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**EVALUATION OF PARLIAMENTARY
ASSISTANCE IN CENTRAL AND
EASTERN EUROPEAN (CEE) COUNTRIES UNDER
THE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION PROJECT, 180-0019**

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Development Associates, Inc.

ABA	American Bar Association
ABA/CEELI	A project of the ABA
CDIE	Center for Development Information and Evaluation, USAID/W
CEE	Central and Eastern European
CRS	Congressional Research Service
CSFR	Czech and Slovakia Federal Republic
DCM	Deputy Chief of Mission (U.S. Embassy)
ENI	USAID's Bureau for Europe and Newly Independent States
ENI/DG	Office of Democracy and Governance of the ENI Bureau
FTF	Frost Task Force
GLIN	Global Library Information Network (a Library of Congress project)
HIR	House Information Resources office of the U.S. House of Representatives
HIS	House Information Services office — former name of HIR
INIMA	Institute of Informatics and Applied Mathematics (Albania)
IQC	Indefinite Quantity Contract
LAN	Local Area Network (computer)
LOC	Library of Congress
MP	Member of Parliament
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NIS	Newly Independent States (former USSR)
ORT	Organization for Rehabilitation through Training (an NGO)
PC	Personal computer
PLA	People's Labor Party (Albania)
RFP	Request for Proposals (a U.S. government procurement term)
SDI	Selective Dissemination of Information (a library services term)
UDF	Main opposition alliance to communist rule in Bulgaria
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USAID/W	Washington Office of the U.S. Agency for International Development
USC	United States Code
USCA	United States Code Annotated
USIA	U.S. Information Agency (Washington, D.C.)

USIS U.S. Information Service (field missions of USIA)

WWW World Wide Web (on Internet)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Development Associates, Inc.

In April 1990, the Speaker of the House of Representatives created the Special Task Force on the Development of Parliamentary Institutions in Eastern Europe to determine how the House as an institution could assist the parliaments of the developing democracies in Central and Eastern Europe. Representative Martin Frost (D-TX) was appointed chairman of the Special Task Force (which became known as the Frost Task Force).

In response to the Task Force's initiatives, Project No. 180-0019 was used to fund an Inter-Agency Agreement between USAID/Washington (USAID/W) and the Library of Congress (LOC) to carry out the programs recommended by the Frost Task Force (FTF) with the legislatures in Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Bulgaria and Albania. Except for Albania and Slovakia, the programs terminated as of July 15, 1995. The program was designed as a short-term effort to give the legislatures a "jump start" in becoming effective in dealing with the large volume of complex legislative activity with which they were faced.

The principal activities of the program were: 1) **the provision of equipment** (computers and related software and networking equipment, copying machines, FAX machines, electronic equipment for parliamentary chambers, and related training); 2) **technical assistance** — orientation visits to the U.S. Congress for legislators and parliamentary staff, hands-on experience for parliamentary staff at the U.S. Congress (especially in research and analysis and in the managing of library collections), conferences in-country for members of parliament, two-week institutes in Washington D.C., and regional meetings for parliamentary staff; and 3) **developing library collections**.

On September 5, 1995 USAID/W signed a delivery order with Development Associates, Inc. to evaluate the FTF program. The evaluation was also to assess the impact of the parliamentary assistance programs and to recommend effective strategies for assisting the CEE countries (Annex A). The evaluation team selected by Development Associates consisted of: James Roush, Team Leader; Paul Mansfield, Legal Information Systems Specialist; Thaddeus Bejnar, Legal Library Resources Specialist; and Kay McClanahan, Evaluation Research Specialist. The team began its work in Washington, D.C. in late September 1995. Roush, Mansfield, and Bejnar departed the U.S. on September 30 to visit Albania, Hungary, Lithuania and Bulgaria in that order. A report was prepared on each of the countries visited (see Annexes E — H). This final report reflects comments provided on the team's draft report of November 30, 1995.

The principal findings and conclusions of the team are:

- 1. The program coordinated by the Frost Task Force (FTF) was very timely.** The legislators were starting from scratch and needed information about an appropriate role for their parliaments and ideas about methods of carrying out their work. They also had a tremendous number of laws to enact, treaties to approve and constitutions to amend or re-write.
- 2. The FTF assistance was very time-saving.** Many of those interviewed by the team felt that, in terms of their capabilities to do their work efficiently and effectively, the parliaments are from three to ten years ahead of where they would have been without the assistance.

3. **The FTF program was universally praised.** This was a reflection of the foregoing (1 and 2) and of how the program was implemented — quickly, responsive to the parliaments' wishes, and with no conditions.

4. **The impact of the project is positive in terms of helping the parliaments to do their jobs better and especially in a more timely fashion.** The impact so far has been primarily on turning out the quantity of legislation needed and getting the new laws published more quickly. The improvement in the quality of legislation varies by country, but is still nominal in some. It can be expected to increase with the maturation of the programs that have been initiated. Although not part of the FTF mandate, there also have been indications of positive impact on the strengthening of democracy. Impact of the project is discussed in more detail in Section IV. below.

5. **There is general interest in continued cooperation with the U.S. Congress and other parliaments in the region,** with an emphasis on cooperation in: a) the field of informatics (internal networks and gaining reliable access to the Internet); and b) the strengthening of legislative processes.

6. **Although the FTF program has achieved its objectives of jump-starting the new legislatures, there is a need for some follow-on activity in some countries and a modified approach in Albania.**

7. While great strides have been made in utilizing the **equipment** provided, it is clear that **more could have been done, and in less time, if the Frost Task Force could have given more attention to technical assistance** for automation start-ups in three of the four countries visited: Albania, Lithuania, and Bulgaria.

8. **Of the technical assistance activities, country conferences for MPs were beneficial, particularly for new legislators and especially when held early in the term. The Parliamentary Institutes were beneficial to parliamentary staff both in terms of the information imparted and the opportunity to meet one's peers from other countries.**

9 **Research and analysis units have been established in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Poland (Sejm and Senat), Slovakia; they are well established in the Czech Republic, Lithuania and Poland.**

10. **The additions of books and periodicals to parliamentary library collections was welcomed because of the limited size of the parliamentary collections and the void in their collections of publications from the West.**

11. **Personal computers are being utilized to improve and speed up the operations of the libraries. Putting more information on-line, however, has occurred only in two of the four countries visited.**

The Frost Task Force (FTF) program has terminated in seven of the original countries; it continues in Albania and Slovakia. It has just begun in Romania. There are **recommendations** in Section II which relate to the on-going programs in Albania and Slovakia, to a special problem in Bulgaria, and to the general problem of unfinished business in all the countries visited. The justification for the recommendations on Albania and Bulgaria and the general problem of unfinished business can be found in the appropriate country reports (Annexes E-H).

Lessons Learned. The Frost Task Force (FTF) program was designed as a short-term "jump start" program. It was designed after visits to Poland, Hungary, and the Czech and Slovak Republic, and those countries made excellent use of the assistance. Subsequently, additional countries were added to the program, some of which were not as well endowed with resources — particularly

trained informatics personnel. Thus, while all of the countries have made impressive gains, some of the countries added later have not made optimal use of the assistance. This reflects the short time frame of the FTF program and the "jump start" design which did not allow for extended technical assistance.

Based on the team's findings in the four countries visited, it would appear that a "jump start" approach was appropriate for the first countries visited. It was also appropriate for the other countries in terms of the political conditions existing at the time, but it needed to be modified somewhat to provide a little longer project time-frame and more flexibility in the provision of in-country technical assistance.

Provision of computers, and usually networking equipment and software, is extremely important for the new parliament: 1) to obtain needed information and disseminate it where it is needed; and 2) to manage the legislative process effectively. The team recommends a strong automation technology component in any new program. It further recommends the following as guidelines for those who would formulate such a program.

- ▶ Programs should generally have a five-year span to avoid early drops of sophisticated equipment and to allow for the gradual introduction of ever more sophisticated system, taking into account local conditions, capabilities, and performance.
- ▶ The first step should be to provide technical support in preparing a three to five-year parliamentary automation plan — tailor-made to each country.
- ▶ A cadre of the project's technical support personnel should be located in the region and should stay in-country longer than the FTF personnel were able to do. A technical implementor should be available on the ground for 60 to 90 days during the initial start-up phases of each country's projects. The recipients should be making progress reports on a regular basis.
- ▶ The project should consider the establishment of a quality Internet connection as an integral part of the "infrastructure," equally as important as a cable plant, hubs, patch panels, bridges, etc. In addition, consideration should be given to funding Internet access costs for the first two years of the project and then phase out over two years.

The technical assistance tools utilized by FTF were appropriate and effective. They would probably need some modification, however, when being utilized by other than the Congressional Research Service. The evaluation team would also recommend some changes in the support given to library collections. These proposed modifications in program content are discussed in Section V — Future Legislative Assistance Programs. That section also includes some suggestions for pre-project activity to ensure the likelihood of a successful project.

In summary, the FTF program was designed for a special situation at a special time in history. It was extremely successful given its limited time frame and operational framework. It is not necessarily the best formula for future programs because the same conditions are unlikely to exist. Because of its short term, there are a few additional actions that should be carried out to solidify the gains made.

I. INTRODUCTION

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A. Background to the Project

With the collapse of Communism in Central and Eastern Europe in 1988 and 1989, political power shifted from a highly centralized executive branch controlled by a single political party to a multi-party democratic system. Single-party legislatures, which had met quarterly or semi-annually for one day to rubber stamp the executive's actions, were being replaced by multi-party parliaments. The latter were being required to amend inappropriate sections of their old constitutions pending enough time to write a new constitution. They also had to enact a high volume of new or revised laws because of the concurrent drastic changes in the economy — going from a tightly controlled centralized economy to an open market economy. In some, the judicial system also needed re-vamping.

To meet these challenges, the newly elected members of parliament (MPs) found that they had a limited physical plant, little if any modern equipment, virtually no knowledge of the role of a democratic, multi-party legislature or how to carry out its role. What few precedents existed were largely irrelevant in the new environment. As one Estonian PM said in 1991: "As new members in a new parliament, what should we do?"

The first democratically elected MPs reflected a broad spectrum of society. Their commonality was their opposition to the previous regime and little experience in a legislature or in governance. In Albania, for example, only 15 of the 140 MPs elected in 1992 had prior experience in a legislature. Their educational training included engineering, teaching, economics, medicine, agriculture, journalism.

The legislatures left behind by the communist regimes were without organization (only Poland had a committee structure) or staff to support legislative activity. The rules and procedures of the legislatures were inappropriate and inadequate for a democratic parliament.

Because of the U.S. Congress's concern about the legislative developments in Central and Eastern Europe, Speaker Thomas Foley appointed on April 6, 1990 a Special Task Force on the Development of Parliamentary Institutions in Eastern Europe. Representative Martin Frost (D-TX) was appointed chairman of the Special Task Force (which became known as the Frost Task Force). Other members of the Task Force included Gerald Solomon (R-NY), Matthew McHugh (D-NY), later replaced by Nita Lowey (D-NY), Howard Berman (D-CA), later replaced by Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Bart Gordon (D-TN), Jim Leach (R-IA) and David Dreier (R-CA).

Between May 26 and June 4, the Task Force visited the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic (CSFR), Hungary and Poland. Based on that visit, the Task Force recommended that the Speaker approve a program of assistance to the three countries. The principal elements of the program, in response to the legislators they had met, would focus primarily on the provision of equipment, member and staff training, and library and research services. The program was designed to be relatively short-term (two to three years). It was felt the legislatures had the capability to play an effective role in their new-found democracies if they just had the requisite tools.

With the Speaker's concurrence, delegations from the three parliaments were brought to meet with the Congress and the Library of Congress. Subsequently, technical teams from the Congressional

Research Service (CRS) and the House Information Services office (HIS) went to the countries in early September to help refine the countries' needs and give the teams the data needed to submit detailed program plans to the House leadership. The teams submitted a report on October 17.

Congressional-Executive Branch discussions took place shortly thereafter, followed by an inter-agency meeting within the Executive Branch. The result was that the U.S. Agency for International Development was authorized to transfer funds immediately to the Library of Congress to initiate the program in CSFR, Hungary and Poland and to transfer additional funds later for the legislatures of Bulgaria, Romania, and Yugoslavia, contingent upon political developments in those countries. An Inter-Agency Agreement was signed between USAID/Washington (USAID/W) and the Library of Congress (LOC) to carry out the programs recommended by the Frost Task Force (FTF). The Congressional Research Service (CRS), the Library of Congress and the House Information Systems office (HIS) were to implement the program under the direction of the FTF. The life of the activity was to be three years. In response to subsequent inter-agency consultations, additional agreements have been signed and the program expanded into other countries.

The sum of \$17.5 million was obligated incrementally between 1991 and 1993 to support the legislatures in Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Bulgaria and Albania. Except for Albania and Slovakia, the programs terminated as of July 15, 1995. On September 14, 1995 USAID/W allocated an additional \$3,055,000 to the LOC to complete the programs in Albania (\$291,000) and Slovakia (\$249,000) and to initiate a program in Romania (\$2,515,000). The completion date for the new agreement is December 31, 1996. Additional information on the evolution of the project is found in Annex D.

The principal components planned for the program were:

- ▶ automation and telecommunication equipment;
- ▶ books and library materials;
- ▶ help in designing a research and information capability;
- ▶ training for legislative staff (including researchers and librarians, as well as committee staff, legal staff, etc.);
- ▶ training for the new members of parliament; and
- ▶ other technical assistance as needed on important substantive policy issues.

B. The Evaluation

On September 5, 1995 USAID/W signed a delivery order with Development Associates, Inc. to evaluate the parliamentary assistance provided under the direction of the Frost Task Force. This assistance had been funded under the project Democratic Governance and Public Administration (No. 180-0019.01).

The purpose of the evaluation was to ascertain the extent to which these parliamentary assistance programs have helped enact pro-democratic laws and put pro-democratic legislative institutions into place. It was also to assess the impact of the parliamentary assistance programs and recommend effective strategies for assisting the CEE countries. More specific evaluation issues, evaluation guidelines, evaluation questions and other substantive portions of the delivery order are set forth in Annex A.

The team selected by Development Associates to carry out the evaluation consisted of:

- ▶ **James Roush, Team Leader**

Mr. Roush is a former USAID Mission Director with 25 years service in the USAID Foreign Service and 16 years consulting in international development, including some 15

evaluations. He has done design and evaluation work related to the strengthening of democratic institutions, including legislatures.

• **Paul Mansfield, Legal Information Systems Specialist**

Mr. Mansfield is a principal in a New Mexico based Technology Consulting firm. He has extensive experience planning and implementing legal information systems for law firms, law departments, and government agencies nationally and internationally. He has designed and prototyped Full Text Retrieval Jurisprudence Systems for the Supreme Courts of Honduras and Panama, and for the Ministry of Justice in Jamaica. He has designed CD-ROM publications for the Department of Defense, Department of Energy, and the Sandia National Laboratory. Mr. Mansfield is a certified FolioVIEWS Engineer, a member of the Technology Utilization Committee of the State Bar of New Mexico and the Economics of Law section of the American Bar Association.

• **Thaddeus Bejnar, Legal Library Resources Specialist**

Mr. Bejnar, a lawyer, is State Law Librarian and Director of the Supreme Court Law Library of New Mexico. He also oversees 32 District Court Law Libraries and provides for the legal research needs of the appellate and district courts. He developed and implemented the automation system for the Supreme Court Law Library, and has developed coordinated inter-library resource sharing with academic libraries. In 1994 he developed a state-wide, multi-level, integrated plan for electronic access to materials on CD-ROM by District Courts, prosecutors and public defenders.

• **Kay McClanahan, Evaluation Research Specialist**

Ms. McClanahan is an attorney with experience in a number of democratic initiative projects — in the U.S. and abroad. She was a UN observer at the 1994 elections in El Salvador. She has worked with the National Center for State Courts and the Administrative Office of the Courts of the State of Arkansas. She has researched projects for the judiciary and the legislature.

The team began its work in Washington, D.C. in late September 1995 with meetings with USAID/W, Congressman Frost, the implementing agencies of the FTF program (CRS, LOC and HIS), State Department officials, and other interested individuals and nonprofit organizations (see the list of persons contacted — Annex B). The team also reviewed a large number of reports and other documents provided by USAID/W and CRS (see Annex C).

Roush, Mansfield, and Bejnar departed the U.S. on September 30 to visit Albania, Hungary, Lithuania and Bulgaria in that order. The team returned to the U.S. on November 8 and presented de-briefings to USAID/W and CRS on November 9. The team then produced a report on each of the countries visited (see Annexes E — H) and incorporated them into a draft evaluation report which was submitted to USAID/W on November 30, 1995.

Comments were provided on the draft report by USAID/W, USAID Representatives, and the LOC/CRS/HIR (formerly HIS). These comments were taken into account in preparing this final report.

II. PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROBLEMS

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The principal program activities of the Frost Task Force (FTF) program were: 1) the provision of office equipment (computers and related software and networking equipment, copying machines, FAX machines), electronic equipment for parliamentary chambers, and related training; 2) technical assistance (orientation visits, training sessions, visit of FTF technical staff); and 3) developing library collections. The amount of funds allocated for each project component by country is shown in Table II-1 below.

TABLE II-1

**Cumulative Obligation and Commitments through 5 October 1995
Eastern Europe — 1991, 1992, and 1993 USAID Transfers
(US \$1,000)**

Country	Equipment	Technical Assistance	Library Collections	TOTAL
Albania	1,064	559	90	1,714
Bulgaria	1,410	643	195	2,249
Czech and Slovak Federal Republic	1,052	286	99	1,437
Czech Republic	590	228	104	922
Estonia	900	274	165	1,339
Hungary	2,086	486	217	2,789
Latvia	1,075	170	131	1,377
Lithuania	1,059	349	101	1,509
Poland	807	656	273	1,736
Slovakia	1,062	336	103	1,501
TOTAL	11,105	3,988	1,478	16,573

Totals may not add due to rounding.

Note: *In addition to the obligations and commitments listed above, \$823,000 was obligated or committed for the administration of the programs in Eastern and Central Europe.*

A discussion of the project achievements and problems by component follows.

A. Equipment

The primary objectives of the equipment component of the FTF program were:

- ▶ assist the parliament in obtaining and using information more rapidly and effectively;
- ▶ modernize the parliament in the eyes of its members and the people; and
- ▶ connect the parliament to the world and to new technology in ways that would lead to a more open system.

The Frost Task Force's technology goal was to construct a basic technology infrastructure on which each recipient country could build. Frost material assistance subsidized the core high-priced components required for that infrastructure; it encompassed the provision of such items as:

- ▶ Personal desktop computers
- ▶ Notebook computers
- ▶ Network file servers
- ▶ Network cable plants, hubs, fiber optic links, microwave links, and routers
- ▶ CD-ROM Players and servers
- ▶ CD-ROM mastering equipment
- ▶ Desktop Publishing computers
- ▶ High speed, medium speed, and personal laser printers
- ▶ Color printers
- ▶ Scanners
- ▶ Basic office automation software (word processing, spreadsheet, and E-Mail).
- ▶ Software application development tools
- ▶ Database management software
- ▶ Full text searching tools
- ▶ High speed and small office copiers
- ▶ FAX machines
- ▶ Offset printing equipment
- ▶ Electronic voting equipment for recording votes at plenary sessions of Parliament

Not every parliament received the same mix of equipment. Frost Task Force technicians spent time in each country reviewing automation systems in place, and the capabilities of the local Informatics staff. There was considerable attention given to providing equipment and software tools which were in use in-country, either in government or private sector firms. This was done to ensure provision of local service and support. Frost personnel were judicious in their efforts to give the Informatics staff the tools *they wanted to use* (within budget constraints), as opposed to dictating what could or could not be acquired. The FTF technicians used the process of equipment planning as a tutorial in how to make such investment decisions. In several instances, the countries were quite impressed by the bidding process and moved to adopt such a system for their own procurements.

1. Assistance Provided

The quantity of the principal items of equipment provided by country is shown in Table II-2 on the following page.

Table II-2

Equipment Provided

Equipment	Albania	Bulgaria	Czech Rep.	Estonia	Hungary	Latvia	Lithuania	Poland	Slovakia	Total
Desktop PCs	32	150	80	80	284	108	61	353	122	1270
Notebook computers	2		12	20		7	4	15	15	75
Network file servers		6	6		8		2	1	8	31
Network cable plants, etc.	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	
CD-ROM players/servers			4	2		2	1	5	1	15
Desktop Publishing	1							1	2	4
Printers (mostly laser)	32	47	10	25	153	42	41	79	33	462
Scanners	1	4	1			1		2	2	11
Basic software	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Database mgt. software		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		
Office copiers	7	4		6	14		3	50		84
FAX machines	4	2		2		1				9
Offset Printing equip.	1							1		2
Electronic Voting equip.	1									1

• Includes both FTF assistance and the U.S. Senate - sponsored "Gift of Democracy" program.

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2. Implementation Obstacles

In the four countries the evaluation team visited, there were two universally observed hindrances to optimum implementation of the automation systems provided by FTF assistance: a) the capabilities of the local staff to implement complex information systems on their own; and b) the inability of the Frost Task Force personnel to visit as frequently as needed and/or for as long a time as needed.

In two of the four countries the evaluation team visited, there was virtually no informatics staff at the outset of the project. In the other two, there was a core of technically qualified personnel. However, they were neither sufficient in number nor sufficiently qualified to take on a job of such magnitude and complexity as the automation of a new parliament which was rapidly expanding its workload and trying to play its new role as a partner with, not a rubber stamp for, the Executive Branch. To be successful, the parliamentary staffs, even if expanded, needed technical assistance and training. As discussed below, both were provided but not in sufficient quantity for optimal performance.

While the Frost Task Force personnel went to great length to work with the local Informatics staff in the design of the hardware components of their information systems, they were limited in the amount of time they could devote to helping the local staff implement these new systems or to orienting parliamentary managers on the funding and personnel implications of the new automation systems. This shortcoming was not due to an oversight by the Frost Task Force; rather, it reflected the fact that the FTF program was not designed as a long term technical assistance project. More discussion of this issue is found in Section III (Lessons Learned).

Frost Task Force personnel had responsibility for projects in nine countries (excluding Romania which came on stream late in the project). These responsibilities supplemented the advisors' normal job requirements back in Washington and were complicated by the requirement to communicate directly with interested parties in each country at each milestone of the project. The end result was a protracted time line for completion of RFPs, assessment of vendor responses, negotiation of best and final offers, contract awards, equipment delivery schedules, equipment testing and acceptance.

The in-country staffing problem was exacerbated by staff turnover. In two countries visited by the team, there were three Informatics directors during the term of Frost Task Force assistance; in another, the Informatics director took extended leaves of absence out of country; in another, there was really no Informatics director at all. Technical staff turnover was also a problem in two countries visited. People trained to use the tools provided by the Frost Task Force left their jobs for more lucrative work in the private sector.

There were other factors which were impediments to long term implementation which could have been alleviated if more extended technical assistance had been available:

- ▶ **No master planning blueprints** — In no country visited did we see functional specifications for the information systems being developed. As information systems become more complex, the lack of master design documents makes enhancements and even maintenance a challenge. The FTF had no goal of assisting in a master planning process and believes that having done so would have delayed concrete results by several years.
- ▶ **Vendor Problems** — In all four countries there were problems with vendors selected to service the parliaments, either as hardware providers or technical implementors. The problems ranged from allegations of graft to lack of qualified personnel to non-delivery of goods purchased with Frost Task Force funds. Most of these problems occurred early in the

Table II-3

Frost Task Force Parliamentary Assistance Evaluation — Network Data Comparison

Issue	Albania	Hungary	Lithuania	Nigeria	Poland	Czech Rep.	Latvia	Estonia	Slovakia
Data On Line - Accessible to All Users	None				b/		d/	e/	f/
Proposed Laws		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Documents Related to Proposed Laws		✓	✓	✓	a/	✓			✓
Bill Tracker		✓	Soon	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Current Laws		✓	✓	✓	c/	✓	✓		✓
Minutes of Committee Meetings		Some			✓	✓			✓
Transcripts of Plenary Sessions		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Voting Records		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
General Documents of the Parliament		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
General Correspondence from Constituents			✓	✓	Planned	✓			
The Parliamentary Calendar		✓	✓	a/	✓	✓			
Research Department Issue Papers			✓	✓	✓	✓			
Press Summaries		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		
Internet Access		✓	✓	Testing	✓	✓	✓		
World Wide Web Home Page		✓	Soon		✓	Feb. 96			
Access to Library			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Biographical data on MPs		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			

Source: Team evaluation for Albania, Hungary, Lithuania, and Bulgaria; direct responses from Poland and the Czech Republic; others as noted.

- a/ Being prepared, but not yet on Network.
b/ Refers to the Sejm.
c/ Online, but without full-text data; will be available soon.
d/ From a June 1994 source, hence probably under-stated.
e/ Information not available.
f/ From questionnaire response, may be under-stated.

Table II-4

Assessment of Parliamentary Automation Systems

Scoring: 1 = Poor - 5 = Excellent

Item	Albania	Hungary	Lithuania	Bulgaria
Computers Installed vs. Demand for Services	3	4	4	4
Servicing of the Legislative Process	1	5	5	3
Improving Management Functions of Parliament	1	2	2	2
IT Dept.'s Use of Technology Provided (Application development innovations)	1	5	3	1
Cost Effectiveness of the Material Assistance Provided	4	4	3	1
IT Capability to Maintain the automation systems	1	5	3	3
Adequacy of Training Programs for Users	1	4	4	3
Adequacy of Budget for Informatics	1	3	5	3
Cooperation between IT and the Library Unit	3	1	4	3
Informatics Marketing of Services	1	5	5	3
Prognosis for Long Term Sustainability	2	5	5	3

* The scoring by the evaluation team relates to its view of the system's current capabilities/performance. It is designed to record the relative strengths and weaknesses of the different systems. It is not meant to be an assessment of FTF program activity in a particular country. Although the FTF program has obviously impacted on what the evaluators found in their visit, the program was not designed to impact on all of the items in the table. Furthermore, the FTF program is not the only factor — in some cases, not even the major factor — that affects the current situation in the country.

5. Sustainability Issues

Sustainability issues are threefold:

- a) The provision of maintenance service to the automation equipment on hand, which is closely related to b);
- b) The establishment of capital replacement funds — in order to update the equipment as it ages beyond an effective usage life of 3 - 5 years; and
- c) The ability to expand the network by adding more PCs, printers, and application software as demand dictates. It is doubtful that a major backslide will occur in any of the recipient countries that will result in a total loss of the computer resources developed to date. Even in Albania, where the least has been accomplished, local efforts continue to expand their system through the addition of more PCs and the running of network cable from the main parliamentary file server to the library.

Spare parts and reliable service technicians were a legitimate concern when Frost Task Force assistance programs began. In all the countries the team visited, this issue has been resolved by virtue of the marketplace and the acceptance of computers in other segments of government or private enterprise.

In many of the countries receiving assistance, manufacturers' warranties have either expired or are about to expire. In the absence of warranty claims, there must be real budgetary commitments for maintenance and for replacement of equipment which fails. In three of the four countries visited, there is a clear commitment to maintenance funding. Not all budgets are as strong as they should be, but the funding is there and growing.

In three of the four countries visited, there is evidence of internally funded expansion of the networks. Aging equipment is being replaced, new equipment is being acquired, network connections are being added, and storage capacities are being expanded.

The economic conditions in these countries are not strong, and there is no guarantee that investment in technology will continue unabated for years to come. There is solid evidence, however, that the importance of good information systems has been ingrained in the leadership of each parliament. Thus, at a minimum, on-going maintenance and moderate upgrades are likely to continue indefinitely.

B. Technical Assistance

The objectives of the Technical Assistance component of the FTF program were:

- ▶ To assist MPs in building an informed, multiparty, democratic legislature by providing them with access to comparative information on policy issues, parliamentary procedure, and the structure of the government. To provide expert technical assistance on these issues to the extent they are requested.
- ▶ To provide training in the form of study tours to senior parliamentary staff in order to observe how the United States Congress and other relevant legislative bodies are structured, administered, and make decisions; and to study how information and analysis are used in legislative decision-making so that the staff can adapt ideas and concepts that would be applicable to their own parliaments.

- ▶ To provide training to parliamentary staff in order to advance their knowledge of the information and support needed for a legislature and to foster intra-regional cooperation and discussion among the countries in transition to a democratic government.
- ▶ To provide hands-on work experience to parliamentary staff in the areas of reference and research in order to demonstrate the range of services that could be provided to a legislature.
- ▶ To assist parliamentary library staff in developing reference collections and reference services in order to provide MPs and parliamentary committees with current information in support of their legislative duties.
- ▶ To assist parliamentary staff administrators in the development of research and analysis services to provide MPs and parliamentary committees with objective and balanced research support and analysis on policy issues.

Examples of technical assistance programs included:

- *Parliamentary Institutes* — two-week programs held on Capitol Hill for professional parliamentary staff (e.g., lawyers, committee staff, librarians). The programs included: a) orientation to Congress, CRS, and other appropriate agencies; b) seminars and workshops with experts; and c) mentoring with CRS and/or congressional staff.
- *Parliamentary Conferences* — three-day conference held in-country for members of parliament and senior staff. The programs were developed to meet the information needs of the specific parliament. Experts and parliamentarians from the United States, Western Europe, and the region held seminars on the roles and responsibilities of legislators and on specific topics of legislative concern that had been determined during previous visits of FTF personnel.
- *Orientation and Training* — individual parliamentary administrators, automation experts and librarians were brought to Washington, D.C. for orientation to CRS and the Congress and to meet with counterparts on Capitol Hill and/or in state legislatures. Specific training was conducted for automation experts and reference librarians.
- *Expert Consultations* — CRS analysts and administrators, librarians, and congressional staff visited the parliaments to conduct seminars and provide consultations in areas of their expertise, including legislative procedures, legislative drafting, staff training, reference, constitutional issues, federalism, minority rights, and economic reform.

Participation in technical assistance activities is shown in Table II-5 on the following page. The Parliamentary Conferences for MPs reached the most people, but they only took place in five countries and they were only for three days. Furthermore, not all MPs attended all the seminars presented. Nevertheless, parliamentary leadership in the three countries visited which had Parliamentary Conferences expressed their appreciation for them. In a letter to Kristi Walseth in December 1994, the Chief of the Chancellery of the Slovakian National Council (parliament) spoke highly of their Parliamentary Conference. The Parliamentary Conference in Vilnius was given credit for bringing conflict of interest issues to the fore in the Lithuanian Seimas. Special seminars for parliamentary staff usually followed the MP conference.

Over 200 people from the nine FTF countries attended Parliamentary Institutes, with the greatest number coming from Poland (47), the Czech Republic (39), Bulgaria (37) and Hungary (31) — reflecting the earlier start of the program in these countries and their larger parliamentary staffs. The Institutes were generally well received, especially as they were perfected. Some of the first ones included non-English speakers who lost quite a bit in translation. Later English fluency was

Table II-5

Participation in Technical Assistance Activities*

	Albania	Bulgaria	Czech Rep.	Hungary	Poland	Slovakia	Estonia	Latvia	Lithuania
MP Conference (dates)	12/94	12/91				5/95	6/93		4/94
Research Unit Established		✓	✓		✓**	✓			✓
Parliamentary Institute	11	37	39	31	47	12	15	11	16
Computer Training	1	7	4	21	31	12	9	7	11
Library Training	2	4	3	8	3	2	21	7	9
Voting System Training	2								
Other Training/Visits	2	1	3		2	--	--	--	--
Totals	18	49	49	60	83	26	45	25	36

* Except for MP Conferences, the numbers refer to the number of participants in the training activities.

** Both the Sejm and the Senat have established research units.

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required. Subsequently, the mentor program was introduced and that seems to have resolved the concerns of earlier attendees who did not feel they were getting full benefit from the training opportunity.

About 30 percent of the Bulgarian participants in the Parliamentary Institutes were no longer with the parliament at the time of the evaluation team's visit. However, some of them had made significant contributions before they had left. In any case, the number of participants from Bulgaria was sufficiently large that there were still plenty of Institute graduates around to make a positive difference. The situation in Albania, on the other hand, was less positive. All three of the legal advisors that had attended Institutes were no longer with the parliament and there was no evidence that they had passed on much — other than the desire to participate in such training.

The following comment in a December 1994 letter to Kristi Walseth from the Chief of the Chancellery of the Slovakian National Council illustrates the value of the Parliamentary Institutes as seen by the parliaments: "The training courses ... greatly contributed to the quality of work of those employees who could witness the high professionalism of the Congress Research Service, their methods and forms of work. The training courses at the same time enabled establishing personal working contacts with the CRS counterparts." Support for the Institutes was also expressed by Polish parliamentary officials in December 1994 and January 1995 correspondence to the FTF and CRS staff and in the responses from the Polish Sejm, the Czech Republic and Slovakia to the evaluation team's questionnaires. Particular support was given by the latter two to the financial (budget) and legal advisor Institutes. Some of the participants interviewed by the evaluation team also stressed the value of the contacts with other participants from Central and Eastern Europe.

Over 100 people took part in computer training sponsored by the Frost Task Force. In addition, a considerable amount of training was carried on in-country utilizing the resources of the parliament or another donor. Some of the informatics personnel trained under FTF auspices provided training within the parliament. Unfortunately, some of them have also left the parliaments — some because of the internal situation in the parliament; some for better paying jobs in the private sector. Of the countries visited, Bulgaria and Lithuania found the loss of informatics personnel a problem; the questionnaires from Slovakia and the Czech Republic indicated a similar situation.

Only 59 librarians were trained, reflecting the relatively small librarian staff in a number of the countries. However, the benefits of the program are greater than apparent from the number of participants because a number of individuals attended more than one program over the period of the project. A number of the training sessions involved hands-on work at the Library of Congress for up to two weeks; this was particularly beneficial according to the librarians interviewed by the evaluation team.

The evaluation team did not identify turnover as a serious problem among librarians. There is interest and a felt need for additional training, including on-site training in computer applications and using the Internet. One aspect of the training was to encourage librarians to become more proactive in meeting the needs of the legislators. The team saw an example of this in Albania where a member of the library staff (of only three people) attends every plenary session — plenary sessions are held nearly a half a mile away from the parliamentary library. The team was not sure that the training had taken in Bulgaria. The Country Reports prepared by the evaluation team (Annexes E-H) provide more detail on the various training activities in the countries visited and the team's assessment thereof.

It appears that the larger libraries were in a position to benefit most from the FTF program. This seems to be borne out by the comments received from the Director of the Library of the Polish Sejm:

"4 persons, including the present director and deputy director (both promoted afterwards), visited the Library of Congress; 3 of them attended library institutes in 1992; 1 also the SLA Annual Conference in 1992; and 1 the conference of state legislators in 1993.

Since 1992 the Library has changed considerably (formulation of a collection development policy; installation and full implementation of an integrated library system; new services for the users; extensive use of information sources in machine-readable form, i.e., on CD-ROMs and diskettes; overall modernization, including changes in the Library's organization, etc.). It goes without saying that those dramatic changes would not be possible without all kinds of assistance received from the Frost programme. The visits to the CRS and other places influenced first of all our "professional imagination" and helped us to turn into a modern library management team able to cope with new challenges."

An important element of the technical assistance program was the encouragement of parliaments to establish research and analysis units. Such offices have been established in the Polish Sejm and Senat and in the parliaments of Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria and Lithuania. The Director of the Sejm Library (quoted above) wrote also that the Bureau of Research of the Sejm had taken over some forms of services previously offered by the Library on a quite limited scale and established numerous new ones.

The evaluation team was particularly impressed with the work of, and the parliamentary support for, the Information and Analysis unit in the Lithuanian Seimas. The unit in the Bulgarian parliament was only established in May 1995 and has yet to be accepted. Centralized information units are hard to sell in societies that have come to expect slanted or inaccurate data from centralized information sources. This was the reason given in Hungary for declining to establish such a unit.

The team did not have the opportunity to analyze how the various units got started and try to isolate the factors that may have made it possible to overcome the suspicions. It has the impression, however, that the pattern adopted by the Lithuanian unit might be worth copying. It has obtained news feeds from a number of news agencies and uses this to prepare a summary overnight of the most important stories relevant to the work of the parliament and distributes it to all MPs at the opening of business. This can save the MPs and their staffs a lot of time; hence the output of the unit is valued. The news summary document is in Lithuanian, but it also includes the language in which the item was published; this should engender confidence by the MPs in the integrity of the unit. The head of the unit was formerly in the library; this may also inspire confidence. Meeting a felt need of the MPs on a regular basis can help open their receptivity to the more analytical work that follows.

C. Parliamentary Library Collections

Libraries were seen as a potential valuable source of information and analysis for the new legislatures. The FTF assistance for them was threefold: 1) additions of books and periodicals to their collections; 2) automation equipment to facilitate research and to make information accessible on-line; and 3) the creation of research and analysis units (discussed in the previous section).

The objective of the Library Collections component of the FTF program was to deliver to parliamentary libraries a core reference collection of books, periodicals, CD-ROM subscriptions, and microfiche (mostly government/legal documents). The core bibliography that was developed in 1990 was the product of a wide-range of expertise from throughout the Library of Congress, including the Law Library. It reflected a basic philosophy of reference service in CRS, i.e., that members of parliament and parliamentary staff need in-depth reference service in virtually all areas of public policy, not just areas directly related to law and regulation. This premise is particularly important

Table II-6

Library Collections Provided

	Albania	Bulgaria	Czech Rep.	Hungary	Poland	Slovakia	Estonia	Latvia	Lithuania	TOTALS
Library of Congress*		41	216	165	113	--	--	--	--	535
Frost Program**	851	987	1,012	1,468	1,238 (735) Sejm (503) Senate	566	789	835	496	8,242
Total	851	1,028	1,228	1,633	1,351	566	789	835	496	8,777

* Donated books from the LOC Exchange and Gift Division.

** Purchased books and serials ordered.

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Table II-7
Library Ratings*

Issue	Albania	Hungary	Lithuania	Bulgaria
Size of Collection	1	5	5	3
Organization of collection	3	4	5	3
Access to Internet	0	3	2	1
Quantity of services provided to MPs and Committees	2	2	3	3
Adequacy of physical facilities	2	4	5	4
Librarians' capability to maintain records of collection	3	5	5	5
Librarians' capability to use automated systems	2	5	5	3
Cooperation among law-related libraries	4	4	5	3
Library's marketing of its services	2	2	3	3
Cooperation with research and analysis group (where one exists)	n/a	n/a	5	3

* Ratings: 5 = highest. The scoring by the evaluation team relates to its view of the system's current capabilities/performance. It is designed to record the relative strengths and weaknesses of the different libraries. It is not meant to be an assessment of FTF program activity in a particular country. Although the FTF program has obviously impacted on what the evaluators found in their visit, the program was not designed to impact on all of the items in the table. Furthermore, the FTF program is not the only factor — in some cases, not even the major factor — that affects the current situation in the country.

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in the responsibilities of a member of parliament to his/her constituents in order to be able to answer the wide range of questions and concerns from constituents.

The core bibliography was used as an initial guide to collections development, but from the outset emphasis was placed on having the parliamentary librarians take a very active role in selecting the materials to be purchased for their libraries and subsequent lists of core materials and new CD-ROM sources were developed out of the feedback from the parliamentary libraries as to which sources were the most useful. Efforts were made to allow for selection of materials in other Western languages.

The parliamentary libraries started from very different levels and those differences are still apparent. However, the most essential core set of international reference materials are now available and in use in all of the parliaments. They now have the international reference sources to provide comparative information on a wide range of policy issues.

The additions of books and periodicals was generally very welcome. In Albania the parliamentary library was established in 1992 with a collection of 3,000 mostly irrelevant volumes; the most valuable were pre-1945 Albania law volumes. Thanks to the FTF and other donors, it now has 35,000 volumes. Estonia was a little better off because the collections, albeit minimal, of the Estonian State Library (parliamentary library) had been hidden in the restricted access collection of the national library. In most countries there had been minimal to zero input of materials from the West.

Personal computers are being utilized to improve and speed up the operations of the libraries. Putting more information on-line on parliamentary networks, however, has occurred only in two of the four countries visited by the evaluation team and it is likely to be slow in coming because of the general philosophy of some librarians and the inadequacy of personnel who understand the use of the equipment. Some follow-on training is needed in a number of the countries to obtain full benefit of the FTF technology assistance.

The libraries also have welcomed the CD-ROM subscriptions, but only a few of the libraries are in a position to subscribe to up-dates. The most used CD-ROM is CELEX (European legal documents in full-text). The use of the CD-ROMs will likely increase when libraries are able to make them available on parliamentary networks.

Data on the numbers of books and serials given to the different countries is shown in Table II-6. The libraries visited by the evaluation team are rated by various factors in Table II-7.

D. Summary Conclusions and Recommendations

The conclusions set forth below are based primarily on the evaluation team's visits to Albania, Hungary, Lithuania, and Bulgaria — in that order. The team has read CRS reports which cover progress in the five countries not visited (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Latvia, and Estonia), evaluations of the FTF program by some of the countries, questionnaires prepared for the evaluation team by some of the countries, and other reports and publications. The team has also held conversations with individuals familiar with the project and/or the political situation in some of the countries. The team's impression is that the information available to it substantiates most of the conclusions it is presenting. The team has not made evaluative conclusions, however, about the specific programs of the non-visited countries because the team found from its visits that it was difficult to ascertain the true utilization of equipment even when on-site.

1. Conclusions

GENERAL

a. The program coordinated by the Frost Task Force (FTF) was very timely:

- The show of support from the U.S. Congress inspired confidence by the legislators in their bid to become independent.
- ▶ The legislators were starting from scratch and needed information about an appropriate role for their parliaments and ideas about methods of carrying out their work.
- The assistance came during a time when the parliaments had a tremendous number of laws to enact, treaties to approve and constitutions to amend or re-write.

b. The FTF assistance was very time-saving. Many of those interviewed by the team felt that, in terms of their capabilities to do their work efficiently and effectively, the parliaments are from three to ten years (varies by parliament) ahead of where they would have been without the assistance.

c. The FTF program was universally praised. This was a reflection of the foregoing (a and b) and of how the program was implemented — quickly, responsive to the parliaments' wishes, and with no conditions.

d. The impact of the project is positive in terms of helping the parliaments to do their jobs better and especially in a more timely fashion. The impact so far has been primarily on turning out the quantity of legislation needed and getting the new laws published more quickly. The improvement in the quality of legislation varies by country, but is still nominal in some. It can be expected to increase with the maturation of the programs that have been initiated. Although not part of the FTF mandate, there also have been indications of positive impact on the strengthening of democracy. This also is nominal in comparison to what can be expected over time. Impact of the project is discussed in more detail in Section IV. below.

e. There is general interest in continued cooperation with the U.S. Congress and other parliaments in the region, with an emphasis on cooperation in: a) the field of informatics (internal networks and gaining reliable access to the Internet); and b) the strengthening of legislative processes. Some elements of a possible follow-on program are set forth in D.2. below. Follow-on activity could be expected to enhance the possibility of a more significant impact on the strengthening of democracy.

f. Although the FTF program has achieved its objectives of jump-starting the new legislature, there is a need for some follow-on activity in some countries and a modified approach in Albania.

