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BULGARIA

AGRICULTURE (200)
Collectivization (202)

COLLECTIVE FARM MEMBERS UNABLE TO SUPPORT FAMILY MAY TURN
CHILDREN OVER TO STATE.

SOURCE ISTANBUL: A 19-year-old Bulgarian escapee, a native of STRANDZHA, who came to Turkey in January 1956.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: 1955.

EVALUATION COMMENT: This report sheds interesting light on the much professed Regime care of the children, according to which the State encourages childbirth. The repercussion of this alleged solicitude for families with many children may be gauged by the information contained in this report. It is, however, unconfirmed in our files.

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"My uncle, 40-year-old Statir Dimitrov STAMBOLIEV, joined the STRANDZHA collective farm in 1950. He is the father of seven children, ranging in age from 12 to two. Six of his children are girls, and the only boy is now three years old.

"STAMBOLIEV is a mason by calling and is employed as a construction worker by the collective farm. He is a steady worker and works during the whole year thus earning as many as 300 workdays annually. Despite his record earnings, he cannot supply his large brood. His wife cannot work in the fields as she has to take care of the children.

In early 1954, when the 1953 accounts were closed at the T.K.Z.S., it appeared that STAMBOLIEV had overdrawn his account by 300 kilos of grain. The farm administration did not know what decision to take in his case. According to the regulations he should have been

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dismissed from the farm, but his services as a construction worker were much needed so expelling him was not a good solution. Finally, the farm president wrote a letter to Premier CHERVENKOV asking for his guidance in this matter. The Premier, in answering the letter, suggested that STAMBOLIEV be given another year on the farm during which year he should attempt to repay his debt.

"In January 1955 it was announced that hard-working Statir STAMBOLIEV's debt had increased to such an extent that he would have had to work for four years to repay his advances. Not knowing how to act, the farm administration decided to offer STAMBOLIEV the following solution: he should place his children in an orphanage where they would be taken care of by the state. Should he refuse, my uncle would have to leave the collective farm.

"On one hand, the state encourages an increased birth-rate, on the other hand, however, nothing is being done to help poor people support their large families. As I escaped before my uncle made up his mind, I do not know what happened to his children."

End.