulgaria, they have taken away 35,000 people for 'military service'. They have been taken away deliberately, so that they do not put any opposition ...

"Dearest Sister, I cannot possibly describe to you our plight and sorrow here. We have shed tears that would together make lakes or seas. They are telling the world that we have changed our names voluntarily. This cannot ever be true. In fact, we had already been deprived of our schools and mosques. Our names were our only possessions. Now they have confiscated them as well ..."

/...

Bulgarian Document No.1

До Селски Общински Съвет  
С.Сърница /Окр.Пазарджик

М О Д Б А,

От \_\_\_\_\_

От \_\_\_\_\_

Име на село: СЪРНИЦА, "пазарджик", записан в том \_\_\_\_\_  
страница \_\_\_\_\_

Др. Председател, .

Моля въз основа на востановител молба в съгласно из-  
менението на преименува на родове на регистрите по граж-  
данското състояние публикувано в вестник - И З В Е С Т И Е -  
брюа: 2. от 1970 Годиш да бъдат внесени в регистрите по  
народност БЪТАРИН, да се преименува имената на както следва:

1- От: _____	На: _____
2- От: _____	На: _____
3- От: _____	На: _____
4- От: _____	На: _____
5- От: _____	На: _____
6- От: _____	На: _____
7- От: _____	На: _____
8- От: _____	На: _____

\_\_\_\_\_/ Година  
С.Сърница /Пазарджик.

О Поздрав:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

A petition form for the use  
of changing names in the records of the  
civil register(application to change their  
Turkish/Moslem names).

Bulgarian Document No.2

Д Е К Л А Р А Ц И Я

Получаващото:.....  
(име, презиме и фамилия на детето)

я.п.серия.....издаден на .....  
от М В Р .....ЕГН.....  
Н.....  
(име, презиме и фамилия на детето)

я.п.серия.....от.....год.издаден от.....  
.....ЕГН.....с удостоверение за извършен  
заявление, че понеже задължението на не извършване задължение на сина на  
.....роген на .....  
(гласно име на детето)

год.в гр.....  
тъй като това е посегателство върху живота и здравето на  
детето,

Уведомявам вас, че при неизпълнение на това посегателство аз  
не носям отговорност по член 324, ал.ІІ във връзка с чл.20 ал.ІІІ от  
Извънредния кодекс.

Настоящата декларация подписах в присъствието на

.....  
(име и презиме и длъжност на длъжностното лице)

.....Декларатори: 1.....  
гр.Хасков 2.....

Длъжностно лице:.....



Bulgarian document No. 2

(Translation)

DECLARATION

The following persons who have their signatures below

..... (Name, Surname)

Identity card ..... No..... place of issue .....

Directorate of Security .....

The Directorate of Security ..... I declare that I  
shall not have my son ..... circumcised.

Because it is dangerous for the health and life of my son.

I am aware that if I have this action carried out, I shall be punished  
according to the criminal code, Paragraph II Article 324 and the Paragraph III of  
Article 20.

I am signing this declaration in the presence of the official in charge.

.....

(Name and Surname of the official in charge)

.....

Declared by .....

City of Haskova

2 .....

The official in charge .....

# ДОПЪЛНЕНИЕ

Към наредба № 1 на Общински народен съвет

Асеновград

Ч. 5а — Общуването между българските граждани в селищната система да става на български език.

Чл. 5б — Забранява се гражданите да носят нетрадиционно българско облекло като шалвари, фереджета и други.

Нарушенията на настоящите допълнения се констатираат и санкционират съгласно заключителните разпоредби на Наредба № 1 на ОБНС — Асеновград.

ИК на Общински народен съвет  
Асеновград

Bulgarian Document No. 3

(Translation)

ADDENDUM TO THE DECREE NO:1 OF THE CITY OF ASENOVGRAD

Article 5a: Bulgarian citizens within the city limits shall communicate in Bulgarian.

Article 5b: Citizens are prohibited to wear outfits such as salvar, ferace which are not of Bulgarian traditions.

Any violation of the addendums made to this decree shall be punished in accordance with the decree No:1 of the City of Asenovgrad.

Executive Committee of the  
City of Asenovgrad

ОБЩИНСКИ НАРОДЕН СЪВЕТ /КМЕТСТВО/ - гр./с/ \_\_\_\_\_  
ОКРЪГ КЪРДЖАЛИЙСКИ

А К Т

Bulgarian Document No. 4

За установяване на административно нарушение

.....  
..... Днес..... 198...<sup>5</sup> г. в гр./с/.....

описаният..... на длъжност  
/собствено, бащино и фамилно име на актосъставителя/

..... при .....

присъствието на свидетелите:

..... от гр./с/.....

..... от гр./с/.....

ставих този акт против.....  
..... гр./с/.....

гр./с/..... ул.....

възраст..... години и месторабота.....

..... в гр./с/..... окр.....

следното:.....

.....

.....

ратко, но конкретно описание на насущ. - действие или бездействие/.....

..... и извършеното е нарушен:.....

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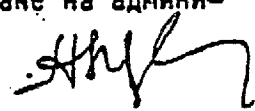
.....

.....

.....

Свидетели: 1... ..  
2... ..

Актосъставител:.....



## Р А З П И С К А

Подписаният.....

гр./с/.....ул.....

Осчетоварявам, че получил препис от този акт, съставен срещу мен  
с на...../.....198<sup>5</sup> год.

По акта имам /нямат/ възражения.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

В тридневен срок, съгласно чл.44 ал.1 от ЗАНН мога да напра-  
писмени възражения по акта и съгласно чл.48 ал.1 от ЗАНН се  
дължавам да уведомя ОНССС.....ако променя адреса си.

ПОДПИС НА ПОЛУЧАТЕЛЯ:

.....  
рите имена и адрес на свидетел при отказ да се получи преписа/  
чл.43, ал.11 от ЗАНН.

ИДЕТЕЛ:

АКТОСЪСТАВИТЕЛ /ВРЪЧИТЕЛ/

БЕЛЕЖКА: Актосъставителят /връчителят/ подписва след подписване  
разписката от получателя на преписа от акта или след надлежното  
оформяне при отказ.

Penalty imposed by the Municipal  
National Council (local administration) in  
Kardzhali for the use of the Turkish language.

(Deletions made to protect the identity  
of the victim.)