- ▶ Application development is either absent (little has been done in Albania with the tools provided for development) or under-utilized (poorly planned and limited applications exist in Bulgaria);
- These are unresolved technical issues in each of the countries visited by the team: Albania's network is not a network; Hungary's cable plant is over-taxed and close to collapse; Lithuania's Internet connection is sporadic; and Bulgaria is stuck with a UNIX/Informix system that they do not use and they are having problems implementing.

procedures, processes and staff support in other legislatures; 2) learning the importance of dealing with conflicts of interest and similar ethical issues; 3) the informal exchanges with the foreign participants; and 4) the symbolic value of the conference, i.e., the U.S. Congress cared enough to organize the conference — their work was important.

b. The Parliamentary Institutes were beneficial to parliamentary staff in terms of the information imparted and the opportunity to meet one's peers from other countries. Both the participants in the Institutes (parliamentary staff) and their supervisors (committee chairmen and parliamentary managers) have attested to the utility of the Institutes, particularly as they were refined and improved.

c. Research and analysis units have been established in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Poland (Sejm and Senat), Slovakia; they are well established in the Czech Republic, Lithuania and Poland. Research units are a good idea, but they can be hard to sell in societies that have come to expect slanted or inaccurate data from centralized information sources.

PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARIES

a. The additions of books and periodicals was welcomed because of the limited size of the parliamentary collections and the void in their collections of publications from the West. There is little usage of most of the books obtained because of a greater interest in Europe and the inexperience of the parliament's librarians in selecting materials. Because of current budgetary problems, few periodical subscriptions are being renewed.

b. Personal computers are being utilized to improve and speed up the operations of the libraries. Putting more information on-line, however, has occurred only in two of the four countries visited. It is likely to be slow in coming in these countries because of the general philosophy of some librarians and the inadequacy of personnel who understand the use of the equipment.

2. Recommendations

The Frost Task Force (FTF) program has terminated in seven of the original countries; it continues in Albania and Slovakia. It has just begun in Romania. The recommendations in this section relate to the on-going programs in Albania and Slovakia, to a special problem in Bulgaria, and to the general problem of unfinished business in all the countries visited. The justification for the recommendations on Albania and Bulgaria and the general problem of unfinished business can be found in the appropriate country reports (Annexes E-H).

ALBANIA

- a. CRS should proceed with the procurement of two computers and a scanner for the library; except for any emergency procurement, further hardware purchases should be postponed until the next two recommendations are implemented.**
- b. CRS should arrange for a systems analyst to go to Albania for a sufficient period of time to develop an automation plan, focussed on support for the commissions and the processing of legislation.**
- c. CRS should contract for a proactive technology implementor to work in the Assembly for three to six months to nurture the development of present applications and those called for in the implementation plan referred to in (2) above.**

The contractor's work would focus on:

- ▶ Streamlining office administrative procedures;
 - ▶ Translating those procedures into automation processes;
 - ▶ Developing those processes, documenting them, and training staff on their usage, e.g., the automation of routine clerical tasks through use of WordPerfect macros, forms, templates, merges, etc.;
 - ▶ Teaching basic concepts of network administration (not to be confused with Novell Netware Administration): filing systems, document naming conventions, document retention, and archiving;
 - ▶ Developing a long range automation plan for the Assembly which incorporates the needs of the MPs, the Library staff, and the administrative staff;
 - ▶ Formulating a purpose for having a computer network;
 - ▶ Drafting basic procedures manuals for use of the core software and custom applications, insuring that those manuals are translated into Albanian, and are maintained locally by Assembly staff; and
 - ▶ Exploring a partnering arrangement with ORT in Albania for customized on-going computer training — ORT's teaching lab facilities are modern and not fully booked.
- d. Additional technical assistance should be provided for:**
- ▶ on-site training in applications using actual work of the Assembly;
 - ▶ practice for the legal advisors in an environment where drafting of legislation is actually done;
 - ▶ archival training for the Archivist; and
 - ▶ a new member orientation after the May 1996 election.
- e. Technical assistance for a research and analysis function should be provided** when the following are implemented:
- ▶ the library gets a budget and its additional positions filled;
 - ▶ an additional informatics position is established and the proactive technology implementor is recruited (recommendation c. above); and
 - ▶ access is provided to Internet.
- (The Chief of Staff has indicated these conditions will be met in the new year.)
- f. Some additional library materials should be provided to the Assembly library, focusing on periodicals and long-term subscriptions to highly used reference sources.**
- g. Assistance should be provided as necessary to facilitate an Internet connection for the library.**

- h. **The library staff should be provided with some additional training in database management.**

BULGARIA

- a. **If USAID approval is required, USAID/W should authorize the Bulgarian Parliament to sell the HP/UNIX servers and use the proceeds to acquire an off-the-shelf text retrieval product and/or more PCs. (The Hungarian Parliament might be a potential buyer.)**
- b. **CRS should assist the Informatics department to negotiate a license transfer of the Informix software, using the failed upgrade issue as leverage with Informix in this negotiation.**
- c. **If follow-on assistance becomes available under another project, and there are no barriers established to the access of information on the network, USAID should consider:**
- (1) funding some short-term technical assistance to: i) assist the Informatics Department deal with the problems cited in II.A. above; and ii) help resolve the TinLib conversion problems and get more databases on the parliamentary network; and**
 - (2) assisting in funding an upgraded access to Internet.**

SLOVAKIA

In the course of its evaluation, the team became aware of the situation in Slovakia where the government appears determined to eliminate sources of criticism or scare them into silence. It raises the question whether the FTF program should be continued under such circumstances. **It would appear desirable to continue the program if: 1) it will facilitate an expansion of information available to the parliament; and 2) the parliament's leadership is not limiting the access of any parties/factions to the information.**

OTHER FROST PROGRAM COUNTRIES

The evaluation team identified technical assistance needs in Bulgaria (informatics and library) and Lithuania (informatics) related to the utilization of FTF assistance. It is conceivable there are similar circumstances in the countries that the team did not visit. **The team recommends that USAID fund the services of a library specialist for up to six weeks and an informatics specialist for up to three months to overcome the obstacles noted by the evaluation team and other similar situations that CRS can identify in the countries not visited by the team.**

III. LESSONS LEARNED

Development Associates, Inc.

A. General

The Frost Task Force (FTF) program was designed as a short-term "jump start" program. It was designed after visits to Poland, Hungary, and the Czech and Slovak Republic, and those countries made excellent use of the assistance. Subsequently, additional countries were added to the program, some of which were not as well endowed with resources — particularly trained personnel. Thus, while all of the countries have made impressive gains, some of the countries added later have not made optimal use of the assistance. This reflects the short time frame of the FTF program and the "jump start" design which did not allow for extended technical assistance.

Based on the team's findings in the four countries visited, it would appear that a "jump start" approach was appropriate for the first countries visited. It was also appropriate for the other countries in terms of the political conditions existing at the time, but it needed to be modified somewhat to provide a little longer project time-frame and more flexibility in the provision of in-country technical assistance.

B. Equipment

Because of the design of the FTF program, not enough attention was given to technical assistance for automation start-ups in Albania, Lithuania, or Bulgaria. Future project design should take this requirement into consideration when developing budgets and implementation plans.

- ▶ Someone needs to be on the ground soon after PCs and software arrive in order to facilitate an orderly system start-up. This may not be necessary in every country, but it is a very predictable requirement in countries/organizations where information systems have not existed before or were rudimentary in nature.
- ▶ There needs to be planning and implementation assistance with fundamental automation issues (e.g., data redundancy, document/file management concepts, procedures and systems planning, records management, archiving, and application development).
- ▶ Realistic expectations must be engendered about the use of high-end programming tools such as ORACLE and Informix. In Lithuania and Bulgaria those expensive tools are under-utilized and were perhaps placed at the parliaments prematurely.
- ▶ There was not adequate exposure to commercial software off-the-shelf, so there was too much effort at "reinventing the wheel."

When Frost Task Force assistance programs began, off-the-shelf applications were more limited in scope than is the case today. However, applications for basic tasks such as network document management with full text searching capabilities did exist at that time. Today there is much more product choice, including products developed in the recipient countries and presented in the local language (or modifiable for the local language) which can be of benefit to parliamentary information systems. Some examples include:

- a) IBM/Lotus Corporation's *Notes* program — an ideal platform for a legislative drafting system.
- b) Novell *Groupwise* — a candidate for workflow and E-Mail applications.
- c) Novell *SoftSolutions* — for network document management.
- d) *Folio* — well suited to full-text research-oriented processes and to CD-ROM publishing activities.

Frost Task Force visits were generally too infrequent and too short. This reflected the "jump start" design, i.e., not enough funding or staff was programmed for this purpose, especially after the number of countries in the program expanded to ten.

- ▶ A technical implementor should be on the ground for 60 to 90 days during the initial start-up phases of each country's projects (after the arrival of the first round of PC hardware and software purchases).
- ▶ The implementor's role would be to:
 - a) Develop a master plan for use of a PC network and application software.
 - b) Supervise setup of networks and PCs.
 - c) Conduct planning sessions on basic network management, access security issues, document/file management, and application development concepts. (These topics were beyond the scope of Frost Task Force assistance.)
 - d) Supervise set-up and configuration of all off-the-shelf application software and insure its compliance with the standards set forth in the master plan.
 - e) Identify topics for basic training with application software; consult with training entities to insure that these topics are addressed.
 - f) Examine the nature of word processing tasks and develop configuration features or macro procedures to streamline those tasks.
 - g) Act as a mentor for an Informatics staff member who will learn all the procedures the implementor develops.
 - h) Document an internal procedure manual of standards which evolves through this process.
 - i) Insure that adequate user documentation exists in the resident language or a widely used language in-country.

In retrospect, it appears that the FTF gave too much technology too soon in countries without the infrastructure and budgetary resources to support it:

- ▶ There is no evidence of budgetary commitment in Albania; Hungary has a limited budget; Lithuania's budget is best, but their support costs are high because of Sun/SPARC, ORACLE — and it took them a *year* to get their text product up and running when other software off-the-shelf could have done it faster (e.g., TOPIC Software which was used in Hungary). Instead they are the first European users of the ORACLE text server.
- ▶ There were numerous ORACLE and SUN products in the first purchases in Lithuania which may not have been necessary (three different E-Mail products and a 5 or 6-user license for ZylIndex which was evaluated and scrubbed because it lacked character set support).
- ▶ Because of the political nature of the project, the FTF technical personnel in the end went along with the desires of the local Informatics staff even when some of the Frost Task Force advisors did not agree with their decisions (ORACLE in Lithuania; VINES in Hungary). Unfortunately, the local staff was not able to deal with these choices on their own in three of the four countries visited (Hungary was the exception). In Lithuania and Bulgaria the Informatics staff is *not* using some of the very expensive development tools (parts of ORACLE

in Lithuania are not in use; and Informix, although installed, has no running applications in Bulgaria) because they have learned they do not need these tools or do not like them.

- ▶ A better approach would be to pay for hardware basics, a network infrastructure and some simple application tools (e.g., lower end database tools, a text retrieval package, perhaps document management tools). Let them work with these for a few years until they get a true sense for what their Information System ought to be. Then revisit as a follow-up and help them take their applications up to the next level. This pre-supposes taking a more traditional technical assistance approach to the project than was done by the FTF personnel under their "jump start" design. With more time spent in laying out needs over a longer period, one would not need to spend all of the money up front. With the exception of Hungary, none of the databases the evaluation team saw was large enough to warrant such high end tools at the outset. Robust search and sort capabilities are needed, but *industrial strength transaction processing horsepower is not*. ORACLE and InforMix are expensive overkill for the applications the team saw and the parliaments' current stage of development.

More could have been done to automate administrative tasks at the parliaments, but this was outside the focus of the project. It would be appropriate to include such activity in a more traditional project.

C. Technical Assistance

Parliamentary Conferences were held in-country for members of parliament (MPs) in five of the FTF countries. These would be useful tools in other legislative support projects. They could serve as mind-stretching activities, as discussed in Section V. They would likely be most effective if carried out at the beginning of the term of a new legislature.

Observation trips to the U.S. and Parliamentary Institutes carried out in Washington, D.C. were used to good advantage by the FTF personnel. It is unlikely that other project coordinators could use these activities as effectively. Furthermore, in the ENI area, it would be desirable that observation trips also include Western Europe and selected countries in Central and Eastern Europe — possibly a democratic Muslim country, depending upon the source country of the participants. Similarly, it might be preferable to carry out Parliamentary Institutes in certain Central and Eastern European countries, depending upon the subject matter.

More in-country training and workshops would be desirable than was feasible under the FTF program. More time in-country by technical support personnel was mentioned under the equipment section above; this holds true for library support, research and analysis units, and for training for committee support and other parliamentary staff.

Some specific ideas regarding these technical assistance tools are included in Section V — Future Legislative Programs.

D. Library Support

Most of the materials that need to be purchased with foreign currency for parliamentary libraries are serials (periodicals), annual editions of reference books and continuations of legal publications. Other materials get out of date too quickly. An assistance program with libraries also needs to work out a plan with the parliament for it to gradually take over the book/serials budget.

Good Internet connections are essential for modern parliamentary libraries. This is the way that librarians and other researchers can retrieve the most up-to-date information. It can obviate the need for many traditional reference books, especially those which go out of date rapidly. The

Internet also provides access to other librarians all over the world, and especially to those in the same region who may be facing many of the same problems.

Training of library staff in any new tools is essential. This can only be accomplished by having the training occur at a pace at which it can be absorbed. Having two weeks of solid training at the Library of Congress may be a good introduction, and may produce significant results, but it does not give librarians new to an automated environment the skill necessary to create that environment back in their own library. The training programs need to be tailored to the individual need of each country and each library. Where the technical ability is high, such as in Hungary, a very different program is required than for those whose skills have not been acquired yet — such as in Albania or Bulgaria. More in-country training is needed.

Regional conferences can be very successful. They provide cross-fertilization of ideas, as well as give librarians the chance to become acquainted with their neighboring counterparts. The focus, however, must be on the needs of the parliamentary libraries. In those cases when participants come from a great range of ability and size of library, there needs to be topics that will benefit both the large and the small, both the technically advanced and the beginners. Such conferences foster regional cooperation, and fostering regional cooperation can help programs such as these become sustainable.

IV. IMPACT OF THE PROJECT

Development Associates, Inc.

A. DEFINITIONS AND METHODOLOGY

There is no Project Paper and no Logical Framework presentation for the project. The evaluation team's statement of work in the Delivery Order uses the term "impact" in various ways. In one place, it states: "ENI/DG is evaluating the extent to which these parliamentary assistance programs have helped enact pro-democratic laws and put pro-democratic legislative institutions in place." The team concurs with the position of Kristi Walseth, Staff Director of the Frost Task Force, that such was not the primary focus of the Frost Task Force (FTF) program. Rather, the FTF found democratic legislative institutions in place prepared to enact pro-democratic laws; their commitment to adopting Western standards of parliamentary democracy was firm and sincere. The problem was that the basic tools and resources for carrying out a smooth and effective transition to such a system were sorely lacking. The goal was to respond to the calls for help from legislators in the area, to help their parliaments get a quick "jump start", and to make a strong gesture of solidarity and support at a time when they most needed it.

In other sections, the statement of work seems to suggest that the **purpose** of the Frost/CRS program was to improve the institutional capacity of the parliaments of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), and this, presumably in conjunction with other programs, would impact favorably on the **goal** of strengthening democracy in these countries. This formulation is more in line with the focus of the Task Force. There is still left, however, the need to establish indicators for measuring the impact of the program at the goal level.

The indicators for impact which can be inferred from the 21 questions in the Scope of Work (Annex A) include:

- 1) a shift in the balance of power from the executive to the legislature;
- 2) an enhanced role for, and improved capability/efficiency of, the individual members for parliament (MPs) and of the parliament as a whole;
- 3) an enhanced standing of democratic parties;
- 4) improved parliamentary leadership and key staff participation;
- 5) improved interaction among MPs;
- 6) an improved level of legislative competence/ability to fully understand the issues;
- 7) more frequent and more extended debate on important issues; and
- 8) information and research capacity within the parliament is accessible to all recognized political parties and organizations within the parliament.

With regard to 1) above, it is important to note that all of the countries in the program have parliamentary systems. Thus, the leadership of the executive comes from the same party (or coalition) which is in the majority in the legislature. While there are variations in how the executive and the legislature work together in parliamentary systems, looking at the "balance of power" seems a little too simplistic. In exploring alternatives, the team came across a typology of the five major types of parliaments, in relation to executives, presented by Attila Agh:

- ▶ the *coordinate* legislature, which maintains a relationship of cooperation and interdependence with the executive in the process of mutual consultation. It is typically based on cabinet government, yet not on cohesive, single party majorities, but more flexible coalitional ones.
- ▶ the *subordinate* legislature, which requires a government to be made up of a single majority party and supported by disciplined parliamentary majority. This implies that the majority lies mainly in the hands of the executive.
- ▶ the *submissive* legislature which is unable to set limits on executive discretion or impose restrictions on the access to nominations for positions of authority. Rather, the executive monopolizes, rewards or physically coerces deputies, thus making the whole parliament a rubber stamp.
- ▶ the *intermediate* type of legislature, which displays a pattern of interaction with the executive, which is highly fragile and which is threatened by immobilization due to the lack of structures for stabilizing executive-legislature relations.
- ▶ The *competitive dominant* legislature, which possesses strong cohesion, and which exerts frequent and highly routinized conflict management with a system of specialized committees. In such a way, it is a worthy competitor of the government, even with the constant re-adjustments to the changing situations.¹

Albania's parliament might be ranked at this time as subordinate; a stronger, more independent legislative leadership could move it towards a coordinate relationship. Hungary would seem to have a coordinate legislature, although some members were concerned that it was moving towards being subordinate. The Lithuanian parliament could be said to have been competitive dominant in the earliest days of the effort to obtain independence from the USSR, coordinate during the first democratically elected parliament, and possibly moving a little toward a subordinate role under the current regime. Bulgaria's 36th Assembly might be characterized as coordinate; the 37th is moving toward a more subordinate position and some opposition deputies believe it is moving to a submissive position.

Whatever subjective characterization one gives to the relationship between the executive and the legislature, it is clear that the relationship changes over time. Further, the changes in the relationship will depend on the political make-up of the legislature, the political standing of its leadership, and the ambitions of the executive — not on the potential efficiency and effectiveness of the legislature. The latter can help change the relationship only if there is strong leadership in the legislature or a cooperative chief executive. Thus, while this typology helps to organize one's thinking about parliament/executive relationships, it does not seem sufficiently specific for our purposes.

¹ "The Role of the First Parliament in Democratic Transition," Attila Agh in *Democratization and Europeanization in Hungary: The First Parliament, 1990-1994*, Hungarian Centre for Democracy Studies, 1995.

The standing of democratic parties (item 3) above) is going to be determined primarily by what is happening in the country and whether the public gives these parties credit/blame for what is happening. If democratic parties are in the majority, one element of the credit/blame may be how they are perceived to have used the legislative assistance provided, but this will be minimal in relation to what is happening with the economy and how the executive is perceived to be performing. This has been demonstrated in the CEE countries.

The other items in the impact indicator list above may be affected by the Frost Task Force (FTF) program and, in some circumstances, they may enhance the possibility that the legislature can contribute to democracy. It does not follow, however, that FTF assistance will be the primary contributor to changes in those indicators or that positive changes in those indicators will always contribute to strengthening/expanding democracy.

The team suggests that there are two issues to be looked at, and looked at separately: 1) the impact of the FTF program on the legislatures; and 2) the role of the legislature in promoting democracy. In the first case, we need to look at what the FTF saw as the principal challenge facing the parliaments--problems for which the FTF designed its program: to establish new, more active, and effective parliaments to replace the "rubber stamp" legislatures of the Communist period which met only two to four days a year and had virtually no staff and limited physical facilities and equipment.

To meet this challenge meant establishing rules for how to consider legislation and establishing mechanisms for ensuring the passage of a high quantity of legislation of tremendous complexity designed to create a civil society based on the rule-of-law, build a market economy, develop a new banking system, etc. It follows that the appropriate impact indicators for assessing the FTF program are legislative effectiveness and, to a lesser degree, the tone set by the parliament. To be effective, a legislature must have access to diverse sources of information, the means to disseminate the information widely and quickly, and the ability to use the information wisely. Discussion of these factors in relation to the countries visited is set forth in section B below.

While it is not fair to judge the FTF program by whether the legislatures did or did not promote democracy, it is important, nevertheless, to look at ways in which legislatures could be expected to promote democracy. Then we can see whether, and in what way, the FTF program had some impact on these indicators. Developing appropriate indicators can also be useful in formulating guidelines for the design of future legislative assistance programs.

The first step is to decide **what** is an appropriate role for a legislature in a parliamentary system in a democracy; the second is to look at **how** that role is carried out.

The parliament's role is usually set forth in the constitution of the country. In most of the countries visited, the establishment and amendment of the constitution was the role of the legislature. Often it was also charged with establishing the rules (legislation) governing the role of the media. In addition, it approves legislation (often including ex-post approval of executive decrees) and treaties. Usually, it approves executive appointments—sometimes judicial appointments, but these may be approved by the president where the latter position exists.

While it is not always stated in the constitution as such, the legislatures have the responsibility to ensure the integrity of the legislation they are approving and to provide oversight over the executive and ensure its accountability. To ensure the integrity of the legislation implies seeing that it is not in conflict with the constitution or existing treaties or laws, that it is enforceable, and that the public (especially those most likely to be affected) has an opportunity to make known its views about the legislation.

How the legislative role is carried out refers to internal procedures, the type of dialogue carried on with the executive and with the public, the relationship with the media, and the conduct of the individual legislators. This is discussed below under the "Tone Set by the Parliament" (C.1.).

B. IMPACT OF THE FROST TASK FORCE PROGRAM

1. Sources of Information

One of the first tasks for the new legislatures was either writing a new constitution or revising the existing one to make it more democratic, to make it compatible with and conducive to the development of a market economy, and to put it in conformity with Western European standards so that the country could eventually enter into Western European institutions. This meant looking outside of the country for sources of information, particularly Western Europe. American sources were also helpful, particularly with regard to the working of the market economy.

Another task of most of the legislatures was drafting a media law. This was especially important in some countries because of the efforts of executives to control the media. Again, there is no local precedent for what needed to be done; information was sought from outside of the country, including from the U.S. The review of draft legislation from the executive involves having ready access to information on existing laws. For draft legislation in new fields, it is also appropriate to look at the types of laws existing in other countries, e.g. in such areas as environmental legislation, how to establish and monitor a banking system, a stock market, etc. To monitor effectively the work of the executive, the parliament must have access to independent sources of information.

Reference documents, periodicals, and CD-ROMs supplied under the FTF program were a welcome source of information. Training was also provided to librarians and members of CRS-like units in how to use the Internet to access information and also on how to put information on networks within the parliaments. The Internet increasingly is becoming a source of legislation from countries and states around the world. The Parliamentary Institutes provided immediate access to information (participants took U.S. legislation and CRS reports home with them). Attendance at Parliamentary Institutes also resulted in contacts that facilitated the obtaining of information later directly from those met in Washington and from other participants from Central and Eastern Europe. The New Member Conferences also provided information directly to members of parliament and parliamentary staff, and the subject matter of the conferences was that in which the different groups within the parliament had expressed an interest.

2. Dissemination of Information

In the countries visited, it was noted that the addition of computers usually did not contribute to a significant increase in the numbers of legislative actions carried out. Very large volumes of legislation had been processed before the computers were available. What changed with increased automation was the scope and breadth of the legislation. For example, after the computers were available, Albania revised its Code of Criminal Procedure (525 articles), Penal Code (335 articles), and the new, comprehensive Civil Code (1,168 articles). MPs said they just would not have been able to cope with these codes without the computers.

Another change noted was the ability to have up-to-date versions of legislation in process after the computers were up and running. At least two countries cited experiences in the pre-FTF period of voting into law the wrong version of a bill and having to rectify it later. All of the countries visited reported very quick turn-around in preparing the minutes of the plenary sessions. In Bulgaria, for example, the minutes from the previous day are on the Chairman's desk when he comes to work the following morning.

Perhaps an even greater contribution of the input of computers was the access to information throughout the parliament. Where networks are up and running, the minutes are not just available to the Chairman, they are available to all of the committees and all the factions. The latest version of bills being considered is not just available in hard copy at the legislators' seats when they come to the plenary session; rather, it is on the network so that legislators can review the latest changes (and perhaps draft additional ones) prior to going to the plenary session. Other than Albania, all of the FTF countries have networks and most are working to extend the data on the network. Among the countries visited by the team, Lithuania has done the best job. Only in Bulgaria did the team hear concerns expressed that the administration of the parliament was considering limiting the access to information on the network.

In Lithuania, the Information Analysis Department receives direct press services from some international news agencies and reviews foreign and local publications daily for news relevant to the workings of the parliament. It then prepares in Lithuanian the "Most Important Events of the Day" and puts it on the parliamentary network at the beginning of the following day — hard copies are provided to those requesting them. This not only expands the amount of information available to legislators; it also saves them and their staff considerable time--precious time.

In Albania, the provision of printing equipment has meant that the time lag between the passage of a law and its publication in the *Gazette* has been reduced from 90 days to 2 weeks. Officially, laws are not in effect until they are published in the *Gazette*. In some countries, this publication delay may not be related to the efficiency of the legislature, but it was in Albania.

The provision of voting equipment has improved efficiency in the voting process. Of greater significance, however, is the availability for the first time of a record of how MPs voted. This is especially helpful in terms of the tone set by the parliament.

The foregoing are examples of improved efficiency in the legislatures visited by the evaluation team which legislators and parliamentary staff report are the result of FTF assistance. Similar examples have been provided by the legislatures not visited through responses to questionnaires--one from FTF at the end of 1994 and one distributed by the evaluation team. Additional details on improvements in legislative achievement in the countries visited are discussed in the Country Reports (Annexes E-H).

3. USE OF INFORMATION

Access of the parliament to a diversity of sources of information and the dissemination of this information to parliamentary factions and MPs will be of limited use unless there are mechanisms for distilling and utilizing the information. At the outset, not all legislatures had committee structures (sometimes called commissions), one method of using information effectively. The visits to the U.S. Congress, the all-member conferences, and the in-country visits of FTF members and staff delegations were cited in the different countries as being helpful for ideas on how to strengthen the committee system and/or provide subject matter information that was relevant to a specific committee's work. In Hungary, specific mention was made of changes made in committee structures based on observations in the U.S. Congress. In at least one country, FTF-sponsored activities were credited for committees being given more authority.

To make effective the committees's work and that of the plenary sessions, there must be trained staff who know to retrieve, analyze and present information so it can be used in decision-making about possible choices. Then the decisions have to be translated into new or amended legislation. The Parliamentary Institutes and the visits of FTF technical delegations were the primary method used by the FTF to impart the orientation or training that was needed. Emphasis was on training for library personnel (to support the committees, MPs, and factions and all of their staffs), legal staff (for help in drafting legislation), and committee staff (the role of the staff and the sources and use

of information). In all the countries visited, both staff and individual MPs spoke highly of this part of the FTF program. Through responses to our questionnaires, parliamentary leadership in the countries not visited also cited positive results from this training/orientation. In Bulgaria, there had been a re-organization and expansion of committee support staff, a large portion of which had benefitted from FTF programs.

Because the MPs and committee staff are usually extremely busy in following the day-to-day progress of legislation (in committee or in the plenary), there is a need for a unit to analyze, synthesize and summarize the information available and put it in usable form. Of the countries visited, only Lithuania and Bulgaria have opted to create CRS-type units. It has been very successful in Lithuania, being well-received by all elements of the legislature; it also services requests from the Office of the President and ministries of the executive. The unit in Bulgaria still has to prove itself, having only been established in May 1995. The evaluation team was unable to assess the quality of the studies prepared so far by the Bulgarian unit, but the subject matter was appropriate and timely.

The Head of the Chancellery of the Polish Senat wrote Kristi Walseth in December 1994 that the Senat had become more independent of the executive branch because of the establishment, with FTF support, of the Senat's Research and Analysis Office. Similarly, the Director of the Bureau of Research of the Polish Sejm reported a constant growth of demand for the Bureau's services. The Director said the Bureau's organizational structure and range of duties had been strongly influenced by the Frost Task Force and CRS. A research center was also created in the Federal Assembly of the Czech and Slovak Republic and became a separate department (Parliamentary Institute) in the Office of the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic.

One of the most important activities of a legislature can be the review of the government's budget. This is an activity for which the legislators are often not well prepared. To help meet this need, one of the Parliamentary Institutes was designed specifically for those who would have primary responsibility for budget analysis. If follow-on assistance were available, a number of countries (including those not visited by the team) would wish to see this specific institute repeated.

An important issue in the use of information is who gets to use it and how may they use it. Generally this is set forth in the rules and procedures of the parliament. In both Hungary and Lithuania parliamentary staff gave credit to FTF-sponsored visits to the U.S. or discussions with FTF personnel in-country for ideas that were incorporated in the parliament's rules.

C. LEGISLATIVE ROLE IN PROMOTING DEMOCRACY

1. Tone Set by the Parliament

A number of the issues that arise in establishing parliamentary rules not only impact on the quality of the legislation, they often set the tone of the parliament — an important indicator of whether the parliament is promoting democracy. Some questions to be raised in this regard include:

- *Can any MP raise issues for discussion by the parliament, draft legislation, request explanations from the government about topics of interest?*

The rules for debate and the offering of amendments vary by parliament, and sometimes by piece of legislation. However, in all of the parliaments visited, times were set aside in the plenary sessions for any MP to bring up any issue that she/he wished, including offering legislation. Some of the countries visited by the team credited FTF-sponsored activities for the existence of such a rule.

All the parliaments visited had procedures whereby any MP, at certain times, could pose questions for the government and the government subsequently (usually at a regular time in the plenary schedule) would respond to the questions. Committees also frequently obtain representations from representatives of government.

- ▶ *Are there mechanisms enabling the public in general and the media to know what is being considered in the parliament and to make its views known?*

Public and media access to plenary sessions was available in all of the countries visited, but information on how to obtain a pass was not always readily available, e.g., in Albania. The session the team visited in Hungary was the best attended by the public that the team observed — it was the day when the government officials responded to questions. There was also a large number of media in attendance.

Plenary sessions in all of the countries visited are televised, but frequently only excerpts are actually broadcast publicly, presumably for lack of interest by the viewers.

Access to committee sessions was rare. In Albania, they said there was no room. Albanian MPs and those from other countries said there was very little interest in committee sessions on the part of the public — the idea of such participation was totally new.

With regard to individuals or organizations making their views known, all of the parliaments had a system for dealing with constituent mail. While some mail comes to individual MPs or parliamentary committees, a lot comes to the parliament in general. This is because not all of the countries have a voting system whereby the individual runs for office from a certain district. Rather, a number come off of party lists. The parliaments have systems for dealing with constituent mail; the Lithuanian system seemed the best organized. Records were kept of the types of concerns and questions so that the data could be analyzed.

- ▶ *Are members violating laws or taking special privileges?*

In at least two of the parliaments visited, mention was made of laws or rules that covered conflict of interest; another was still wrestling with the subject. FTF-sponsored visits to the U.S. and the in-country all-member conferences were credited with bringing this issue to the fore (Hungary and Lithuania). Lithuania had passed a conflict of interest law for civil servants, but had not yet been successful in crafting one to apply to the MPs.

It should be noted that the tone in the parliament usually reflects the attitudes of the political factions and the parties they represent. The FTF program did not deal with factions or parties. Hence, the USAID funding of other organizations, such as the National Democratic Institute and the International Republican Institute, to work directly with political parties was helpful to achieving the USAID objective of promoting democracy.

- ▶ *Does approved legislation conform to constitutional norms?*

Most of the countries have established constitutional courts to review legislation to ensure that it conforms to the constitution. The Bulgarian parliament has also established a Council on Legislation, composed of constitutional and other legal experts, which reviews laws and treaties before they are submitted to the plenary for final approval. The Council's reports go to the appropriate parliamentary committee and to the chairman of the parliament. Unfortunately, the Council's recommendations have been ignored on a number of instances by the 37th National Assembly and the laws have subsequently been rejected by the constitutional court. The current Slovak parliament has also passed a number of measures that have been rejected by the country's constitutional court.

- *Does the parliament serve as a model for political debate, compromise, and consensus building, demonstrating on a day-to-day basis that conflicts can be resolved peacefully?*

This would be demonstrated in both plenary and committee action. All of the parliaments visited by the team had rules requiring that all parties could bring issues to the plenary sessions, and there were some efforts at building coalitions around particular pieces of legislation (e.g., control of the media) and in obtaining non-partisan input in the drafting of legislation (e.g., drafting legal codes in Lithuania, reviewing draft legislation in Bulgaria). The most impressive activity that the evaluation team heard about was the practice in Hungary of obtaining consensus of at least five of the six political parties represented in the parliament on the general approach to important issues before beginning the actual drafting of legislation.

2. Content of Legislation

A review of the content of legislation is also important in assessing a legislature's role in promoting democracy. What kinds of constitutional changes, laws or changes to laws are being passed? Are they expanding or contracting political and economic liberties?

One of the underpinnings of democracy is a free and independent media. The writing of a media law is of concern to a number of the countries that participated in the FTF program. The parliament in Albania has been working on a media law for over a year; the Lithuanian Seimas is also struggling with the issue. One of the activities of the commission working on the media law is to obtain legislation from other countries, particularly from Western Europe. In Hungary, a six-party consensus was reached during the team's visit on the main outlines of a media law. This agreement now has to be translated into a draft law. Although the media issue is far from being settled, the team believes that the only FTF country where a free media seems to be in danger is Slovakia.

There follows a listing of some of the principal "pro-democracy" legislative actions taken by the parliaments participating in the FTF program:

- ▶ writing or revising their countries' constitutions to be supportive of democracy and the development of market economies;
- ▶ establishing constitutional courts whose primary function is to guarantee the supremacy of the constitution of the country;
- ▶ electoral reform;
- ▶ passing or modifying economic and social legislation to be supportive of the constitutional changes and to be in harmony with that of European countries;
- ▶ rules and procedures governing the electronic media;
- ▶ revising laws regarding local government to de-centralize authority and, in some cases, pass resources to local communities;
- ▶ enacting new rules for government procurement, requiring competition and openness in contracting; and
- ▶ establishing conflict of interest rules for government and, in some cases, legislative personnel.

3. Serve as the Principal Public Forum on Policy Issues

Especially in countries coming out from under the reign of autocratic governments dominated by a single political party, it is important that the new legislature serve as the principal public forum for discussing significant national issues and problems. It should become the marketplace for the expression and exchange of ideas between and among differing groups and interests.

In the CEE countries, the fight for independence was usually fought out in the somewhat liberalized legislatures that were developing in some of the countries toward the end of the period of communist domination. Thus, it was only natural that they would continue to be the focus of intense debate in a number of countries. However, in the more recent round of elections, some political parties (or two-party coalitions) seem to be moving in the direction of less debate and quick votes.

* * *

Although the FTF program was not designed to promote democracy, it is clear that its support to the newly elected democratic legislatures in Central and Eastern Europe had a positive impact on the efforts of these parliaments to strengthen their new-found democracy. The FTF program exposed legislators and their staffs to the principal features of a working democracy and the role the legislature can play in the democratic process. The program gave the participants the tools needed to go and do likewise. To a very large extent, they made good use of the tools. A side benefit of the success of the FTF program is the goodwill generated among the legislative leadership in these countries.

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V. FUTURE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMS

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A. Suggested Pre-Conditions for Initiating New Programs

One of the first steps would be to be clear on the objectives of the new project or program. Is it a two or three-year "jump-start" program, like the Frost Task Force (FTF) program, or a more traditional three to five-year institutional development program? Our working assumption is that the conditions justifying a "jump-start" program, which existed in Central and Eastern Europe in 1990, do not exist in 1996. The latter could involve heavier up-front activity for observation trips, training, and technical assistance with potential outlays for more sophisticated equipment probably coming later in the project than was the case of the FTF program.

Presumably the principal reason for considering a legislative assistance program would be to promote or defend democracy. Some may ask if this is the best way to do that. The answer is that there is no one sure way to promote democracy; in fact, it would probably make sense in most countries to work with more than one public institution as well as with nongovernmental ones if they exist. As discussed in Section IV, legislatures in general are positioned to be the principal public forum for the discussion of policy issues and to set the tone for political debate and promote consensus.

Assuming that there is consensus inside USAID to have a legislative support project/program, some questions should be asked before broaching the subject of assistance in a particular country. Is the country committed to democracy? If not, is it possible to undertake other activities until there is some consensus? If yes, is the legislative leadership committed to democracy and to modernization of the legislature? CRS has stressed the importance of commitment of legislative leadership; the evaluation team also noted that lack of progress in certain countries at certain times was directly related to the commitment from leadership. CDIE evaluators have come to similar conclusions in some of their studies.

One way to test the commitment of political leadership to democracy would be to request that a multi-faction group be established to help plan and monitor the legislative program. Obtaining the approval of such a group would also help insulate the program from changes in the leadership of the legislature — which happened in most of the FTF countries. Furthermore, such a group can help pave the way for, and support, modernization activity — including conducting a needs assessment that would be a prerequisite for establishing the country program.

Excepting that overriding considerations exist for taking immediate action, try not to launch a legislative assistance activity in a country unless the next scheduled legislative election is at least two years away. The best time to launch would be with a new legislature.

B. Guidelines for Program Content

Two main activities are needed: 1) mind-stretching; and 2) equipping for action.

Mind-stretching would be focussed on two questions: 1) what is the legislature's role in promoting democracy and nation-building? and 2) how can the legislature be effective in carrying out its role?

The mind-stretching could be carried out in the following activities:

- ▶ Parliamentary conferences carried out early in the term of the new legislature;
- ▶ Observation trips to the U.S., Western Europe and selected countries in Central and Eastern Europe — possibly to a democratic Muslim country, depending on the particular ENI country; and
- ▶ periodic in-country workshops on a related theme carried out by a local NGO or university institute.

As a part of answering the question about the legislature's role it may be possible to arrive at a consensus among the legislative leadership and faction leaders on what should be the legislative priorities, e.g., does the legislature want to be in a position to do an independent review of the budget, are there certain subject matters that are the highest priority for new or amended legislation, are there potential dangers to the democracy that the legislature should be addressing and/or alerting the country about, etc.?

The next step might be to bring into the discussion the heads of committees and heads of legislative departments to determine how the legislature can be effective in carrying out the emerging program. If they are serious about the legislature becoming effective, this leadership group will be led to look for the tools to do the job. If they have not already done so, they are likely to become aware of the importance of independent sources of information and the need to disseminate and utilize this information.

This brings us to the tools needed to equip the legislature for action: information materials, technology and training — to use the technology to access, disseminate and use the information.

The information materials component of the project would focus on helping the legislature get a good connection to the Internet and in training personnel in how to use the Internet. Some U.S. publications might be procured under the project, but this would be minimal because of the availability of the Internet and the activities of other donors. The Europeans have been quite willing to provide books and serials, and West European regional organizations are opening small specialized libraries within the parliamentary or national libraries in Central and Eastern Europe.

Provision of computers, and usually networking equipment and software, is extremely important for the new parliament: 1) to obtain needed information and disseminate it where it is needed; and 2) to manage the legislative process effectively. The team recommends a strong automation technology component in any new program. It further recommends the following as guidelines for those who would formulate such a program.

- ▶ Programs should generally have a five-year span to avoid premature installation of sophisticated equipment and to allow for the gradual introduction of ever more sophisticated systems, taking into account local conditions, capabilities, and performance.
- ▶ The first step should be to provide technical support in preparing a three to five-year parliamentary automation plan — tailor-made to each country.
- ▶ A cadre of the project's technical support personnel should be located in the region and should stay in longer than the FTF personnel were able to do. A technical implementor should be available on the ground for 60 to 90 days during the initial start-up phases of each country's projects. The recipients should be making progress reports on a regular basis.
- ▶ The project should consider the establishment of a quality Internet connection as an integral part of the "infrastructure," equally as important as a cable plant, hubs, patch panels,

bridges, etc. In addition, consideration should be given to funding Internet access costs for the first two years of the project and then phase out over two years.

More training should be planned for in-house and in-country than was carried out under the FTF program. Some might be in the form of organized hands-on training programs, particularly with new technology (including using the Internet). An expatriate to work with a research and analysis unit for the first six months to a year might help it gain integrity — this would need to be tested because it could have the opposite effect in some situations. Training of personnel for such a unit could take place on-the-job if it were feasible to have a resident expatriate. Otherwise, the planned head of such a unit should visit CRS and the research and analysis units in Poland and Lithuania. Perhaps it could be arranged for them to work in one of the units for a few weeks.

Support for committee staff in information gathering and analysis and in the drafting of legislation might include visits to the U.S. Congress and/or a state legislature. An alternative might be a "circuit rider" expert in the region that would give seminars and spend two weeks at different locales working with an individual or group on a piece of legislation.

C. Modes of Implementation

The mode of implementation may depend on whether the project is being carried out on a bilateral basis or through a regional project. Assuming a regional project, there should be a coordinating unit, presumably a contractor or grantee. The evaluation team believes that the FTF program indicates the need for a stronger field presence. This would seem to be even more important as the recipient countries become even farther geographically from the U.S. and if it is decided that the "jump-start" approach is not feasible or desirable. We believe costs of such a field presence can be significantly reduced if the project coordinating unit utilizes a number of Central and Eastern European experts to carry out training activities. It might even be feasible to establish a regional training center for certain specialties in conjunction with one of the legislatures that participated in the FTF program, e.g., Poland.

The coordinating unit must be very sensitive to the potential political pitfalls of working closely with a sovereign legislature; at the same time, it must also have access to a top level technology team. It may be difficult to find a single firm or grantee that can meet these criteria. A consortium approach to project implementation may be indicated.

CRS-CH5.R43

ANNEX A. SCOPE OF WORK

Development Associates, Inc.

ARTICLE I — TITLE

Evaluation of parliamentary assistance in Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries, Democratic Governance and Public Administration, Project No. 180-0019.01.

ARTICLE II — OBJECTIVE

To strengthen democracy in Central and Eastern European countries by improving the capacity of their parliaments.

ARTICLE III — STATEMENT OF WORK

A. Introduction

With communism's collapse, political power in the Central and East European (CEE) countries has shifted from a once highly centralized executive branch to multi-party legislative systems which are not functioning according to their design. Many of these parliaments had a basic understanding of parliamentary procedures but lacked useful and tangible parliamentary resources.

These newly democratic parliaments are now overwhelmed by the legislative volume, the demand for fast action, and increased responsibility. Without the experience, equipment, or expertise needed to create laws and maintain order, these parliaments are in a most difficult situation.

It is within this context that the need for parliamentary assistance arose. Within the broad goal of strengthening democratic institutions, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), under the Support for East European Democracy (SEED) Act, has assisted in improving parliamentary effectiveness throughout the CEE.

In April 1990, the Speaker of the House of Representatives created the Special Task Force on the Development of Parliamentary Institutions in Eastern Europe to determine how the House, as an institution, could assist these developing parliaments.

In 1991, USAID and the Library of Congress (LOC) signed a \$4.25 million Inter-Agency Agreement to provide equipment and technical assistance to the parliaments of Hungary, Poland, and the Czech and Slovak Federated Republic. Since that time, the effort and amount spent in the CEE has grown to a total of \$17.5 million.

