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Director of
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National Intelligence Daily

Friday
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BULGARIA:

Relations With the West

Sofia has taken several actions recently to improve relations with Western governments, both to promote stronger economic links and to offset the effects of Bulgaria's publicized links to the papal assassination plot. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The Bulgarians—accused in the past of cooperating with international drug traffickers—last November assisted the Dutch and Belgians in investigating several drug smuggling cases. They have also granted a longstanding request by US drug enforcement officials for a meeting, now scheduled for next week in Sofia. [REDACTED]

The Bulgarians this month broke a deadlock on negotiations over divided families, telling the US Embassy in Sofia that nine of 18 pending cases would be processed immediately. Party leader Zhivkov early this month also pardoned two imprisoned West Germans, presumably to improve the atmosphere for a visit to Sofia by Foreign Minister Genscher in March. [REDACTED]

Comment: Zhivkov, who wants greater access to Western technology in part to compensate for declining Soviet aid, has had reason to fear the growing international criticism of Bulgaria might lead to Western economic sanctions. Most Western governments probably will find his conciliatory measures insufficient and will be skeptical that they demonstrate any basic change in policy. In the meantime he is facing a new round of criticism from the Turkish Government and Western reporters for his harsh treatment of ethnic Turks. [REDACTED]

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