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Todor Burmov and the First Bulgarian Government (5 May - 24 November 1879)

(Summary)

Todor Burmov, the Prime Minister of the first Bulgarian Government, became a prominent figure as early as the time of the struggle for national and church autonomy in the period of the Bulgarian Revival. He wrote books and pamphlets on the disputes between Bulgarian and Greek ecclesiastics. He was a contributor and editor of newspapers and magazines of the Revival period; he was an interpreter in the Russian Embassy in Tsarigrad (Istanbul), the treasurer of Prince Vladimir Al. Cherkaski at the time of the Liberation War, vice-governor of Plovdiv, the first Bulgarian governor of Sofia. After the Liberation of Bulgaria from the Ottoman yoke, he participated in the country's political life only for a brief period, but the fact that he became the first Prime Minister of the Principality ranks him among "the builders of modern Bulgaria". Attention is paid to Burmov's personality, and the opinion of some of his contemporaries and the first Bulgarian researchers are presented; the positive, as well as the negative features of Todor Burmov's personality are pointed out. The article considers Todor Burmov's own activities in the structuring of the Council of Ministers and in the governing of the country, as well as the most important actions of the first Government, and, above all, the Prime Minister's contribution to the establishment of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which was permanently headed by him. The Government succeeded only in laying the foundations of the state's structuring and to take the first steps towards its economic organization in the short period (around five months) while Burmov was in power. The most

successful actions of the Premier and the Cabinet, as well as their mistakes, which provoked the people's severe discontent because their interests were directly affected, are also pointed out. These negative events were what ultimately influenced the elections for the First Common National Assembly when Todor Burmov's Cabinet, which was supported by the Conservative party, lost the people's trust. Despite his firm belief in the rightness of his policy and its service to the people, the Prime minister handed in the resignation of the Cabinet following the loss at the elections.