B. Evaluation

USAID's Bureau for Europe and the New Independent States, Office of Democracy and Governance (ENI/DG) is evaluating the extent to which these parliamentary assistance programs have helped enact pro-democratic laws and put pro-democratic legislative institutions into place.

This study is to assess the impact of the parliamentary assistance programs and recommend effective strategies for assisting the CEE countries. To improve the parliamentary institutional capacity, this program is strengthening institutional infrastructures, providing modern automation

and office systems for analyzing information, and strengthening the members of these parliaments (and their professional staff) professional capabilities.

C. Evaluation Issues

To effectively evaluate the effect these programs have had on parliamentary assistance, the contractor must

- ▶ Isolate reasons for any problems and recommend solutions.
- ▶ Compare and contrast assistance programs and their effectiveness in those countries.
- ▶ Assess the equipment, technical assistance, and resource development.
- ▶ Recommend alternative courses of action if necessary.
- ▶ Submit recommendations for an effective strategy for future assistance in the CEE and determine whether those strategies can be translated to other parts of the world.

D. Evaluation Guidelines

The Contractor should evaluate these parliamentary assistance programs' impact. Specific desired effects for this evaluation are:

1. Improved efficiency via new equipment;
2. Legislative tracking and communications technology;
3. Expanded research capabilities through acquisition of independent information and analysis capabilities;
4. Enhanced library services and staff ability to serve Members of Parliament's needs; and
5. Expanded regional cooperation.

The Contractor must determine to what extent program objectives have been met or will soon be met, and it is within these objectives' parameters that the Contractor must evaluate the pursuit of the stated program goals.

ARTICLE IV — DELIVERABLES

1. A draft work plan — Four days prior to departure, the Contractor shall submit a draft work plan to ENI/DG/RLG for concurrence. The work plan will show determined measures by which to assess the impact of assistance provided, taking into consideration the political situations in each country as well as the argument that legislative improvement cannot be measured by greater efficiency. In the work plan, the Contractor will propose methods for data collection and measurements for testing the impact, effectiveness, and efficiency of assistance delivered. This plan will include the indicators the evaluators propose to use to assess and measure impact for each country and a list of in-country interviews planned to date. The Contractor must specify a systematic way to compare information across countries and determine a method to substantiate findings.

2. Draft report — The Contractor will submit a draft report no later than 14 days after the appraisal team's return to the United States which:

- (a) identifies, in order of importance, successful activities or accomplishments stemming from the approach to date;
- (b) calls attention to, documents, justifies, and analyzes problem areas;
- (c) recommends solutions to these problems;
- (d) recommends types of assistance, in order of importance, that should be continued, expanded, or discontinued;
- (e) when appropriate, recommends, in order of importance, new or complementary initiatives for the future, and
- (f) addresses the pursuit of the goal and objectives and the evaluation questions and issues for this project as laid out in the Statement of Work.

5. Executive Summary — This summary will be included in the draft and final reports, and will outline the report points above, in order of importance. This summary will not exceed three pages.

6. Final Report — Within six working days of receipt of USAID's comments on the draft report, the Contractor will submit the final report.

Note: The evaluation questions referred to 4.(f) above were not included in the final Statement of Work, but it was the intent of ENI/DG/RLM that they be addressed by the evaluation team. These questions are as follows:

Political Impact

- 1) Is there any evidence that the balance of power between the executive branch and legislative branch changed due to these assistance initiatives? Has the assistance brought about any change in relations between the executive and legislative branches of the governments? If so, please document such evidence.
- 2) Ascertain, through conversations with Members of Parliament, the staff working with Parliament, parliamentary librarians, USAID representatives, other USG representatives, or by other means, how the assistance has directly affected the role and capability/efficiency of the individual Members and of the parliament, and the importance of certain groups.
- 3) What is the effect of the assistance on leadership and key staff participation and overall interaction among Members.
- 4) Define for each country the outside political and macro forces which may have affected the progress of project implementation. Take this political situation into account when evaluating each country.

Utilization

- 5) How have the skills/information/training received changed Member and staff work within the legislative process? Cite examples.

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- 6) Do the parliaments value any aspect of the programs (equipment, technical assistance, and library development) more than the others? If so, why? In what ways are the assistance programs responsive to specific host country needs?
- 7) Is the level of technological assistance commensurate with host country needs and capabilities?
- 8) How do the Library of Congress procurement office and House Information Systems Office's procurement processes for equipment vary in their integrity across the countries?
- 9) Where applicable, how have the legislatures used the legal codes and past and current legislation on electronic databases?
- 10) Have the libraries or research staffs restructured in any way as a result of the assistance?
- 11) Are the parliamentary libraries being put to better use as a result of the assistance? Are the librarians able to answer questions in depth? How do the librarians feel about the new equipment/technical assistance/larger library collections?
- 12) Do the Research and Analysis units have a customer service orientation? Are there mechanisms in place to solicit feedback from members of parliament and their staff on the quality of the analyses?

Legislative Impact

- 13) Determine if there has been a noticeable change, positive or negative, since the project's achievements, in the areas of: level of competence/ability to fully understand issues and length/frequency of debates (as affected by the assistance)?
- 14) Is the new information and research capacity accessible to all recognized political parties and organizations within the parliament? Are the resources used in a manner most beneficial to the Parliaments? Is there any evidence that the assistance is being used for purposes other than those for which it was intended?

Assistance Issues

- 15) Determine whether there were any other donors providing parliamentary assistance before or during the U.S. program. List and describe the involvement of each additional donor and describe how the assistance affected U.S. parliamentary assistance.
- 16) What steps have host countries taken to ensure the sustainability of the programs once USAID has completed its assistance?
- 17) Determine the starting point at which U.S. parliamentary assistance began in each country and use this when measuring the impact of assistance.

Inter-organizational, interpersonal issues

- 18) In Hungary in 1991-1992, the government undertook an approximately \$1.2 million effort to modernize its computer system at the same time as the Special Task Force project. How did these two projects, one through the government of Hungary, the other through the government of the United States, complement or conflict with each other? Have there been similar situations in other countries, and how did they turn out? Would such a situation be encouraged or discouraged in the future?

- 19) What were Members, staff and librarians' impressions about the program/Parliamentary Institutes/conferences (both in-country and overseas)? How do they think the programs might be improved?
- 20) Have the various USG counterparts worked well together, or have any conflicts disrupted the project?

Assessment

- 21) Determine whether the USAID country targets for this activity provide an effective means for measuring the end results. ENI/DG/RLG will provide country targets to the Contractor before departure from Washington, D.C. [not done]

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ANNEX B. LIST OF PERSONS CONTACTED

Development Associates, Inc.

HOUSE SPECIAL TASK FORCE

Martin Frost, D-TX — Chairman
Kristi Walseth, Staff Director for the Task Force

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS/CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE/HOUSE INFORMATION RESOURCES

William Robinson
Francis Miko
Cathy Brickman
Bill Freeman
Aletta Waterhouse
Julie Kim
Felicia Kolp
Robert Shrott
Roger Noble
Lynn V. Brooks
Bud Collins
Pamela Dragovich

USAID/WASHINGTON

Susan Kosinski, Project Officer
Gerry Donnelly, USAID/ENI/DG
Ellen Czaplewski, Desk Officer: Albania
Jenny Cowan, Desk Officer: Bulgaria
Brian Wickland, Desk Officer: Hungary
Jennifer Karp, Desk Officer: Latvia,
Lithuania, Estonia
Kay Harris, Evaluation Project Officer
Ilona Countryman, Project Officer
Ron Sprout, ENI/PCS
Jan Emmert, PPC/CDIE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Sherwood McGinnis, Office of the Coordinator
for East Europe Assistance
Tom Underwood, Desk Officer: Albania
Paul Huges, Desk Officer: Czech Republic
Eleanor Nagy, Desk Officer: Slovakia
Robert Norman, Desk Officer: Hungary

U.S. INFORMATION AGENCY

Alison Portnoy (By phone)

OTHER

Walter Raymond, Association of Former
Members of Congress
Thomas Carothers, Carnegie Endowment for
International Peace
Susan Benda, National Democratic Institute
Susan Atwood, National Democratic Institute

Note: For a list of people contacted in the countries visited, see the appropriate Tab to the Country Reports (Annexes E-H).

ANNEX C. LIST OF DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

Development Associates, Inc.

Documents from CRS and USAID

Report to Speaker Foley from the Special Task Force on the Development of Parliamentary Institutions in Eastern Europe - June 28, 1990

CRS Work Plan: Oct. 1993 - Dec. 1994

Inter-Agency Agreements between USAID and Library of Congress:

- Jan 1991 (\$4.25 million)
- Aug 1991 (\$758,000)
- Mar 1992 (\$6 million)
- Apr 1992 (\$3 million)
- Jul 1993 (\$3.5 million)
- Sep 1995 (\$3.055 million)

USAID Project Authorizations for the Inter-Agency Agreements

Memoranda

- CRS to Jerry Hyman, USAID, May 26, 1992
- CRS to Jerry Hyman, USAID, June 10, 1992
- CRS to Jerry Hyman, USAID, Feb. 11, 1993
- CRS to Jerry Hyman, USAID, Mar 25, 1993
- CRS to Peter Orr, USAID, Mar 10, 1994
- USAID to CRS, Mar 15, 1994
- USAID to CRS, Dec 28, 1994
- Cathy Brickman to Susan Kosinski re: Q2 FY94 report on project, Apr 7, 1994
- Cathy Brickman to Terry Nugent re: Q2 FY95 report on project, Apr 6, 1995
- Cathy Brickman to Susan Kosinski re: Q2 FY95 and Q4 FY94 report on project, Apr 6, 1995
- Cathy Brickman to Ken Miller re: Q3 FY95 report on project, Aug 11, 1995

Semi-Annual Reports of the Special Task Force

- As of Mar 31, 1991 (1st IAA was signed 1/30/91)
- Apr 1, 1991 - Sep 30, 1991
- Oct 1, 1991 - Mar 31, 1992
- Apr 1, 1992 - Sep 30, 1992
- Oct 1, 1992 - Mar 31, 1993
- Apr 1, 1993 - Sep 30, 1993
- Oct 1, 1993 - Mar 31, 1994
- Apr 1, 1994 - Sep 30, 1994
- Oct 1, 1994 - Mar 31, 1995

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Quarterly Reports of the Special Task Force

Apr 1, 1992 - Jun 30, 1992 (CEE)
 Jul 1, 1992 - Sep 30, 1992 (Baltic)
 Oct 1, 1992 - Dec 31, 1992 (CEE and Baltic)
 Jan 1, 1993 - Mar 31, 1993 (CEE and Baltic)
 Apr 1, 1993 - Jun 30, 1993 (CEE and Baltic)
 Jul 1, 1993 - Sep 30, 1993 (CEE and Baltic)
 Oct 1, 1993 - Dec 31, 1993 (CEE and Baltic)
 Jan 1, 1994 - Mar 31, 1994 (CEE)
 Apr 1, 1994 - Jun 30, 1994 (CEE)
 Jul 1, 1994 - Sep 30, 1994 (Baltic)
 Oct 1, 1994 - Dec 31, 1994 (CEE)
 Jul 1, 1995 - Mar 31, 1995 (CEE)
 Apr 1, 1995 - Jun 30, 1995 (CEE)

CRS Monthly Reports of the Library of Congress to the Chairman of the Special Task Force

Mar 1991	Jan 1992	Jan 1993	Jan 1994
Apr 1991	Sep 1992	Feb 1993	Feb 1994
Jul 1991	Oct 1992	Mar 1993	Mar 1994
Aug 1991	Nov 1992	Apr 1993	Apr 1994
Sep 1991	Dec 1992	May 1993	May 1994
Oct 1991		Jun 1993	Jun 1994
Nov 1991		Jul 1993	Jul 1994
Dec 1991		Aug 1993	Aug 1994
		Sep/Oct 1993	Sep 1994
		Nov/Dec 1993	Oct/Nov/Dec/1994

Trip Reports on Staff Visits to:

Czech and Slovak Federal Republic/Hungary/Poland (May 26 - Jun 4, 1990)
 Hungary/Czech and Slovak Federal Republic (Sep 1 - 15, 1990)
 Czech and Slovak Republic, Hungary, and Poland (Feb 23 - Mar 6, 1991)
 Bulgaria (May 26 - 31, 1991)
 Budapest (Aug 11 - 17, 1991)
 Sofia, Bulgaria and Warsaw, Poland (Aug 26 - Sep 7, 1991 & Dec 3-12, 1991)
 Poland (Nov 5 - 22, 1991)
 London, Prague, Budapest (Nov 22 - Dec 13, 1991)
 Albania and Hungary (Dec 1 - 7, 1991)
 Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia (report dated April 6, 1992)
 Czech and Slovak Federal Republic (Aug 8 - 12, 1992)
 Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, & Albania (Feb 21 - Mar 7, 1993)
 Lithuania to prepare for Parliamentary Conference (Jan 10 - 15, 1994)
 Lithuania (Felicia Kolp trip report dated October 1, 1994)
 Bratislava, Slovakia (Oct 1 - 6, 1994)
 Slovakia (Parliamentary Conference) (Nov 29 - Dec 1, 1994)

Agendas from Parliamentary Conference/Workshop

Czech Chamber of Deputies (May 14 - 17, 1995)
 National Council of the Slovak Republic (May 30 - 31, 1995)

Parliamentary Institute Agendas

Appendix A - Accomplishments to Date in Eastern Europe (Jan. 1991 - July 1995)

Automation Accomplishments as of 10/1/93, 10/20/94, and 1/1/95 by Cathy Brickman

Background Notes for all countries, U.S. Department of State

United States SEED Act Assistance Strategy Update for all countries

USAID Country Profile, March 1995 for all countries

Project Files 3/1/93 - 9/30/94, Office of USAID Representative, Tirana, Albania

Legislative Strengthening: A Synthesis of USAID Experience, Ryan S. McCannell, CDIE, USAID/Washington, May 1995

The Congressional Frost Task Force Program to Assist the Parliaments of Central and Eastern Europe, Francis Miko, Congressional Research Service, November 3, 1995

Parliamentary Development Assistance in Central Europe and the Former Soviet Union: Some Lessons from Experience, William H. Robinson and Francis Miko, Congressional Research Service, May 1993

Strengthening the Legislature and Democracy in the Philippines, CDIE Impact Evaluation, 1995

Letter of 14 December 1994 to Kristi Walseth from Wojciech Sawicki, Head of the Chancellery of the Polish Senat

Letter of 14 December 1994 to Kristi Walseth from Gabriel Dzurek, Chief of the Chancellery of the National Council (Slovakia)

Letter of 10 January 1995 to Francis Miko from Wieslaw Staskiewicz, Director, Bureau of Research, Chancellery of the Sejm (Poland)

Letter of 10 November 1994 to William Robinson from Ivi Eenmaa, General Director, National Library of Estonia.

Press clippings from an FTF program ceremony in Latvia

Other Documents

Information Services of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, 1994
Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, 1992 (printed in 1993)
Rules and Procedures of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, 1995

Description of Frost Task Force technology assistance in Bulgaria - from the Informatics staff at the Assembly, October 1995

Research Department, National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria, 1995
Written Products, Research Department, National Assembly of Bulgaria, 1995
Brief on the Library, National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria, 1995
National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria
Rules of Organization and Procedure of the National Assembly, Sofia, 1995
Members of Parliament in the 37th National Assembly, Sofia, 1995

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Recueil Informatif, Assemblée Populaire de la République d'Albanie, Juin 1995
"Albania: Making up for lost time," Financial Times, October 2, 1995
ORT Albania Democracy Network Program, July 1995
List of Albanian Laws, 1995

Democratization and Europeanization in Hungary: The First Parliament, 1990-1994, Hungarian Centre for Democracy Studies, 1995
Standing Orders of Parliament of the Republic of Hungary
On the Standing Orders of the Parliament of the Republic of Hungary, 1994

"Consultants in Eastern Europe Say They Aren't to Blame for Projects' Failures, International Herald Tribune, October 16, 1995

Democratic Legislative Institutions: A Comparative View, David M. Olson, M. E. Sharpe, New York, 1994

East-West Parliamentary Practice Project (Objectives and Organization), European Cooperation Fund, April 1993

Questionnaire response from the Czech Republic (general, equipment, library)

Questionnaire response from Slovakia (general, equipment, library)

Questionnaire responses from the Sejm (Poland):

General — from the Director of the Bureau of Research
Library — from the Director of the Sejm Library

Packet of information about, and reports of, the Research and Analysis Office of the Chancellery of the Polish Senat

ANNEX D. CHRONOLOGY OF CRS PROJECT

Development Associates, Inc.

1990

- Apr 6 The Special Task Force on the Development of Parliamentary Institutions in Eastern Europe was established by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The Chairman was Martin Frost; the other members were Bart Gordon, Nita Lowey, Sherrod Brown, Gerald Solomon, Jim Leach and David Dreier.
- Jun 28 The Special Task Force (Frost Task Force — FTF) submitted a report to Speaker Foley on its trip to Central Europe (Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary) in which it recommended assistance totalling \$6,341,000 to the three countries for equipment (\$5 million), Members and staff training (\$350,000 to the House Information Systems office), and library and research resources (\$991,000).
- Sep 18 The Joint Senate-House Committee on the Library of Congress approved the participation of the Congressional Research Service (CRS) in the administration of the assistance proposed by the FTF.
- Oct 17 The Technical Assistance Group of the FTF submitted its report on travel to Hungary and the Czech and Slovak Republic September 1 - 15, 1990, including its recommendations for legislative support to the two parliaments.

1991

- Jan 29 USAID authorized \$8 million for the East European Regional National Legislatures Project (180-0019) for activities to foster democratic pluralism. It was planned to obligate \$6 million for Poland, Hungary, and the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic. The remaining \$2 million would be obligated for the legislatures of Bulgaria, Romania, and Yugoslavia contingent upon political developments in those countries. The life of the activity was to be three years.
- Jan 30 An Inter-Agency Agreement was signed between USAID and the Library of Congress (LOC) under which \$4.25 million was allocated to the LOC for Poland, Hungary, and the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic (CSFR) for equipment (\$2,785,000 — primarily for Hungary and CSFR because Poland was to receive assistance under the Gift for Democracy program of the U.S. Senate), technical assistance for information and research capability (\$756,000), library collections (\$509,000), and general administration (\$200,000). The LOC activity was to be managed under the direction of the Frost Task Force.
- Aug 26 USAID authorized Amendment #1 to the Inter-Agency Agreement, authorizing the LOC to undertake activities in Bulgaria, Romania, Yugoslavia, Albania, and such other countries as USAID might subsequently designate in writing — within the authorized funding level of \$6 million. The allocation to LOC was increased from \$4.25 million to \$5,008,000.
- Aug 26 USAID and LOC signed Amendment #1 to the Inter-Agency Agreement increasing the budget allocation to \$5,008,000 and authorizing LOC programs in Bulgaria,

Romania, Yugoslavia, and Albania. The budget was distributed as follows: Equipment - \$3,151,000; Technical Assistance - \$994,000; Library Collections - \$609,000; and General Administration - \$254,000.

Sep 19 USAID signed Amendment #2 to the Project Authorization, authorizing the inclusion of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in the program — per the recommendation of the FTF.

1992

Mar 25 USAID authorized Amendment #3 to the project authorization, increasing the life-of-project budget from \$8 million to \$15 million, of which \$14,008,000 was planned for FTF-managed activities. In addition, USAID was authorized to directly obligate funds.

Mar 26 USAID and LOC signed a new Inter-Agency Agreement providing an additional \$6 million for the programs in Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia (sic), and Bulgaria.

Apr 23 USAID and LOC signed a new Inter-Agency Agreement providing \$3 million for implementing programs in the Baltic States (Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia).

May 22 USAID authorized a new Democratic Governance and Public Administration project (180-0019) to consolidate the Local Government and Public Administration project (180-0018) and the National Legislatures project (180-0019). Life-of-Project funding for the new project was set at \$31.5 million (\$21.75 million for legislatures) and the project completion date was extended to January 29, 1996. This was considered Amendment #4 to the National Legislatures project.

1993

Jul 12 USAID and LOC signed a new Inter-Agency Agreement for \$3.5 million for a two-year program of assistance to the legislatures of Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The funds were allocated as follows: Equipment - \$2,140,000; Technical Assistance - \$830,000; Library Collections - \$430,000; and General Administration - \$100,000. The country distribution was: Albania - \$1,468,000; Bulgaria - \$282,000; Estonia - \$590,000; Latvia - \$632,000; and Lithuania - \$528,000.

Nov 19 USAID authorized Amendment #5 to increase the funding for Project 180-0019 to \$93.6 million (\$25.25 million for legislatures) and extend the life of the project to January 29, 1998.

1995

Feb 23 USAID authorized Amendment # 6 to extend Project 180-0019 to January 29, 1999, with no change in the funding level.

Sep 15 USAID allocated an additional \$3,055,000 to the LOC for legislatures in Albania (\$291,000), Slovakia (\$249,000) and Romania (\$2,515,000). The completion date for the activities is December 31, 1996.

NOTE: **FOR ACTIVITIES IN INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES, SEE THE COUNTRY REPORTS AND COUNTRY CHRONOLOGIES (ANNEXES E - M).**

ANNEX E. COUNTRY REPORT — ALBANIA

Development Associates, Inc.

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ANNEX E. COUNTRY REPORT — ALBANIA

Development Associates, Inc.

I. SETTING

Albania was the most repressive and most isolated of Eastern Europe's Marxist-Leninist states. Its history, even pre-dating 48 years of communism and 500 years in the Ottoman Empire, was characterized by the subjugation of its people. Thus, when communism collapsed in 1990, Albania had virtually no previous experience with, or knowledge of, the most basic concepts underpinning democracy: popular representation and participation in governance, diversity in ideas and sources of information, the rule of law and respect for human rights, and civilian control of the military.

Enver Hoxha ruled with an iron hand until his death in 1985. His hand-picked successor, Ramiz Alia, gradually brought the country out of its international isolation and began to ease political controls on the population and institute modest economic reforms. However, influenced by developments in the rest of Central and Eastern Europe, opposition to the government had become so strong by the end of 1990 that the Alia government agreed to multi-party elections.

In these elections in March and April 1991, the Communist party won by a substantial margin, dominating the 250-member parliament. However, the opposition claimed that the elections had not been fair (as did international observers) and staged massive demonstrations against continued Communist rule. The government resigned June 5, 1991 and an interim coalition government of experts was formed to govern until new elections. The latter took place in March 1992 for the Presidency and the parliamentary-style People's Assembly. The Democratic Party, the major opposition party, won the election.

The Assembly elected in 1992 consisted of 140 Deputies, of which 100 were elected by constituency and 40 were nominated by the political parties. The number nominated from each party is based on the ratio of the party's total vote in the election to the total of all votes. At the time of the election, 92 deputies were members of the Democratic Party, 38 from the Socialist Party, 7 from the Social Democratic Party, and 3 from two other parties. Seven women deputies were elected. The Deputies come from a variety of vocational fields, e.g., 26 engineers, 26 teachers, 19 economists, 15 medical doctors, 10 agriculturists, 8 university professors, and 6 journalists. Very few had prior governmental experience; 125 were serving as Deputies for the first time.

Responsibility for the overall management of the People's Assembly resides with the President of the Assembly and two Vice-Presidents. The work of the Assembly is carried out through 10 Parliamentary Commissions and two-days-a-week plenary sessions. A number of staff offices support the Presidency of the Assembly and the Commissions. An organization chart of the People's Assembly is appended as Tab A.

Project activity in Albania was authorized in August 1991, and the Frost Task Force sent a staff delegation to Albania in December 1991. The delegation determined that assistance from the Frost Task Force should await new elections and the implementation of changes in the structure of the Assembly. Although elections were held in March 1992, a full assessment trip was not made until February 1993. The first assistance was provided the following month and technical assistance and library support intensified quickly. Requests for Proposals for equipment were issued in October 1993 and a significant quantity of equipment was delivered in 1994 and 1995.

In toto ten MPs and parliamentary staff were sent to the US either to attend Parliamentary Institutes or on individual trips to view legislative support operations, meet with Congressional staff, or to attend meetings such as COMDEX in Las Vegas or the National Council of State Governments in San Diego. Over the next 18 months, Frost Task Force staff made 15 trips to Albania varying in purpose from additional assessment to problem analysis and resolution to equipment acceptance and on-site instruction. The principal Frost Task Force actions are recorded in Tab B (Chronology). A list of the people contacted in Albania by the evaluation team is appended as Tab C.

II. THE PROJECT

A. Equipment and Related Training

Albania was cited by the Frost Task Force as the country most isolated from technological advances in the field of office automation, and therefore the most ill-equipped of the countries involved in the assistance project. There were virtually no modern office automation tools on the premises when the Frost Task Force first visited the country in December 1991. There was also a 90-day time lag between passage of laws and their publication in the official *Gazette*.¹

1. Computers

a. Assistance Provided

The Frost Task Force provided material assistance for computer equipment at these levels:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| PCs & Printers | Thirty two PCs and Laser Printers, two notebook PCs and a portable printer were delivered between March 1993 and July 1994. |
| Software | Word Processing software was purchased for each PC; Spreadsheet, Database, and desktop publishing software was purchased as needed, but not for every PC. |
| Network | The interconnection of the PCs into a network did not occur until the summer of 1995, one year after delivery of the last batch of PCs. Frost assistance paid for installing cables to interconnect all of the PCs, along with associated devices for handling network traffic, collectively known as a Cable Plant. The Novell Network Operating System version 3.12 was also installed. |
| Scanner | An entry level optical scanning device was provided for the Desktop Publishing unit which produces the <i>Gazette</i> . |
| Copiers | Five small office copiers and two high volume copiers were purchased and delivered in the first quarter of 1995. |
| Fax | Four plain paper fax machines were purchased and delivered in the first quarter of 1995. |

b. Implementation Obstacles

The primary implementation obstacles in Albania were threefold:

¹Without publication in the *Gazette*, a law is not really in effect.

- (1) The country's lack of exposure to contemporary office technology at all levels inhibited planning. In addition to being a new experience for those people who would actually use the technology, there were concerns about locating competent maintenance providers and sources for spare parts in Albania;
- (2) The absorptive capacity of the small staff at the Assembly was minimal; and
- (3) Communications between Albania and the outside world were difficult to non-existent.

There was no technical expertise at the Assembly for implementation and supervision of the technology tools proposed by the Frost Task Force. House Information Resources (HIR) Engineer and Frost Technical advisor Bud Collins says that, given these concerns, they proceeded slowly. In fact, only a couple of PCs were initially installed in March 1993, over a year after the first site visit by the Frost Task Force. A few more PCs were installed in July of 1993, and the remainder one year later in July 1994. The network component in Albania was not installed for yet another year, in July 1995. As of this evaluation, the network is not 100% functional: the cable plant is not complete (there is no connection to the Assembly Library) and a few individual PCs either lack networking components or are having conflicts with the network. In addition, many of the PCs, although connected to the network, do not activate that connection when turned on each day.

Concerns about maintenance were verified by the failure of the selected in-country vendor to provide timely and responsive service. The vendor, InfoSoft, was responsible for warranty service on the computer equipment and maintenance of the Xerox photocopiers. Excessive delays in replacement of PC parts covered under warranty resulted in unnecessary down-time for some computers. The vendor's Xerox technicians did not have enough experience with the products they were supposed to service. During our visit we observed one copier in a state of partial disassembly. It has been out of service for more than two months. An advisor to the Congressional Research Services (CRS) team has recommended no additional work from InfoSoft. We are told that there are now other sources for Xerox and PC service in Albania, but we have no information on their technical capabilities or their performance compared to InfoSoft.

At the beginning of the project, the People's Assembly had no FAX, few and poorly working telephones, and no e-mail. This obstacle was largely overcome by communicating with the Assembly by using USAID and USIS services. Nevertheless, the problem contributed to delays in getting decisions and created problems in planning trips of FTF personnel.

The lack of available technical counterparts and relatively low priority given to office automation by the Speaker meant that the Assembly's actions related to the project were often delayed.

c. Usage and Impact

Our interviews with Assembly staff were consistent in their reporting that the PC equipment usage is limited primarily to basic word processing functions. The person in charge of publishing the *Gazette* uses an advanced product called PageMaker to handle the more complex page layout requirements of that job. The Library staff uses an off-the-shelf product called ProCite which is a bibliographic program used as an electronic card catalogue system (ProCite is not a multi-user network program).

One local vendor, the International Computer Company (ICC), has been contracted to develop some very basic database management tasks for the Archives Department, the Interparliamentary Affairs Department, and the Finance office. Most of these applications are under development or in testing mode. The Finance office uses a payroll calculation program, but still types payroll checks on a typewriter. A materials inventory database is in use there, and an accounting system is under development.

The Novell network installed in July 1995 is still not complete. As of September 15, 1995, William Freeman, an HIR automation consultant, reported that only 28 of the 32 PCs installed at the Assembly were actually attached to the network. Our spot check showed that many of the PCs which have cable connections to the network do not actually establish that connection when they are "booted" each morning. From the perspective of implementation, there is not really a "network system" in place at the Assembly. The wires are strung and the Novell software is installed. But there is little evidence of data or resource sharing (e.g. network access to CD-ROM services in the Library or shared databases in other departments) and no demonstrable reason to have a network.

The photocopying equipment is used extensively.

FAX machines are installed, and used. However, the library staff's FAX does not have an available phone line, and FAXes sent out of country must be approved by the Chief of Cabinet of the Assembly.

Lotus spreadsheet software is used by a few people, but no training has been provided for that product.

The scanner is used to digitize photographs or graphics for use in the *Gazette*.

d. Training

One week of DOS training and one week of WordPerfect training was provided to about 20 staff members at the Assembly. The training was provided by the state-owned Institute of Informatics and Applied Mathematics (INIMA) in Tirana, and was funded by the SOROS Foundation. Each day of class was actually a 3 to 4 hour session. No additional training has been provided by INIMA or any other training organization. No internal training programs were identified.

Our spot check of 20 PCs at the Assembly confirms that minimal basic WordPerfect functions are employed by most operators. Advanced skills such as the use of macros, style sheets, and templates which streamline the production of routine documents was not evident in our examination of the operator's environment and work product.

The person who is in charge of maintaining and supporting the PCs at the Assembly, Mr. Leonat Pashkja, is a recent college graduate and an electrical engineer. He attended some but not all of the DOS and WordPerfect training done by INIMA. During the week of our assessment he was receiving four days of Novell System Administrator training from the Hungarian Donosphere Company.

e. Critique of Assistance and Its Use

Given the baseline conditions reported in 1991, the technology portion of material assistance provided to the Albanian Assembly has clearly had a dramatic impact on the organization's ability to generate information. The Frost Task Force and its technical advisors described 1991 conditions in Tirana as "something like an American office in the early 1950s":

- ▶ There were two telephones for the entire Assembly;
- ▶ There were no photocopiers;
- ▶ Proceedings of the Assembly were recorded by hand on the backside of previously used paper;

- ▶ There was one PC, but it was used for publishing the *Gazette*; all other text was produced on old manual typewriters.

Introducing computers, laser printers, and photocopiers into this environment virtually guaranteed immediate improvements in productivity by virtue of the mechanical processes being replaced. In that context the Frost Task Force's assistance has had an impact on the Assembly's administrative capabilities. Measurements in other contexts are not as discernible. Most of the computers have been installed for just over a year and are being used as electronic typewriters. Applications beyond Word Processing are just evolving and have not had sufficient usage from which to assess impact.

The Frost Task Force's technological objectives generally were to build a basic technological infrastructure (e.g. personal computers, network cable plants, Novell networks, off-the-shelf core software for word processing). In Albania, however, the initial objective was merely to start the automation process. The decision to add a network came in 1994 at the request of the newly hired Chief of Staff.

In the last 15 months, when the bulk of the PCs have been in place, their usage, with few exceptions, has not progressed beyond the electronic typewriter metaphor. No follow-on training has been conducted since the original introductory sessions in 1994.

The Frost Task Force's own reports discuss how primitive the baseline environment was; it seems shortsighted to give the Assembly high tech tools and no direction on how to approach using them. We recognize that the Frost Task Force by design did not want to get into the application layer of these automation systems, but given the obvious conditions in Albania, we think that in this instance an exception was and still is warranted. More discussion of specifics is found below in Section IV (Conclusions and Recommendations).

In our interviews with technical personnel and computer users, we found no evidence of any consideration of why they have a network — why there was a file server and what its function would be. These are not technical issues; rather, they are conceptual issues. There are no computers with any structured way of filing WordPerfect documents; there are virtually no documents *on the network* and, consequently, *no shared information on the network*. There is no awareness of the requirement to make safety copies of data through a rigorous file server backup procedure.

All proceedings of the Assembly are tape recorded and transcribed into WordPerfect. They are then printed and filed with the Archives department. But no one has thought about using those WordPerfect transcription files as a shared data *resource* for the MPs or their professional staff. WordPerfect's full-text indexing capabilities can give all users powerful searching capabilities with which to locate specific information discussed during debates at the Assembly.

The Chief of Staff of the Assembly, Mr. Walter Paci, is the only person we interviewed who seems to have some sense of vision for how the Assembly's automation tools should be used. But that vision is somewhat narrow due to his own lack of experience in dealing with such issues. In sum, you cannot know where you are going if you have no sense of the possibilities.

The network itself is too undeveloped to evaluate. The infrastructure is there in the form of a cable plant and Novell network software. But the file server is virtually void of data, and most of the PCs, although connected by cable to the network, do not make a connection to that network when turned on each day.

In response to the foregoing critique (sharper in the draft report), the CRS says that FTF technicians tried to get the Assembly to hire an informatics technician long before it did. FTF offered to fund a consultant to analyze the Assembly's needs, but the speaker was not interested. FTF was also willing to contract for additional training.

f. Sustainability Issues

One staff person has responsibility for maintaining the computer equipment and that person is also responsible for the voting equipment and sound system at the Assembly chambers, and for other electrical equipment throughout the Assembly. There is no staff person in charge of network administration, although we were told that a full-time position has been approved but not filled.

There has been no follow-on training for the computer users nor have we seen any plans which indicate on-going training programs or funding for those programs. We were told by the Speaker of the People's Assembly, Mr. Pjeter Arbnori, that if the party in power loses seats in the next election (in March 1996) mass turnover of staff will occur. If that happens, what little expertise that has been developed at the Assembly will be lost.

The salaries in the Assembly are very low, and that creates the potential for high turnover. Well trained technology people are easily lured to the private sector. The Organization for Rehabilitation through Training (ORT) offers computer training classes through a USAID-funded job training project. An interview with the ORT Project Director revealed a high demand for computer-literate workers. The ORT program, since 1992, has trained over 1,500 students in basic computer literacy. The Albanian economy is growing and attracting new business from international organizations. Those organizations are importing jobs which require technical expertise and which pay much better than the Assembly — or the government in general. The Assembly has this year approved raises for government workers totaling 20 percent.

There is no budget in place for equipment repair. Most of the PC equipment was acquired just 15 months ago and is still under warranty. When the warranties expire, however, there must be funds available for routine maintenance and for equipment replacement.

2. Electronic Equipment

a. Assistance Provided

The Frost Task Force provided material assistance for electronic equipment at these levels:

Voting System	A system for registering MP presence, recording votes, and timing debates was installed in the Assembly chamber in September 1994.
Sound System	A replacement sound system was installed in the Assembly chamber in September 1994.
Debate Timer	A sports timer was purchased for use in timing Assembly debates. However, this function duplicated a function built in to the voting system so the timer was installed in a conference room at the administration building instead.
Translation Equipment	Although never documented in Frost Task Force or CRS trip reports, a system for providing real-time translation was found on the fourth floor conference room at the Assembly's administration building. Francis Miko at CRS says this equipment was required for an in-country seminar and was cheaper to purchase than rent. The equipment was left as a gift. It was an oversight that it had not been mentioned in any reports.

b. Implementation Obstacles

The RFPs for the Voting and Sound system were issued in October 1993; the contract was awarded to Daktronics in Brookings, South Dakota in March 1994; installation did not occur until

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September 1994. There were technical problems with the voting system which stalled full implementation until after December 1994.

Dial-up access to the voting system for direct technical support from the vendor has been installed and implemented which should expedite resolution of technical problems.

The most significant obstacle to use of the voting system was and remains a distrust of its accuracy, or that a potential exists for voting fraud (claims of voting fraud have been made) - see e. below.

c. Usage and Impact

The voting and sound systems are used during every session of the Assembly. The time required to tabulate a vote of the Assembly has been reduced from minutes to seconds (a vote takes about 20 seconds) and the results are displayed on a screen at the front of the Assembly. On occasion some votes are recorded in secret without this display. For the first time, a voting history for each MP is being tabulated.

The sound system replaced an old and limited public address system in the Assembly chamber. In addition to providing amplification for each MP addressing the Assembly, the audio can be directed to other rooms in the Assembly and to a tape recorder which captures on tape all proceedings. An audio feed is also available to the media.

The sports timer was originally purchased to time debates in the Assembly. Because the voting system also has that capability, the sports timer was moved to a large conference room at the Assembly's administration building where it is used to time speakers during proceedings held there (usually meetings of commissions).

d. Training

Mr. Leonat Pashkja, the Assembly's Chief Electrical Engineer, received training from Daktronics on the maintenance of the voting and sound systems. Mr. Pashkja has in turned trained two staff persons at the Assembly on the operation of these systems.

e. Critique of Assistance and its Use

Shortly before the arrival of the evaluation team, there had been allegations of voting fraud using the electronia voting system. For that reason, the team reviewed the process carefully. We attended a session of Parliament on Wednesday October 4 and observed the electronic voting system in use there. We also conferred with Mr. Zana Bufi, Information Specialist at the Parliament, and Mr. Leonat Pashkja, an electrical engineer who operates and maintains the voting system. These were our observations:

1. The voting system is a computer-driven device with control consoles located at every MP's desk, and a large display screen at the front of the Assembly hall. The control consoles allow MPs to register their presence and to vote electronically in public or private mode. The display screen shows which members are present; their vote on a particular piece of legislation under discussion; information about the legislation being reviewed; and other data as selected by the operator.
2. Each MP has two ID cards encoded to uniquely identify the member to the electronic voting system: a primary card and a backup card (for use if they leave the primary card at home or somewhere else). If either card is lost it can be voided by the operator of the voting system, and rendered unusable by anyone attempting to use that card in the future.

3. An MP may insert his or her card at any console location in the Assembly hall for the purpose of registering attendance, or to vote. When a card is inserted, its unique code identifies the member and registers him as present.
4. It is a common practice for an MP to insert his or her ID card into a voting system console in order to register as "present" for the purpose of establishing a quorum, and then leave the main Parliamentary chamber for coffee or other reasons. It is therefore possible for a quorum to be reached when in fact not all registered members are physically present. Attendance is tallied in two ways on the electronic display at the front of the hall:
 - a. A light is illuminated adjacent to the member's name;
 - b. A counter is incremented which reflects the total number of members registered in attendance.
5. Members sometimes forget to remove their ID cards when a session adjourns. Their cards are collected by a staff member, and turned in to the Secretary. Those cards are available for pick-up at a table in the front of the Assembly hall during a subsequent session. However, we observed no supervision of that table on Wednesday. So it is possible that a member could pick up someone else's card and insert it in a console for the purpose of reaching a quorum.
6. If a member is in possession of another member's ID card, it is possible to use that ID card during a vote. There is a very short time span allowed for casting votes (20 seconds) so a member's second vote would have to be cast fairly quickly, and at a vacant seat in close proximity to that member (for access to the second voting console).
7. We were told that members do loan out cards to other members for the purpose of proxy voting, although that practice is officially against the rules.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Under current operating procedures it is fairly easy to cheat on registering attendance for the purpose of establishing a quorum. However, we note that on Thursday October 5, it is reported in the *Albanian Daily News* that speaker Pjeter Arbneri has warned the deputies that:

"I will not count from now on how many lights are on, but deputies in the hall..."
2. Cheating on votes, while possible, is more difficult:
 - a. A second console must be available from which to cast the second vote;
 - b. That console must be in close proximity to the voter in order to record the vote surreptitiously; otherwise the member's movement from one console to the next would be cause for suspicion;
 - c. Close visual monitoring of the assembly during a vote, backed up by video recordings of the full assembly during every vote, could serve as deterrents to voting fraud.

Thus, voting fraud with the electronic voting system is most unlikely, but the previous system on establishing a quorum fostered a perception that the electronic system could not be trusted. To overcome this perception, the Assembly must enforce its rules against proxy voting, monitor better

MP access to other member's ID cards; and provide for bi-partisan monitoring of the actual voting process. Although the importance of the rules and their enforcement was stressed by the FTF technical staff, the Assembly is still lax in enforcing the rules.

The proceedings of every session are recorded on audio tape and transcribed to word processing files. Those files are printed and sent to the Archive office. There is little evidence of any effort to disseminate the records of proceedings outside the domain of the Assembly itself. Inside the Assembly, there is no electronic access to the computer versions of those proceedings due to the nascent character of the PC network.

f. Sustainability Issues

Leonat Pashkja is the only staff person with technical knowledge of the electronic systems at the Assembly. Spare parts must come directly from the manufacturer in South Dakota (and an inventory of spare parts has been provided).

The clearest measure of sustainability is the acceptance by the MPs of the importance of these systems and that acceptance was evident at all interviews. It is therefore unlikely that the electronic systems will be abandoned or left in disrepair.

3. Printing and Binding Equipment

a. Assistance Provided

The Frost Task Force provided material assistance for printing and binding equipment in the Assembly administrative building at this level:

Printing Plant Printing presses and associated binding/finishing equipment were installed in the basement of the Assembly Administration building in September 1993.

b. Implementation Obstacles

Several trips were required by Frost Task Force technical advisors to teach local staff the basics on maintaining a state-of-the-art printing plant. Frost technical advisors reported problems with local users understanding preventive maintenance requirements. There were also no in-country sources for spare parts and consumables.

c. Usage and Impact

At the 1991 baseline for this project, the time lag between passage of a law and its publication in the *Gazette* was 90 days. Since installation of the printing plant that time lag has been reduced to two weeks.

The plant is used at 40 percent capacity and produces \$45,000 a year in profit. The Chief of Staff of the Assembly wants to increase utilization by marketing services to other government ministries.

d. Training

The press operator and the Assembly's electrician received training on use and maintenance, primarily from Doug Underwood of the CRS Technical staff. In addition, all of the manuals for the printing presses and associated equipment were translated into Albanian.

e. Critique of Assistance and its Use

Potential uses for the printing press that were not mentioned during our interviews included production of materials for use by the Public Information Office of the Assembly; higher production runs of the *Gazette*; and publication of the proceedings of the Assembly.

f. Sustainability Issues

Financially, the printing plant is self-sustaining. With increased marketing, additional revenues could support other needed staff positions at the Assembly.

4. Other Donor Assistance

One PC was provided by the German-Marshall Fund prior to arrival of the Frost Task Force. No evidence of other equipment donors was identified.

5. Current Needs

See Recommendations (IV.B.2)

B. Technical Assistance

In 1991, when the Frost Task Force made its first visit to Albania, there was little internal staff structure in the People's Assembly. Between the 1991 visit and the beginning of assistance in 1993, the staff of the Assembly more than doubled in size (to 40) and new office space and room for a library were acquired. A committee structure was established, and a chief of staff was appointed to allocate and manage resources. These changes were attributed directly to assistance received from the Bundestag and the French government. This pre-Frost Task Force technical assistance consisted of visits to the Bundestag by Albanian deputies and consultations with parliamentary experts from Germany and other European nations. Nonetheless, as the Frost technical delegation concluded in May 1993, the Albanian Assembly was the "most seriously handicapped of the new democratic legislatures."

