



Bulgarian President-elect Vows to Root Out KGB Moles

A number of questions arise concerning such a promise:

- 1) Is Plevneliev serious or just grandstanding?
- 2) If he is serious, can he gather the political support for this effort where others have failed?
- 3) Will he live long enough to carry through with this promise?
- 4) If the secret archives are finally opened, will many — if not most — of the incriminating files and evidence have been removed or destroyed?



The 47-year-old Plevneliev, a former Regional Minister and candidate of the ruling center-right party, Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria (known as GERB), is scheduled to take office on January 23, 2012. He will be replacing current President Georgi Parvanov, whose Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) is merely the renamed Bulgarian Communist Party, which ruled the country with an iron fist during the Soviet era. In 2006, the Bulgarian Parliament passed a path-breaking law to open the files of the CSS, which had been one of the Soviet KGB's most subservient "little brothers," and one of the Warsaw Pact intelligence services frequently tasked for KGB assassination and terrorism assignments.

The famous "umbrella assassination" of Bulgarian defector [Georgi Markov](#) in London in 1978 was a joint Russian-Bulgarian operation — as was the far more involved and infamous assassination attempt against Pope John Paul II in 1981, using Turkish national Mehmet Ali Agca, in an attempt to hide the connections to both Sofia and Moscow.

Thus far, Parvanov and the BSP successfully sabotaged the effort to open the CSS files. Parvanov finally ended speculation and accusations that he was himself a CSS agent by admitting that he had indeed worked for the feared communist agency — under the code name "Gotse."

Parvanov and the BSP attempted to stack the commission in charge of releasing the files by pushing former police chief Hristo Marinski, a "security adviser" to Parvanov, as chairman of the commission. That plan was scotched when Marinski's own ties to the CSS were made public.

Before any of the files could be officially published, Bozhidar Doychev, the man who was in charge of the files and archives (a position he had held for the previous 25 years) was found dead in his office on November 15, 2006. The official verdict in Doychev's case is "suicide," but there is, understandably, considerable public skepticism concerning that ruling. The skepticism increased when one month later another archive custodian, Ivan Rakov, also turned up dead. Another suicide, of course. The release of the files was further delayed by Ivan Drashkov, whom the BSP selected to head the National Security Service, which replaced the old communist CSS. Drashkov is widely believed to be a KGB/FSB asset — a reasonable assumption, as he worked in the old CSS for three years, before the "collapse" of communism, while the agency was under KGB control. Drashkov resigned his National Security Service post when his ties to Bulgarian mafia dons — such as Bogomil Manchev, Krassimir Georgiev, Hristo



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Kovachki — became public.

A [2008 report by Deutsche Welle](#), the German news agency, noted:

One in six Bulgarian officials since 1990 had ties to the secret police during communism, concluded a parliamentary study....

The head of the government, four vice-premiers and 25 democratically elected ministers are among those with a connection to the secret service. Current President Georgi Parvanov worked under the code name Gotse; his predecessor Jean Videnov was also a special agent.

Former spies are especially prevalent in the foreign ministry and in diplomatic service. Three former ministers, 13 deputies and even Bulgaria's current NATO ambassador were all part of the communist intelligence cadre.

An investigative committee commissioned by parliament examined 673 government officials who had served since the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1990 and found that 108 were linked to communist intelligence.

After two decades of delay, major questions arise as to how many of the files have been destroyed, pilfered, or “laundered.” A [2004 study](#) by the Sofia-based Center for the Study of Democracy reported that 144,235 files had, by that time, already been completely destroyed. If her file is not among those already destroyed, one of the most prominent foreign service officials very likely to be revealed as a CSS/KGB operative is Bulgaria's current Ambassador to the United States, Elena Poptodorova, who was photographed with President Barack Obama in an official White House ceremony on August 12, 2010 (see [here](#)).

Poptodorova served in the Foreign Ministry as a member of the Bulgarian Communist Party during the 35-year reign of Bulgaria's Stalinist dictator, [Todor Zhivkov](#), and according to some accounts was close to Zhivkov, serving as his translator.

When the Communist Party changed its name to the BSP, she was elected speaker of the BSP group in parliament.

There are many other highly placed individuals — in all levels of elective and appointive civilian office, as well as the police and military — who do not want the secret Bulgarian files to see the light of day. But it may be the big names in Bulgaria's so-called private sector who will be most anxious about (and who will most violently oppose) release of the files. As in all of the former states of the Soviet Union and its communist Warsaw Pact allies, Bulgaria's phony “privatization” program simply amounted to a massive transfer of state assets to Communist Party officials and intelligence service agents. They became instant millionaires and billionaires. They control most of the Bulgarian economy, the government bureaucracy, and the media. After its defeat in World War II, Germany was subjected to a long and severe [“de-nazification”](#) program to root out all former Nazis and deny them positions of power in the new Germany. No similar purging of communists has been allowed to take place in any former states of the Soviet empire.

While Bulgaria does not loom large on the radar screens of most foreign policy wonks, and many Americans would have a difficult time even naming the continent on which it could be found, it deserves more serious attention. Now as a member of NATO and the European Union, Bulgaria has access to military, diplomatic, political, banking, financial, business, and technological circles it could only dream



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of a generation ago. However, the communist apparatchiks and intelligence agents who ran the old Zhivkov regime during the Soviet era not only continue to cling to power and sabotage all genuine efforts aimed at reform, but also use their leveraged positions to help Bulgaria's mafia spread its tentacles throughout Europe. And Bulgaria's CSS/mafiosi work hand in hand with their Russian KGB/mafiosi, same as in the old days.

A recent example of this ongoing Moscow-Sofia symbiosis can be seen in the case of notorious arms dealer Victor Bout, the "Merchant of Death," whose [trial in New York City ended with his conviction](#) on November 2.

The government's star witness in the case was Victor Bout's longtime business associate Andrew Smulian, who testified regarding, among other things, Bout's dealings with illegal arms dealers in Bulgaria. The surface-to-air missiles that were at the center of the case against Bout were weapons he had been scheduled to buy from the Bulgarian firm KAS Engineering, for sale to (he thought) the FARC terrorists of Colombia. As it turned out, the "FARC" representative he was dealing with was actually a U.S. DEA agent.

Guilty! Viktor Bout the "Merchant of Death"

[Viktor Bout and the Russian Terror Network](#)

["Merchant of Death" Trial Still Looms](#)

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