

LN
19 Jun
VI/1770

BULGARIA

AGRICULTURE

Collectivization
Delivery quotas
Exploitation

STANDARD OF LIVING

Food
Rationing

Is The USSR Shipping Grain To

Bulgaria?

SOURCE ROME: A large group of Jewish emigrants passing through Italy on their way to Israel. The group consisted of men and women of various ages and occupations, residing prior to their departure in different parts of Bulgaria. The group left SOFIA on 19 March 1952. Also, recent letters received from Bulgaria after the new money reform was introduced in Bulgaria.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: current period

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The lifeblood of Bulgaria, predominantly an agricultural country, has always depended upon the export of the produce of her soil.

Between the two world wars 82 per cent of Bulgaria's exports, of which grain was one of the important items, went to Germany. The rest went to Italy, lowland countries, Egypt, Greece, etc. Now, Bulgarian products are exclusively shipped to the Soviet Union.

Grain exported.

After the Communist took over in 1944, large quantities of Bulgarian grain began to be shipped to the USSR. The Bulgarian Government tried to explain the bread shortage in the country by saying that the Germans had carried everything away. Later the drought was blamed for it.

At the same time, small token quantities of Bulgarian grain, which previously had been shipped to the Soviet Union came back in the form of Soviet "aid" to alleviate the bread shortage.

Crops during the past few years had been abundant, particularly during 1951. The Bulgarians do not remember a similar yield since 1913. This year's harvest again promises to be very good.

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Bread rationed.

It is now seven years since the end of World War II and bread was still rationed until recently in grain-producing Bulgaria. Austerity, in the form of grain reserves, is the present official explanation.

Today, Bulgaria's wheat production is much larger than before World War II. Three factors are mainly responsible for the increase.

1) Over 56 per cent of all farmland is collectivized. An agronomist, appointed by the local People's District Council, is provided for each TKZS (Labor Cooperative Agricultural Enterprise) or group of smaller ones.

Scientific farming plus the introduction of agricultural machinery have increased the yield per decare (1,000 square meters.) Whereas formerly the average wheat yield per decare was 125 kilos it is now 185 kilos.

2) Independent farmers are burdened with very high delivery quotas.

3) Failure to fulfill delivery quotas spells confiscation of land, heavy fines amounting to 300,000 Leva (before the recent devaluation of the Leva: one new Leva for 100 old Leva,) imprisonment up to three years and internment of dependents.

Iron Grip.

The Communist Party's strong grip over the peasants, as displayed by the strict security measures in TKZS and retaliation against defaulting independent farmers, excludes the possibility of sizable agricultural sabotage in Bulgaria as may be the case in other satellite states.

Today the greater part of Bulgaria's grain and the rest of her agricultural produce are shipped to the USSR. In the Danube ports of VIDIN and ROUSE lone ferryboats transporting freightcars loaded with Bulgarian foodstuffs destined for the Soviet Union via another satellite, Rumania, are playing the river day and night.

The freightcars return empty or loaded with cargo known only to high Party members.

Blatant Soviet propaganda might claim that the USSR supplies her Bulgarian satellite with grain and other foodstuffs. The Bulgarian people, sweating under Soviet ruthless exploitation, knows better. Before the produce of

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the country was diverted to the Soviet Union they got in from abroad the manufactured goods they needed. Now there are no manufactured goods although the Bulgarians have much less to eat.

Only careless observers can be deceived if relying on falsified statistics which, are disseminated by the Soviet Union and backed up by her Communist stooges in Bulgaria. The Soviet Union does not ship grain or any other foodstuffs to Bulgaria. She robs the produce of the Bulgarian soil, so that bread, fats and meat had been rationed until 10 May 1952..On that date rationing was at last done away with when the Leva was pegged to the ruble to further facilitate the exploitation of the Bulgarian economy.

EVAL. COMMENT: Matters correspond with similar information.