During discussions with the Frost team in 1993, Assembly leaders expressed a need for assistance for: (1) deputy training in parliamentary procedure; (2) staff attorney training in parliamentary procedure; (3) staff training in the provision of research and information services; and (4) development of the deputies' relationships with their constituents. The need for regional cooperation in the provision of information services was expressed to a visiting delegation in 1994.

1. Assistance Provided

The deputies and parliamentary staff received four types of technical assistance:

- ▶ trips to Washington to attend Parliamentary Institutes;
- ▶ individual trips to Washington;
- ▶ an in-country training seminar for deputies; and
- ▶ brief consultations with Frost Task Force delegations and CRS/LC staff in Albania during their visits.

The Parliamentary Institutes, with multi-country participation, was the principal training tool utilized by CRS. Individual programs were tailored for key participants; except for librarians, the programs did not include hands-on training.

The Parliamentary Institutes and individual trips provided an orientation to democratic parliamentary structures and procedures. Three deputies and seven staff members went to Washington between May 1993 and May 1994. The May 1993 Institute was for specialists in government budgets and finance. A legal advisor attended the ninth Institute. The tenth Institute was for legislative attorneys and legal committee staff members. The last visit was to Poland for a four-day conference on parliamentary rules and procedures.

A New Member Conference was held in Tirana in December 1994; 129 of the 140 members attended at least parts of the conference.

2. Implementation Obstacles

There were communications problems in organizing technical assistance activities. At the beginning of the project, the People's Assembly had no FAX, few and poorly working telephones, and no e-mail. This obstacle was largely overcome by communicating with the Assembly by using USAID and USIS services. Nevertheless, the problem probably contributed to the feeling by some participants that they had inadequate time to plan for trips.

Political developments in Albania led to some delay in initiating the Frost Task Force program in Albania in comparison with other Central and Eastern European countries. In addition, Albania did not have a large staff; hence, there was not a large number of potential participants from which to choose and only a limited number of people could be spared to participate in the program.

3. Usage and Impact

The application of the technical assistance is of two types: a) general knowledge of, and attitudinal changes about, the potential role of the parliament in a democracy; and b) use of skills learned by staff personnel in their every day activities.

Given the long period of isolation and the subservience to an autocratic leader, the exposure to, and obtaining knowledge about, a working democracy was welcomed by Albanian legislators. Its utility was probably more in raising questions that needed to be answered rather than providing specific answers for Albania. Nevertheless, the observations of systems utilized by the U.S. Congress formed the basis for requests for assistance under the Frost Task Force program.

Most of the participants in the technical assistance activities cannot fully use the skills they learned because the supporting information systems are not yet fully functional. Some personnel need additional training. Even after the systems are functional and participants fully trained, the impact of the program will still be rather marginal because of the small number of participants in the program and the fact that three of the seven participants have left the Assembly.

The Commissions of the Assembly are hampered by lack of space, staff, funds, and the lack of experience and understanding of the potentialities for the Commissions. Deputies expressed the concern that they did not have the money to pay experts to come in to testify, or to prepare reports on behalf of the Commissions. The concept of having individuals testify without charge, out of personal conviction or institutional gain, seemed novel to them and, to some, slightly improper. Deputies in general do not see a need for procedures for hearings or truly public meetings of the Commissions.

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4. Critique of Technical Assistance

Mr. Uran Butka, Chairman of the Commission on Culture and Mass Media, had an individual two-week trip to the U.S. He indicated that he appreciated the information, but that it was very general and he did not get to meet with people who were dealing with the same types of issues he was. As Chairman of the Commission on Culture and Mass Media, he was very interested in the relationship of the Congress with the Smithsonian and with both the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. He indicated that there was not time for identifying the proper people and making arrangements to meet with them.

This reflects two concerns expressed by participants: (1) there was inadequate time to prepare for the trips and they did not have an opportunity to influence the agenda until they got to Washington; and (2) whether they were attending Institutes or were on individual trips, the program was much the same. As Valter Paci, the Chief of Staff, said with mild exaggeration, "Ten people went, and I got ten identical reports back."

The experiences at the US Congress appeared "unreal" to some of the Albanian Deputies and staff, and they had difficulty relating the Washington scene to their own needs and experiences. A frequent comment was that they were awed by the size of the CRS operation and especially by the size of the individual Congressperson's staff. As Valter Paci put it, a single US congressman had a bigger staff than the entire People's Assembly.

Karmen Quintinarrri felt that the time she spent sitting and listening to lectures could have been used better in either hands-on training or participation in discussion groups focussing on specific issues that the Albanian Assembly is now facing. She said she could have read the lecture material in the weeks before the Institute, if it had been available, and would have been able to come prepared with questions and ideas.

Deputy Eduard Selami, Chairman of the Commission on Foreign Relations, and former head of the Democratic Party, indicated that the trips to Washington dovetailed nicely with the earlier trips to the Bundestag. He indicated that he appreciated the opportunity to see and compare the American system with the European, although he felt that the Albanian Assembly would more appropriately follow the European model. He stated that the Albanian Deputies were inexperienced and the Albanian Assembly was immature as a parliament. He felt that the best part of the Frost Task Force trips was the training that the staff received. He felt that the Members Seminar which was held in Tirana in December 1994 was very useful and the most productive activity for the Deputies. This view was echoed by other Deputies.

Frequently stressed by Deputies, but even more by parliamentary staff and the librarians, was the opportunity that the Washington and regional meetings gave them to establish contacts with personnel from other parliaments. Evidence from correspondence and FAXes indicated that these contacts were continuing and were highly productive, especially in terms of sharing problem-solving ideas.

5. Sustainability Issues

The principal sustainability issues in technical assistance relates to the ability of the institution to retain the services of those who have benefitted from training and to provide for follow-on training at appropriate intervals. As indicated, three of the seven staff personnel trained have moved on. In addition, some people are predicting that there will be a large turn-over of MPs in the next election. In addition to turn-over problems, the budget is very restrictive and does not provide, at this time, for follow-on training.

6. Other Donor Assistance

Visits to Germany and France have been mentioned above. There was no other significant technical assistance provided to the Assembly by other donors. There has been, however, some work with individual political parties by some of the European political parties.

The National Democratic Institute has worked with a local non-governmental organization (NGO) to promote more knowledge of, and interest in, the work of the Assembly. The NGO is working particularly to arrange town meetings in some 15 towns with attendance of Deputies. The International Republic Institute (IRI) worked with the committee that was drafting the revisions to the Constitution. It held luncheons to meet informally with parliamentary staff to discuss the work of committee. IRI has also fostered media interest in the Assembly.

7. Current Needs

A continuing thread in discussions with Deputies was that they did not have a trained legal staff who could draft legislation for the Assembly. Currently this was particularly being felt in the Commission on Culture and Mass Media which is trying to draft a mass media law for Radio and TV. Concurrent with this, they expressed the need for current comparative law from other European states in English (the most popular foreign language) or French. They did not expect to find Albanian translations, which would be their preference.

The Legal Department has three attorneys for five positions. These legal advisors expressed a need for additional training in parliamentary and committee procedures. Mr. Sokol Birbiri, a legal advisor and Constitutional Law Professor, was very emphatic, "This is not something that you can learn from books. This can only be learned by working in a system where these things are done." Karmen Quintinarrri made the same point. They would welcome the opportunity to work in a state legislature in the United States for a month to six weeks. As an alternative, they felt it would be helpful to have an expert resident for a few months.

C. Library Assistance

The parliamentary library in Albania was started in 1992. Mrs. Zana Buqi, a professional librarian, was hired to manage the collection of approximately 3000 volumes. In their initial assessment, the Library of Congress staff rated these volumes as "mostly irrelevant." The Albanian library staff agree that these are not high use items; some research, however, is done in the older (pre-1945) Albanian law volumes. In 1993 the library collection was augmented by the addition of the books from the library of the former Central Committee of the People's Labor Party (PLA). Again, these volumes are of primarily historical interest. By the end of 1994 the library's collection had grown to over 35,000 volumes, including the contributions of the Frost Task Force and other donors.

Currently the library has a staff of three: Mrs. Zana Buqi (hired in 1992), a second librarian hired in 1993, and a third in 1995. A fourth position is now in the process of being filled (hire date: January 1996). There are four other proposed, but unfunded, positions under the library: two translators and two research staff to prepare issue briefs.

The collection of the Parliamentary Library is organized by call number in two areas: a reading room, and a large room with closed stacks. Lighting in the closed stacks is provided by daylight from a single window and by flashlight. The classification system is Albanian and is prominently displayed above the card catalog. The card catalog is in three parts: the original 3000 volumes; materials from the former Central Committee of the People's Labor Party (PLA); and the newer material from various sources.

There are over 5,000 entries in the periodical database, mostly from Albanian newspapers published in Tirana. They are indexed by topic and by the name of any Deputy mentioned. The database of laws and decrees is up-to-date. The database for books is indexed only by topic, not by author or title. It contains only 166 titles.

The library has three in-house databases, all in Procite: periodical articles, laws, and books. The same 87 indexing terms are used for all three. The librarians indicated that they wish to migrate to the uniform EuroThesarus, as soon as a translation can be prepared. The two translator slots in the library remain unfilled and are on hold until after next spring's elections.

The library staff's priorities are fulfilling Deputies' requests, maintaining the newspaper/periodical article database, and maintaining the law/decrees database.

1. Assistance Provided

The library received 851 titles — books, sets & periodicals (periodicals are incomplete for the period covered) from the Frost Task Force, including CD-ROM titles.

The Frost Task Force provided the library with software: Word Perfect, dBase IV, Windows, and Procite. The two senior librarians received some introduction in the use of microcomputers during their two-week stay at the Library of Congress. The librarians were given training in Procite both at the Library of Congress and on-site by Frost Task Force librarians. They were provided with an initial Procite database containing the 344 records for the original book drop.

During 1994 the Frost Task Force provided the library with three PCs, a photocopier and a FAX machine. A previously provided photocopier intended for the library was needed by the administrative staff.

The Frost Task Force provided the two senior librarians, Zana Bufl and Vjollca Hysenbegasi, with two weeks of discussions and hands-on experience at the Library of Congress in February-March 1994. Training included reference work, use of Procite (a bibliographic database program), how to provide SDI (selective dissemination of information) services for Deputies, and various demonstrations of search software, including the use of the Internet. The librarians felt that this was a very important part of the overall library assistance, especially the opportunity to work with various librarians.

Both Mrs. Bufl and Mrs. Hysenbegasi attended the Librarians Workshop held in Budapest, Hungary September 21 - 23, 1994 and the one held in Prague May 12 - 18, 1995. Both librarians said that the most important part of the Prague workshop was its focus on regional cooperation: how to get information from others and find out what other librarians were doing. Much of the Budapest workshop was focused far beyond the state of things in Albania, and hence was neither timely nor relevant.

2. Implementation Obstacles

There were communications problems in organizing training activities. At the beginning of the project, the People's Assembly had no FAX, few and poorly working telephones, and no e-mail. This obstacle was largely overcome by communicating with the Assembly by using USAID and USIS services. Nevertheless, the problem probably contributed to the feeling by some participants that they had inadequate time to plan for trips.

Political developments in Albania led to some delay in initiating the Frost Task Force program in Albania in comparison with other Central and Eastern European countries. In addition, the library had minimal staff; hence, there was not a number of potential participants from which to choose

and only a limited number of people could be spared to participate in the program. Once, the Albanian librarian had to cancel out of a training program at the last minute.

A significant problem has been the difficulty in utilizing the assistance provided. For example, the library has no budget — this is scheduled to change with the new year. Salaries are paid from the general administration budget. Office supplies (paper, catalog cards, paper clips, etc.) are received as requested — when funding is available — from the office of the Chief of Staff of the People's Assembly. The library has no periodical subscriptions of its own. It has no written collection development policy or internal procedures.

3. Usage and Impact

The electronic databases are used to access articles from newspapers and other periodicals. Patrons access Albanian laws and decrees via a book index prepared from the library's Procite database of the official gazette.

The original Procite database has not been up-dated by the library.

The FAX machine is not hooked up because the library is on a party line with four other offices. FAXes are sent and received through the Office of the Chief of Staff. The librarians have no permission for long distance calls (no budget), they write no letters (no budget for stamps), all faxes must be "approved" (because there is only one working fax machine, and because international faxes cost money).

There are no current foreign periodical subscriptions. All Frost Task Force subscriptions terminated in January 1995. Furthermore, the librarians indicated that they have not received any publications on exchange from the Library of Congress since January 1995, even though they had been routinely sending a copy of the official gazette to the Library of Congress.

The library has over 10 CD-ROM titles with over 15 disks. They have a single CD player attached to a PC which has some of the software loaded to access these titles. Also included among the CD-ROMs was the United States Code Annotated (West Pub.) using Premise software. The USCA CD-ROMs and software were in the library, but the software was not installed. The librarians had not been trained on Premise software, although they had seen demonstrations. They indicated that there had been some delay in receiving the Premise software, and they were waiting for the engineer to install it. The engineer did not have installation of library software on his to-do list. The librarian specialist on the evaluation team installed both the Premise software and the batch file for the World Factbook CD-ROM and gave a brief training on the use of each.

During the December 5 - 7, 1994 Members Parliamentary Seminar in Tirana, the librarians were given the opportunity to market their library to the Deputies. The librarians felt that this was successful, as requests for information from Deputies more than tripled during December. Even so, the evaluation team interviewed a Deputy who expressed surprise when told of the services available from the library.

The network connection to the parliamentary staff network is under construction. Eventually this will be the library's link to the Internet. The Chief of Staff indicates that the money has been set aside for an Internet link, and the international phone line has been reserved from state telecommunications. For budgetary reasons, there will be no hook-up before the new year, but even that date appears premature. The Assembly's sole engineer, Leonid Pashko, has not been trained in routers and firewalls, and does not currently have time even to complete Novell training. Hiring and training a second person for informatics is essential for Internet access.

The Library and its reading room is located in part of the office building that houses the parliamentary staff and the staff and regular meeting rooms of the Commissions of the Assembly.

The parliament building, where plenary sessions of the Assembly and party caucuses are held, is a 15-minute walk from the office building; it has no library facilities or reading room. During plenary sessions a librarian is on duty at the parliament building.

In summary, the library is now carrying out the following:

- ▶ Preparing photocopies requested by members;
- ▶ Indexing Laws and Decrees from 1991 to date, produced in both Albanian and English;
- ▶ Indexing, clipping and keeping vertical file of articles from Albanian newspapers — articles are arranged by topic (87 topics in local list) and by the name of the Deputy mentioned;
- ▶ Indexing in Albanian articles from the periodicals the library receives;
- ▶ Exchanging materials with the Polish Senate library and the Hungarian parliamentary library;
- ▶ Sending the new laws and decrees to the Library of Congress;
- ▶ Maintaining an official gazette file — five copies are received, of which three are for exchange;
- ▶ Receiving one copy of the unpublished transcript of plenary sessions of the People's Assembly; and
- ▶ Maintaining a card catalog covering all, or mostly all records.

Reflecting its size of three, the library staff is now not doing:

- ▶ Non-bibliographic research;
- ▶ Retrieving information from other libraries;
- ▶ Indexing information that is only available from sources outside the library;
- ▶ Translation (except for Index to Laws and Decrees which is produced in both Albanian and English);
- ▶ Coordination with National Library;
- ▶ Entering books in the Procite database (only 166 books entered; the database does not include the bibliographic records delivered in Procite in March 1993 of the books provided by the Library of Congress at that time);
- ▶ Integrating older materials into a single, newer card catalog or into the book database.

4. Critique of Assistance

The materials supplied by the Frost Task Force fell basically into three categories: 1) current reference materials; 2) American legal materials; and 3) general works on public policy, history etc. As there were few existing reference materials, the Frost Task Force reference materials were very useful. As they become dated, however, their utility significantly and rapidly decreases. This problem has already been noted by the library staff.

American law, in general, does not speak to the Albanian experience. Deputies pointed out the differences in the systems and said that they tend to look to European laws for models. Little of the American legal material has seen any use. The history, biographies and such have been of avocational interest to a number of Deputies, but not with respect to their day-to-day parliamentary activities. The public policy volumes have seen some use, but as one Deputy who was in the library remarked, "They do not focus on our problems."

Aside from the reference materials, the periodicals have been the most used. Part of this use is attributable to the fact that the bibliographies prepared by the library staff for Deputies are from the periodical/newspaper database. The second reason is that periodical articles tend to focus on current problems. The librarians indicated that no periodicals have been received in Albania from the Library of Congress since December 1994, even though subscriptions had not yet run out. This was borne out by reviewing the current periodical shelf. The cut-off of subscriptions was commented upon by librarians, Deputies and other staff.

The less than optimum selection of books to be supplied by the Frost Task Force reflect the lack of knowledge by the Albanian librarians of what their Deputies might need. At the time the librarians were invited to select materials from the core lists prepared by the Library of Congress, they had almost no books. Any books were better than none. They had neither the collection development materials available nor the institutional knowledge to make selections from other sources. The result was delivery of a book collection that does not fit well the needs of the library users.

Deputies say it is good to have a good library, it makes their job easier. Deputies say having Albanian newspaper clipping service (part of training received from Frost Task Force) makes answering correspondence easier. The Chief of Staff says that information from the library helps Deputies propose amendments to government bills. The librarians say that Deputies research the form laws take in other countries to try to pick the best for Albania.

5. Sustainability Issues

The leadership of the Assembly is not, at this point, providing adequate support for the parliamentary library — in terms of materials, technological support, or continued training. The library's access to Internet, coupled with additional training in database management, should improve its value to members of the Assembly, particularly the chairmen of commissions. This in turn should improve the chances that the library will be adequately funded. The improvement in services made possible with Frost Task Force assistance has already led to the library having a line item in the Assembly budget for 1996 — a first. Furthermore, the library has organizationally not been subsumed under an information department; rather, it continues to report to the Chief of Staff.

6. Other Donor Assistance

In March 1993, the Library of Congress supplied 344 volumes from their Gift and Exchange program. That year the British House of Commons supplied over 1,000 titles on law and government, and the French government supplied a somewhat smaller number of books and periodicals, primarily on the European Community. SOROS Foundation provided several hundred titles to the library, focusing on democratic institutions and media law. USIS contributed several hundred volumes on law and government. French periodicals have continued to be received through the French Embassy.

The librarians are expecting an agreement to be reached soon regarding the provision of a Council of Europe library in the parliament. This library would provide copies of Council of Europe publications which include analyses of laws.

The librarians had a full introductory course to micro-computers at INIMA, a governmental training organization. The course, which was funded by the SOROS Foundation, involved: one week, halftime, in introduction to microcomputers; one week, halftime, in DOS and Windows environment; one week, halftime, in WordPerfect. They were offered, but did not take, one week, halftime, in dBase IV.

A week-long hands-on experience at the House of Commons library was provided to the librarians during 1994 under the British project "Know How."

7. Current Needs

The librarians echoed the need, expressed by the Deputies, for more European laws in English or French or German (in that order).

No research and analysis staff exists to support the Commissions because the Speaker, and thus the Chief of Staff, does not see this as a priority at this time. The Chief of Staff has gotten approval for a translation staff who can translate foreign comparative law into Albanian. While this is needed, there will be a need for someone to research these documents. The legal advisors state they do not have any time for research. Currently, the three of them staff the ten commissions and proof-read the galleys of the official gazette. They also draft "private bills" and amendments for the Deputies, as time permits.

Library materials especially needed are current periodicals focused on the needs of the Deputies. These would include at least the Economist and the Financial Times.

The exchange program should be clarified and reduced to a formal agreement, so that the Albanians and the Library of Congress know what is being exchanged in return for the official gazette. A long-term subscription to a highly used reference source would be better than a larger dump of soon-to-be-outdated materials.

Technological assistance of a scanner and another PC may tide the library over for the time being in terms of current operations, but Internet access is essential to the long-term stability of the library. This access requires trained informatics personnel, cabling, routers, and firewalls, and commitment from the Assembly for a telecommunications budget. From the operational aspect, Albania should be encouraged to place its laws full text on their own Internet homepage in both English and Albanian. This acts two fold: 1) it meets a concern expressed by various Deputies that the Albanian legislative story is not getting out to the world; and 2) it supports the growing movement to make laws available in a usable format, without cost (above the user's telecommunications costs). This movement already places the laws of various developed nations, states and even cities and counties, on the Internet.

Training for the librarians in the use of the various search softwares that they need to know for CD-ROM access is essential. Demonstrations and instructional materials in English are seldom sufficient. Internet training, both initial and continuing, is essential to utilize this resource. Additionally, the informatics staff must be trained in the hardware necessary for the Internet, as well as in the software tools used to access the Internet, and in an html program for construction of a World Wide Web homepage.

While the Albanian budget remains constrained, either workshops in Tirana or travel to librarian workshops in the region should be provided. Sharing and interaction with other librarians can keep a library alive and dynamic; isolation frequently leads to stagnation.

III. Legislative Developments During the Project Period

The structure of the Assembly is unchanged from the start of assistance. Most draft legislation is prepared by the appropriate ministry in the government. It comes to the Assembly and is assigned to a commission by the Council (the Speaker and the two vice-speakers). This assignment is approved with the adoption of the "agenda" in plenary session. Hearings are not conducted by the Commissions. At most, an expert from the government will be asked to explain a provision in the draft law (bill) under discussion. Deputies generally do their own research, if any is done, requesting bibliographic assistance from the library. No translation service is provided. There is no budget for outside researchers, experts, or translators.

Access to the Assembly by the public has not changed. Officially it is open to the public. The Assembly is surrounded by uniformed Republican Guards, employed by the Interior Department, and carrying Kalashnikovs. Members of the public are not allowed past without a permission slip issued in advance by the Office of the Speaker. There are no signs indicating how to obtain access, nor do the civilian clerks inform people how to get a permission slip. There are only 140 observation seats in the plenary hall of the Assembly. When a controversial topic is being discussed, the permission slips are awarded through the political parties, with the number of slips received by the parties based on the percentage of seats they hold in the parliament.

Certain sessions of the Assembly are broadcast on the single national TV channel, namely, all sessions affecting an individual, such as confirmation hearings on judges or requests to remove immunity from a Deputy. Other sessions may occasionally be broadcast. Eighty percent of the people receive their news from TV. There are 14 accredited newspaper reporters who may attend plenary sessions of the Assembly. There are 16 newspapers published in Tirana, and most of the larger cities and towns have 4 or 5 local newspapers. Most, if not all, of the newspapers are instruments of particular political parties or factions. There is no noticeable tendency to appear objective.

Meetings of the Commissions are officially open to the public, but they meet in small rooms with no additional space. Additionally the meeting times and places are not published or posted outside of the Assembly. The meetings of the Commissions are held in buildings where there is restricted access.

Most of what the Assembly passes can be considered reform legislation. The Assembly in the past year has passed two very long laws: the Code of Criminal Procedure, with 525 articles, and the Penal Code, with 335 articles, both of which were written in the Justice Ministry with the assistance of ABA-CEELI. In July 1994, the Assembly passed the new, comprehensive Civil Code, with 1168 articles — the longest law the Assembly has dealt with.

The length of individual laws has increased in recent years as the Government is introducing fundamental legislation to replace the old system, which was only partially modified immediately after independence, and to establish a political and economic framework which will facilitate Albania's acceptance into West European organizations. Because of the latter need, there is a growing recognition among the Deputies that a drafting capacity is necessary in the Assembly, not just for the occasional law, but for the proper drafting of amendments.

It appears that the number of amendments to government-proposed legislations has increased over the past few years. During the last year, the Assembly has begun to return draft laws to the government for further work. This appears to reflect some increase in self-confidence and increasing desire among some to assert the Assembly's right to be treated as an equal by the Executive.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. General

1. Conclusions

- a. The Frost Task Force program, along with visits and exchanges of other Western countries, provided a badly needed orientation for people who had no experience with democracy and had been so isolated from the West. The visits of the Assembly leadership to see methods and procedures used by Western legislative bodies also assisted them in formulating their request for Frost Task Force assistance.
- b. Although it would not have been appropriate to initiate the Frost Task Force program before the parliamentary elections of March 1992, it is unfortunate that assistance was not initiated until a year after the elections. The delay appears to have been related to the workload of the CRS staff, not the readiness of the Albanians.
- c. The content and method of implementation of the Frost Task Force assistance did not take into account sufficiently the low level of technology in Albania — and especially in the Assembly. See the discussions below of the program components.
- d. The chief of staff of the Assembly expressed ignorance of other avenues of U.S. assistance which appear to be available to it (e.g., through the ABA/CEELI program and indirectly through the ORT Albania Democracy Network Program).
- e. There should be some restructuring of the remaining Frost Task Force assistance for Albania to increase the amount and quality of technical assistance — see discussions below.

B. Equipment

1. Conclusions

- a. The provision of computer equipment has had a significant favorable impact on the work of the People's Assembly because the level of technology in the Assembly was virtually at zero. Nevertheless, the potential benefits are far from being realized. The uses to date of the computer equipment are crude, symptomatic of the Assembly's lack of exposure to modern technology, the absence of a master plan, and inadequate technical assistance — both at the program design phase and with the delivery of the equipment.
- b. Although a network is installed, it currently has no mission for the organization.
- c. The Assembly cannot realize the potential of its automation tools without focused technical assistance.

2. Recommendations

- a. **HIR/CRS should proceed with the procurement of two computers and a scanner for the library; except for any emergency procurement, further hardware purchases should be postponed until the next two recommendations are implemented.**

b. **HIR/CRS should arrange for a systems analyst to go to Albania for a sufficient period of time to develop an automation plan, focussed on support for the commissions and the processing of legislation.**

c. **HIR/CRS should contract for a proactive technology implementor to work in the Assembly for three to six months to nurture the development of present applications and those called for in the implementation plan referred to in (2) above.**

The contractor's work would focus on:

- ▶ Streamlining office administrative procedures;
- ▶ Translating those procedures into automation processes;
- ▶ Developing those processes, documenting them, and training staff on their usage, e.g., the automation of routine clerical tasks through use of WordPerfect macros, forms, templates, merges, etc.;
- ▶ Teaching basic concepts of network administration (not to be confused with Novell Netware Administration): filing systems, document naming conventions, document retention, and archiving;
- ▶ Developing a long range automation plan for the Assembly which incorporates the needs of the MPs, the Library staff, and the administrative staff;
- ▶ Formulating a purpose for having a computer network;
- ▶ Drafting basic procedures manuals for use of the core software and custom applications, insuring that those manuals are translated into Albanian, and are maintained locally by Assembly staff; and
- ▶ Exploring a partnering arrangement with ORT in Albania for customized on-going computer training — ORT's teaching lab facilities are modern and not fully booked.

C. Technical Assistance

1. Conclusions

a. The technical assistance activities have been well received and are considered very important by Assembly leaders and members in helping them to understand the basic concepts of democracy and the role and working of a legislature in a democratic society.

b. Because of the relatively small number of staff members available for training and the departure from the Assembly of three of the seven staff that were trained, the impact of the staff training has been marginal to date.

c. The sustainability of the benefits from technical assistance is doubtful unless some additional assistance is provided during the rest of the project. The assistance needed (besides in the use and care of computers and other technology) would relate to the drafting of legislation and the accessing of information for developing legislation.

2. Recommendations

a. Additional technical assistance should be provided for:

- ▶ **on-site training in applications using actual work of the Assembly;**
- ▶ **practice for the legal advisors in an environment where drafting of legislation is actually done;**
- ▶ **archival training for the Archivist; and**
- ▶ **a new member orientation after the May 1996 election.**

b. Technical assistance for a research and analysis function should be provided when the following are implemented:

- ▶ **the library gets a budget and its additional positions filled;**
- ▶ **an additional informatics position is established and the proactive technology implementor is recruited (recommendation B.2.c. above); and**
- ▶ **access is provided to Internet.**

The Chief of Staff has indicated these conditions will be met in the new year.

D. Library Assistance

1. Conclusions

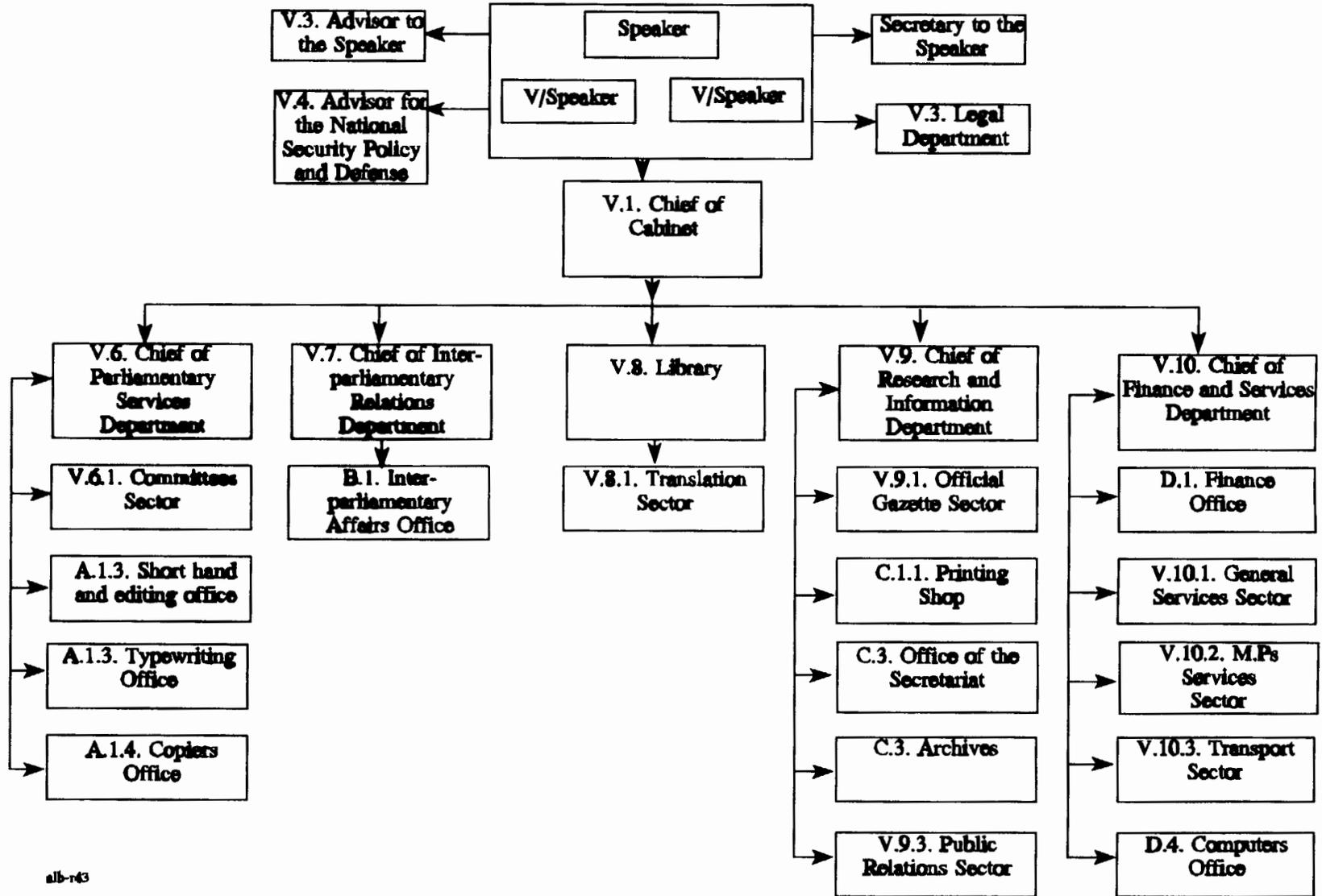
- a. The book donations of the Frost Task Force for the Assembly library were well received, but they are fast becoming out of date.
- b. Additional training is needed by the library staff to make full use of the equipment provided to the library.
- c. Support for the library has increased within the Assembly, and it is expected to receive additional funding next year.

2. Recommendations

- a. **Some additional library materials should be provided to the Assembly library, focusing on periodicals and long-term subscriptions to highly used reference sources.**
- b. **Assistance should be provided as necessary and feasible to facilitate an Internet connection for the library.**
- c. **A small amount of additional equipment should be provided to the library (see B.2.a. above).**
- d. **The library staff should be provided with some additional training in database management.**

[CRS advises that a. is in process and d. is scheduled for 1996.]

TAB A
ADMINISTRATION OF THE ALBANIAN PARLIAMENT
Table of Organization
(March 1995)



alb-r43

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TAB B**CHRONOLOGY — ALBANIA****1991**

- Jan 30 An Inter-Agency Agreement was signed between USAID and the Library of Congress (LOC) under which \$4.25 million was allocated to the LOC for Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia (sic). The LOC activity was to be managed under the direction of the Frost Committee.
- Aug 26 USAID and LOC signed Amendment #1 to the Inter-Agency Agreement increasing the budget allocation to \$5,008,000 and authorizing LOC programs in Bulgaria, Romania, Yugoslavia, and **Albania**.
- Dec 2 - 4 Kristi Walseth and Francis Miko visited Albania on a fact-finding mission. They found that the Assembly had many basic needs — books, automation, office equipment and supplies. They concluded that modest assistance could make a significant difference —when the time was right.

1993

- Feb 22 to Mar 10 Kristi Walseth, Francis Miko and Julie Kim visited Hungary, Bulgaria, and Albania. The team reported that Albania had the "most seriously handicapped of the new democratic legislatures" with no space, no materials and no communications.
- Mar 28 Kristi Walseth and Mary Nell Bryant delivered library materials.
- May 2 - 15 The Eighth Parliamentary Institute was held in Washington, D.C. for specialists in government budgets and finance, with attendance from Albania.
- May 17 - 22 Mary Nell Bryant and Pamela Dragovich delivered books to the Assembly library and developed a data base of the library collection.
- May 22 to June 5 M.P. Uran Butka and Perekli Polloshi, legal counsel for the Assembly traveled to Washington, D.C. for an introduction to CRS and the U.S. Congress.
- Jun 13 - 18 John Kelley and Patricia Gardner assessed the printing needs of the Assembly.
- Jul 2 - 11 A Congressional delegation led by Rep. Frost visited Hungary, Albania and Slovakia.
- 12 USAID and LOC signed a new Inter-Agency Agreement for \$3.5 million for a two-year program of assistance to the legislatures of Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The allocation for Albania was \$1,468,000.
- 12 - 23 The ninth Parliamentary Institute took place in Washington, D.C. for committee staff members, with attendance from Albania by Perekli Polloshi, Legal Advisor to the Assembly.
- 24 - 31 Mr. Polloshi also attended the conference of the National Council of State Legislatures in San Diego. [Mr. Polloshi was fired upon his return to Albania.]

- Sep 13 - 24 The tenth Parliamentary Institute took place for legislative attorneys and legal committee staff members, with attendance from Albania.
- Oct 22 Two Requests for Proposals (RFPs) were issued: 1) voting system and sound system; 2) office automation equipment. Closing date for submission of RFPs November 17.
- Dec 6 - 10 John Kelley, Ruth Nelson, Henry Collins and Patricia Gardner came to evaluate the bids received in response to the RFPs issued October 22nd.

1994

- Feb John Kelley and Patricia Gardner monitored the installation of the printing plant and conducted acceptance testing on the office automation equipment provided [6 PCs and software].
- 26 Zana Bufi and Vjollca Hysenbegasi from the Assembly library went to CRS for two weeks of hands-on work experience to improve their reference skills and knowledge of reference materials.
- Mar 23 - 26 John Kelley, Patricia Gardner, Ruth Nelson and Henry Collins went to South Dakota to confer with Daktronics about the contract awarded to them to provide a voting system to the Assembly.
- Apr 30 Valter Paci, Advisor to the Speaker of the Assembly, came to Washington, D.C. for a two-week program of training and study of the operations of CRS and the U.S. Congress.
- May A staff member of the Assembly attended a four-day conference in Poland on parliamentary rules and procedures.
- Holly Larsen and Pamela Dragovich visited Albania to assess the collections of the Assembly library and prepare final purchase lists.
- 16 - 20 Mr. Kelley, Ms. Gardner and Mr. Collins went to Albania to install the wiring for a voting and sound system. The final voting system installation plan was completed.
- Jun 6 - 17 Engellushe Shqarri and Leonat Pashko of the Assembly, with Mr. Collins of the HIS, went to Brookings, South Dakota to develop the final specifications for the voting and sound system with the vendor, Daktronics.
- 16 A contract was issued for \$18,920 to Donasphere Ltd. for delivery of 4 486-based workstations and 4 laser printers.
- 20 - 22 Leonat Pashko attended the Information Technology in Parliaments conference in Warsaw.
- Jul John Kelley, Patricia Gardner and consultants Doug Underwood and Dale Bunch went to Albania to install a printing press and conduct final training on its use.
- 26 A contract in the amount of \$118, 010 was awarded to Donasphere, Ltd. for 22 80486SX computers, 2 80386 Notebook Computers with modem and battery

- pack, 22 laser printers, 1 Desktop Publishing Workstation, 1 Scanner, and upgrades, parts and supplies.
- Sep Daktronics installed the voting and sound system. John Kelley, Patricia Gardner, and Henry Collins monitored the installation and conducted acceptance testing of the system and of office automation equipment.
- Oct Mr. Collins and Mr. Freeman went to Albania to test the voting and sound system — problems had arisen which the contractor was required to fix.
- Nov Collins and Freeman went to South Dakota to test a new version of the voting system and to finalize the report format.
- Dec 5 - 7 A Parliamentary Conference for members of the Assembly was held, with CRS assistance and attendance/participation by representatives of the U.S., Canada, Italy, Lithuania and Poland. Some 130 of the 140 MPs, including the President of the People's Assembly, attended.
- Freeman returned to Albania with Douglas Underwood of Duplicating Equipment Service, Inc. and a staff member from Daktronics to continue work on the voting and sound system. The new software caused a problem with clear display function. The contractor was required to solve this problem. Numerous problems were found with the printing system. Some staff training was provided. Most problems were fixed, but the motherboard had to be returned to the U.S. for repair.
- Dec 28 USAID-LOC Agreement of July 12, 1993 was modified to re-align the country budgets. Albania's allocation was reduced from \$1,468,000 to \$1,344,000 (\$805,000 for equipment, \$340,000 for technical assistance, \$280,000 for library collections, and \$43,000 for general administration).

1995

- 1st Qtr Bid received for the installation, support and wiring for the network (LAN).
- The voting and sound systems finally accepted.
- Printing system has problems. Need more training maybe. Platemaker had problems.
- The copiers delivered had problems.
- May Two parliamentary librarians attended the regional parliamentary library conference in Prague, Czech Republic.
- Jun John Kelley, Ruth Nelson and Henry Collins went to Albania to help install a small computer network and to iron out problems, including problems with copiers. The network connection cards and software were delivered and will connect 48 users in a network. There were problems with some vendors, but they were expected to be resolved quickly.
- Ms. Nelson successfully dealt with outstanding problems with the printing equipment.

Sep 14 USAID allocated an additional \$291,000 to the LOC for the Albania's People's Assembly. The completion date for the activities is December 31, 1996.

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TAB C**LIST OF PEOPLE CONTACTED****PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY**

Pjeter Arbnori, Speaker
 Valter Paci, Chief of Cabinet
 Uran Butka, Chairman of the Commission on Culture and Mass Media
 Halit Shamata, Chairman of the Commission on Legal Matters
 Ndue Gjika, Member of the Commission on Culture and Mass Media
 Genc Ruli, Chairman of the Commission on Economics and Finance
 Ylli Bufi, Chairman of the Commission on Industry and Transport
 Maqo Lakrori, Secretary of the Commission on Health, Education and Social Affairs
 Eduard Selami, Chairman of the Commission on Foreign Relations
 Karmen Quintinarri, Legal Advisor
 Philippe (?) _____, Legal Advisor
 Sokol Birbiri, Legal Advisor
 _____, former Legal Advisor
 Zana Bufi, Chief Librarian
 Vjollca Hysenbegasi, Bibliographer
 Rubina _____, 3rd librarian
 Sevetta _____, preparation of Fletorja Zyrtare (Official Gazette)
 Alban Bala, Chief of the Information Office
 Leonat Pashkia, Electrical Engineer
 Correspondence Secretary
 Archivist
 3 people in Finance Office

U. S. Embassy

Douglas Smith, Deputy Chief of Mission

Office of the USAID Representative

Dianne Blane, Representative
 Stephen Haynes, Deputy Representative
 Cameron Pippitt, Project Development Officer

UNITED STATES INFORMATION SERVICE

Charles Walsh, Public Affairs Officer
 Librarian

American Bar Association/CEELI

Joseph W. Clough, Rule of Law Liaison

International Republican Institute

Peter Dickinson, Resident Program Officer

National Democratic Institute for International Affairs

Alicia Allison, Field Representative

Other

Gudar Beqiraj, Director, Institute of Informatics and Applied Mathematics
Donald W. Conrad, Project Director, ORT International
Romeo Sherko, Director, International Computer Company
Joti Grigor, General Manager, InfoSoft M.I.

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ANNEX F. COUNTRY REPORT — HUNGARY

Development Associates, Inc.

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ANNEX F. COUNTRY REPORT — HUNGARY

Development Associates, Inc.

I. SETTING

Hungary's transition to a Western-style parliamentary democracy was the first and one of the smoothest among the former Soviet bloc countries. Inspired by a nationalism that long had encouraged Hungarians to control their own destiny, increasing pressure for change was building as early as 1987 — even within the Community party. A Central Committee plenum in February 1989 endorsed the principle of a multi-party political system.

A roundtable made up of representatives of new parties, old re-created parties, the communist party and different social groups met in the summer and fall of 1989 to discuss major changes to the Hungarian constitution and the steps in the transition to a fully free and democratic country. In an historic session on October 16-20, 1989, the parliament adopted legislation providing for multi-party parliamentary elections and a direct presidential election.

Hungary's first free, multi-party elections in more than 40 years took place in March and April 1990. A coalition of three democratic parties commanded a 60 percent majority in the parliament. The unicameral Hungarian National Assembly is the highest organ of state authority. It can initiate legislation, but most is sponsored by the Prime Minister and sent to the Assembly for approval.

It has 386 members, of which about 176 are elected directly from individual constituencies and 210 are elected from regional and national party lists. Members of parliament (MPs) serve full-time. Two and one-half days each week are devoted to plenary sessions. Two days are devoted to committee and party faction (caucus) meetings.

When the Frost Task Force technical delegation arrived in Budapest in September 1990, it found that the National Assembly had few staff and limited budget. Rules and procedures were being re-written and the constitution was probably going to require revision — if not replacement.

Individual members had few resources at their disposal — no PCs for them or their staffs. There were few copiers, one fax machine, and no adequate telephone system to support voice or data communications. The only link between the Parliament building and the "White House" parliamentary office building was an unreliable phone system.

The Parliamentary Library, which was located in the main Parliament building had some PCs, but no network. The professional staff had no PCs for use in analytical work. Its photocopying capability was inadequate — it often took a day to get a document copied.

