

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Bulgaria

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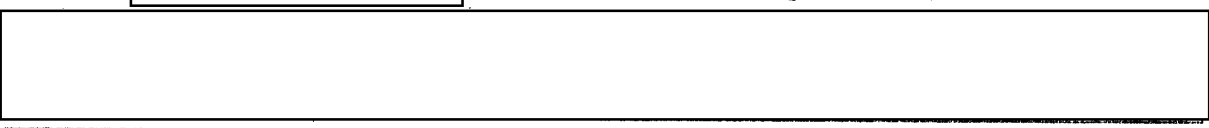
SUBJECT 1. Economic and Industrial Information
2. Miscellaneous Information

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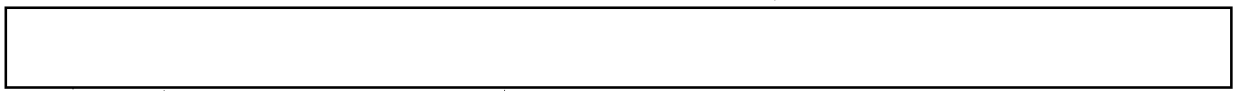
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25X1 The Economic Situation in Bulgaria

25X1 1.

25X1 the Bulgarian economic situation may be characterized as an exploitation of the people's goods by the Communist regime. In reality, all agricultural products are confiscated by the authorities. The latter have gone so far as to oblige private farmers who have cows suckling their calves to furnish 150 liters of milk per cow. A government decree concerning the obligatory furnishing of agricultural products to the state, fixes beforehand the amount that must be turned over, without taking into consideration whether or not the soil is arable, worked, or fallow. Thus in the region of Blkhovo (and this example is typical of the whole country), the peasants have been obliged to give up 150 kilos of grain per decare; it was not taken into consideration whether the total or only a part of the land had been sown with grain. Actually, the decree in question exempted from the tax products under intensive cultivation such as cotton, poppies, sesame, et cetera, and vineyards; but on the other hand the producer of these intensively cultivated products is obliged to give to the state his entire production, with the difference that in this case a minimum per decare has been fixed; for example, 40 kilos of raw cotton per decare. These minimum quotas vary per decare, according to the product under cultivation.

2. Actually, the Communist Government has adhered to its general fiscal program even for land under intensive cultivation, the land being covered by a general tax on arable land (548,000 decares for the entire country), since the government considers that the land should furnish 150 kilos of cereals per decare. Moreover, land under intensive cultivation is covered by a special tax which, in spite of the pretended exemptions, is maintained as a real tax. Together with the 548,000 decares, this land makes a total of approximately 630,000 decares. Because of this complicated and subtle scheme, instead of exacting 150 kilos of cereals provided for by law, the authorities now try to obtain 172 kilos, even though the land in question may only be able to produce 80 kilos. It is obvious that private landowners cannot adapt themselves to these exigencies. All this legislation resembles a type of complicated fiscal instrument of torture.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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3. The government promised that every independent farmer who filled his quota would be assisted, that is, he would be given the seeds needed for sowing, and cereals for feeding himself, his family, and his cattle. However, these promises were not kept, and the private landowners were obliged to obtain the seeds for themselves, generally, at a kolkhoz for a very high price. The private landowner is obliged to purchase grain in order to fill his quota. The government, continuing its game, urged the independent farmer that if he joined a kolkhoz he would not pay local taxes, fines, and other fiscal obligations. A large number of independent farmers, who were reduced to poverty, believed the government promises; however, after they had turned over their farms, crops, and cattle to the kolkhoz, the government published a decree according to which farmers who had more than seven decares could not benefit from these exemptions.
4. The farmers not only did not have their cereals returned to them, but were obliged by the authorities of the kolkhoz to which they belonged to give up twenty kilograms of cereal per decares to the state, and twelve kilograms of forage for every head of cattle which they had turned over to the kolkhoz. Those who were not able to satisfy these requirements were once again called kulaks and enemies of the people, and remained without any means of livelihood. Private farmers, who were not able to furnish the required quota of cereals, were fined and even sentenced to prison for several months or years. Thus at Kirilovo, a village of 1,300 inhabitants in the Elkhovo district, 1,280,000 leva was collected in fines. Every peasant in this village, except the Communists, was punished with fines.
5. There is a scarcity of salt and fuel. For example, there is the case of the village of Seltse, district of Balchik, whose inhabitants are obliged to go to Kavarna in order to acquire matches. There are many strange cases of this sort; for example, Balchik is located on the shores of the Black Sea and one would think, therefore, that the inhabitants could obtain fish in their own city; instead, however, they are obliged to make a trip of more than two kilometers to purchase fish from the fishermen, because in the city of Balchik fish is not sold. Often, stores in the provinces are without salt, fuel, and tobacco.
6. The Bulgarian Parliament has passed a law imposing very severe sanctions on mine specialists who leave their work without adequate reason.
7. The Stalin Nitrogen Fertilizer Factory in Dimitrograd, as well as many mines located in the Rodope Mountains, have come under Soviet management in the form of a Soviet trust directed by Soviet military authorities. The same trust controls the power plants Reublika, Paritsa, and Raslog.

Miscellaneous Information

8. The theater at Varna no longer plays anything but Soviet propaganda works. In the last two years, only one Bulgarian play has been represented, that of Vazov, the Bulgarian Victor Hugo. The public attends the theater less and less frequently, and at performances in Varna no more than 430 spectators are present in a theater which holds 650.
9. Twenty-five thousand copies of Stalin's works have been placed on sale in Bulgaria by the Bulgarian Communist Party press.
10. The death of the former Agrarian Party deputy, Petur Bojinov, has been announced. Bojinov died in the Belene concentration camp near Svishtov.
11. In certain regions of northern Bulgaria, cases of dysentery have appeared, particularly in Varna. This disease comes from the poor quality of bread which the public is obliged to consume.
12. The period 1-15 May 1951 was devoted to a collection on the behalf of North Korea. Until that time, the collections were not made under government auspices; the recent collection, however, was sponsored by the government.
13. Lately, many Bulgarians have sought refuge in Yugoslavia because of the increased Sovietization of the army, the coercive measures taken against

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the peasants, and the purges inside the Communist Party. Many officers of the Sliven garrison have been arrested, and others have taken refuge in the mountains on the outskirts of the city. These mountains, with which the author of this paragraph is well acquainted, are covered by large forests and are seldom frequented. Moreover, the peasants are allegedly increasing their resistance to the collectivization measures, deserting the collective farms, and fleeing to the mountains from where they cross the Bulgarian-Yugoslav border. Allegedly, the peasants fear that Bulgaria will become a part of the Soviet Union, and indeed the Soviets act as if Bulgaria had already become a part of the USSR.

14. Ivan Mikhailov and Petur Panchevski have been made colonel-generals, the highest rank in the Bulgarian Army. Mikhailov is vice president of the Council of Ministers, and Panchevski is Minister of Defense. Both were decorated with the Order of the Peoples Republic of Bulgaria for services rendered during 27 and 25 years respectively in the army. The decree failed to specify which army was referred to. Mikhailov and Panchevski left Bulgaria in 1923 when they were approximately 20 years old. They returned to Bulgaria in 1944 as Soviet Generals.

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