

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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1. Following the death of Stalin, political oppression of the Jews in Bulgaria was considerably reduced. The Hebrew religion is tolerated, and it does not seem that the Jews will be treated discriminately.
2. There are approximately 4,000 Jews in Bulgaria and it is expected that 70 to 80 percent will request expatriation to Israel. In view of this almost total emigration to Israel, the Hebrew community is indifferent to any criticism by the Bulgarian Communist government. A Jew prefers private activity to government work because it is less controlled and more profitable. The greater majority of the Jews has been reduced to poverty.
3. The exodus of the Jews from Bulgaria is partly motivated by their desire to continue a free life in the land of their forefathers, but chiefly by the necessity of "freeing themselves from abject poverty".
4. Many Jewish families are waiting for their children to finish their schooling before departing for Israel, because they hardly know the Hebrew language. There are families which send the children to Israel separately, as each completes his studies; the parents will accompany the last child when he finishes school.
5. Many Jews who wish to migrate to Israel cannot earn the cost of the voyage. Each refugee must take with him enough food to last until they land in Israel. There is also the cost of the customs duties for any valuables he takes along with him. For these reasons, expatriation is very often postponed.
6. There is in existence, the Palestine Committee, in Sofia. This committee is limited in its work to preparing the necessary documents for any Jew who wishes to go to Israel. The work of the committee, apparently is not blocked by the political authorities.
7. The present chief of the Palestine Committee is Alberto Graziano, who resides in Sofia. His predecessor was Pincas (fmu), who has gone with his family to live in Israel.

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