The Office of the Parliament had an IBM System 36 with more than a dozen work stations for accounting and personnel work. The General Secretary's office had a Novell LAN with 24 work stations. The automation office had a staff of two. Plans were made for over \$300,000 in Frost assistance for equipment, installation and training. Preliminary plans were also drawn up for support to the Parliamentary Library's collections and the establishment of a centralized research and analysis office to serve the committees and members.

The principal actions taken to implement the Frost Task Force (FTF) program in Hungary are recorded in Tab A (Chronology - Hungary). A list of the people contacted by the evaluation team is included as Tab B.

II. THE PROJECT

A. Equipment and Related Training

The initial FTF 1990 trip report on Hungary reported a general shortage of office automation equipment, information resources and facilities. Staffing levels were also substandard. However, the Hungarian Parliament was not completely without automation tools: about 20 PCs were installed at various parts of Parliament, and Microsoft Word was used for text processing. A general plan for extending automation had also been developed.

An ad hoc committee was established to organize equipment and information support for MPs and committees. An outside group of experts on automation was used in conjunction with a task force of MPs to act as an internal counterpart to the FTF.

Training was an across-the-board priority issue in Hungary in order to utilize fully the technology tools being purchased. FTF recommended that equipment be purchased in country so that support and maintenance could be readily available.

1. Assistance Provided

The Frost Task Force provided material assistance for computer equipment at these levels:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| PCs & Printers | From 1991 through 1994, 291 personal computers (desktop and notebook), 8 files servers and 153 printers (laser, ink-jet, and color) were purchased and installed at the Parliament, in the Library, and in the White House (the members' nearby office building). The equipment was delivered to the Department of Informatics; it was allocated based on decisions of an advisory committee comprised of Members of Parliament (MPs), Informatics staff, and Library staff. |
| CD-ROM | A 7-platter CD-ROM server was purchased for the Parliamentary library. |
| Software | Basic office automation software (word processing and spreadsheet), relational database software, application development tools, and full-text retrieval software were provided during the same interval. |
| Network | Banyan Vines network operating system software and utility programs, and SCO Unix were provided for the Parliament, although the FTF technical advisors did not agree with the decision to use this technology. Following the departure of the Director of Informatics early in the Frost Assistance project, a replacement Novell network operating system was negotiated and purchased. The Novell software has not yet been established as the network platform, but it is targeted for implementation in January 1996. At the time of this evaluation, there were two networks: one for Parliament which uses the Banyan Vines technology; and one for the Parliamentary Library, which uses the Novell network operating system. Both networks were funded by the FTF. |
| Scanner/ Microform | One flatbed scanning device and two microform readers/printers were provided. |
| Copiers | Fourteen copiers were purchased and installed during the period of assistance; two were high speed and twelve were small office copiers. |

2. Implementation Obstacles

During the early implementation phase in 1991 and 1992, local procurement misconduct hampered the acquisition of technology products. An investigation followed in the summer of 1992. The Department of Informatics had three different directors during the term of assistance. In addition, the Frost Task Force's technical advisors were in basic disagreement with the Hungarian Informatics staff over some fundamental choices for the structure of their network. One advisor told us they spent nearly a year trying to persuade the Informatics staff to move in a different direction in their choices for network design.

The current Director of Informatics says he scrapped in 1993 the application development done by his predecessor because he considered the CLIPPER development tool used to write those applications inadequate for their intended usage. He replaced the CLIPPER applications with internally developed ORACLE applications, using software tools provided by Frost assistance. This delayed having applications up and running until 1994.

After the 1992 procurement investigation, the organizational structure of the Parliament was modified. Informatics was moved from reporting directly to the Secretary General of the Parliament to a position several levels lower in the organizational structure. The Chief of Informatics currently reports to the Chief Engineer of the Parliament. Informatics now lacks the organizational authority to introduce technological innovation on its own.

The Parliament's network has grown rapidly. Today there are over 400 PCs attached, with a projected growth to over 800 in just a few years. The original coaxial cable plant lacks the bandwidth to handle the increasing traffic load and is a major impediment to expansion of applications and addition of new users. Yet the Parliament's budget for technology is meager.

In our interviews with high level administrative staff we identified conflicts between Informatics, the Secretary General, and the head of Library Information Services. Some conflict appears turf-related; other is perceptual — that Informatics does not truly understand the processes at Parliament and cannot therefore automate them well. We also heard from Informatics people that the MPs and administrators do not appreciate or understand technology issues involved in developing comprehensive information systems.

3. Usage and Impact

A joint committee of MPs and technical staff at the Parliament and Library made decisions on the allocation of all equipment provided by the FTF, and also on a considerable amount of equipment purchased by the Hungarian government.

Usage has moved well beyond basic word processing functions, and into the arena of decision support through in-house development of extensive database tools. The applications currently in place on the Parliament's network include:

- ▶ The full text of all bills pending before the Parliament, along with all amendments.
- ▶ A chronological history of all bills introduced, all actions taken, and the full text of all debates during plenary sessions.
- ▶ Full text of the minutes of committee meetings, although this is not a complete set of data. Committee chairpersons have the discretion to disallow publication of committee work on the network.

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- ▶ A biographical and personnel database of all MPs. The biographical component is available to all network users; the personnel information is available to just a few high level administrators.
- ▶ A rudimentary document management system for use in filing and locating word processing documents.
- ▶ The library has a commercially developed bibliographic database and internally developed periodical tracking systems. They also produce a database of periodical abstracts called *PressDocs*. About 5,000-6,000 abstracts from articles in the Hungarian press are added to this database each month. A monthly update is distributed on floppy disk, and less frequently on CD-ROM, to libraries and other subscribers.
- ▶ Both the Parliament system and the Library system have access to commercially produced CD-ROM products, some produced by Hungarian publishers, others from outside the country.

4. Training

Frost money paid for extensive ORACLE training in August 1993. The in-house technical staff received developer training in Budapest. The Informatics staff in turn provided training for the end users in Parliament. About 150 people were trained on the use of the ORACLE applications. The Informatics staff also produced written documentation and extensive on-line help for all of the applications developed in-house.

In June 1994 two Hungarian automation specialists attended the FTF-sponsored *Conference on Information Technology in Parliaments* that was held in Poland.

In May and June of 1995, the Director and one staff member from Informatics traveled to Washington to receive indexing, abstracting, and technical training in preparation for their library's participation in the Library of Congress Global Legal Information Network (GLIN) project.

5. Critique of Usage

In general we found the Hungarian IT staff to be extremely competent and innovative implementors of technology for the Parliament. However, there are organizational issues and other factors which have hindered the most effective use of the technology currently in place:

- ▶ There are two networks in place which are not easily accessible to each other. The Parliament's network operates under the Banyan VINES operating system; the Library uses Novell NetWare. While the Library can connect to the Parliament's network, users must reboot their PCs in order to do so. There is no corresponding link from the Parliament back to the Library system. The Parliament plans to switch to Novell Netware in January 1996; this should resolve this issue.
- ▶ Some duplication of effort is apparent, e.g., the library has its own database of MPs, subscribes to a CD-ROM for Hungarian law which is available on the Parliamentary network, and has a third party CD-ROM of legislation.
- ▶ There are two very different perceptions of the information resources at the Parliament. We heard more than once that the Library is primarily for historical information about the country, and not of much value to MPs; only the Parliament network is for researching the activities of Parliament. The librarians present a different picture. For them, the two

systems are complementary data stores, but the library's is under-utilized because it is not available to the Parliament's network.

- ▶ The document/records management functions of the network are very underdeveloped. Little attention has been given to the management of current administrative or MP work product.
- ▶ There is a very low-tech method for moving information between the Ministries and Parliament. With the introduction of laws, re-keying occurs often. For the first time there is discussion in this year's budget of inter-network communication and software standards.
- ▶ There is too much emphasis on writing applications from scratch with the ORACLE application tools. Off-the-shelf applications, which can be localized to incorporate country specific language requirements, are commercially available. Application development is expensive and time-consuming and must be weighed against the financial resources available for the overall implementation of an information system.

6. Sustainability Issues

The Informatics budget is small and over-extended, at about US\$400,000 per year for maintenance, upgrades, and expansion and about US\$160,000 per year for software. The Parliament is faced with aging PCs, an over-taxed cable plant, and increasing demands for more applications and an expansion of users. The number of users on their network has doubled in the last two years, yet the number of Informatics staff has remained constant. Electronic research tools acquired with Frost funds require on-going expenditures to maintain.

Despite the Parliament's rather spartan fiscal condition, there is a clear commitment to continued support and development of computer resources for Parliament, and for the rest of government. Although Frost assistance provided a lot of hardware and software, the Hungarian government has also made a sizable investment of its own. The General Director of the Hungarian Parliament told us the ratio of Hungarian to U.S. expenditures during the period of Frost assistance was 1:3. We were also shown an informatics master plan for the next ten years which demonstrates an awareness of the on-going nature of information system development.

Hungary is a country with an abundance of technical talent and a strong presence of contemporary computer technology. We attended a Computer Exposition in Budapest and saw a comprehensive offering of technology providers, including many local software development companies.

The Parliament has a very competent technical staff which received high marks from both of their primary support entities: IQSoft and ORACLE/Hungary. Both of those companies are robust with business development in their own right, and can provide supplemental technical assistance to the Parliament's informatics staff in many areas of application development.

Pay scales for government workers are predictably low and that raises the potential for staff turnover, especially for technically skilled workers. However, the informatics unit has not had a turnover problem; in fact, it has successfully recruited staff from companies with which it has done business.

7. Other Donor Assistance

Most of the equipment assistance has come from the U.S., and most of that has come from the FTF. In 1991 the Council of Europe donated two PCs and one copy machine. In 1994 USIS donated four PCs to the Library.

8. Current Needs

The most important technical action needed is completion of the cable plant upgrade from coaxial ThinNet to 10-BaseT level 5. This project is currently underway but not fully funded. Without the cable plant upgrade, addition of users and expansion of network services is stalled. The second most important technical action needed is upgrading the operating system of the main parliamentary network from Banyan-Vines to Novell. This upgrade has been purchased and is slated for a January 1996 installation. When completed, the parliamentary and library networks — two distinct systems — can be integrated into a single enterprise-wide network.

For the long term health of the system, there is need for:

- a) integrated planning to replace the current competition between the Office of the Secretary General, the Library, and the Informatics management; and
- b) educating the management of the Parliament and the Parliament's budget committee about the financial requirements for automation systems, e.g., on-going maintenance, capital replacement and training.

B. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

In 1991 when assistance began in Hungary, the radical reformation of the Hungarian government of 1989-90 had been completed. Parliamentary elections under the new system had been held and the basic structure of the new parliament had been created. A committee system had been established.

There are 386 Members of Parliament (MPs). Less than 50 percent of the current MPs were in office in the "First Parliament," 1990-1994. Prior to FTF assistance, some MPs had attended programs of the State University of New York in Albany in parliamentary practice and procedure.

The size of the parliamentary staff grew from 10 in 1989 to the present level of 521.

1. Assistance Provided

Technical assistance under the Frost Task Force program was directed primarily at meeting the needs of the expanding parliamentary staff. The newly hired lawyers, economists and public administrators needed to know how to function in the role of committee support. The principal methods for offering technical assistance were the holding of Parliamentary Institutes, mostly in the U.S., and the visits of Frost Task Force members and staff delegations to Budapest. Subject matters included parliamentary libraries, government budgets and finance, bill-writing, parliamentary rules and procedures, and the use of information systems.

There were a few participants from the administrative part of the parliament. In office administration, Frost Task Force provided information on what was physically needed in an office, what kinds of support each department could provide, and what kinds of applications software might be used. For example, the Civil Service department based the design of its software application on what had been seen in the U.S. Congress.

About 30 staff members attended Institutes, a small number in relation to the needs of the staff, which had increased dramatically in size and in responsibility..

2. Implementation Obstacles

No implementation obstacles to the technical assistance activities were identified.

3. Usage and Impact

There were modifications to the parliament's committee structure during the time of Frost Task Force assistance. These changes included consolidation of the functional areas of some committees, division of one committee (Security Affairs) into two (State Police and Militia), and the splitting off of Constitutional Revision to a special committee, from the Law and Government Committee. The impetus to make these changes was attributed by staff to examples seen in the U.S. Congress. There are now 14 standing committees, 4 special committees and 2 investigatory committees.

Some of the Frost Task Force activities, as well as discussions in Hungary with Kristi Walseth and other FTF members and staff, appears to have helped pave the way for the work of the National Democratic Institute with MPs on the parliament's rules and procedures, a revision of which went into effect in September 1994. That revision included provisions that gave more rights to minority, opposition factions in parliament, including broadening the ability for members to initiate parliamentary debate. Under the new rules, the minority position is now to be included in committee reports.

4. Critique of Technical Assistance

Dr. Krisztina Imrene Horovitz critiqued the technical assistance for parliamentary staff by saying, "it provided us with an opportunity to see how committees worked, and how the U.S. Congress did things." She pointed out three specific changes that had resulted from staff attendance at, and the information received from, the parliamentary institutes: (1) the law on the legal status of MPs was amended; (2) the procedures for monitoring and verifying MPs' expenses were strengthened; and (3) the rules on conflict of interest were strengthened.

The Hungarian parliamentary staff made a few suggestions for improving the technical assistance part of the program: (1) focusing more on drafting principles for legal staff; (2) more regional or in-country training; and (3) visiting more state legislatures.

The Frost Task Force trip report of April 19, 1991 noted that the parliament would like assistance in the area of bill drafting. This continues to be a concern as the Legal Department would like to expand its bill-writing role. While appreciating the assistance under the Frost Task Force Parliamentary Institutes, the legal staff would like hands-on experience in a working environment. The suggestion was made that this is the type of assistance that the American Bar Association's CEELI program is providing to the Ministry of Justice, and that such a learning program might be set up at the parliament.

5. Sustainability Issues

There are no particular sustainability issues related to the technical assistance activities.

6. Other Donors

Technical assistance from the Bundestag prior to Frost Task Force work had helped the Parliament establish its committee structure.

The British provided staff training in 1992 in London and the Canadians ran a program in 1994.

The National Democratic Institute helped in the drafting of new rules and regulations for the Parliament.

7. Current Needs

There is still a need expressed for assistance in bill writing.

There is need for a stronger research and analysis capability to support the parliamentary committees. This can be provided by improving the organization of data bases and furnishing some additional training to the staff which supports committees and party factions.

A more efficient way of strengthening the research and analysis capability would be the establishment of a research and analysis department for the Parliament. However, this possibility was rejected by the different factions because of the distrust by the MPs of centralized information-gathering. Hungarians defended this distrust by citing the "information management" techniques of the Soviets, and how nothing that the former government had said could be trusted.

There is a need to streamline the automation activities involved in processing legislation from the drafted version in the government through Parliamentary approval and the law's publication in the official gazette and on CD-ROM (by an office other than the publisher in the gazette). There is unnecessary key entry and there is no verification that the passed version, the gazette version and the CD-ROM are the same. The Parliament has the capability to solve the problem, but a special study, possibly by an outside expert, could help bring about the needed changes.

C. PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARY

The Parliamentary Library is the premier law library in Hungary. In the country-wide shared collection development plan, it is also the selected special library for modern history and public policy studies. It is a UN depository library and has the Council of Europe — Eastern Europe depository library as an adjunct. In its reading room it has the beginnings of a NATO collection.

Its collection of foreign legal materials is outstanding, going back solidly to the mid-1800's. Recent material is a bit more spotted, but still impressive. The Library currently has 1600 subscriptions, down from a high of 2000 in 1994. This reduction is essentially due to a fixed budget that has not kept up with inflation or changes in foreign exchange rates.

The collection has over 700,000 volumes and is housed in the original parliament building. It has an MP reading room in the Library and another in the Information Center in the nearby parliamentary office building, known as the White House.

The Library has a full-time staff of 50 and 40 working part-time. The Library is open to the public and is used by the government, the parliament, students and historians as well as the occasional member of the public. These uses do not interfere with the use by MPs. The Library director reports directly to the Speaker of the Parliament and serves a five-year term. The Library has its own administration and is independent from the rest of the parliamentary staff; its staff are not included in parliamentary staff totals.

At the onset of FTF assistance, the Hungarian Parliamentary Library was already involved in automation, having 11 computers and an automated catalog. It was producing and publishing an abstracting and indexing service for law, political science and history publications called PressDoc. The Library had plans for an internal network and for connection to HungarNet, a Hungarian academic BITNET network. It had at least two photocopiers and was connected to the parliamentary LAN; it had no fax machine.

Assistance to the Library was to include support to a "nascent policy research center." The Frost Task Force's initial report stated, "There seems to be a consensus among the parties that the

Parliamentary Library is the logical center for the development of information and research services."

1. Assistance Provided

The physical changes associated with FTF assistance consist of the creation of the White House Information Center and the provision of additional computers, the local Novell network, and a CD-ROM tower.

The FTF provided 1,468 new titles of books and serials to the library. About half of these reside in the White House Information Center. These books helped provide needed foreign language titles; foreign purchases had been severely curtailed. Selection of the titles was done, for the most part, independently by the Library staff, i.e., not dependent upon the Library of Congress (LOC) Core List. Approximately ten of the titles were CD-ROMs. The FTF provided a CD-ROM tower for networking these titles. Not all software was installed for searching these CD-ROMs. More than half the disks provided were not network versions. The Library currently has five disks networked (three from FTF) and one FTF set on a stand-alone machine.

The FTF provided two-week training at the LOC for six librarians from the Library. Those who attended were trained professional librarians. The emphasis of this training was on reference service and selective dissemination of information to MPs. In addition, at the end of the FTF assistance, the Library hosted a Library Workshop in Budapest on September 21 - 23, 1994. Seventeen librarians from the Library participated. Informal discussions and assistance was provided to librarians during the visits of FTF personnel.

2. Implementation Obstacles

At the time FTF assistance began, Library staff were not integrated into parliamentary operations. They were totally independent with their own mission. They did not communicate with the Informatics division. This problem was not completely overcome.

There was distrust of having a centralized information and research service. As several staffers and an MP described it, there was residual distrust of government information. The information provided by the previous regime had risen to the level of a standing joke. This obstacle has not been resolved; no centralized information and research services exists.

3. Usage and Impact

There are marked disagreements between the MPs about the role of the Parliamentary Library in the legislative process. Most MPs are seldom seen in the Library; they ask their staff for information and it is up to the staff to find it. The Chief Engineer said that the MPs are for the most part unaware of both the Library and the Informatics division. It is the impression of many MPs that the Library is irrelevant. To quote MP Tamas Wachslar "It is history. I am interested in what is happening now, not ten minutes ago." This is in contrast to MP Peter Madai who was met while he was using the reading room. He indicated a strong support for the Library. He is also a professional historian. Krisztina Horovitz indicated that most of the MPs continue to regard the Library as the place of students and academicians.

On the other hand, the White House Information Center is well used as a browsing place for newspapers, and by staffers who request information on MPs' behalf. Over 50 percent of the queries are answered by use of the full text law databases on the parliamentary network.

The impact of the FTF assistance to the library is different for the two entities involved: the White House Information Center and the main library.

The White House Information Center serves only the parliament and would not have existed without FTF assistance. It is busy and productive. Staff find it invaluable. It is much more accessible to staff and MPs than is the library. Its success depends upon several factors: (1) proximity to staff and MP offices; (2) direct access to databases provided by both the Library and Informatics; (3) staffing by both the Library and Informatics so that the best resource is utilized; and (4) access to the extensive Library collections when needed. Its young staff are a model of the level of cooperation needed at the administrative level. FTF assistance was effectively focused and the Hungarians have developed the initial resources into a highly effective operation.

The assistance to the main library is more difficult to evaluate. The reference staff are very user-oriented, which seems to be a direct result of FTF training. There is usage of the books and periodicals provided, although the CD-ROMs have not all been useful. There is no sustainability for the books and materials portion of the assistance. The books and periodicals are aging. The library has not had the financial resources to re-subscribe to any of the CD-ROM titles, although it is looking forward to being able to budget for a CELEX update.

The computers are starting to have parts wear out. The memory requirements for Windows and the Internet require that machines be upgraded or replaced. Lastly, because of the size of the Library and its operation, the FTF assistance was a small drop. Most effective of the physical assistance was the provision of the network and the CD-ROM tower. This brought the Library forward technologically faster and allowed it to leapfrog about five years.

There has been no change in the staffing level of the library during FTF assistance, but there has been some shift in duties — notably in increased reference services for MPs and parliamentary staff.

The Library had pre-FTF plans to develop HungDoc, an indexing service distributed on floppy or CD-ROM that abstracts in Hungarian from articles in foreign newspapers and periodicals. Production of HungDoc was begun in 1991 during FTF assistance, but received no direct assistance. The Library already produced PressDoc, a similar service for Hungarian publications. The provision of additional computers to the library hastened the implementation of the Library's plans for HungDoc.

Most effective and longest lasting, based upon the opinions of the library staff and the evaluator, was the LOC hands-on training and opportunity to make professional contacts with both LOC staff and regional parliamentary librarian staffers.

4. Critique of Assistance

The library staff rated the hands-on training at the LOC as the best part of the FTF assistance. They indicated that the books, network, computers and CD-ROMs were useful and enabled them to support the parliamentary staff better, but the exposure to new ideas in library service and the contacts that they made while in Washington were benefits that would stay with them a lifetime. The Library has not fulfilled its role as the central provider of information. The primary source of information in the parliament is the parliamentary network and the Internet. The library network is not accessible from the parliamentary network because of incompatible networking operating systems. This has resulted in two independent databases being kept on the same topic, such as the MP information databases, one of which is created in Informatics and the other in the Library. The incompatible networks were both supplied under FTF assistance and appear to be the result of a pre-existing lack of communications between the two departments.

This split between the Library and Informatics is a serious deterrent to maximizing the benefits of FTF assistance. For example, WorldWide Web development is taking place in the Informatics Division, while the Library is still using older, less efficient forms of presentation. Informatics offered a WWW training course, but the Library did not participate because they did not have their

own Internet server. Librarians have to reboot their computers to the parliamentary network in order to use the Internet. The networking operating systems' incompatibility is scheduled to be eliminated next year when the parliamentary network switches from Banyan-Vines to Novell 4.1. Nevertheless, the Library is still pursuing funds for its own server and an alternate access through an academic network.

The problem of access to commercial databases, noted in the April 1991 report as a target for assistance, has not improved despite replacement of the telephone system. This is due to the high costs of such databases.

The concept of providing information on CD-ROMs rather than through expensive commercial on-line search facilities was a good one. Unfortunately many of the CD-ROMs provided are not being used. The highest used CD-ROM title is CELEX, European Legal Documents in full-text. Others of the CD-ROM titles are not used because they are not of high interest and/or not readily available. As a case in point, one librarian said about the United States Code Annotated (USCA) on CD-ROM: "it is something that one ought to have in case someone wants to use it." In fact, the paper copies of the USCA are used instead. Since the CD-ROM is not a network version, it would have to be installed on the stand-alone CD-ROM reader if someone wanted to use it. Because it is low use, it is not normally installed. Because it is not installed, it is not easily available for use.

5. Sustainability Issues

The Library has only re-subscribed to three of the thirty some periodicals and none of the CD-ROMs provided by the FTF. The Library maintains a prospective list of periodicals that they would like to receive. Similarly, the Library has had no budget for new foreign books since July 1994. Fortunately, the Library has the right to receive an official copy of all new Hungarian publications, although this depository requirement has not yet been applied to CD-ROMs. In addition, the library receives the bulk of its foreign materials via exchange for Hungarian materials.

The library has not budgeted for hardware. Hardware is either supplied by the Informatics division or is promoted from a donor. The computer assistance does not appear to be sustainable. The budget does not provide for replacement machines.

The training of staff and the creation of the White House Information Center are more permanent contributions of the FTF assistance.

6. Other Donors

Materials were provided by the British, French and German governments, the European Union, the Council of Europe, and NATO. The Council of Europe pays for two staff. Training and technical assistance was received from the British Parliament and the German Bundestag.

7. Current Needs

The Library needs a good Internet connection, but it does not need its own communications server and Internet connection. The main parliamentary network is slated to change its operating system from Banyan-Vines to Novell; this will permit the library network to be fully integrated into the parliamentary network and will allow them to use the parliamentary Internet connection.

The Library needs to integrate its activities and databases with those provided by the Informatics division. Technical assistance from a Librarian/Information Systems person may be the only way this coordination can be achieved.

The Library needs to market its services to the MPs and the MP advisors, especially its services as a search intermediary. Technical assistance in library marketing would be useful.

III. LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENTS DURING THE PROJECT PERIOD

The role and structure of the National Assembly has not changed significantly since the beginning of the project. The membership has changed, however. First, nearly one-fifth of the MPs elected in 1990 were replaced during their term. Second, there was a large turnover from the May 1994 elections. In the new parliament, 64 percent of the MPs are new. The previous governing coalition is now in the minority. The socialists (former communists) are now in the majority.

During most of the period, the rights of the opposition resulted in a very large amount of plenary time being devoted to interpellations. In spite of this, a very large quantity of laws were passed. However, the vast majority consisted of a small number of paragraphs; many were amendments to laws passed earlier in the same session. Nevertheless, the sum total of the Assembly's work helped establish democracy more firmly and set the stage for Hungary's entry into West European economic and political institutions.

During the latter part of the project period, committee structures were changed and committees given more responsibility. Both conflict of interest and contracting rules were strengthened. Reporting by political factions of the parliament on the use of government funds was tightened.

In the previous administration, the government took actions against some of the media which were alleged to have been politically inspired. At one point, the Constitutional Court told the government to cease and desist. It was left to the parliament to come up with new legislation covering the media. During the team's visit to Hungary, a consensus of the six political parties was reached on the main lines of such legislation.

The public can get passes to view the plenary sessions of the parliament; there was a large crowd in attendance the day the evaluation team visited the plenary session. There is also a special gallery for the media. Plenary sessions are also televised daily from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Sessions beyond 4:00 p.m. are taped and are available to journalists. There is an agenda published weekly to which journalists have access; a press briefing is given every Friday.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. GENERAL

1. Conclusions

- a. In spite of some technical problems, Hungary has made good use of the FTF assistance: equipment, technical assistance and library support.
- b. Democracy continues to flourish in the Hungarian Parliament, notably in the internal rules of the Parliament and in the process of seeking consensus among the political parties on important issues before presenting legislation related to the issues.
- c. In any follow-on project for legislative assistance in the ENI region, Hungary could play an important role, e.g., by serving as a demonstration of a working democracy and by providing

presenters and/or serving as a site for regional workshops on consensus building, automation and library services.

2. Recommendation

That Hungary participate in any ENI regional project for legislative assistance, both as a provider of technical assistance to newly independent states and as a recipient of a small amount of funds to help fund the cable plant upgrade if the latter could be used to help expand the parliamentary network and obtain better integration of the automation efforts.

B. EQUIPMENT

1. Conclusions

- a. The FTF assistance significantly accelerated Parliament's implementation of technology, and the development of internal information systems.
- b. The Informatics staff at Parliament was able to take the Frost assistance and independently construct the network infrastructure and application programs identified in its own long range plans.
- c. Initial disagreements between Frost technical advisors and the head of Informatics were impediments to the success of the network, but they have been addressed and corrected. Management of Informatics has changed and is currently pursuing technological solutions more consistent with Frost's original recommendations.
- d. The rapid growth of the network has created a critical need for a cable plant upgrade — which is now underway but not totally funded.

2. Recommendation

If follow-on assistance becomes available, assist in funding the cable plant upgrade and seek means to:

- (a) **Educate the upper management of parliament on the requirements for annual maintenance costs and longer term expansion and upgrade costs; and**
- (b) **Facilitate cooperation between the library and informatics staff, e.g., by fostering joint planning efforts through an internal task force incorporating parliamentary staff, Informatics staff, and library staff.**

C. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

1. CONCLUSIONS

- a. Good use has been made of the observations of the workings of the U.S. Congress and the hands-on training provided. This was reflected in Parliamentary rules and regulations and in various processes introduced into the Parliament.
- b. The Parliament did not take advantage of one element of technical assistance that was available: assistance in setting up a centralized source of research and analysis services. The factions would not trust such an institution — at least not yet. On the other hand, it is probable

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that the Library could quietly start providing some services and gradually earn the confidence of the MPs and the factions.

c. Parliamentary staff would welcome the chance to participate in any future regional workshops, particularly on the drafting of legislation.

2. Recommendations

- a. **Fund Hungarian participation in any regional workshops on the drafting of legislation.**
- b. **Utilize Hungarian automation and library services personnel as presenters/resource persons in workshops for newly independent states.**

D. PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARY

1. Conclusions

a. The most obvious use of FTF assistance was the establishment of the Information Center in the White House office building, but the main library has also increased its capacity to provide useful information to the committees, MPs, and factions.

b. The main library has an extensive collection and is well-equipped to provide more services than is currently requested. It needs to be more aggressive in marketing its services and to work in greater collaboration with the Informatics unit to improve its capabilities.

TAB A**CHRONOLOGY — HUNGARY****1990**

- Apr 6 The Special Task Force on the Development of Parliamentary Institutions in Eastern Europe was established by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The Chairman was Martin Frost; the other members were Bart Gordon, Nita Lowey, Sherrod Brown, Gerald Solomon, Jim Leach and David Dreier.
- Jun 28 The Special Task Force (Frost Committee) submitted a report to Speaker Foley on its trip to Central Europe (Poland, Czech and Slovak Republic, and Hungary) in which it recommended assistance totalling \$6,341,000 to the three countries.

1991

- Jan 30 An Inter-Agency Agreement was signed between USAID and the Library of Congress (LOC) under which \$4.25 million was allocated to the LOC for Poland, Hungary, and the Czech and Slovak Republic. The LOC activity was to be managed under the direction of the Frost Committee.
- Feb - Mar A technical staff delegation from the Congressional Research Service (CRS) and the House Information Systems office (HIS) visited the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, Hungary, and Poland. The Hungarian Parliament was to prepare a list of equipment by April. An additional list of periodicals and books were requested.
- Mar 21 Eight boxes of library materials were air-lifted to Budapest with a Congressional delegation.
- Jun 21 RFP 91-7C was published for the procurement, delivery and installation of office automation hardware and software.
- Sep 30 A contract for \$306,440 was awarded to Donosphere/Duna Elektronika for the installation of 85 personal computers, 40 laser printers, 30 ink-jet printers, 3 color printers, and personal computer software.
- 30 A contract for \$108,416 was awarded to Oce for installation of 10 small office copiers and 2 high volume copiers.
- 30 A contract for \$89,032 was awarded to Microsystem for installation of 2 color copiers and 2 microform readers-printers.
- Dec 5 - 7 Kristi Walseth and Francis Miko visited Hungary to review the status of programs. They found that most of the equipment for which contracts had been let was still with the vendor but was to be delivered before the end of the year. There had been problems with Customs, and it had been decided to get ether net cards installed in the computers before delivery. The Speaker's Advisory Committee had decided on the distribution of the equipment.

The delegation also discussed the second stage acquisition of superservers and other equipment.

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The Council of Europe provided a document collection to the Parliamentary Library, together with two on-line computers and a new copier.

1992

- Feb 24 to Mar 6 Four people from Hungary attended the third Parliamentary Institute for parliamentary staff.
- Mar 20 RFP 92-8 was published for the procurement, delivery, and installation of servers, network operating system, database and text management software and office automation equipment and software.
- Mar 30 to April 10 Four people from Hungary attended the fourth Parliamentary Institute for parliamentary staff.
- May 26 - June 5 Four people from Hungary attended the fifth Parliamentary Institute for parliamentary staff.
- Jul 5 - 17 Mary Nell Bryant traveled to Bulgaria and Hungary to assist the development of library collections.
- 20 - 31 Four people from Hungary attended the sixth Parliamentary Institute for parliamentary staff.
- 28 An additional order for \$420,880 was placed with Donasphere for 100 386DX workstations, 60 notebooks, and 30 laser printers.
- 28 RFP 92-65 was published for procurement, delivery, installation, and support of office automation equipment and software.
- Aug 14 A contract for \$120,060 was awarded to IQSoft for ORACLE RDBMS, tools, case tools for SCO UNIX, Card, ORACLE for Windows, dBASE compiler, and software maintenance.
- 17 A contract for \$430,390 was awarded to Montana Kft. for installation of 5 servers, 2 network bridges, 2 backup workstations, 7 486-based application and development workstations, 3 tape backup systems, 1 CD-ROM server, scanner, VINES unlimited network operating system, VINES SMP network operating system, mail, network management, PC network printing, server-to-server LAN, PC/TCP with routing, application toolkit, asynchronous terminal emulation, server-to-server X.25, X.29, and software maintenance, mailMAN for VINES and V-bridge and software maintenance, Trellis optical disk redirector VINES, VINES assistant, TOPIC database builder, TOPIQL, TOPIC for Windows, and software maintenance, SCO open desktop, open desktop server upgrade, SCO MPX and software maintenance.
- Oct 4 - 17 John Kelley, Bill Freeman and Cathy Brickman traveled to Bulgaria and Hungary for RFP development, vendor evaluations, and acceptance testing on equipment. Pat Gardner joined them in Budapest.
- Nov 2 - 13 Three people from Hungary attended the seventh Parliamentary Institute for parliamentary staff, primarily legal specialists.
- Dec 3 A contract was awarded for \$153,880 to Selectrade Computer for installation of 15 486PCs, 30 laser printers, 33 ethernet adapters, and 1 projection panel.

1993

- Feb 12 - 13 William Freeman, Cathy Brickman, Bud Collins, and John Kelley visited Hungary for acceptance testing of office automation equipment.
- Feb 22 to Mar 10 Kristi Walseth, Francis Miko and Julie Kim visited Hungary, Bulgaria, and Albania to conduct a needs assessment and a political analysis of each country.
- 28 Kristi Walseth and Mary Nell Bryant delivered library materials.
- Apr 18 to May 1 Dr. Katalin Pinter and Eda Balazsik of the Parliamentary library participated in library training at CRS.
- May 2 - 15 The Eighth Parliamentary Institute was held in Washington, D.C. for specialists in government budgets and finance, with attendance from Hungary.
- Jul 2 - 11 A Congressional delegation led by Rep. Frost visited Albania, Hungary and Slovakia. Ms. Bryant used the occasion to discuss the remaining budget for library collections with staff members of the Library of the Hungarian Parliament.
- 12 - 23 The ninth Parliamentary Institute took place in Washington, D.C. for committee staff members, with attendance from Hungary.
- 24 - 31 Katalin Haraszti and Andrea Varallyai of the parliamentary library attended the annual conference of the National Council of State Legislatures in San Diego and then undertook two weeks of library training at CRS.
- Aug 16 - 28 Hungary sent a representative(s) to the annual meeting of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions in Madrid and Barcelona. Funding was provided for E. European attendance by the German Marshall Fund, the Soros Foundation and the Ford Foundation.
- Sep 13 - 24 The tenth Parliamentary Institute took place for legislative attorneys and legal committee staff members, with attendance from Hungary.
- Oct 31 to Nov 13 Ivan Ronai and Karoly Redl, who specialize in reference work at the library of the Hungarian Parliament carried out two weeks of hands-on work experience in CRS. They also attended the Online '93 conference in Washington for training on the range of services provided by electronic mail.

1994

- May 5 - 12 Hungary participated in the Parliamentary Rules and Procedures Conference in Warsaw, Poland.
- Jun 20 - 22 Two Hungarian automation specialists attended the Conference on Information Technology in Parliaments, which was held in Poland.
- Sep 21 - 23 Hungary hosted an FTF-sponsored Library Workshop.

1995

- Apr Rubens Medina, Nick Kozura and Anton Wekerle went to Hungary to assess the ability of the parliament to participate in the GLIN project.

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May/June ? Istvan Dina and Miklos Banki went to Washington for a month to receive indexing, abstracting, and technical training in preparation for their library's participation in the LOC's Law Library's Global Legal Information Network (GLIN) project.

May Two parliamentary librarians attended the regional parliamentary library conference in Prague, Czech Republic.

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TAB B**LIST OF PEOPLE CONTACTED — HUNGARY****HUNGARIAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

Tamas Wachslar, MP, Vice-President of Defense Committee
Peter Madai, MP
Dr. Istvan Soltesz, Secretary General
Istvan Papp, Deputy Secretary General
Dr. Miklos Banki, Head of the Legal Department
Dr. Laszlo Juhasz, Advisor to Committee on European Integration Affairs
Dr. Tibor Soos, General Director
Emil Bakos, Deputy General Director & Head of Finance Department
Dr. Krisztina Imrene Horovitz, Head of the Administrative Department
Dipl. Ing. Peter Arva, Chief Engineer
Istvan Dina, Head of Department of Informatics
Laszlo Palossy, Software Engineer, Department of Informatics
Laszlo Belokosztolszki, Programmer, Department of Informatics
Bordacs Csaba, Department of Informatics
Ivan Ronal, Deputy Director, Parliamentary Library
Dr. Eva Prohle, Deputy Director, Parliamentary Library
Judith Szilvassy, Director Council of Europe Documentation Center

U. S. EMBASSY

William Sifkin, Chief Political Officer

OFFICE OF THE USAID REPRESENTATIVE

James E. Watson, II, Project Development Officer

NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Michael A. Marshall, Senior Program Officer & Representative in Hungary

OTHER

Gabor Proszeky, PhD., Director of Morphologic company
Peter Forro, Vice-President of Megamicio, a computer technology company
Andres Czeke, M.D., Vice-President of Radio Alarm Security Service, Ltd.
Attila Kirchner, System Programmer, NAS company
Dr. Julia Sipka, IQSoft
Laszlo Langer, IQSoft
Dr. Tamas Langer, IQSoft
Peter Szeredi, IQSoft
Gabor Fejer, IQSoft
Kristof Kallay, ORACLE/Hungary
Zoltan Paris, ORACLE/Hungary
Sandor Biszak, Arcanum Databases
Pal Beringer, Arcanum Databases
Schmiedl Gabor, Editor and Parliamentary Library user

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ANNEX G. COUNTRY REPORT — LITHUANIA

Development Associates, Inc.

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ANNEX G. COUNTRY REPORT — LITHUANIA

Development Associates, Inc.

I. SETTING

Under the leadership of intellectuals, the Lithuanian reform movement Sajudis was formed in mid-1988 and declared a program of democratic and national rights, winning nationwide popularity. On Sajudis's demand, the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet passed constitutional amendments on the supremacy of Lithuanian laws over Soviet legislation, annulled the 1940 decisions on proclaiming Lithuania a part of the USSR, legalized a multi-party system, and adopted a number of other important decisions.

A large number of the members of the Lithuanian Communist Party (LCP) also supported the ideas of Sajudis. In December 1989, the LCP split from the Soviet Union's Communist Party and became an independent party; in 1990 it renamed itself the Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party. In March 1990, Sajudis-backed candidates won the elections to the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet, and the new chairman of the Soviet proclaimed the restoration of Lithuanian independence, formed a new cabinet of ministers, and adopted the Provisional Fundamental Law of the state and a number of by-laws.

The USSR demanded revocation of the act and began employing political and economic sanctions against Lithuania (an economic blockade was imposed April 17, 1990), as well as demonstrating military force. On January 10, 1991 Soviet authorities seized the central publishing house and other premises in Vilnius and unsuccessfully attempted to overthrow the elected government by sponsoring a local "National Salvation Committee." Three days later the Soviets forcibly took over the TV tower, killing 14 civilians and injuring 700.

During the national plebiscite a few weeks later (February 9), over 90 percent of those who took part in the voting (79 percent of those eligible) voted in favor of an independent, democratic Lithuania. Lithuania's leaders continued to seek Western diplomatic recognition of its independence. Soviet military-security forces continued forced conscription, seized buildings, attacked customs posts, and sometimes killed customs and police officials.

During the August 19 coup against Gorbachev, Soviet military troops took over several communications and other government facilities in Vilnius and other cities, but they returned to their barracks when the coup failed. The Lithuanian government banned the Communist Party and ordered confiscation of its property.

There were no more serious threats to Lithuania's independence, but it was not until September 1992 that the Soviet Union signed an agreement calling for the withdrawal of its troops by August 31, 1993. In the meantime, there were visits from two large U.S. Congressional delegations (September 1991 and February 1992). In September 1991, USAID/Washington authorized the Frost Task Force to include the Baltic states in the CRS-administered program.

Lithuania began to participate in Frost-sponsored activities in mid-1992, the year in which a new constitution was approved by referendum and new elections were held. The Lithuanian Democratic Party won a plurality of votes and a majority of parliamentary seats. The organization of the

unicameral Seimas is shown in Tab A. A chronology of Frost activity in Lithuania is shown in Tab B. Tab C includes a list of the people contacted by the evaluation team.

II. THE PROJECT

A. Equipment and Related Training

The Frost Task Force (FTF) first visited Lithuania in February 1992. In their trip report they noted a general level of automation well below what they had seen in other project countries. What they also found in Lithuania was a bright and energetic Informatics staff (formally the Computer Data Processing Department) with an automation plan, an impressive equipment wish list, an existing Novell network of 22 users, 33 other PCs and an array of printers. The equipment was the legacy of a Lithuanian delegation selected for negotiations on independence from the USSR.

The state-owned telephone system was of poor quality, which inhibited development of computer communications with other government agencies and institutions in-country, as well as establishing connections with the outside world.

The Seimas Informatics staff had been working with a consulting professor at the local university prior to Frost assistance, and had developed specifications for an ORACLE-based data management system on a UNIX network. Frost Task Force technical advisors initially challenged some of the decisions made by the Informatics staff but ultimately went along with the plan.

1. Assistance Provided

Between September 1993 and November 1994, the Frost Task Force provided material assistance for computers and office equipment at these levels:

PCs & Printers	61 personal computers, four notebook computers, 41 printers, and a SUN server.
CD-ROM	One CD-ROM server, two CD-ROM players, and 1 CD-ROM Mastering unit.
Software	Basic office automation software; extensive ORACLE database management and application development tools; ORACLE text retrieval tools; DOS and Windows text retrieval tools; E-Mail software; and general utility software.
Network	Novell Netware 4.0; routers, hubs, connectors, cables, and other network infrastructure components.
Other PC Hardware	32 modems; 1 flatbed color scanner.
Copiers	2 small office copiers; 2 high speed copiers; 1 color copier.

2. Implementation Obstacles

The head of the Lithuanian Informatics staff has managed in two years to create a very professional development team and a sophisticated state-of-the-art information system for the Seimas. The most significant impediment to implementation of this system has been staff turnover: four persons trained on networking and the ORACLE database tools provided by Frost assistance have left the Seimas for more lucrative jobs in the private sector.

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The Informatics Director also took personal time off out of the country several times during the implementation phase of the project. Although she left an appointed deputy in charge, Frost Task Force technical advisors had difficulty with a lack of timely decision-making during the director's absence.

During the initial procurement phase there were some difficulties with delivery of product — delays in promised delivery dates and receipt of software which was not the most current version. The Informatics director has subsequently adopted procurement methods which minimize the possible occurrence of these delays with future purchases. As of this evaluation, all equipment promised by the Frost Task Force has been delivered and is operational.

In September 1994 lightning destroyed some equipment which provided access to the Internet. Identification of all damaged equipment and subsequent replacement was time-consuming.

Informatics has spent the last year in application development mode with a Windows version of ORACLE. Their new database product is scheduled for release in November, although it was still in testing mode during the week of our evaluation, and had some glitches which may delay its introduction at the Seimas. In addition, only about 40 percent of the 250 computers currently in place at the Seimas have the capacity to run the new ORACLE software applications. Until the other 60 percent are either upgraded or replaced, the new software will reach a limited segment of the user population (those 60 percent will continue to use the DOS applications which the new ORACLE products will replace).

