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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY	Bulgaria	REPORT NO.	[Redacted]
SUBJECT	Working Conditions and Forced Labor	DATE DISTR.	6 October 1955
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Attached is a copy [Redacted] as received [Redacted]

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COUNTRY Bulgaria

DATE DISTR. 14 Sept. 1955

SUBJECT Working Conditions and Forced Labor

NO. OF PAGES 2

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. Every working person in Bulgaria, regardless of where he worked, was required to carry a work book (trudova knizhka). Until 1953, it was extremely difficult to change jobs; the individual had to give 15 to 30 days' advance notice before he could be released from the job he then held. However, since 1953, transferring jobs has been easier. Individuals who studied at technical schools were required to complete a period of service in a ministry or state enterprise before taking jobs of their own choice.
2. The number of independent workers was very small and that number was being reduced each year on orders from the State who wanted to completely eliminate these independent workers as well as the landowners and the businessmen; licenses to operate independent small stores and shops were given only to invalids. Lawyers were obliged to join collectives which took a large part of their earnings, and professional nurses had practically disappeared. Although there were some persons independently engaged in transportation, they, too, were required to join collectives. The few independent workers remaining still earned more than those employed by government enterprises.
3. Trade unions were unable to show initiative in protecting the workers' rights and were able to fight only the unlawful measures against their administrations. Union members paid their dues very reluctantly, usually only when the union trustee or treasurer actually demanded payment. Employees of the trade unions were paid twice each month. Members of the trade unions received sick benefits.
4. Members of the ruling groups did not think they received sufficient salaries. The lowest salary given a Bulgarian Army officer was 1,000 leva per month. This amount was almost twice that of the salary of a physician. Party members received higher salaries than non-Party members but, in spite of that, Party members felt their salaries were low. Therefore, in many cases, their wives were forced to work to supplement the husbands'

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salaries. For instance, the wife of the Minister of Food Industries worked for the Committee for Cultural Relations Abroad, while the wife of militia major Dafin Dafinov worked at home as a seamstress. 1

5. The productiveness of forced labor was low; therefore, various means of increasing production were used. When a forced laborer was assigned to a construction project, he was assigned a specific amount of ground, measured in cubic meters, to be dug each day. The regular work day for forced laborers was 11 hours but this period of time included travel time between his forced labor camp and his job.
6. Increases in productiveness from forced laborers were obtained by the following means:
 - a. The work day was increased.
 - b. Arrest for non-completion of the norm and being placed in a prison without doors or windows and forced to sleep on bare floor boards in clothing with no blanket or cover. If stricter punishment was necessary, the prisoner was placed in a cell with ankle-deep water and was given only bread and water.
 - c. Being kept on the job until very late at night with the same norm, regardless of the type of ground to be dug, i.e., sand, very hard ground, rock, or roots.
 - d. Being branded as a fascist or saboteur and threatened with further prosecution.
 - e. Given more food daily if the required norm was surpassed.

In spite of all the above enforced measures, productiveness remained low.

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