There has been no master design document for their database applications, and their programming staff is inexperienced. Consequently there have been several instances of programming requests which have been at odds with the database structures in place. This has resulted in some re-tooling of the existing software or hardware. The Informatics department recently added a Systems Analysis component to handle better the planning for system expansion and overall application design.

3. Usage and Impact

Members of Parliament (MPs) are not the primary users of PCs — whether purchased with Frost assistance or Seimas funds. Committees, factions, and departments are the real users. There is an abundance of word processing and spreadsheet users. But the focus of the computer network is *access to information*. Documents created by every segment of the Seimas are stored in a database which is available to all network users, and to the public by way of an Internet home page. Outbound access to the Internet is also installed. There are 56 Internet addresses on their network; their Internet tariffs are subsidized by the Norwegian Parliament through the end of 1996.

The Informatics staff has converted historic data back to their date of independence on March 1, 1990. Their plan is to have available in their ORACLE databases: all versions of all laws of the country; all legal documents executed with other countries; new legislation introduced into the Seimas but not yet passed; a database about pending legislation (e.g. who introduced it and when, where it is in the legislative process); and all working papers of the Seimas and its committees. Most of this information will be available to Internet users as well.

All of the ORACLE and basic office applications have been localized to reflect the Lithuanian language and character set. With each new PC purchasing cycle they strive to acquire state-of-the-art technology (e.g. their most recent PC purchasing specifications upgraded the basic system from 80486 to Pentium processor level). A total of about 250 PCs are in place, with about 170 PCs on the network.

Specific departmental implementations observed include:

- ▶ The Head of the Seimas Secretariat has established a control mechanism for the introduction of new legislation which involves recording basic document information into a database. All legislation is tracked from the date of its introduction through resolution — either by passage, failure, or Presidential veto.
- ▶ The Information Analysis Department receives data feeds from several major news services and each day prepares summaries of the top stories relevant to Lithuania. Those summaries are published in Lithuanian, English, and the native language in which they are transmitted. The archives of these summaries are stored on the network in ASCII form but have not yet been incorporated into the ORACLE database products.
- ▶ When MPs request information, the Information Analysis Department produces *Briefing Papers* similar in format to CRS's *Issue Briefs*. MPs, factions, committees, the President and some Ministries use their services. They are viewed as politically neutral.
- ▶ The Seimas transmits documents by E-Mail to outside institutions for incorporation into their own collections.
- ▶ The Correspondence Unit tracks all general correspondence sent to the Seimas. Each document received is logged into a database and tracked until a response has been sent to the writer. Correspondence is tracked by issue type, and statistics are available which show the number of documents received, by issue type, during any given year.
- ▶ The Press and Public Relations Department uses computers to generate several publications targeted to readers outside of government. They would like to publish information on the Internet but have not yet done so.

The National Library, which is located next door to the Seimas, has a Novell network which is linked to the Seimas via a fiber optic cable which was purchased with Frost Task Force funds. This allows Seimas network users to access the electronic card catalogue and periodical abstracts databases at the Library. Library users in turn have access to the Seimas document databases. More extensive discussion of the National Library is contained in C. below.

4. Training

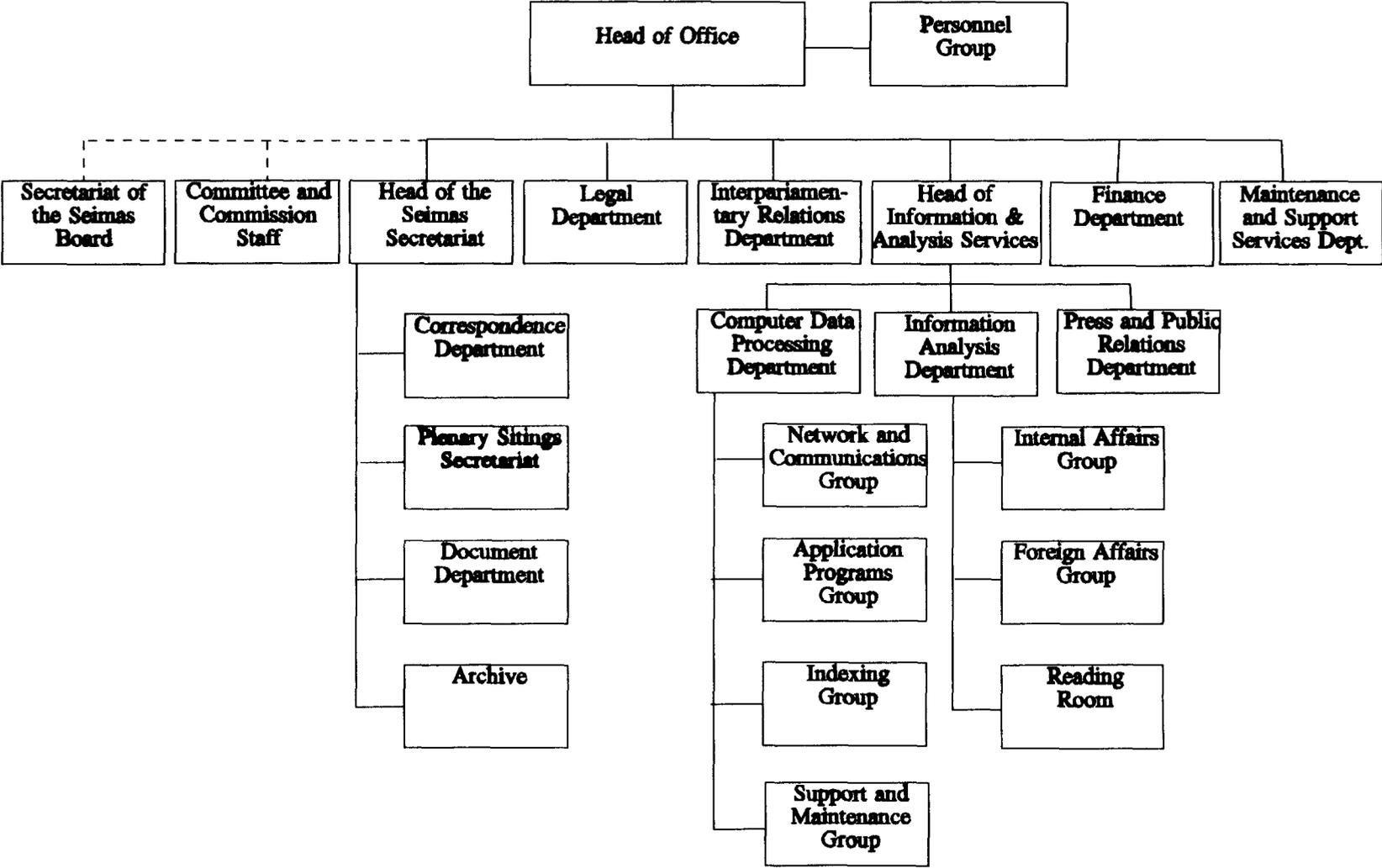
Frost assistance sent one person from Seimas to the American COMDEX computer exposition in November 1992, and paid for ORACLE training of four Informatics staff members in 1993. The Informatics department has paid for additional ORACLE training. Unfortunately all of the Informatics staff members trained with Frost assistance have left the Seimas for higher paying jobs in the private sector.

In 1994 two Informatics staff members attended the Information Technology in Parliaments conference in Warsaw, under joint sponsorship of the Frost Committee, the Polish Senat, and the European Parliament.

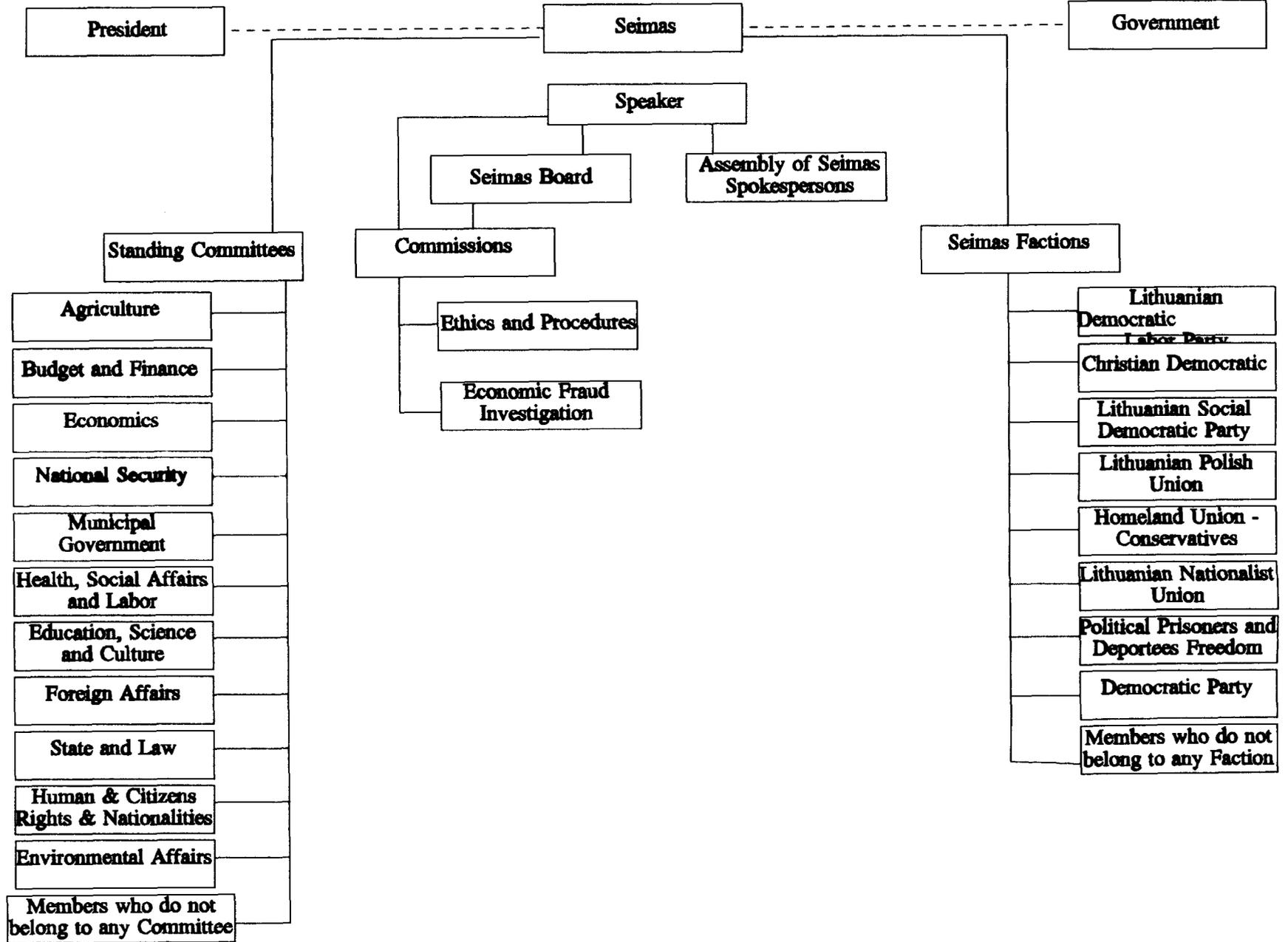
The Seimas subsidized basic training for beginners and advanced users of word processing and spreadsheet software. The Informatics staff trained users during the summer of 1995 on a variety of topics. Training lasted three weeks, eight hours per day in 1 ½ hour increments. A professor from the University conducted Internet training sessions during that same period.

There is no formal training program for new hires in the Seimas. New user orientation is left to the individual departments. If there is demand for training, the Informatics staff will provide it. Training has been supplemented with brief Lithuanian language translations of user manuals for

**TAB A
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF THE OFFICE
OF THE SEIMAS (PARLIAMENT) OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA**



SEIMAS OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA



D. Parliamentary Library

1. Conclusions

- a. The Information Analysis Department is one of the showcases of FTF assistance. It has overcome the natural suspicion by the parties of centralized information sources.
- b. The Information Analysis Department needs a good Internet connection to realize its full potential.

2. Recommendation

If there should be a legislative assistance program for NIS countries, Lithuania should be used as a site for a meeting of those interested in establishing a CRS-type operation. It could be an appropriate model for legislatures coming out from under communism.

overloaded. The Internet is the only means by which they will be able to continue to receive current legal information. Additionally, plans have been laid for interconnecting the government Ministries, the Constitutional Court and the parliament. Funding of these connections is essential for the future domestic information needs of parliament.

III. LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENTS

As the Seimas has grown in stature, it has become a focal point for public attention. During the team's visit, there was a sizable demonstration in front of the parliament. Pensioners were complaining about how they were being treated. The parliament also receives some 7,000 letters a year from constituents. Principal complaints are about property rights and property settlements, law enforcement actions, and judgments of courts. Complaints about actions of civil servants are sometimes received, but these are turned over to the office of the Ombudsman who deals with such complaints.

Although the dominant political party can usually get passed any measure on which there is consensus within that party, there are some rules ensuring that the minority can bring issues up in the plenary sessions, e.g., each third Thursday evening, anyone can present proposals. Generally there is an attempt to get consensus on major/strategic issues, e.g., the concept of national defense, association with the European Union, changes to the constitution, and buying land.

Although not all MPs are aware of and taking advantage of the services provided, there has been a vast change within the last two years in the amount of information available to committees, factions, and individual MPs. The Information Analysis Department is not only putting out a large amount of information on a regular basis, it has increased substantially its output of research reports and special studies — 8 in 1993 to 42 in 1994 to an annual rate of 50 in 1995. In addition, there is much more on the network available to all.

Some of the principal legislative actions during recent years includes: revising the Rules and Procedures of the Seimas — a major overhaul two years ago, some further amendment in 1995; establishing an ethical code for civil servants — not yet done for the MPs; court reform; a banking system law; participation in the drafting of the civil code — was finished in October for presentation to the Minister of Justice and subsequent presentation to the Seimas; and amendment of the administrative law code. The Seimas is still wrestling with the preparation of a media law.

Both the public and the media have access to plenary sessions. In addition, the various factions hold frequent press conferences in the Seimas. There is no practice of open committee meetings.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. General

1. Conclusions

a. The Seimas has made especially good use of the assistance provided to it by the Frost Task Force. Particularly noteworthy are:

i) The Information Analysis Department is effective, widely respected, and widely used by MPs and the parliamentary committees.

ii) The Informatics group has managed well the use of the FTF assistance; there is more useful information on-line in the Seimas than in the other parliaments visited.

2. Recommendation

That Lithuania participate in any ENI regional project for legislative assistance, both as a provider of technical assistance to newly independent states and as a recipient of a small amount of technical assistance to assist in long term automation planning.

B. Equipment

1. Conclusions

- a. In general, this is one of the best executed programs we saw during our four-country tour.
- b. Within Lithuania, the Informatics department at the Seimas has become the model for technology usage. They regularly receive requests for services from the Office of the President and Ministries of the Executive branch. This offers a great opportunity to *lead* those requesting agencies toward a model of inter-agency compatibility which will facilitate data sharing.
- c. Informatics staff have taken Frost Task Force assistance and quickly turned it into a functional data resource with almost no outside assistance.
- d. Technical assistance after the initial delivery of equipment would have helped accelerate the implementation process.
- e. Some fundamental network administration and software issues were not addressed by the Informatics unit.
- f. The Information Analysis department has software requirements which are different from general system users. It needs special consideration from the Informatics Department to address these requirements. It needs a different text retrieval system and a higher priority for service. This department is highly regarded and demand for its services is growing.

2. Recommendation

If follow-on assistance becomes available, fund a two-month technical assistance visit to help do a long-term automation plan, which could be integrated with long-term Government of Lithuania plans.

C. Technical Assistance

1. Conclusions

- a. There was general consensus on the value of visits to the U.S. Congress, including the CRS and other parts of the Library of Congress (LOC), as a way of getting ideas and broader perspectives.
- b. The Parliamentary Institutes served well their intended purpose.
- c. The work of parliamentary committees and legislative drafting continue to be two subjects in which there would be an interest in participating if something comparable to the Parliamentary Institutes were to be included in a follow-on regional project.

The Parliamentary and Government Information Department of the National Library provides some staff for the parliamentary reading room, sometimes called the parliamentary library, under the supervision of the Information Analysis Department of the parliament. The collection in the reading room now totals over 4000 volumes, with 338 current periodical subscriptions.

The Information Group of the Independence Movement (1989-90) consisted of both computer specialists and researchers. This group evolved into the Information Analysis Department and the Computer Data Processing Department (Informatics) of the parliament. The Information Analysis Department runs both the parliamentary reading room and the research center. The latter consists of three departments: Domestic, East and West. The research center provides reports on demand from MPs, ongoing daily press digests, and selective dissemination of information services.

1. Assistance Provided

Two of the FTF computers were placed in the reading room at the parliament and eight were placed in the research center. All of the 496 books, CD-ROMs, and periodical titles received from the FTF were placed in the reading room, or are located in the research center. A copy of Procite was provided to the National Library to facilitate the indexing and abstracting of newspapers.

Two members of the Information Analysis Department received training at CRS/LOC for two weeks. Six of the information staff attended the Librarians Conference in Estonia in June 1993. One librarian received training in Poland under FTF assistance. Others attended the Budapest and Prague library workshops.

There was informal consultation between the Information Analysis Department and National Library staffs and CRS/LOC staff during FTF visits.

2. Implementation Obstacles

There was a jurisdictional dispute between the National Library Government Information Division and the new parliamentary Information Analysis Department. This engendered communications difficulties. The problem was resolved when the head of the National Library Government Information Division was hired away to head the parliamentary Information Analysis Department. FTF technical personnel helped to avoid a major jurisdictional problem through training grants and personal intervention.

Some MPs questioned the neutrality of the research services available from the Information Analysis Department. They recall the level of validity of governmental information during the Soviet years and are reluctant to rely on this information. This was an obstacle to the creation and continuation of the services. It is slowly being overcome by the professional attitude that the FTF-trained staff demonstrate, and by the high quality of their work product. They received a better than average rating on effectiveness in a 1994 survey of MPs and faction staff members.

3. Usage and Impact

The existence/continuation of the Information Analysis Department is a direct result of FTF assistance. The original Information Group was to be disbanded, but encouragement received from CRS/LOC kept it together until material assistance arrived. After Frost Task Force assistance, the unit was reorganized as a politically neutral office directly under the Chief of Staff, and removed from the politically active press office. The western newspaper and periodical subscriptions provided by the FTF were the foundation of their information services and led directly to their subscribing to western news feeds.

Several individuals indicated that the FTF technical assistance was critical in developing and maintaining the Information Analysis Department. Algimantas Pavilonis, former Chief of Staff, said that when parliamentary staff were cut in 1993, that department was kept intact; its utility had been proven due to FTF assistance.

MPs are generally aware of the research services available from the Information Analysis Department, and the services are well used.

All of the CD-ROMs are available for use. While none of them have been networked yet, the software is installed on several machines, primarily in the Information Analysis Department where they are used in answering MPs' questions and in the preparation of issue briefs. The computer software CD-ROM is installed in the Informatics Department. The only Frost Task Force CD-ROM that has been re-subscribed to is CELEX, the full-text European Community documents, but the Library has purchased other CD-ROMs on their own, such as Keeling's World Fact Chronology. The books and periodicals are distributed both in the parliamentary reading room (now often called the parliamentary library) and the Information Analysis offices where they receive high use. However, because of this usage, tracking down a given volume may take a few minutes.

The National Library, which was not part of the FTF program, plays a support role to what has become the Parliamentary Library. The National Library press digests do not duplicate the work of the Information Analysis Department because the latter focuses on broader issues. The Library is building a new wing which will almost double its capacity, and will house the almost 100 tons of books donated by the American-Lithuanian community. The parliamentary staff use the National Library when their own resources in the Parliamentary Library are inadequate.

4. Critique of Library Assistance

CRS/LOC contact was established early in the parliamentary organizational process. Ms. Felicia Kolp was working with the National Library as early as October 1991. This enabled the Lithuanian Parliamentary staff structure to grow into a form that included a research and analysis unit rather than having to have one grafted on later.

5. Sustainability Issues

The Information Analysis Department of the Seimas is fully operational, enthusiastically staffed, and adequately, if not well, funded. The unit is administratively supported, respected for its work by the MPs, and integrated into parliamentary operations. There appear to be no sustainability issues, except for the fact that all of the Lithuanian government (including the Seimas) is being threatened with a 50 percent budget cut.

6. Other Donor Assistance

The Parliamentary Library received over 3000 volumes from various donors, including the French Embassy, the Bundestag, and Canada. The National Library has received extensive help from international donors. Notable are: a half million DM from the German government in 1992 for the purchase of books; books from the French government, the Lithuanian Research and Studies Center in Chicago, and the Lithuanian 16th of February Gymnasium in Germany; and an exchange program with 252 partners in 40 countries. The National Library became a depository for the European Economic Community in 1992 and for the Council of Europe in 1993.

7. Current Needs

The Information Analysis Department needs a better, more durable Internet connection. The current, temporary, Internet connection is, by grace, through an academic system that is

The Informatics department should take advantage of the Seimas' leadership role and establish standards for other government organizations:

- i) Consider developing an inter-agency Informatics committee to develop standards for development of government-wide information systems with an emphasis on data exchange.
- ii) Approach ORACLE, via their local vendor representatives, as no-charge participants in the committee (ORACLE has a presence in over a dozen government organizations as well as private sector companies). It is in their interest to help establish programmatic and data exchange standards).

The Informatics department could benefit from help from a temporary duty automation planner as suggested above by the Head of the department.

B. Technical Assistance

The technical element discussed in this section includes a meeting in Lithuania for members of parliament (MPs), Parliamentary Institutes, most of which were held in the U.S. and were for parliamentary staff (although some MPs also attended some Institutes), and informal advice provided by the visiting FTF terms. The technical assistance provided to support automation is discussed under A. above, and technical assistance to the Library and the Information Analysis Department is reviewed in C. below.

1. Assistance Provided

Lithuania began participating in Parliamentary Institutes beginning with the fifth in May 1992 for parliamentary librarians. In all, 16 parliamentary staff members participated in the Institutes. While not technical assistance in the usual sense, there were also visits to Congress and CRS by officials and members of the Seimas which provided useful information for their work and, in some cases, helped the participants decide on how the Frost assistance might be structured. For example, the Vice-Chairman of the Seimas visited the U.S. Congress in December 1991 and held meetings with senior officials of the Congressional Research Service (CRS). In April 1993, the Chief of Staff of the Seimas visited CRS to examine its research and reference services and discuss CRS's program cooperation with the Seimas.

An all-members Parliamentary Conference for MPs was held in Vilnius April 18 - 21, 1994. An FTF technical delegation went to Vilnius in January to interview committee staffs, party factions and others to get ideas for topics to be covered in the conference. The conference was attended by MPs, parliamentary staff, and several cabinet members. A one-day seminar for staff followed the conference.

A sharing of ideas and experience also took place during the visits of U.S. Congressional delegations as well as between Seimas staff and the members of FTF technical delegations.

2. Implementation Obstacles

No particular implementation obstacles were identified, although it is noted that Lithuania did not participate in every one of the Parliamentary Institutes. The scheduling of the members' conference probably would have been of more value had it been held early in the term of the legislature rather than a year and a half into the term. This appears to have reflected the overload on the CRS staff.

3. Usage and Impact

A large number of people attended at least parts of the all-member conference. All but 4 of the 141 members, about 75 staff members, and several cabinet members attended at least one session of the conference. When the evaluation team interviewed MPs, it found some that had not attended, some that had attended but did not remember anything about it. One said the discussion about ethics in government had been good. Because the team was visiting some 18 months after the conference, and some turnover in MPs since the conference, these findings are not particularly surprising. Given all these factors, however, it is difficult to assess the impact of the conference.

Those who had attended the Parliamentary Institutes spoke highly of them. They appreciated the experience and they felt it had helped them in their work. They also valued the opportunity to establish contact with their peers from other nearby countries. Perhaps reflecting that a number of the Institutes had involved legal staff, the Head of the Legal Department told the team that the FTF assistance had been very helpful to his department.

There was consistent praise for the dedication and cooperative attitude of the FTF technical personnel. Their impact was reflected in the local decision-making as well as in the good will generated for the U.S. Congress. For example, Kristi Walseth was cited for helping clarify rules and procedures that the Seimas was revising.

4. Critique of Technical Assistance

As indicated in 3. above, it is difficult to assess the impact of the all-member conference. Nevertheless, it was appreciated for its symbolic value. It seems likely its benefits could have been greater if it had been possible to arrange for it to take place earlier. As one MP said, we have so many conferences we can attend.

5. Sustainability Issues

The only sustainability issue related to technical assistance is whether those participating in training and orientation programs will continue with the parliament for at least a reasonable period of time. In the case of MPs, that will be decided by the next election. With regard to staff, the record is pretty good, with the exception of those trained in information technology — see A.6. above.

6. Other Donor Assistance

Various West European organizations sponsor conferences on various subjects. In addition, opportunities are provided for selected staff to visit West European parliaments or parliamentary libraries. The team did not hear of any other donor with a formalized program like the Parliamentary Institutes.

C. Parliamentary Library

There was no parliamentary library associated with the State Assembly under Soviet rule. The fledgling parliament used the National Library which is immediately adjacent to the three parliamentary buildings. The National Library has collections of over five million volumes and a staff of 503. It receives over 170,000 books and periodicals annually. It has three automated catalogs with different coverages and numerous periodical digests available over a local network, which is also connected to the network of the parliament.

Word, Excel, the Norton Commander, Clarion, Netscape, and the ORACLE database system currently under development.

5. Critique of Usage

We think the work done by the Frost Task Force and the Informatics staff at the Seimas has been superb and that the Lithuanian Parliament has one of the most advanced systems of the four countries we visited. In the context of Frost Task Force assistance goals, Lithuania was the one of two countries we visited to develop a strong Information Analysis (Research) component. There are, however, some issues which have not been addressed, which we think can only enhance their system.

Implementation of the Information Analysis Department in Lithuania has flourished, productivity has soared, and demand for services has increased. Yet the department's computer support is weak. There are 25 PCs in the department, but no text processing (different from word processing) software with which to manage the volumes of data they receive each day through their news feeds. Numerous off-the-shelf Windows products are available for this purpose. Software purchased with Frost Task Force funds can also be put to use in this department. Information Analysis also has a growing text archive of documents they create which are not yet incorporated into the ORACLE database system. Eventually they will be. However, due to the nature of this department's work, they must be able to retrieve their documents in *easily publishable* form, which does not happen with the ORACLE text system.

Routine documents produced during the course of everyday business at the Seimas are not a part of the document database built with ORACLE. Nor do they need to be. However, some attention is required for management of those documents — e.g., how they are named, where they are filed, and how long they are retained on the file server before they are archived and/or deleted. Left unattended, this problem becomes a serious issue down the road. The network's primary server is already out of disk space and an upgrade has been ordered. Policies and procedures on general document management are needed.

Documents accessed through the databases are all stored in generic ASCII form. This is done to allow other government and non-government entities to use copies of these documents for printing, or for inclusion in other databases. The ASCII format eliminates the necessity for file conversions by other word processors or database applications. Since there are no uniform standards for software among all government ministries and organizations, ASCII format is a well-intentioned consideration. However, this storage mechanism makes it cumbersome and time-consuming to *republish* any of these documents on paper. The ASCII format has stripped the documents of all formatting and page layout characteristics. Many documents are stored as ASCII "full justified" documents, which means they are full of extra spaces. Importing such documents into a word processor, with the intent of printing them, requires a lot of unnecessary operator clean-up. Contemporary software products allow export to ASCII format on demand. Storing documents in their native formats makes their database more functional for consumers.

6. Sustainability Issues

Staff turnover has been an impediment to development of applications and will continue to be a threat as long as private sector jobs offer significant economic advantage over government work. However, a new civil service law in effect requires employees who receive training as part of their job to repay their training costs if they do not work for a required period of time after the training.

There is solid evidence of budgetary support and commitment to continued investment in technology. Each year PC purchasing standards are upgraded to reflect changes in technology. Older PCs are not discarded — but are recycled to MPs who want them, but who have no prior

experience with computers and do not need state-of-the-art systems. The Informatics' budget since 1992 has increased 326 percent; a 12 percent increase is requested for 1996.

Several people interviewed expressed concern about budgetary pressures to cut expenditures and focus on more populist issues instead, but no one thought the progress made with technology to date would be reversed.

General budget deficits make planning difficult. The organizational units receive their annual budget by quarters, which are subject to reductions based on overall budget conditions. There is also no incentive to spend prudently and save prior year funds for use in the next fiscal year. More often than not, carryover from one fiscal year to another is prohibited (in Hungary, this was not the case).

System maintenance can be a lengthy process once warranties expire since there is not yet an active core of hardware service providers in country. This presents problems when special replacement parts are required. The Informatics staff engineers are capable of doing much of the actual repair work themselves, but spare parts availability is problematic.

Long range planning efforts are weak in the government generally. Informatics generally only plans a year at a time. The Informatics Director said the most important issues she faces are management and planning, and hoped a resident consultant could be available for several months to assist her department in this effort.

7. Other Donor Assistance

- ▶ SEVSEVECO, a Swedish concern, did a document management analysis at the Seimas.
- ▶ The Norwegian Parliament pays for the Seimas's Internet access (through 1996). These fees are about US\$5,000 per month.

8. Current Needs

The Informatics department needs to improve the management of documents in production:

- a) It should examine off-the-shelf document management system (DMS) products such as SoftSolutions or PC Docs to handle the routine administrative task of managing all documents on their network. This tool is much more than an access tool. Its primary function is to bring order to the process of naming, filing, retaining, archiving, and purging routine word processing and other documents on the network.
- b) DMS tasks can easily integrate with existing procedures developed in-house to address document control.

There is room also for an improvement in the management of portable documents:

- a) To make all of their database documents more user-friendly and functional (both internal databases, and the planned World Wide Web databases), the Informatics department should stop saving all text as ASCII data stripped of all formatting and page layout attributes. Instead, the documents found during searches should be presented in publishable form (e.g. as Microsoft Word for Windows documents).
- b) To address those instances where ASCII files are required (e.g. a government unit with an incompatible software system), procedures can easily be added to Informatics' applications which will convert to ASCII on demand.

ANNEX H. COUNTRY REPORT — BULGARIA

Development Associates, Inc.

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TAB C**LIST OF PEOPLE CONTACTED — LITHUANIA****Lithuanian National Assembly (Seimas)**

Aloyzas Sakalas, Vice-Chairman of the Seimas
 Neris Germanas, Chancellor of the Seimas
 Arimantas Juvencijus Raskinis, MP, Committee on Education, Science and Culture
 Antanas Kairys, MP
 Pranciskus Vitkevicius, Chairman of the Committee on State and Legal Affairs
 Lita Slicyte, MP, Deputy Chairman of Law and State Committee
 Andrius Kubilius, MP
 Algirdas Saudargas
 Ceslovas Vytautas Stankevicius, Adviser to Christian Democratic Faction
 Gintautas Ddirgela, Computer Specialist, LDDP Faction
 Dalia-Genovaite Davideniene, Adviser, Foreign Affairs Committee
 Arvydas Kregzde, Head of the Office of the Seimas
 Algimantas Pavilionis, former Head of the Office of Seimas
 Renata Blagniene, Head of the Information Analysis Department
 Nijole Visockaite, Head of the Seimas Reading Room
 Vytautas Sinkevicius, Head of the Juridical Department
 Ona Volungeviciute, Head of the Computer Data Processing Department
 Jonas Milerius, Deputy Head of the Computer Data Processing Department
 Ausra Petraitiene, Senior Consultant, Computer Data Processing Department
 Aleksandros Kazakovas, Computer Data Processing Department
 Gediminas Narusevicius, Computer Data Processing Department
 Jonas Petronis, Computer Data Processing Department
 Vytautas Lenkutis, Department of Press and Public Relations
 Vladas Bulavas, Director of the National Library
 Arnoldas Matijosius, Researcher in Penal Law at Vilnius University
 Lolita-Aukse Raudiene, Chairman's Assistant, Constitutional Court
 Librarian - Law Library of the Constitutional Court
 Dr. Vladas Bulavas, Director National Library
 Regina Skuopad, Senior Archivist
 Rima Kupryte, Program Coordinator, Law Library, Open Society Fund (SOROS)
 Librarian - Law Library, Open Society Fund (SOROS)

U. S. Embassy

John Stepanchuk, Deputy Principal Officer

Office of the USAID Representative

Genevieve H. Abel, Project Manager

Other

Algimantas Pavilionis, former Chief of Staff of the Seimas

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- consumables, one 1090 high-volume copier and consumables, and one color copier and consumables.
- 29 A contract of \$120,678 was awarded to Microlink Press for the delivery and installation of SPARCstation 10 and SW, SPARC upgrade to SM 40, 64MB Memory, 4.2GB Disk with Expansion Pedestal, SBus SCSI-2 and Database SCSI-2 Ethernet Cards, SUN Database Excelerator, Media and Documentation, 2nd year HW maintenance for SPARCstation 10.
- 29 A contract of \$295,905 was awarded to CIB Computer Ltd. for the delivery and installation of 59 486-based microcomputer workstations, two 486-based DTP workstations, four 486-based Notebook computers, 2 ethernet adapters, 18 Hub/Wiring Concentrators, transceivers, 41 printers (laser, inkjet, dot matrix, portable and color) and consumables, one CD-ROM server, two CD-ROM drives, one color scanner, 32 external modems, six RAM upgrades, one CD-ROM Recording Unit and 20 writable disks, 8 microcomputer accessories (controllers, disks, keyboards), 2 Routers, 2 SCSI terminal servers, 110 RJ45 wall plates, twisted pair cable.
- 29 A contract of \$169,411 was awarded to ORACLE Corporation for the delivery and installations of ORACLE V.7 Upgrade for SPARC10/40, ORACLE V.7 (32 Users) for SPARC 10/512, ORACLE SQL *Forms, Menu, Reportwriter, SQL *Plus, SQL *TextRetrieval, and Pro *C for 8 users, SQL *Net for 40 users, Mail Server, CASE Tools Server Bundle, Mail Gateway to SUN Mail, Tools Bundle for DOS, Tools Run Time for DOS (20 users), ORACLE Net (TCP/IP) (32 users), Data Browser, ORACLE *Card for Windows Devl. (3 users), *Card Runtime (10 users), ORACLE Book Devl., Book Runtime (2 users), ORACLE Mail Client (32 users), and 2nd year SW maintenance.
- 30 A contract of \$66,416.14 was awarded to Ashford International for the delivery and installation of 72 personal computer software packages (multi-user LAN and single user packages, assorted), Microsoft NT OS and Novell NewWare 4.0 Net OS.
- Oct 3 - 10 Mindaugas Navickas of the Seimas attended ORACLE training in Washington, D.C.
- 24 Rimantas Grikenis and Irena Petravičienė of the Seimas travelled to Washington, D.C. for library training at CRS and attendance at the Online '93 conference [Oct 24 - Nov 13].
- Nov 14 - 19 John Kelley, Cathy Brickman and William Freeman went to Lithuania to conduct acceptance testing of office equipment delivered under RFP 93-26.
- Dec 12 - 18 Jurgis Bridzius of the Seimas had ORACLE training in Washington, D.C.

1994

- Jan 8 - 15 Nancy Davenport, Jill Roberts, and Mary Ellen Callahan went to Lithuania to prepare for the April conference for members of the Seimas. The CRS team interviewed about 60 of the 141 members to help determine the agenda for the meetings. The team also held meetings with staff members of the Seimas and other government officials, examined facilities that might be used for the conference, and negotiated the terms for holding the conference.
- Feb 27 to
Mar 5 Evaldas Sinkevicius attended librarian training in Warsaw.
- Apr 18 - 21 Kristi Walseth, William Robinson, John Hardt, Nancy Davenport, Francis Miko, Jill Roberts, and Mary Ellen Callahan went to Lithuania to participate in the Parliamentary

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- Conference for members of the Seimas. A one-day seminar for staff members followed the conference.
- May The Seimas sent three participants to a four-day conference on parliamentary rules and procedures which was held in Poland. Kristi Walseth (Frost Committee), William Brown (Parliamentarian of the House of Representatives), Paul Rundquist (CRS specialist on American government), and Lucien Nedzi (former member of Congress) participated in the conference.
- Jun 20 - 22 Jurgis Bridzius and Robertas Sileikis, staff members of the Information Engineering and Computer Services Department of the Seimas, attended and presented papers to the Information Technology in Parliaments conference in Warsaw. [The conference was jointly sponsored by Frost Committee, the Polish Senat, and the European Parliament.]
- Jun Ms. Larsen consulted with the Seimas library and helped the librarian develop book orders, consistent with the remaining budget, which could be placed by the end of FY 1994.
- Sep 20 - 23 Virginia Beganskaite, section head of the National Library group, attended a regional librarian's conference in Budapest. Some of the topics were: staff training, ready reference, subject indexing for legislative information.
- Oct Felicia Kolp went to Lithuania to assess the effects of the Frost Committee program on the development of the information services provided to the Seimas.
- Nov 15 - 18 Kristi Walseth and Francis Miko went to Lithuania to collect information on the effectiveness of the Frost Committee programs of assistance to the Lithuanian parliament. They were joined by Cathy Brickman and Bill Freeman in the formal closure of the automation program.
- Dec 5 - 7 A Lithuanian member of parliament participated in the Parliamentary Conference for Members of the Albanian People's Assembly.

1995

- Apr Cathy Brickman and Bill Freeman went to Lithuania to conduct acceptance testing of automation equipment and software. The equipment was accepted; some small pieces of equipment have yet to be delivered. Brickman and Freeman also assessed the ability of the Seimas to participate in the LOC's Law Library's Global Legal Information Network (GLIN) project.
- May The Seimas sent two participants to the regional parliamentary library conference in Prague. Sessions included discussions of management issues, the Internet, recruitment and training, collections development issues, organizing for ready reference, and regional cooperation.
- Apr - May Valdotas Vaicaitis and Ausra Petraitiene went to Washington for a month to receive indexing, abstracting, and technical training in preparation for participation in the GLIN project.

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TAB B**CHRONOLOGY — LITHUANIA****1991**

- Jan 30 An Inter-Agency Agreement was signed between USAID and the Library of Congress (LOC) under which \$4.25 million was allocated to the LOC for Poland, Hungary, and the Czech and Slovak Republic. The LOC activity was to be managed under the direction of the Frost Committee.
- Sep 6 - 7 A Helsinki Committee delegation of the U.S. Congress visited the Lithuanian parliament.
- 19 USAID authorized Amendment #2 to the Inter-Agency Agreement, authorizing the inclusion of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in the program — per the recommendation of the Frost Committee.
- Oct Felicia Kolp made a pre-Frost assistance visit to the National Library to help it develop an information service for the Lithuanian Parliament.
- Dec 5 - 11 The Vice-Chairman of the Lithuanian parliament visited the U.S. Congress and, among other things, met with William Robinson, Deputy Director of the Congressional Research Service (CRS).

1992

- Feb 13 A U.S. Congressional delegation, headed by Congressman Solarz, visited the Seimas.
- 22 - 25 A technical staff delegation of the Frost Committee visited Vilnius as part of a trip to all three Baltic nations. The delegation included: Kristi Walseth (Frost Committee), William Robinson (CRS), William Freeman (HIS), Catherine Brickman (HIS), John Kelley (CRS), Vita Bite (CRS), Eric Johnson (LOC), Felicia Kolp (CRS) and Lolita Silva (LOC). The delegation found that the Baltic parliaments had the barest infrastructures, and their capacities to carry out their responsibilities were sorely challenged. The delegation felt that the parliaments needed to place high priority on human resource development as well as technology; the U.S. assistance should provide considerable staff training activity. There was an unfriendly we/them attitude between the Seimas Information Staff and the National Library's Government Information Section. (Travel and per diem costs paid from a grant of the MacArthur Foundation.)
- Apr 12 - 19 A congressional delegation headed by Rep. Frost visited the Balkan states and Poland.
- May 26 to Jun 5 Lithuania sent two people to the fifth Parliamentary Institute in Washington, D.C.: Danute Vabalaiate, head of the Foreign Affairs Group of Seimas Information and Analysis Center, and Renata Blagniene, Head of the Government Information Section of the National Library. The focus of the Institute was on parliamentary libraries.
- Oct 4 - 21 Mary Nell Bryant travelled to all three Baltic states to examine the needs of the parliamentary libraries and assist in collection development.

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Nov 2 - 13 Lithuania sent one legal specialist to the seventh Parliamentary Institute which was held in Washington, D.C. The participant also attended the COMDEX computer exhibition in Las Vegas from November 14 - 21.

1993

- Apr 14 - 22 Algimantas Pavilionis, Chief of Staff of the Seimas, travelled to CRS to examine CRS's research and reference services and discuss CRS's program of cooperation with the Seimas.
- 22 Felicia Kolp travelled to Lithuania for a 3-week visit to assist the National Library and the Information and Analysis Center of the Seimas. She was joined by Eric Johnson.
- May 2 Lithuania was represented at the eighth Parliamentary Institute which took place in Washington, D.C. May 2 - 15 for specialists in government budgets and finance.
- 15 - 22 Romas Bunevicius, a staff member of the Seimas, travelled to Washington, D.C. for ORACLE training at the Learning Center International. The training was designed to provide him with the experience necessary to develop an automation scheme for the Seimas.
- Jun 10 RFP 93-26 was issued to provide office automation equipment to the Seimas.
- 16 - 18 Mary Nell Bryant, Robert Schrott, Felicia Kolp, and Holly Larsen conducted a conference in Tallinn for parliamentary librarians from the Baltic states. The section head of the National Library group, Virginia Beganskaite, was one of those attending from Lithuania.
- 19 - 25 Valdas Ziemys, a staff member of the Seimas, attended computer training at the Learning Center International in Washington, D.C.
- Jul 12 USAID and LOC signed a new Inter-Agency Agreement for \$3.5 million for a two-year program of assistance to the legislatures of Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Lithuania's allocation was \$528,000.
- 12 - 23 Lithuania was represented at the ninth Parliamentary Institute which was held in Washington for committee staff members.
- Aug 1 - 8 Kristi Walseth, John Kelley, Cathy Brickman, Henry Collins, and Patricia Gardner went to Lithuania to evaluate the proposals in response to the RFP issued June 10.
- 16 - 28 Lithuania was represented at the annual meeting of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions which was held in Madrid and Barcelona.
- 17 Saulius Peceliunas, a member of the Seimas; Jonas Gecas, a Deputy Minister of Defense; and Gedimainas Kirkilas, Deputy Chairman of the Democratic Labor Party and a member of the Committee on National Defense and Security was briefed by CRS on its functions and the activities of the Frost Task Force in Lithuania. [They were in the U.S. under USIA auspices.]
- Sep 13 - 24 Lithuania was represented at the tenth Parliamentary Institute which was held in Washington for legislative attorneys and legal committee staff members.
- 29 A contract of \$137,904 was awarded to Rank Xerox for the delivery and installation of 2 small office copiers and accessories and consumables, one 5053 high volume copier and

ANNEX H. COUNTRY REPORT — BULGARIA

Development Associates, Inc.

I. SETTING

Bulgaria's transition from communism to pluralism was among the most sudden and unexpected in Eastern Europe. Todor Zhivkov, the Communist Party and state leader who had ruled Bulgaria since 1954, resigned abruptly on November 10, 1989. The new prime minister, following a wave of demonstrations for democracy in Sofia, pledged to push political and economic reform and to set up a coalition government. The main opposition alliance, UDF, refused to participate in a coalition government, resulting in the setting of elections.

Multi-party elections were held in June 1990. The reformed Communist Party, re-named Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP), won a decisive victory — nearly 53 percent of the vote and 211 of the 385 seats in the Grand National Assembly. The BSP set up a new government with old faces. The UDF and other opposition groups continued to demonstrate after the elections, charging that the elections had been unfair and demanding an end to Communist rule. By the end of 1990 the leader of the UDF had been elected President, and an independent had formed a new government in which the Communists no longer held a majority position in the cabinet.

A number of far-reaching reforms were introduced in December 1990. The progressive political liberalization culminated in the adoption of a democratic constitution on July 12, 1991. This was followed by an election in October which produced a new coalition government headed by the UDF.

Meanwhile, a Frost Task Force (FTF) technical assistance group visited Bulgaria in May 1991 to assess the resources and needs of the parliament and the feasibility of providing assistance. In August, USAID/Washington (USAID/W) signed an amended agreement with the Library of Congress (LOC) authorizing programs in Bulgaria.

Tab A presents the current organization of the 37th National Assembly. A summary of the FTF actions during the project period is given in Tab B. A list of the persons contacted during the evaluation visit is appended as Tab C.

II. THE PROJECT

A. Equipment and Related Training

The Frost Task Force first visited Bulgaria in May 1991. It observed a very undeveloped Information Technology and Programming Department (IT) of four persons, working with 1984 level technology and no networking capabilities. Very fundamental applications had been attempted with limited success. No communications capabilities were in place, and the national telephone system was based on analog switches from 1928. No contemporary electronic sources of information were available; no online services were in use. The Informatics staff was young, inexperienced, and resource limited. At the same time, the Parliament was flush with activities which demanded automation support.

1. Assistance Provided

During the period May 1992 through June 1994, the Frost Task Force provided material assistance for computers and office equipment at these levels:

PCs & Printers	150 PCs (Desktop, notebook, and desktop publishing workstations), 47 printers (Laser, portable, and color); 2 Hewlett-Packard database servers.
CD-ROM	A CD-ROM server, CD-ROM players, and 1 CD-ROM Mastering unit.
Software	Basic office automation software; extensive Informix database management and application development tools; TinLib integrated library management software.
Network	Novell Netware 3.11; routers, hubs, connectors, cables, and other network infrastructure components. A microwave link for interconnection of the two parliamentary buildings; the SCO UNIX operating system for the HP servers.
Other PC Hardware	Fax modems; 2 stand-alone FAX machines; 4 color scanners.
Copiers	4 small office copiers

2. Implementation Obstacles

The management of the Informatics department has changed twice during the term of Frost assistance, most recently in February 1995. Each change has brought a different approach to Informatics implementation. One director was insistent on development of software from scratch, heavily influencing the initial hardware and software choices.

The Informix database tools have proven to be of limited value; currently, they are not used to support *any active database applications*. A much less expensive, but nevertheless functional, implementation is in place using Microsoft Access as the database management development tool. The Informatics staff wants to connect the Access applications to Informix by using the "ODBC" (Open Database Connectivity) standard, but, for technical reasons, it has not been successful in doing so.

A possible solution to the ODBC problem is an upgrade to the Informix software. That upgrade has been paid for with Frost funds, but has not been delivered by the in-country vendor, NOAC. NOAC received payment for the upgrade but did not pass that payment along to Informix in Germany, so no upgrade was sent to the Parliament. The problem remains unresolved and further Informix application development is stalled.

The Informatics department chose to write their own full text retrieval software in lieu of purchasing a commercial off-the-shelf product. Their software has been under development for more than a year, and there is very little content in their full text databases.

The national telecommunications system remains antiquated and state-run. It is based on 1928 technology. The best Internet connection is of poor quality with frequent dropouts. The use of the Internet is limited to E-Mail in lieu of research. Other problems with Internet are discussed in Section C. below. There are no immediate forecasts for improvements to the country's telecommunications infrastructure.

A conspicuous lack of trust between various departments and factions of the Parliament was evident during our visit. This has hindered Informatics system development. Important policy on

access to basic information in the Informatics databases is unclear. An opposition party advisor gave us a Bulgarian-language planning document prepared by the Informatics department in September. Our translator prepared an English version of key segments for us. The document suggested inappropriate and illogical restrictions to essential Parliamentary information (e.g. the text of proposed legislation and documents related to that legislation would not be directly available to MPs through the network). We were told these policy questions have been under discussion since April 1995 and that nothing has been "officially" adopted.

We were told that the previous Informatics Director was replaced after the last election because he was loyal to the wrong party. Further, the current Informatics Director was said to be a political appointee with no technical background.

We were also told of an allegedly politically motivated reprimand from the Secretary General to the Senior Programmer at Informatics. The programmer is alleged to have violated some security protocol by working on the network on a weekend, at a time when disruptions to the network's operation would have no impact. The programmer has consulted legal counsel and the matter is not resolved.

The librarian is territorial about access to information services and would rather have users come to her than deliver services on the network. The TinLib integrated library software selected for the library is stalled in its implementation due to problems with development of a bibliographic coding language. Please see Section C. below for more discussion of this issue.

3. Usage and Impact

Frost Task Force assistance has accelerated the development of information systems for the Bulgarian Parliament, primarily in the area of hardware and networking assistance. In the 3 ½ years since Frost Task Force assistance began, the Parliament has expanded office space into the former Communist Party Headquarters, which is about a mile from the main Parliamentary building. Frost Task Force funds were used to pre-wire 400 potential network connections in the new building, and a microwave link was installed which connects the networks between the two buildings. Today, the Parliament has a robust state-of-the-art PC network of over 140 active users in two locations. All Parliamentary Committees and all factions have at least one PC with a network connection and a laser printer.

Eleven databases have been developed by the in-house Informatics staff and are available on the network, with potential access by all users. An Internet access was established for testing purposes just prior to our evaluation. The Parliamentary network has access to bibliographic databases in the Library; to the Celex CD-ROM service of the European Union; to a third party database of Bulgarian Laws (NORMA); to the economic legislation of the Russian Federation; and the DAXY full text database of the official *State Gazette*. The Chancellery tracks all official documents of the Parliament. The Legal Department tracks pending legislation. A Desktop Publishing department prepares camera ready copy for the official *State Gazette*, for all laws passed by the Parliament and signed by the President, plus any other page layout requirements. The Informatics department has written internal databases to track all network cable routing and connections in their two-building network, and a database about all PCs and associated equipment owned by the Parliament.

Information resources, which would not have been able for a number of years without the Frost Task Force assistance, are being used to help the Parliament implement the legislative changes required to accommodate their new constitution and prepare for membership in the European Union.

4. Training

During the period of Frost Task Force assistance, eight Informatics staff were involved in training activities outside of Bulgaria. Some were sent to technology trade shows or vendor sites in the United States. Others attended and presented papers at Parliamentary conferences in Europe. Both activities gave them opportunities to meet with vendors and review currently used technologies for parliaments and libraries. Vendor training in the United States was provided for three people.

At the end of 1994, Informix training was conducted in Sofia and paid with Frost Task Force funds. Four programmers received two weeks of training on utilization of the Informix database and program development tools.

Several internal training programs have been developed for Parliament staff and conducted by the Informatics department. Basic Windows and word processing training courses last for one week, three hours per day. More than 80 users have participated in these courses. Another cycle is planned for training on use of the network databases and E-Mail. A training room setup with six computers also serves as an MP network access center when training is not underway.

5. Critique of Usage

Although an impressive list of database titles has been developed, they have not been written with the high-end application tools purchased with Frost Task Force funds (Informix running on the HP database servers). Microsoft Access (MS Access) database software has been preferred because of its graphical Windows interface. So far this has not posed a problem. The largest database on the network is the Chancellery's Control database with 15,000 records. It occupies less than two megabytes of disk space, which is nominal. Nor do database sizes cause performance problems on the network (the highest peak load on the entire network is less than 10 percent).

The Informatics programmers are trying to create a link between the MS Access programs running under Windows and the Informix database engine running under UNIX. Doing this has been problematic due to problems with ODBC and a missing Informix upgrade (cited in sub-section 2. above). Informatics is at an impasse with the vendor who was supposed to deliver their Informix upgrade. However, given their database sizes and general network performance, it is difficult to justify using the Informix software and HP servers.

Their full-text software, written from scratch, is very primitive and lacks most of the features available in commercially developed software. There are only three years of the *Gazette* currently available on the network with full text search capability. Neither the text of proposed legislation nor the proceedings of the plenary sessions are available in full-text searchable form. Current laws are published by a third party (the product is called NORMA), but its full-text searching capabilities are primitive.

Until recent testing of the Internet, no internal E-Mail system was in place. Even now, the Internet test is limited to 17 E-Mail accounts.

No master plan has been developed for the Parliamentary Information System. Programming projects have been pursued with vague requirements definitions — or none at all.

CD-ROM capability, although purchased, is grossly under-utilized as a network resource. Only a single title (Celex) is available on the network. All other CD-ROM titles must be accessed in the library from a stand-alone CD-ROM player.

6. Sustainability Issues

The Bulgarian Parliament has demonstrated a clear commitment to developing information technology. Their Informatics staff has expanded from 6 to 21 positions since Frost Task Force assistance began. Five of those positions have been transferred to the Chancellery's Desktop Publishing Unit, but they are still Informatics-related.

The Parliament has also funded expansion of the network through purchase of more computers and printers (15 PCs and 25 printers this year; 50 PCs planned for next year).

Maintenance services and spare parts are available for most of the equipment in their inventory, with some items requiring import from the U.S. Their budget for maintenance and upgrades is \$100,000.

Discussions are underway to network with their White House (right across the street from their secondary office building), and to network with other government agencies and ministries.

7. Other Donor Assistance

No other donors provided material assistance.

8. Current Needs

Internet capacity needs to be upgraded with satellite up-link access.

The Informatics department needs to explore the possibility of selling the HP/UNIX servers. The Parliament's database volumes, network traffic, and network size do not warrant these high performance tools. The Hungarian Parliament might be a potential buyer. The department could use the HP/UNIX proceeds to acquire an off-the-shelf text retrieval product and/or more PCs.

The department also needs to negotiate a license transfer of the Informix software. It should be able to use the failed upgrade issue as leverage with Informix in this negotiation.

The CD-ROM equipment purchases with Frost Task Force funds need to be mounted on the network with as many general interest titles as are available from the library.

B. Technical Assistance

The FTF assessment team found limited numbers of staff for supporting the parliamentary committees. Many of the members of the new parliament (MPs) had no experience with government, let alone as legislators. At the time of the FTF assessment team's visit (May 1991), it was planned to hold a conference for new members after the elections. In addition, the team identified a strong need for a research unit to support the MPs' need for access to independent, non-partisan information. It was assumed that the Bulgarians would also want to participate in the Parliamentary Institutes for parliamentary staff.

1. Assistance Provided

A follow-up team visited Sofia from August 26 to September 7, 1991 to plan the proposed Parliamentary Conference for new MPs. The conference took place December 10 - 12, 1991, the first conference for new members of an Eastern European parliament. It was attended by 160 MPs and others from the government and academia. Speakers came from Great Britain, Germany, and the Council of Europe — as well as from the United States. Some of the topics covered were:

- ▶ Responsibilities of a Member of a Legislative Body
- ▶ Economic Policy in a Market Economy
- ▶ Developing the Market System
- ▶ Social Safety Net Issues
- ▶ Parliamentary Oversight of Domestic and International Security
- ▶ Human Rights
- ▶ Developing Civilian Control over the Military

The Bulgarian National Assembly also participated extensively in the Parliamentary Institutes held in Washington at the LOC and CRS. Some 40 staff members participated in the Institutes or other training activities. These participants represented nine departments (including Informatics and the Library), seven parliamentary committees and the overall management of the parliament.

Considerable technical assistance from CRS staff was provided over an extended period of time to help the National Assembly plan the establishment of a research and analysis unit. William Robinson prepared a special report for use of the Assembly: "A Tentative Model of Research Capabilities of the National Assembly."

Technical assistance was also provided to the Library and the Informatics Department. Nancy Davenport prepared a special report on training: "Development of an In-House Training System in the Parliament."

2. Implementation Obstacles

The only implementation obstacles that the team identified were related to the establishment of the Parliamentary Research Department (PRD). In the post-communist societies, there is typically a suspicion of any centralized information source. That seems to have contributed to the delay of the establishment of the PRD, and it still hangs over its head.

The evaluation team was told by a former official of the Assembly that the previous administration was in favor of establishing the PRD, but held off doing so because of impending elections (late 1994). There was concern that its establishment and appointment of a head of the unit would be construed as "playing politics." The irony is that this person, who is now in the opposition, charges that the establishment of the PRD in May 1995 was political, that the head of the unit is politically correct but not qualified, and that one cannot trust what is produced by the unit. He had not read any of the material produced.

3. Usage and Impact

It is difficult in November 1995 to assess the impact of a New Member Conference held in December 1991 when the majority of the participants are no longer in the parliament. It is relevant to note, however, that the Chief Secretary of the National Assembly advised Kristi Walseth in November 1994 that the conference had been very useful and that they were planning to organize a similar event for the new parliament. [The outcome of the election changed their plans.]

The evaluation team was able to interview some 15 of the participants in FTF-sponsored training activities, primarily the Parliamentary Institutes. All of the participants said that it had been a valuable experience and that it had helped in their work. Some could give the participants examples specific to their jobs, but most said that the benefit was more in the broadening of perspective than in specific skills. Those that went to the U.S. later in the program commented favorably on the mentor concept. They were able to get more out of their learning experience and to meet more people of specific interest to them. Besides helping them in their day-to-work, the contacts they established have allowed them to obtain draft or actual legislation or other information easily from other Eastern and Central European countries.

As indicated in the previous section, the Parliamentary Research Department (PRD) was late in its establishment, and it is not yet accepted by the opposition. Hence, for the moment, its usage by MPs — and hence its impact — is limited. Some ideas were discussed with the head of the unit on possible ways to overcome the suspicion. Some documentation on the Information Analysis Department of the Lithuanian Seimas was also provided to the PRD chief.

4. Critique of Technical Assistance

The CRS report on the New Members Conference, and the subsequent approval of putting on another one for the next new members, suggests that it was successful. The timing would seem to have been very propitious: a) it was the first parliament after the downfall of communism in which democratic forces were in charge; b) most of the members, therefore, had no legislative experience, let alone experience in a democratic legislature; and c) it was held very shortly after the election.

The Parliamentary Institutes appear to have been an excellent training format, particularly after the introduction of the mentor format.

While the Parliamentary Research Department has been long in coming and has yet to prove itself, that does not reflect on the quality or quantity of technical assistance. Rather the internal politics of the National Assembly is the obstacle.

5. Sustainability Issues

One could postulate that the benefits of New Member Conferences are not sustainable because of the turnover of the MPs. The topics, however, are of broad import, not specialized training, and the society will continue to benefit from their exposure to the conference even if they do not continue as MPs. The participants are likely to continue to be leaders who can influence public opinion in a positive way.

Turnover of the parliamentary staff, however, is of more concern. In the case of the National Assembly, 11 of the 40 participants are no longer employees. However, 4 of the 11 were in political positions, so it is natural that they would move with the change in the political leadership of the Assembly. Over time, it will be important that parliamentary pay scales keep pace with the private sector; otherwise, the losses may be severe in some categories, e.g., informatics personnel and lawyers.

In the short term, the sustainability of the Parliamentary Research Department depends upon the support of the current leadership of the Assembly. Over the longer term, the unit will have to earn the respect and trust of the various factions and the parliamentary committees. The Lithuanian experience suggests that it is possible.

6. Other Donor Assistance

Training programs have been offered by the European Parliament, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the parliaments of the United Kingdom and Germany, the Soros Foundation, and the Open Society Foundation (a local Soros affiliate).

7. Current Needs

In his letter of November 29, 1994 to Kristi Walseth, the Chief Secretary of the National Assembly cited a number of training needs for the parliamentary staff. In addition to those for informatics and the library, mention was made of: a) the need for current information on the introduction of new information technologies and training on how to use them; b) the study of the administrative

services offered in other parliaments and the opportunities for applying their experience; and c) language skills. Language skills was also raised with the evaluation team by some of those who have participated in FTF-sponsored programs.

C. Parliamentary Library

The Parliamentary Library was created in 1880 and was intended to serve as an archive and to provide literature, information and reference for the legislature. In 1991 at the time of the visit of the Frost Task Force (FTF) technical assistance group, the library had a staff of five professionals, including a computer programmer. Its collections of about 100,000 volumes were primarily in French, German, Bulgarian, and Russian and focussed on the subjects of law, economics, government, and management. It housed the daily records of parliamentary debates in shorthand since 1879. It also had a collection of the *State Gazette* since that time.

While the library had very little in terms of reference books, or modern books in the social sciences, it had made great strides in developing its own databases. Some of the systems they had created included:

- ▶ information on members of the parliament for the past 45 years.
- ▶ current member database, which includes biographies and citations to the *State Gazette* when they spoke on the floor (citations are then looked up manually).
- ▶ a database which indexes articles referring to Parliament in Bulgarian newspapers — it was updated daily and could be searched by member name.
- ▶ a database of the *State Gazette* which included bills, acts, regulations, decrees, etc. This was kept up-to-date daily. It was searchable by subject and member name.
- ▶ a legislative database which included titles of bills, actions, and sponsors — it could be searched by sponsor.
- ▶ an on-line catalog, recently begun, which it was hoped to make retrospective eventually.

The library published a monthly newsletter, distributed to all members, which included a description of new acquisitions, a listing of bills introduced and the name of the committee to which they were sent, a listing of foreign legislation received, and a description of their databases.

1. Assistance Provided

The library's collections were expanded through the Library of Congress (LOC) Exchange and Gift Collections program (41 titles) and purchases under the FTF program (987 books and serials/periodicals).

The library received seven personal computers (two 386s and five 486s) which are included in the computer network of the National Assembly. Two of them are used in the reading rooms (one in the main parliament building and one in the parliamentary office building — the former headquarters of the Communist Party).

The TinLib system for building an integrated library system was purchased by the FTF for the library.

At least seven trips were made by U.S. experts between 1991 and 1994 to work with the library. During the same period, five members of the library staff were included in various training

programs at CRS and the LOC. The head of the library also participated in the regional meetings (Budapest in 1994 and Prague in 1995) for senior officials and staffs of parliamentary libraries.

2. Implementation Obstacles

No obstacles were identified in the delivery of the assistance.

Full use has not yet been made of the assistance, e.g., Tin Lib is not yet installed and operating. The transfer of the automated catalog from ISIS to Tin Lib is hampered by the lack of a final decision on a subject authority list and on a classification system. Some items in ISIS are classified in Dewey decimal for 1991-1993. Translation of the screens of the acquisitions and circulation modules has not yet begun. Because of the nature of the ISIS system, each record will have to be reviewed and the cataloging supplemented if TinLib is to be fully utilized. This is an enormous task and probably should be contracted out.

Another part of the problem with the conversion is that the documentation for TinLib was only provided in English and is a bit thin. A Russian version of the documentation now exists, but the budget to purchase it does not. The staff working on the conversion consist of one librarian and one informatics department staff person. Neither of them have the cataloging expertise nor the understanding of the TinLib program to be comfortable in making the decisions necessary to carry the project forward. The TinLib staff do not have routine contact with either the supplier in London, nor with their Russian colleagues who have implemented TinLib in Moscow.

3. Usage and Impact

The addition of new materials and the establishment of reading rooms in the two parliamentary buildings has led to increased usage of the library. The library has also added to its databases:

- ▶ a catalogue of books received — since 1992;
- ▶ press coverage of events in the domestic and international political life of the country — since 1992;
- foreign legislation;
- ▶ documents of the European Council and international organizations;
- ▶ informational materials; and
- ▶ elections.

Approximately 46,000 documents are included in the library's databases. Unfortunately, most of the library's data bases, including data obtained on CD-ROMs, have yet to be put on the parliamentary network. Thus, the library's contribution to the work of the People's Assembly (parliament) is still considerably less than its potential.

4. Critique of Library Assistance

In general, the assistance was responsive to the library's desires and appropriate for its potential activity. It appears, however, that the problems implicit in using TinLib were not sufficiently analyzed so that some special assistance could have been included in the program to solve, or at least alleviate, some of the problems. A CD-ROM tower is needed to network the CDs; presumably, this could have been included in the FTF program.

5. Sustainability Issues

The Director of the Library claims that she does not have adequate funds nor staff. This could become more serious over time, particularly if the library does not put more of its data bases on the parliamentary network. The Library should find funding for contracting the conversion to TinLib so her staff resources would be available for handling requests from parliamentary committees, MPs, etc.

6. Other Donor Assistance

The Parliamentary Library has received book and serial donations from a number of West European countries. The U.S. Information Service has supplied books, a CD-ROM with the U.S. Code, and Internet services. The French Centre for Parliamentary Documentation was established at the Library in 1994; it is supported by the parliament of Quebec and the French community of the Belgian parliament.

7. Current Needs

Current needs are: Internet access, including e-mail accounts; Internet training; technical assistance in getting TinLib up and operating, and a CD-ROM tower.

III. LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENTS

In 1990 the National Assembly restored the Grand National Assembly to draft and adopt a new constitution; it also scheduled the elections for its membership. The Seventh Grand National Assembly was convened after the parliamentary elections of June 10, 1990; it adopted the new constitution on July 12, 1991. After the adoption of the constitution, the Assembly continued to work as an Ordinary National Assembly until October 2, 1991; elections were held for the new National Assembly on October 13. The new 36th National Assembly served until December 1994 when it was replaced by the current 37th National Assembly.

The current electoral law establishes a proportional system of representation, with fixed party lists in 31 electoral districts. The National Assembly consists of 240 members. MPs may not hold other state posts or engage in activities incompatible with their status.

Some of the actions of the Seventh Grand National Assembly and/or the 36th Assembly include:

- ▶ the establishment of a Constitutional Court whose primary function is to guarantee the supremacy of the constitution. The Court has rejected five laws passed by the 37th Assembly as being unconstitutional;
- ▶ passing a number of laws regarding ownership of land and other measures to support the growth of the market economy;
- ▶ passed or modified a lot of economic and social legislation to harmonize it with that of the European Union;
- ▶ revised the laws regarding local government — officials can more easily be replaced (the first round of local elections were held the day before the evaluation team arrived in Sofia);

- ▶ provided in the Assembly's rules and regulations that the last day of each month is reserved for parliamentary committees, and the first day of each month for factions, to present issues of concern in the plenary session (which is open to the public and the press); and
- ▶ given more responsibility to parliamentary committees.

Some of the parliamentary staff estimate that legislation now is addressed in one-third less time and is more carefully reviewed by the parliament, thanks to the help of the Frost Task Force.

The legislative process is also considered more democratic because MPs now have greater access to bills because of the automation assistance of the Frost Task Force.

Some of the MPs with which the evaluation team talked feel that the leadership of the 37th Assembly is trying to undermine some of the measures mentioned above, including access to information on the network. While some of the negative reactions seemed excessive (e.g., in relation to the work of the new Parliamentary Research Department), other actions and documents circulating would naturally trigger concern. This type of reaction is particularly understandable given that the current leadership is from the party that is the successor to the Communist Party.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. General

1. Conclusions

Although the provision of FTF assistance has terminated, the task of putting all the assistance to good use is not finished. The immediate processing of legislation has been made more efficient, but the research and analysis activity and the networking of databases needed to improve the content of legislation are lagging.

2. Recommendation

If follow-on assistance becomes available and there are no barriers established to the access of information on the network:

- a) **fund some short-term technical assistance to: i) assist the Informatics Department deal with the problems cited in II.A. above; and ii) help resolve the TinLib conversion problems and get more databases on the parliamentary network; and**
- b) **assist in funding an upgraded access to Internet.**

B. Equipment

1. Conclusions

a. The Bulgarian Parliament's material assistance from the Frost Task Force accelerated their development of a computer network of shared information resources. Without Frost Task Force assistance, the same process would have taken two or three times as long.

- b. More technical assistance in the form of training and application design at the outset would have helped them develop systems faster and perhaps avoid the problems they are having with Informix connections to MS Access.
- c. There has been too much emphasis on writing software from scratch and too little effort made to identify and utilize commercial off-the-shelf programs as building blocks for their information system.
- d. The Informix database tools and HP UNIX servers are not warranted given the data volumes and network loads currently in place. The funds used to acquire this technology could have been put to better use early in the project.
- e. Lack of long range planning has hampered application development.
- i) Database development has occurred on demand by department, but there is no "big picture" evident.
- ii) Although there are many "databases" on the network, there is not an information system of applications in place.
- f. Sensitive data access issues remain unresolved; there are indicators of restrictions which are not warranted.
- g. Internet capabilities are extremely limited with land-line access; they will be only nominally useful. E-Mail capability can be used, but research will be difficult. In addition, the Internet access being tested uses an academic link, which is in violation of Internet protocols.

2. Recommendations

- a. **USAID/W should authorize the Bulgarian Parliament to sell the HP/UNIX servers and use the proceeds to acquire an off-the-shelf text retrieval product and/or more PCs. CRS should assist the Informatics department in this endeavor, e.g., by contacting the Hungarian Parliament as a potential buyer.**
- b. **CRS should assist the Informatics department to negotiate a license transfer of the Informix software, using the failed upgrade issue as leverage with Informix in this negotiation.**

C. Technical Assistance

1. Conclusions

- a. The New Member Conference and the training and orientation provided through the Parliamentary Institutes were well received and have had a positive impact on the way the National Assembly carries out its legislative functions.
- b. FTF technical assistance was instrumental in the establishment of the Parliamentary Research Department; the latter's success depends upon its ability to overcome the suspicions of the minority parties. Its best chance of achieving this is probably through working more cooperatively with committee chairmen and the Parliamentary Committees Department. It might also explore the possibility of developing current news summaries of the European press on issues/organizations relevant to the legislative program similar to the work of the Lithuanian Information Analysis Department).

D. Parliamentary Library

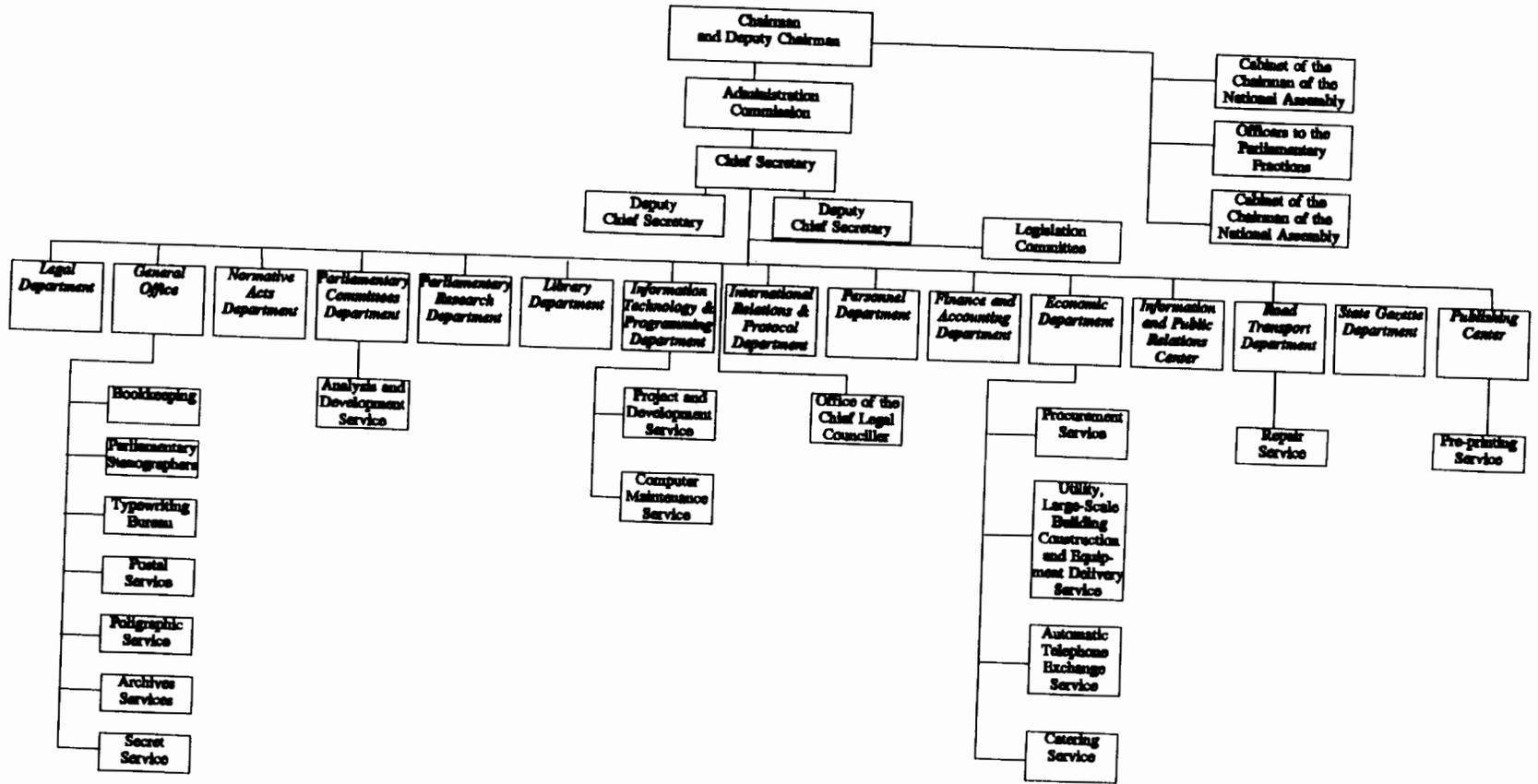
1. Conclusions

The library has made some progress in extending its services, but it could be considerably more supportive if it would get more of its databases on the network and be more aggressive in marketing its services.

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TAB A ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF 37TH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA



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TAB B**Chronology — Bulgaria****1991**

- Jan 30 An Inter-Agency Agreement was signed between USAID and the Library of Congress (LOC) under which \$4.25 million was allocated to the LOC for Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. The LOC activity was to be managed under the direction of the Frost Committee.
- May 26 - 31 A Frost Task Force technical staff delegation visited Bulgaria to assess the resources and needs of the parliament and the feasibility of providing assistance.
- Aug 26 USAID and LOC signed Amendment #1 to the Inter-Agency Agreement increasing the budget allocation to \$5,008,000 and authorizing LOC programs in Bulgaria, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Albania.
- Nov 4 - 15 The second Parliamentary Institute for parliamentary staff was held in Washington, D.C. The theme was an overview of the Congressional Research Service (CRS) and research techniques. The Bulgarian attendees were Emilia Droumeva, Assen Dyulgerov, Valentin Korkinov, Margarita Angelova, and Radka Nencheva.
- Dec 10 - 12 A New Members Conference for MPs was held in Sofia with international speakers.

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- Jan 23 RFP 92-12 was published for the procurement, delivery and installation of office automation equipment and software for the National Assembly of Bulgaria.
- Feb 24 to Mar 6 The third Parliamentary Institute for parliamentary staff was held in Washington, D.C. The main topics were parliamentarianism, democracy, and legislation and technologies. The attendees from Hungary were Dian Stanhev, Dimitar Yordanov, Gristo Botev, and Irena Alkova-Atanassova.
- Mar 21 - 28 Staff from CRS and the House Information Services (HIS) traveled to Bulgaria to review responses to RFP 92-12 and to conduct site visits to vendors who bid on the RFP.
- Mar 30 to Apr 10 The fourth Parliamentary Institute for parliamentary staff was held in Washington, D.C. Four attendees from Bulgaria arrived March 28 and departed April 22. The focus of the training was the legal aspects of the legislative processes, electronic voting systems. The Bulgarian attendees were Vitalia Koleva, Bissera Zankova, Boyanka Mladenova and Radoslav Glushkov.
- May 10 A contract for \$353,498 was awarded to Infoguard for installation of 2 80486 workstations, 3 80486 servers (and network operating system software), 12 80386SX workstations, 14 80386DX workstations, 10 laptop computers, 18 laser printers, 4 portable printers, 1 color printer, 2 scanners, 6 Fax/modem cards, 46 Ethernet network adapters, additional memory and storage for workstations (various), 2 CD-ROM readers, 110 personal computer software packages (various products), and printer supplies.

- May 26 to June 5 Bulgaria sent two people to the fifth Parliamentary Institute in Washington, D.C.: Roumen Tontchev, information technology office, and Michaela Rousseva from the Deputy Chairman's cabinet. The focus of the Institute was on parliamentary libraries. The attendees also attended a conference in San Francisco June 8 - 13.
- Jun 23 A contract for \$44,926 was awarded to Computer Bay for the installation of 4 small office copiers and 2 facsimile units.
- Jul 5 - 17 Mary Nell Bryant traveled to Bulgaria and Hungary to assist the development of library collections.
- 20 - 31 The sixth Parliamentary Institute for parliamentary staff was held in Washington, D.C. The theme was legal library systems and automation seminars. The Bulgarian attendees were Dimitar Stefanov, Tzvet Mineva, Prolet Natchkova, and Tzetzka Gugaleva.
- Aug 19 - 25 Stoytcho Delitchev attended a Communications Technologies Exhibition to choose a computer network vendor.
- 21 - 27 Snezhana Botusharova, the Vice-President of the National Assembly, and Ventsislav Dimitrov, Chairman of the Budget and Finance Committee, visited Washington to meet with CRS and Congressional staff. They also attended the CRS Graduate Legislative Institute in Richmond from August 27 - 29.
- Oct 4 - 17 John Kelley, Bill Freeman, and Cathy Brickman travelled to Bulgaria and Hungary for RFP development, vendor evaluations, and acceptance testing on equipment.
- Nov 1 - 8 Dimitar Yordanov and ___ Gentchev, Information Technology office visited Computer Systems Fair in Las Vegas.
- 2 - 13 Bulgaria sent three legal specialists to the seventh Parliamentary Institute which was held in Washington, D.C.
- Nov 29 to Dec 6 Sandra Baumgardner and Martha Dexter travelled to Bulgaria to help the parliamentary staff prepare for the selection of an integrated library system.

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- Feb 2 - 11 William Freeman, Cathy Brickman, Bud Collins, and John Kelley traveled to Bulgaria to assist in the development of an RFP for data communication equipment and servers.
- Feb 22 to Mar 10 Kristi Walseth, Francis Miko, and Julie Kim went to Albania, Hungary, and Bulgaria to conduct a needs assessment and political analyses of the parliament in each country.
- Mar 28 to Apr 4 Nancy Davenport and Mary Ellen Callahan went to Bulgaria and Poland to evaluate technical assistance provided by the Special Task Force.
- May 2 Bulgaria was represented at the eighth Parliamentary Institute in Washington, D.C. by Michaela Rousseva and M. Barossova. The Institute focussed on budget and state finance.

- Jun 14 RFP 93-27 was issued to provide communications equipment and cabling for the Bulgarian Assembly.
- Jul 12 USAID and LOC signed a new Inter-Agency Agreement for \$3.5 million for a two-year program of assistance to the legislatures of Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Bulgaria's allocation was \$282,000.
- 12 - 23 Bulgaria had three participants in the ninth Parliamentary Institute in Washington, D.C. The focus was on parliamentary committees.
- Jul 26 to Aug 10 Patricia Gardner and Henry Collins went to Belgium and Bulgaria to evaluate vendors who submitted proposals to provide equipment to the Bulgarian Assembly.
- Aug 16 - 28 Bulgaria was represented at the annual meeting of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions which was held in Madrid and Barcelona (non-Frost Task Force funding).
- 23 - 27 Stycho Delichev attended the Interop Computer Conference in San Francisco.
- Sep 13 - 24 Bulgaria was represented at the tenth Parliamentary Institute which was held in Washington D.C. for legislative attorneys and legal committee staff members.
- 30 A contract of \$65,820 was awarded to Cabletron Systems, Inc. for the delivery of 3 hubs, 3 racks, 3 UPSs, ST jumpers, patch panels and cables, passive baluns, ThinNet cable, connectors, tools and test equipment, network management station and software, training for 2 students on installation and operation of ethernet hubs and SNMP agents and network management, use of bridges and routers.
- 30 A contract of \$42,000 was awarded to Infoguard for cable delivery and installation of data wiring.
- 30 A contract of \$42,149 was awarded to Microwave Bypass for the delivery and installation of ethernet over microwave equipment, equipment spares, on-site user training.
- Oct 2 - 9 William Robinson and Nancy Davenport went to Bulgaria to consult with parliamentary and party leadership to determine their research goals and the possible design of a research department and with members of key political parties and factions to determine their needs and expectations for research. Mr. Robinson had meetings to assess the quantity and quality of outside resources and the possibility of coordinating the activities of outside sources of research with those of a possible parliamentary research and analysis service.
- 23 - 31 Cathy Brickman, Bill Freeman, and Henry Collins went to Bulgaria for a post-award conference to finalize the design and plan for installation of a computer network for the National Assembly. They also consulted with parliamentary staff about the requirement of an RFP for a data base server, a data base management system, and office automation equipment.
- Nancy Davenport went to Bulgaria for a week to interview leaders of the National Assembly and its staff and to prepare plans for future training programs with parliamentary staff.

Nov 28 to Dec 4 Radoslav Glushkov and Krastyo Musharov were in Washington, D.C. for network training by Cabletron Systems.

1994

Feb 12 - 18 Henry Collins went to Bulgaria to install a microwave telecommunications link between buildings of the National Assembly and to train Bulgarian staff members in how to use the equipment.

Mr. Kotchev, Secretary General of the Bulgarian National Assembly, visited CRS. CRS staff discussed the implications of closing out library material orders.

Mar RFP 94-10 was issued for automation systems for the National Assembly.

May The Bulgarian Parliament sent three participants to a four-day conference on parliamentary rules and procedures which was held in Poland. Kristi Walseth (Frost Committee), William Brown (Parliamentarian of the House of Representatives), Paul Rundquist (CRS specialist on American government), and Lucien Nedzi (former member of Congress) participated in the conference.

May Ms. Larsen consulted with the National Assembly library and helped the librarian develop book orders, consistent with the remaining budget, which could be ordered by the end of FY 1994.

May 25 - 27 A Frost Task Force technical delegation visited Bulgaria to provide preliminary acceptance on network equipment delivered under RFP 93-27 and to visit vendor site visits for RFP 94-10.

Jun William Robinson went to Bulgaria for a week to discuss the development of research and analysis capabilities.

Installation of wiring for the new Parliament building was completed.

20 - 22 Dimitar Jordanov, Head of the Research and Information Department, and Nikolay Guentchev, Research and Information Department staff member, attended the Information Technology in Parliaments conference jointly sponsored by the Senat of Poland, the Frost Task Force, and the European Parliament. Mr. Jordanov and Mr. Guentchev delivered three papers at the conference.

Aug 6 - 15 Sofka Petrova Vulkova of the Information Systems department to a CRS orientation program.

Sep 11 - 27 Two people from the Legal Department attended a training program on parliamentary procedures.

1995

May Bulgaria sent two librarians to the regional parliamentary library conference in Prague sponsored by CRS and the Czech Parliamentary Library. Sessions included management issues, the Internet, recruitment and training, collections development issues, organizing for ready reference, and regional cooperation.

Jun Dobrin Kanev went to CRS for a week of training in conducting research and analysis for a legislature.

CRS-ANNH.R43

TAB C**LIST OF PEOPLE CONTACTED — BULGARIA****BULGARIAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

Former Chairman of the Assembly (36th)
 Dr. George B. Karev, MP, Vice-Chairman of the Committee on Health Care
 Alexander Djerev, MP, Committee on Education, Science, and Technology
 Elena Borislavova, MP, Committee on Foreign Relations
 Krassimir Stoyanov, Secretary General
 Chavdar Georgiev, Deputy Secretary General
 Dr. Emilia Drumeva, Deputy Secretary General & Head of the Legal Department
 Valentine Grozdanov, Counsellor, Legal Department
 Vitalija Koleva, Legal Department
 Pepa Stojanova, Normative Acts Department
 Bojanka Krumova, Normative Acts Department
 Michaela Ruseva, Normative Acts Department
 Margarita Angelova, Head of Library
 Irena Aykova, Library
 Mikhail Balev, Head of the Information Office
 Dimitar Jordanov, former Chief of Information Office
 Stoytcho Delichev, Head of Maintenance and Support Service, Information Dept.
 Velislav Stoyanchev, Dipl. Eng., Chief Expert, Information Department
 Dr. Dobrin Kanev, Head of Parliamentary Research Department
 Dr. Stefan Filipov Stefanov, Senior Adviser, Research Department
 Dr. Antony Todorov, Senior Adviser, Research Department
 Katie Kristova, Research Department
 Liliana Petrova, Research Department
 Vladimir Minkov,
 Eduardo (?) Maneff, Chief of Parliamentary Committees Department
 Tzetzna Tchavdarova, Parliamentary Committees Department
 Vladimir Minkov, Advisor, Committee on Culture
 Dora Grozdanova, Advisor, Committee on Energy
 Tzveta Mineva, Chancellery
 Elena Skenderova, Chancellery
 Professor Vassil Mrachkov, Director, Council on Legislation
 Professor Alexander Dzherov, Lawyer (?)

U. S. EMBASSY

William Montgomery, Ambassador

OFFICE OF THE USAID REPRESENTATIVE

John Tennant, USAID Representative
 Bistra Petrova, Project Management Specialist (Democratic Initiatives)

OTHER

Emmanuel Ikonov, Interpreter for Frost Task Force Technical Delegations
 Stefan Nedkov, President, Infoguard, Ltd.

CRS-ANNH.R43

ANNEX I. CHRONOLOGY — POLAND

Development Associates, Inc.

1990

Jun The Polish parliament was looking forward to receiving some 215 computers and 100 printers from the U.S. Senate as part of the "Gift of Democracy." They were not seeking further computer equipment at that time, but rather American technical assistance in bringing the computers on line. A logical assumption, at that time, was that some of this new equipment would be allocated to the Solidarity Parliamentary Club for use by its 261 members (since by that time Solidarity controlled the Chancellory).

Requests were also made for:

- videocassette tapes to assist in the task of filming Sejm and Senat proceedings
- a paging system to call members to vote
- office equipment, including FAX machines, copiers, stenographic machines, etc.

According to Chancellory staff, the computer center was well equipped to handle the Parliament's administrative computer needs, but not its legislative tracking capability. The Poles wanted U.S. Congressional Assistance in:

- setting up a system for tracking the status of legislation
- printing bills
- setting up an electronic voting system (currently no record of how individual members vote)

Training was requested to cover the following areas:

- Member training
- Staff training
- Parliamentary Training Center was suggested
- Seminar for Rules and Procedures (Senat has no rules and uses rules of Sejm. Some members suggested that outside advice regarding constitutional problems and procedures between the two chambers might be better received by Polish MPs who are insensitive to their importance.)
- Drafting legislation
- English language training (Use of Peace Corps Volunteers was suggested.)

Other suggestions regarding expanded U.S. Polish parliamentary contacts:

- Team of senior staff members (English speaking) to study U.S. Congressional Committee work in Washington.
- Technical team to receive 5 or 6 weeks of "hands on" experience with U.S. systems

- American expert to observe Sejm and Senat for extended time period and prepare report with recommendations for reform within existing traditions and rules of Polish Parliament.

Information was requested about the Congressional Research Service and other similar programs for members of the U.S. Congress (course descriptions, program announcements etc.) to aid in setting up their own legislative training institutes and seminars for Members and staff. They also needed assistance in filling a 20-year backlog in books and periodical collections. They did not know what they were missing and needed to learn how to secure a normal flow of new publications.

1991

- Jan 30 An Inter-Agency Agreement was signed between USAID and the Library of Congress (LOC) under which \$4.25 million was allocated to the LOC for Poland, Hungary, and the Czech and Slovak Federated Republic (CSFR) for equipment (primarily for Hungary and CSFR because Poland was receiving assistance under a separate program), technical assistance for information and research capability, library collections, and general administration. The LOC activity was to be managed under the direction of the Frost Task Force (FTF).
- Mar As a follow-up to a Task Force trip and discussions with Senat and Sejm research staff in early 1991, copies of the Core Bibliography and a collection of CQ Almanacs (from '70s and '80s) were sent to Poland.
- Sep 5 Wojciech Sawicki, Head of the Chancellery, Polish Senat, requested the following:
- 3-4 parliamentary experts from U.S. and West European countries to participate in a series of 4 - 6 seminars for Senators (bringing with them prepared reports and other written materials on issues in question). Travel expenses and other costs to be paid for by the Frost Task Force.
 - funding (all or part of approximately \$30,000) for production of an educational film on the Senat, its history, structure, and legislative activities.
 - trips to the U.S. for Polish Senators (groups of 3 or 4 each) to visit the U.S. Senate in the first term of 1992 for one week stays.
- Nov Walter J. Oleszek reported after a Parliamentary Visit to Poland that the Sejm Chancellery wanted to construct a new parliamentary library and wanted funds for a feasibility study. The Sejm library required an examination of its collections and recommendations for modernization. The Sejm also requested ways to acquire information and analysis regularly and systematically on major political and economic developments in Latin America, Africa and Asia (it already has the capability regarding neighboring countries). The Senat requested that CRS specialists (familiar with Polish developments) visit Warsaw to assist the Reference Unit and Research and Analysis Group.
- Oleszek recommended gradual installation of a new generation of computers, specifically replacing the central Hewlett-Packard computer in the Sejm. The Senat requested a computer specialist to assist in developing its databases. Officials of the Sejm Chancellery suggested that the Sejm and CRS organize periodic seminars on various subjects to be conducted in Warsaw for staff, lawmakers, and other officials.

(U.S. and European experts would be needed for 7-10 days.) A similar request was made by the Senat Chancellery.

Parliamentary officials requested specialized training for staff on methodologies for analyzing specific issue areas: assessment of budget and fiscal issues, environmental protection, etc. (Polish staffers in U.S. and U.S. experts in Warsaw).

Dec 3 "Gift of Democracy" equipment delivered to Polish Senat was: 276 IBM PC/AT workstations, 5 laptop computers, 29 laser printers, 36 draft printers, 5 portable printers, 50 small office copiers, 1 high volume copier, folding, stitching and trimming equipment and a custom-built offset press.

1992

Mar 5 - 6 Kristi Walseth and William Robinson visited Poland to discuss the up-coming intra-regional parliamentary conference.

13 A contract in the amount of \$355,739 was awarded to Team Technologies for 1 80386 Server, 62 80386 workstations, 10 80286 notebook computers, 5 laser printers, 3 portable printers, 5 CD-ROM Readers, 1 desktop scanner, 9 uninterruptible power supplies, and 79 personal computer software packages (various products). [U.S. Senate Gift of Democracy]

March 21 to April 4 Mary Nell Bryant visited Poland to assist the Senat and Sejm in the development of their information resources and services.

March CRS staff briefed the Vice President of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers in preparation for a visit to Poland of a delegation of union officials sponsored by the AFL-CIO.

March Until now the equipment to Poland had been provided by the U.S. Senate's Gift of Democracy to Poland. In March, representatives from the Frost Task Force met with the automation coordinators from the Sejm and the Senat to discuss a strategic automation plan to build on that equipment.

Apr 12 - 19 A Congressional delegation headed by Representative Frost visited Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania and Poland.

May 26 to June 5 Five staff members from Poland participated in the fifth Parliamentary Institute which focused on parliamentary libraries.

Jun 6 - 16 Magdalena Kuta, Director of the Computer Center of the Polish Sejm, and Jaroslaw Deminet, Director of the Bureau of Information of the Polish Senat, visited CRS for discussions with HIS and CRS computer and acquisitions staff.

Jun 21 - 23 Kristi Walseth and William Robinson attended a conference in Poland for senior staff members of parliaments of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

Jul 5 - 7 Five staff members from Poland attended the sixth Parliamentary Institute.

Aug 27 - 29 Kristi Walseth, John Kelley, William Freeman, and Cathy Brickman traveled to CSFR and Poland to consult with parliamentary staff.

15

- Sep 6 - 23 Mary Nell Bryant traveled to Poland and the CSFR to assist with collection development of the parliamentary libraries.
- Oct 31 to Nov 8 Wojciech Sawicki, head of the Chancellery of the Polish Senat, traveled to Texas to observe the U.S. elections and to Washington, D.C. to meet with Congressional staff.
- Nov 2 - 13 Five staff members from Poland attended the seventh Parliamentary Institute; most attendees were legal experts.
- Dec 7 - 11 Wlodzimierz Borodziej, the Director-General of Sejm Research, and Wieslaw Staskiewicz, the Deputy Director of Sejm Research, visited CRS to examine CRS's research and reference services.

1993

- Feb 3 An RFP was issued for computer training, software and equipment for the Polish Sejm and Senat.
- Feb 21 to Mar 6 Hanna Ozdzyńska of the Polish Sejm's Bureau of Interparliamentary Relations came to CRS for training and work experience in the Office of Special Programs.
- Mar 22 to April 2 William Freeman, Cathy Brickman, Bud Collins, John Kelley and Patricia Gardner went to Poland to assess vendors who replied to the RFP issued February 3.
- Apr A contract in the amount of \$50,586 was awarded to Ashford International for delivery and installation of 15 486 PCs and 4 laser printers at the Polish parliament.
- A contract in the amount of \$335,100 was awarded to Verity for the delivery and installation of a site-license for TOPIC text retrieval software (host and client-based products), development tools, consulting and training for the Polish parliament.
- A contract in the amount of \$313,750 was awarded to Ingres for the delivery and installation of 2 platform licenses for Ingres Database Management System software (host and client-based products), development tools, consulting and training for the Polish parliament.
- May 2 - 15 Poland sent participants to the eighth Parliamentary Institute which focused on government budgets and finance.
- May Paul Lundquist visited Poland to consult with members of parliament and their staff on questions related to parliamentary rules and procedure.
- Jun 14 - 18 William Freeman and Cathy Brickman went to Poland to test office automation equipment financed by the FTF.
- Jul 12 - 23 Poland participated in the ninth Parliamentary Institute.
- 12 - 31 Malgorzata Korzeniowska of the Senat library and Hanna Popowska of Sejm library participated in library training at CRS and attended the annual conference of the National Council of State Legislatures.

- Sep 13 - 24 Poland participated in the tenth Parliamentary Institute which was for legislative attorneys and legal committee staff.
- 13 - 20 Paul Rundquist, Linda Cox and William Brown (House Parliamentarian) went to Poland to attend the conference on parliamentary rules and procedures.
- 18 - 24 Regina Sarosiek of the Sejm attended a training course in software management at the Learning Center International in Washington, D.C.
- Sept Two CRS staff members went to Poland to evaluate the technical assistance provided by the FTF. They found that of the staff members trained by CRS, all 11 from the Senate were still there as were the majority of those from the Sejm.

1994

- Jan 31 Wieslaw Staskiewicz, Head of the Bureau of Research of the Sejm, Jarek Deminet of the Bureau of Research of the Senat, and Wojciech Kulisiewicz, Head of the Sejm Library came to CRS for several days to discuss plans for regional conferences in Eastern Europe for staff members from all the parliaments assisted by the FTF. The conferences would be on the development of parliamentary automation systems, development of rules and procedures for a legislature, and on parliamentary library cooperation.
- May A four-day conference on parliamentary rules and procedures was held in Poland.
- Jun 20 - 22 The Sejm and the Senat co-sponsored a regional conference on Information Technology in Parliaments.
- Nov Ewa Chielewska-Gorczyca of the Sejm library came to Washington to attend a conference on planning participation in the LOC's Global Legal Information Network (GLIN) and training parliamentary staff who will oversee the program.

1995

- Feb 4 Ewa Chielewska-Gorczyca and Katarzyna Nowosad of the Sejm library went to Washington, D.C. for a month's training in indexing, abstracting, and technical aspects of participation in the GLIN program.

ANNEX J. CHRONOLOGY — CZECH REPUBLIC

Development Associates, Inc.

1990

- June Francis Miko of the Congressional Research Service (CRS) reported that the Frost Task Force (FTF) could propose that Congress send over an expert on Congressional press and television facilities to assess the needs of the Czechoslovak Federal Assembly press and TV center, and to offer advice and equipment. He also suggested that the Task Force could recommend that the Czechoslovak Federal Assembly provide a plan for computerization to which it could then respond with equipment support.
- June The Federal Assembly requested outside help in establishing constituent services. The Task Force received a specific request for any information on the role and organization of CRS, the ways in which its findings are disseminated, use of external expertise, and the relations between the CRS and Congress, as well as with the Executive branch.
- Sept The FTF Technical Assistance Group reported that the Czechoslovak Parliamentary Library did not have sufficient staff available to fulfill information or research and analysis needs for Members. The Parliamentary library had one PC and one low volume copier. The Czechoslovak Academies and universities (i.e. School of Economics, Academy of Science, Technology, and Economics) were the centers of knowledge on automation. Federal Assembly equipment included mainframe, mini, and PC-based computer systems; the first two, manufactured in Eastern bloc countries, were obsolete. The Assembly was relying more on PCs and PC LAN-based networks. The following recommendations were made:
- establishment of a planning and implementation organization
 - PCs for word processing
 - copiers (both high volume and desk top)
 - telephone answering machines
 - FAX equipment
 - microform reader/printer
 - PCs for legislative text processing
 - all equipment be bought "in country" with vendor installation, training, and set-up and software support.
- Estimated cost was \$227,600, but funding of \$273,120 was recommended to cover hardware, software, installation and training.
- Oct The U.S. Information Agency (USIA) notified the Frost Task Force that it was ready to work with the Library of Congress (LOC) in furthering library development.
- Oct 17 An FTF Technical Assistance Group went to Czechoslovakia and learned that a group of Members of Parliament (MPs) and outside experts were attempting to design a Parliamentary Institute to provide research and analysis. They planned to be connected to data bases in the Academy of Science, Technology, and Economics and the Parliamentary Library. The proposal was in draft bill stage; planners hoped to have it in place within two years. A small legislative network for processing

legislation, to be done in stages, was seen as one of the highest priorities of the Parliament.

Some 60 essential reference materials had already been identified and shipped to the Library of Parliament. The library collections consisted of some 200,000 volumes, 400 periodical subscriptions, and an excellent collection of newspapers from the interwar years 1918-1939. It was a depository for Czechoslovak publications in the fields of law and the social sciences and for United Nations and International Court of Justice publications. It exchanged publications with 18 foreign governments (none in English) and (with a non-existent acquisitions budget). Many reference books were extremely outdated such as the 1946 **Encyclopedia Americana**. The official exchanges of the Library of Congress were with the National Library in Prague. The directors of the National Library and the Parliamentary Library were good friends and worked together cooperatively.

1991

- Jan 30 An Inter-Agency Agreement was signed between USAID/Washington and the Library of Congress (LOC) under which \$4.25 million was allocated to the LOC for Poland, Hungary, and the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic (CSFR) for equipment (\$2,785,000 — primarily for Hungary and CSFR because Poland had received assistance earlier), technical assistance for information and research capability (\$756,000), library collections (\$509,000), and general administration (\$200,000). The LOC activity was to be managed under the direction of the Frost Task Force.
- March Czech technical representatives visited the Exchange and Gifts Division of the LOC to get assistance in book selection for its Parliamentary Library Collection. The 78 books received from this division were more than had been ordered from the West in 20 years. CRS staff compiled a listing of CD-ROM titles for the Parliamentary Library with descriptive material on each database. In addition to the 78 books already received, another 136 titles were enroute to Prague as the delegation was visiting Washington.
- March An RFP for equipment for the Czech and Slovak Federal Assembly was published for:
- 100 personal computers
 - 10 laptops
 - 14 office copiers
 - 10 laser printers and a variety of other equipment
- May 19/
June 10 A representative from the Parliamentary Institute of the Czech and Slovak Republic was in Washington to discuss formulation of a research capability for the Assembly.
- June Two librarians from each of the Task Force countries came to Washington, D.C. for a major program of technical assistance for librarians. The program included Philadelphia and San Antonio.
- Sept Automation staff from the House Information Systems office (HIS), CRS and the LOC Contracts and Logistics Office worked with counterparts in CSFR to develop automation plans for the Federal Assembly and prepare the necessary RFPs to implement the plans.
- Sept The initial periodical orders were finalized for the Czech and Slovak Republic, Poland and Hungary. USIA contributed \$30,000 for subscriptions for FY 1991.

- Oct The Vice Chairman of the House of Nations of the Federal Assembly of the CSFR and the Director Designate of the CSFR Parliamentary Institute came to D.C. for training and to attend the Annual Conference of the Association of Public Policy and Management, followed by a workshop on building research capability. Representatives from CRS's Library Services Division and the Office of Technology Assessment traveled to Prague to help select an integrated library management system for the microcomputer LAN system. They followed up on the delivery and installation of CD-ROM products ordered for the Parliamentary Library.
- Nov The CRS acquisitions team met two days with the CSFR Federal Assembly's automation staff to determine hardware needed to track legislation and provide text retrieval.
- Dec Mary Nell Bryant travelled to CSFR to work with library staffs and developed a set of quick reference guides for CD-ROM searching.

1992

- April Mary Nell Bryant, CRS, developed CD-ROM searching guides for the CSFR Federal Assembly which were translated into Czech. She also helped them develop acquisition profiles for the CSFR Federal Assembly Library and gathered materials to help identify priorities for future Library needs in light of the probable dissolution of the Federation. CRS staff also revised and updated two-year projections for serial subscriptions for the Library.
- Apr - Sept The fourth, fifth and sixth Parliamentary Institutes (each for 2 weeks) took place during this period, beginning in Washington, DC and continuing to other locations for further observation and training (i.e. Maryland General Assembly, Special Libraries Association of San Francisco). Fifty-five professional staff members participated from four countries, including from CSFR.
- Oct The FTF learned that, following the dissolution of the former federation, all library materials sent to the Federal Assembly of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic would be turned over to the House of Representatives of the Czech Republic.
- Nov The seventh Parliamentary Institute took place and three participants were from CSFR. It was designed primarily for lawyers providing legal support for the parliaments of their countries and used the mentor format.

1993

- Jan USAID redirected its assistance from the CSFR to the Czech Republic and Slovakia.
- March Mary Nell Bryant went to Prague and Bratislava to examine the condition of the parliamentary libraries and assist their further separate development.
- April The FTF authorized partial re-allocation between the Czech Republic and Slovakia of the funds for the library materials originally budgeted to the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic. Slovakia received \$130,000; the Czech Republic received \$95,000.
- Apr-Sept Technical assistance was provided through a variety of programs including the eighth, ninth, and tenth Parliamentary Institutes, attended by 43 professionals including those from the Czech Republic.

- The FTF also provided the Parliament of the Czech Republic with basic office equipment and assistance in planning to meet their longer term automation needs.
- April Mary Nell Bryant went to the Czech Republic to assist the development of the parliamentary library and facilitated an agreement to establish a reference center in the main building of the National Council to serve as a liaison with the main library (located several miles away).
- May Kristi Walseth and two members of HIS went to the Czech Republic to hold a ceremony to signal the approaching end of all the programs of the Frost Task Force in the Czech Republic.
- June A delegation of six deputies from the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic visited CRS under sponsorship of USIA's International Visitors Program and Meridian House International.
- July CRS representatives met with the Director of the Defense Resources Management Institute and a representative of the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School to discuss the International Military Education and Training Program and the possibility of cooperation with CRS.
- Oct Mary Nell Bryant collected orders for new materials, evaluated the operation of a new reference center, and discussed a training program for a librarian scheduled to come to CRS in 1994.

1994

- Feb A librarian from the Library of the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic came to CRS for hands-on training.
- May CRS staff members made preparations for a regional conference for parliamentary librarians in May.
- May Two members of HIS conducted acceptance testing of the last equipment delivered to the Chamber of Deputies making the equipment acquisition program in the Czech Republic complete.
- June The FTF and the Polish Sejm and Senat co-sponsored the Conference on Information Technology in Parliaments in June. Two automation specialists attended from the Czech Republic.

ANNEX K. CHRONOLOGY — SLOVAKIA

Development Associates, Inc.

1990

- Apr 6 The Special Task Force on the Development of Parliamentary Institutions in Eastern Europe was established by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The Chairman was Martin Frost.
- Jun 28 The Special Task Force (Frost Task Force - FTF) reported to Speaker Foley on its trip to Central Europe (Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary), recommending assistance to the three countries for equipment, Members and staff training, and library and research resources.
- Oct 17 The technical assistance group of the FTF submitted its report on travel to Hungary and the Czech and Slovak Federated Republic (CSFR) September 1 - 15, 1990, including its recommendations for legislative support to the two parliaments.

1991

- Jan 30 An Inter-Agency Agreement was signed between USAID/Washington (USAID/W) and the Library of Congress (LOC) under which \$4.25 million was allocated to the LOC for Poland, Hungary, and CSFR. The LOC activity was to be managed under the direction of the FTF.
- [FTF assistance was provided during 1991 and 1992 to the Federal Assembly of the CSFR.]

1993

- Jan 1 Slovakia became an independent nation.
- Apr One-third of the equipment ordered for the Federal Assembly of the CSFR was re-distributed to Slovakia. Of the \$225,000 allocated to the Federal Assembly for library materials, \$130,000 was re-allocated to Slovakia.
- May 2 - 15 The Eighth Parliamentary Institute was held in Washington, D.C. for specialists in government budgets and finance, with attendance from Slovakia.
- 18 - 26 John Kelley, Cathy Brickman, and Bill Freeman conducted needs assessments in the Slovakia and Czech Republic's parliaments.
- Jul 2 - 11 A Congressional delegation led by Rep. Frost visited Albania, Hungary and Slovakia. While accompanying the delegation, Ms. Bryant discussed procedures in Slovakia for ordering library materials and the next steps for the program.
- 12 - 23 The ninth Parliamentary Institute took place in Washington, D.C. for committee staff members, with attendance from Slovakia.

- Aug 16 - 28 Slovakia sent a representative(s) to the annual meeting of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions in Madrid and Barcelona. Funding was provided for E. European attendance by the German Marshall Fund, the Soros Foundation and the Ford Foundation.
- Aug 23 - 27 Vladmir Palenik of the Slovak National Council attended the Interop Computer Conference in San Francisco.
- Sep 13 - 24 The tenth Parliamentary Institute took place for legislative attorneys and legal committee staff members, with attendance from Slovakia.
- Oct 6 - 16 Mary Nell Bryant traveled to Poland, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic to assist in the development of the parliamentary libraries. She conducted training sessions on CD-ROM technology.
- Oct 28 - 31 Mr. Collins travelled to Slovakia to finalize the design of a computer network for the National Council.

1994

- Jan 17 - 24 Cathy Brickman and Bill Freeman reviewed the terms of the RFP that the automation team was preparing for office automation equipment for the National Council. RAP 94-7 was issued in February.
- Mar There is a change of government in Slovakia.
- Apr 25 - 29 Zuzana Kajanova and Maria Koncova, staff members of the National Council, went to Washington for network training by Cabletron Systems.
- Apr 18 - 22 Patricia Gardner, Ruth Nelson, Cathy Brickman, Bill Freeman, and Mr. Kelley visited Slovakia to review the responses to RFP 94-7 for computers and software.
- May Mr. Collins went to Slovakia to check on progress in wiring for a computer network in the National Council and to conduct acceptance testing on network equipment.
- Jun 13 A contract of \$188,000 was awarded for the delivery and installation of 2 Pentium, SCO UNIX-based database servers, 2 Pentium file servers, 6 486/66 file servers, 1 CD-ROM server, Fyre utilities software, 8 Anti-Virus NLM and Year 1 virus updates, NetWare NFS NLM, UNIX OS and System Administration training and NetWare System Management training for 3 students.
- 13 A contract of \$62,000 was awarded to I-Net, Inc. for delivery and installation of TEXPRO software for 32 users, TEXPRO Basic Development and Database Administration for 2 users, Archex Plus System and Software.
- 13 A contract of \$19,500 was awarded to Junkers Presov for delivery and installation of JURIX-CDX software for Slovakia and the Czech Republic and Year 2 (1994) subscriptions.
- 13 A contract for \$301,200 was awarded to Donasphere Ltd. for the delivery and installation of 83 486 workstations, 15 486-based notebooks, 5 portable CD-ROM drives, 25 laser printers, 1 postscript color printer, 2 portable printers, 4 Soundblaster boards and speakers, 2 portable soundboard systems, 75 1-MB RAM upgrades for Arche Triumph 386/SX systems, PC accessories, Microsoft MAIL Server

for 30 users and SMTP and FAX Gateways, and 36 assorted personal computer software packages.

- 13 A contract for \$27,700 was awarded to EXTERNA IT spol. s.r.o. for the delivery and installation of 2 DTP workstations, 2 scanners, Recognita Plus, CoreDRAW!, Corel Ventura, Moe Windows software, and font cartridges for DTP.
- Jun 20 - 22 Vladimr Palenik, Head of the Computer Center of the National Council, and Zuzana Kajanova of his staff attended the Conference on Information Technology in Parliaments, which was held in Poland under the sponsorship of the Polish Senat, the Frost Task Force, and the European Parliament.
- Oct Vladimir Palenik from the National Council received project management training at Learning Tree International in Reston, Virginia.
- Nov Maria Konckova and Zuzana Kajanova went to Washington for training by Cabletron Training on automation equipment.
- Nov Willia Robinson, Francis Miko, Julie Kim, Tom Miller, and Douglass Bellis went to Slovakia to participate in a conference on rules, procedures, and organization for Members of the National Council. The conference was co-sponsored with the Association for Former Members of Congress.

1995

- May A Parliamentary Conference for members of the National Council was held outside Bratislava in May in collaboration with the U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress. The participants from the Council included about 40 deputies and numerous staff members. The conference was opened by Josef Rea, Chairman of the NRSR Committee for Public Administration, and U.S. Ambassador Theodore Russell. Sessions were held on such topics as: preparation of proposals for legislation; reaching consensus; preparing for membership in the European Union and NATO; interest and pressure groups; and local government and citizens groups.
- The conference was followed by a day-long seminar for staff that covered: Deputies' needs for information analysis; the role of committee and group staff in the legislative process; and the development of research, reference, and analytical capabilities.
- Jun Ms. Brickman and Mr. Freeman went to Slovakia to conduct acceptance testing of equipment which had been delivered in April. They solved a problem with viruses by finding new software. A problem with printers was found to require a driver with a Slovak language set. The equipment was taken, fixed, and returned.

Note: This program is on-going, with final termination by 12/31/96.

ANNEX L. CHRONOLOGY — LATVIA

Development Associates, Inc.

1991

- Jan 30 An Inter-Agency Agreement was signed between USAID/Washington (USAID/W) and the Library of Congress (LOC) under which \$4.25 million was allocated to the LOC for Poland, Hungary, and the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic (CSFR) for equipment, technical assistance for information and research capability, library collections, and general administration. The LOC activity was to be managed under the direction of the Frost Task Force (FTF).
- Sept The three Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania received international recognition of their independence. At the Frost Task Force Meeting, there was an agreement made to add all three nations to Task Force Programs.
- Sept 19 USAID authorized Amendment #2 to the Inter-Agency Agreement, authorizing the inclusion of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in the program — per the recommendation of the Frost Committee.

1992

- Feb Preparations for extending FTF programs to the Baltic states began with a privately-funded needs assessment trip to the Baltic states by members of the FTF.
- Feb A delegation from the staff of the FTF, the Library of Congress (LOC), and the House Information Systems office (HIS) travelled to the Baltic states to evaluate the needs of their parliaments. They reported back to the FTF in March.
- Feb - Mar The Inter-Parliamentary Union sent two Members of the Canadian parliament and a parliamentary librarian from Denmark to Latvia and Estonia to review the needs of the two countries' parliaments for training, material assistance, and equipment. While there, they met with members of the FTF that were conducting a similar analysis and agreed to exchange reports in an effort to coordinate the efforts of the two organizations.
- The German Bundestag is contributing DM 500,000 to the national libraries of each of the Baltic states (these also serve as the parliamentary libraries).
- Mar A Congressional delegation, including the Chairman of the FTF, visited the Baltic states.
- Apr 29 The Baltic states were included in the FTF programs after the funds were transferred from USAID/W.
- Apr A Congressional delegation, headed by the Chairman Martin Frost, visited the three Baltic states. William Freeman and Catherine Brickman of HIS and John Kelley of CRS accompanied the delegation, consulting with automation experts in Latvia and refining the list of equipment that will be ordered. The equipment acquisitions team awarded a contract to provide the Latvian Supreme Council with computer training, software, and equipment. A total of 234 books and periodical subscriptions have now

- been ordered.
- Apr Mary Nell Bryant participated in a seminar sponsored by USIA on "Initiating and Reinforcing Information Channels for Government Decision Making Abroad — The New Challenges." Staff from CRS and the Library of Congress met with Inga Grinfelde, a librarian with the National Library of Latvia, who was accompanied by Maira Bundza, a librarian with the Latvian Studies Center Library, Kalamazoo, Michigan.
- May The parliamentary libraries served by the FTF were provided with citations and descriptions of international legal reference books.
- May 25 to June 5 Six staff members from the Baltic states attended the fifth Parliamentary Institute, designed primarily for librarians. Attendees then discussed at the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) additional assistance from the U.S. Information Service libraries. Librarians from the Baltic states were able to select several titles for their collections from the Exchange and Gift Division of the Library of Congress.
- Sept The equipment acquisitions team worked on the initial specifications for an RFP to provide Latvia with copiers, microcomputers, FAX machines, and network equipment.
- Oct The National Conference of State Legislators (NCSL) hosted delegations from the Supreme Councils of Latvia and Lithuania. Both delegations attended a number of briefings on their legislation and met with CRS staff members and with members of the Frost Task Force. The Latvian delegation visited the Michigan legislature in East Lansing and met with Members of the Maryland State Assembly to discuss the state constitution, redistricting issues and the process for drafting bills.
- Oct 4 - 21 Mary Nell Bryant of CRS visited the Baltic states to work on library development and to foster cooperation among the libraries and parliamentary support organizations in those countries. She spoke with staff members about how to develop the technical assistance program. In Latvia she discussed the status of equipment programs of the FTF with the automation staff. She also worked on the collections of both the Supreme Council Information Center and the Parliamentary Information Department of the National Library and discussed the development and coordination of information services to Members of the Supreme Council and both those organizations. She held preliminary discussions with the heads of the national libraries in all three countries about the possibility of holding a conference in Tallinn, Estonia in June.
- Nov 2 - 13 Seventeen parliamentary staff members (including one from each of the Baltic states) attended the seventh Parliamentary Institute which was held primarily for lawyers providing legal support to the parliaments of their countries. It followed a new format based on the use of mentors from congressional offices and CRS and included the extensive use of meetings of small groups of people with similar professional interests. Eleven staff members from Eastern Europe and the Baltic states attended the COMDEX exhibition of computer equipment in Las Vegas. The equipment acquisitions team issued the first RFP for one of the Baltic states: to provide equipment to Latvia including copiers, microcomputers, microform readers, and software.

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- Feb The acquisitions team interviewed the 19 vendors who responded to the RFP for office automation and data communication equipment due in January.
- Feb 11 Gvido Zemribo, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Latvia, accompanied by Robert Utter, former Chief Justice of the Washington State Supreme Court, visited Washington, DC in a trip sponsored by the USIA. They discussed activities of the FTF with Kristi Walseth and William Robinson, Deputy Director of CRS, and constitutional law in the emerging democracies with CRS specialists. They also met with Joseph Ross, CRS Director, and Kathleen Price, the Law Librarian.
- Mar 9 Nancy Davenport, Associate Director for Special Programs, and Mary Ellen Callahan of CRS, went to Riga, Latvia, to discuss staff training, the effectiveness of the technical assistance program so far, and the possibility of a conference for the members of the new parliament after elections scheduled for June 5-6, 1993.
- Apr 17 - 25 Four staff members came to Washington for training on computer networks at the Learning Center International.
- May A contract was awarded to provide the Latvian Supreme Council with computer training, software, and equipment, including 58 microcomputers, 2 notebook computers, 28 printers, 1 scanner, and 2 CD-ROM servers.
- Jun 16 - 18 A conference for parliamentary librarians from the Baltic states was held in the new building of the Estonian National Library in Tallinn. Four CRS staff attended. Six librarians participated from Latvia.
- July 12 - 23 Seven parliamentary staff members, with participation by Latvia, attended the ninth Parliamentary Institute in Washington; its focus was on members of committees.
- Sept 13 - 24 Two staff members attended the 10th Parliamentary Institute for legal specialists.

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- Feb 21 - 26 Maris Gailis, a Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Government Reform and four officials of the Latvian Saeima came to CRS to learn about congressional oversight on security issues.
- Feb 27 to Mar 5 Librarians from each of the Baltic states (Ginta Kise from Latvia) went to Warsaw for training in the Polish Parliament sponsored by the Frost Task Force.
- Mar 11 An RFP was issued for office automation equipment and software for Latvian Saeima.
- May 8 - 14 Irena Gailuma, a staff member from the Latvian Saeima, took an automation training course at the Learning Center International.
- May Contracts for office automation equipment for the Latvian Saeima were issued. A four-day conference on parliamentary rules and procedures was held in Poland, co-sponsored by FTF, the European Parliament, and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Three staff members from the Latvian Saeima attended.

- June 10 - 15 In order to ensure that orders for library materials would be completed by the end of FY1994, Holly Larsen went to Latvia to discuss the orders with members of the staff of the parliamentary library.
- June 10 - 16 John Kelley of CRS and Patrick Cunningham of the Office of Inspector General of the Library of Congress went to Latvia and Estonia to audit the equipment provided by the FTF.
- June 20 - 22 The FTF and the Polish Sejm and Senat co-sponsored a Conference on Information Technology in Parliaments, held in Poland. Ms. Brickman, Mr. Freeman, and Mr. Collins of HIS and Mr. Kelley of CRS participated. Two automation specialists attended from various legislatures, including Latvia.
- June 26 Kristi Walseth, Staff Director of the FTF, Julie Kim of CRS, and Cathy Brickman and Bill Freeman of HIS went to Estonia and Latvia. Ms. Brickman and Mr. Freeman conducted acceptance testing on automation equipment, completing this phase of the program in Latvia with the following installed: 58 microcomputers, 2 notebook computers, 28 printers, 1 scanner, 2 CD-ROM servers, and software.
- Sept The 13th Parliamentary Institute, held for two weeks, trained 14 parliamentary staff members (including Latvian) in the provision of legislative legal support.
- Sept The regional conference on parliamentary library cooperation took place in Budapest. Participants included the chief parliamentary librarians and their deputies from nine countries including Latvia and Estonia. CRS provided follow-up reference training and facilitated discussion on the development of cooperative resource development and sharing. The conference gave the participants an opportunity to exchange experiences and to strengthen the relationships among parliamentary libraries in Eastern Europe and the Baltic states. Participants decided it would be useful to have annual regional parliamentary library conferences. They scheduled the next conference for May 1995.
- Dec A total of 849 books and periodical subscriptions have been ordered under the FTF program.

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ANNEX M. CHRONOLOGY — ESTONIA

Development Associates, Inc.

1991

- Jan 30 An Inter-Agency Agreement was signed between USAID/Washington (USAID/W) and the Library of Congress (LOC) under which \$4.25 million was allocated to the LOC for Poland, Hungary, and the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic (CSFR) for equipment, technical assistance for information and research capability, library collections, and general administration. The LOC activity was to be managed under the direction of the Frost Task Force.
- Sept The three Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania received international recognition of their independence. At the Frost Task Force (FTF) meeting, there was an agreement made to add all three nations to Task Force Programs.
- Congress re-allocated \$3 million for the FTF program in these three Baltic states from funds originally appropriated for other purposes in FY 1991.
- Sept 19 USAID/W authorized Amendment #2 to the Inter-Agency Agreement, authorizing the inclusion of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in the program — per the recommendation of the FTF.

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- Feb Preparations for extending the FTF programs to the Baltic states began with a privately funded needs assessment trip to the Baltic states by members of the FTF.
- Feb A delegation from the staff of the FTF, the Library of Congress, and the House Information Systems office (HIS) travelled to the Baltic states to evaluate the needs of their parliaments. They reported back to the FTF in March.
- Feb - Mar The Inter-Parliamentary Union sent two Members of the Canadian parliament and a parliamentary librarian from Denmark to Estonia and Latvia to review the needs of the two countries' parliaments for training, material assistance, and equipment. While there, they met with members of the FTF that was conducting a similar analysis and agreed to exchange reports in an effort to coordinate the efforts of the two organizations.
- The German Bundestag is contributing DM 500,000 to the national libraries of each of the Baltic states (these also serve as the parliamentary libraries). This donation allowed the National Library of Estonia to purchase about 800 books and periodicals.
- Mar A congressional delegation, including the Chairman of the FTF visited the Baltic states.
- Apr 29 The Baltic states were included in the FTF programs after the funds were transferred from USAID/W.

- Apr A congressional delegation headed by Chairman Martin Frost visited the three Baltic states. William Freeman and Catherine Brickman of HIS and John Kelley of CRS accompanied the delegation, consulting with automation experts in Estonia and refining the list of equipment to be ordered.
- May The parliamentary libraries served by the FTF were provided with citations and descriptions of international legal reference books.
- May 25 to Jun 5 Six staff members from the Baltic states attended the fifth Parliamentary Institute, designed primarily for librarians. Attendees then discussed at the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) additional assistance from the U.S. Information Service libraries. Librarians from the Baltic states were able to select several titles for their collections from the Exchange and Gift Division of the Library of Congress.
- Aug 15 - 20 An FTF Technical Support Team went to Stockholm to meet with Swedish and Estonian Parliament representatives to determine Estonian Parliament automation requirements and to plan and schedule RFP preparation. The trip served several purposes; first, the team reviewed the automation support the Swedish Parliament (Sveriges Riksdag) was providing to the Supreme Council of Estonia; second, they determined what additional automation help Estonia required from the FTF; third, they agreed that FTF supplied hardware and software should be consistent with an overall unified automation plan jointly developed by the Swedes, Estonians, and FTF staff; fourth, it was agreed that the Swedes would provide support for FTF-supplied automation items; and fifth, they jointly developed a preliminary schedule for FTF procurement.

A series of meetings were held with Anders Forsberg, Head of Administration, Bengt Thufvesson, Head of the Document Management Department, Carl-Gerhart Ulfhielm, Head of the Automation Department, and Jan Zetterdahl and Björn Skinstad and Bengt Eriksson. The group addressed the Estonian support issues outlined above. Väino Olev from the Automation Department of the Estonian Supreme Council was present for meetings on August 19. Mr. Olev reviewed the agreements and conclusions and helped prepare a tentative FTF automation support schedule.

The Swedes were very supportive of the FTF automation initiatives and were willing to work with the FTF to provide assistance to the Estonians beyond the hardware and software they have already provided. Based upon the meetings, the following was resolved:

- ▶ The FTF would purchase the additional VAX 4000 mini-computer required by the Estonians.

The Swedes would forward the necessary specifications for the hardware and software to the FTF automation team for RFP preparation.

The mini-computer would be installed in Toompea Castle by the Swedes. The Swedes will provide all required support for the minis (VAX cluster).

- ▶ The FTF would purchase PCs, Servers, LANs, communications equipment, and software necessary to automate the Member's House.

The Supreme Council would provide the necessary cable channels for the connections within the Member's House and between the Member's House and Toompea Castle. The Swedes would do the actual cable installation.

- ▶ The FTF would purchase PCs, Servers, LANs, communications equipment and software necessary to automate Kadriorg Palace.

The Estonians would provide the cable channels for Kadriorg Palace and the Swedes would be responsible for network installation.

The connection between Kadriorg and Toompea, a distance of approximately five miles (7-8 km) would most likely be provided by a microwave link. The FTF would provide the necessary communications equipment for this link. Installation of this equipment would be performed by a local Estonian contractor and the Swedes.

- ▶ FTF related procurement activities would not begin until after the Estonian general election in September.

Initial delivery of VAX-related equipment and software was scheduled for May/June 1993. The first delivery of PC-related equipment and software was scheduled for August 1993, followed by a second delivery in October 1993.

- Oct 4 - 21 Mary Nell Bryant of CRS visited the Baltic states to work on library development and to foster cooperation among the libraries and parliamentary support organizations in those countries. She spoke with staff members about how to develop the technical assistance program. In Estonia she discussed the coordination of data bases between the acquisitions department and the parliamentary information department. She also held preliminary discussions with the heads of the national libraries in all three countries about the possibility of holding a conference in Tallinn, Estonia in June 1993.
- Nov 2 - 13 Seventeen parliamentary staff members (including one from each of the Baltic states) attended the seventh Parliamentary Institute which was held primarily for lawyers providing legal support to the parliaments of their countries. It followed a new format based on the use of mentors from congressional offices and CRS and included the extensive use of meetings of small groups of people with similar professional interests. Eleven staff members from Eastern Europe and the Baltic states attended the COMDEX exhibition of computer equipment in Las Vegas.
- Nov Kristi Walseth, John Kelley and Roger Nobles of CRS and Cathy Brickman and Bill Freeman of House Information Systems (HIS) joined 11 members of the parliamentary staffs of all countries served by the FTF at the COMDEX exhibition of computer equipment in Las Vegas, Nevada.

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- Mar 9 Nancy Davenport, Associate Director for Special Programs, and Mary Ellen Callahan of CRS, went to Tallinn, Estonia, to discuss staff training and the effectiveness of the technical assistance program. They also made preparations for a conference for members of the Estonian Parliament, the State Assembly, which had been proposed by Tunne Kelam, Vice President of the State Assembly.
- Apr 17 - 25 Vaino Olev, a staff member from the Estonian State Assembly, came to Washington for training on computer networks at the Learning Center International and to get an overview of CRS.
- May 4 An RFP was issued to provide office automation equipment.

- May Eric A. Johnson of the Exchange and Gift Division of the Library of Congress went to Estonia on a fellowship from the American Library Association to provide advice to the parliamentary library.
- June Bill Freeman, Cathy Brickman, and John Kelley of CRS and Patricia Gardner of the Library of Congress went to Estonia to assess the vendors who responded to the RFP to provide the Riigikogu with office automation equipment. Proposals were due June 4.
- June 3 - 5 Nancy Davenport, Associate Director for Special Programs, and Mary Ellen Callahan, Jill Roberts, Francis Miko, and Vita Bite of CRS went to Tallinn for a conference for Members of the Riigikogu (State Assembly of Estonia), jointly sponsored with the State Assembly. Staff Director Kristi Walseth, Francis Miko, and Vita Bite participated. Half the 100 members of the legislature attended at least one session of the conference as did many of the parliamentary staff.
- June 16 - 18 A conference for parliamentary librarians from the Baltic states was held in the new building of the Estonian National Library in Tallinn. Four CRS staff attended. Ten librarians participated from Estonia.
- July 12 - 23 Seven parliamentary staff members, with participation by Estonia, attended the ninth Parliamentary Institute in Washington; its focus was on members of committees.
- Aug The equipment acquisitions team awarded several contracts for office automation equipment to go to the Riigikogu of Estonia (under the terms of the RFP issued in May) including 70 microcomputers, 20 notebook computers, 25 laser printers, 2 microform reader/printers, and assorted software.
- Sept 13 - 24 Two staff members attended the 10th Parliamentary Institute for legal specialists.
- Oct Ulla Jurvista of the Riigikogu came to CRS for two weeks (with 2 Hungarians and 2 Lithuanians). They also attended the Online 93 conference.
- Dec 6 - 11 Eric Johnson of the Exchange and Gift Division of the Library of Congress went to the Riigikogu to assess the program of assistance to its library.

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- Feb 27 to Mar 5 Librarians from each of the Baltic states (Ilona Korgema from Estonia) went to Warsaw for training in the Polish Parliament sponsored by the Special Task Force.
- Apr 4 - 15 Ahto Ruadvere of the Estonian Riigikogu's Technical Department and Vaino Olev, head of that department, came to Washington for computer training at the Learning Center International.
- May Contracts for office automation equipment to be delivered to the Estonian Riigikogu were issued. A four-day conference on parliamentary rules and procedures was held in Poland, co-sponsored by FTF, the European Parliament, and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Three staff members from the Riigikogu attended.
- June 10 - 16 John Kelley of CRS and Patrick Cunningham of the Office of Inspector General of the Library of Congress went to Estonia and Latvia to audit the equipment provided by the FTF.

- June 15 - 18 In order to ensure that orders for library materials can be completed by the end of FY1994, Holly Larsen went to Estonia to discuss the orders with members of the staff of the parliamentary library.
- June 20 - 22 The FTF and the Polish Sejm and Senate co-sponsored a Conference on Information Technology in Parliaments, held in Poland. Two automation specialists attended from various legislatures, including Estonia.
- June 26 Kristi Walseth, Staff Director of the FTF, Julie Kim of CRS, and Cathy Brickman and Bill Freeman of HIS went to Estonia and Latvia. Ms. Brickman and Mr. Freeman conducted acceptance testing on automation equipment, completing this phase of the program in Estonia with the following installed: 70 microcomputers, 20 notebook computers, 27 laser printers, 2 microform reader/printers, 2 FAX machines, and assorted software.
- July The 11th Parliamentary Institute, held for two weeks, which was designed for members of the staffs of parliamentary committees, trained 12 members of committee staffs, including some from Estonia.
- Aug The 12th Parliamentary Institute, held for one week, was the first designed specifically for research staff; it trained 12 members of parliamentary staffs, including some from Estonia.
- Sept The 13th Parliamentary Institute, held for two weeks, trained 14 parliamentary staff members (including Estonian) in the provision of legislative legal support.
- Sept The regional conference on parliamentary library cooperation took place in Budapest. Participants included the chief parliamentary librarians and their deputies from nine countries (including Estonia). CRS provided follow-up reference training and facilitated discussion on the development of cooperative resource development and sharing. The conference gave the participants an opportunity to exchange experiences and to strengthen the relationships among parliamentary libraries in Eastern Europe and the Baltic states. Participants decided it would be useful to have annual regional parliamentary library conferences and scheduled the next conference for May 1995.
- Dec A total of 783 books and periodical subscriptions have been ordered under the FTF program.