

MK
April 21
V-769/F

BULGARIA

COMMUNIST PARTY (0600)
Personalities (0606)

BIG FISH IN A LITTLE POND: STRANDZHA.

SOURCE ISTANBUL: Three young Bulgarians who escaped together from STRANIZHA in January 1956.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: Until January 1956.

EVALUATION COMMENT: Mihail Nedelkov KASHEV is known to this office as a State Security agent and fanatical member of the BCP. His present job as the STRANDZHA collective farm's president is UNCONFIRMED, as are the names of other persons cited below.

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The following Communists play an important role in the everyday life of STRANDZHA villagers:

Prodan DIMITROV, 46, president of the village people's council. In 1941 he was arrested and imprisoned on charges of subversive activities against the state. Having spent a few months in jail, DIMITROV was released and made his way to the Soviet Union. He returned to Bulgaria in 1945 and upon his return to STRANDZHA was elected president of the village council. Sources of this report stated that he did not run as a candidate in the February 12 1956 village council elections because he wanted to retire. He has three sons; two serve as officers of the Bulgarian army, the third is a truck driver at ELHOVO.

Mihail KASHEV, 38-40, is the president of STRANDZHA's collective farm. He became a Communist after 1944. He treats people in the village as if they were animals, not human beings. He was looked upon as the most probable successor to DIMITROV as village council president. He is hated by all the villagers but has the support of the borough CP committee.

Todor MECHKAROV, 40, is Communist Party secretary at STRANDZHA and also works as the village cooperative store's salesclerk. Prior to 1944 he was a farmer with 45 dekares of land. Later on he became a militiaman and was elected CP

(More)

secretary in 1949. He is a heavy drinker and often has to be carried home from the village inn long after midnight.

Dimo RUBTSOV, 56, is an old-time Communist who had spent some years in the USSR prior to 1944. After his return in the wake of the Red Army he became the first "okoliyskimupravitel" (borough administrator) at ELHOVO. Later on he was elected a people's deputy and retained his seat until 1952. While district administrator he ruthlessly persecuted his old friends who had refused to join the Communist Party. From STRANDZHA alone five farmers disappeared without trace on RUBTSOV's orders. He declared that the men had escaped to Turkey, but this was not true. In all probability they were shot near the border on orders of the district administrator and then were buried as "fugitives caught attempting to escape."

During his tenure in office, RUBTSOV raped a number of young girls attending the ELHOVO highschool. Source could name Kalia Gospodinova UZUNOVA and Stanka KARCHEVA who were among RUBTSOV's victims. After these incidents he lost his post in late 1949. He then "retired" and came to live in STRANDZHA where he continued to terrorize the villagers. A number of farmers who escaped to Turkey in 1950-51 stated that they were forced to leave Bulgaria because they could no longer tolerate RUBTSOV's continued bullying. Although he no longer holds an official post, his word still carries weight in the ELHOVO region.

Ilcho Todorov KASAPOV, 55, is assistant CP secretary of the village and works as a brigadier at the collective farm. Prior to 1944 he was an illiterate shepherd. Having joined the Communist Party he was given a post at the TKZS and his children were given the possibility of finishing highschool. His daughter is a teacher at the STRANDZHA secondary school; his son hopes to go to SOFIA University. Apparently, KASAPOV helped the Communist underground prior to 1944.

Rale MECHEV, 47, formerly one of the wealthiest farmers in the village, has also joined the Communist Party and was among the first sponsors of the village collective farm. He contributed 200 dekares of land toward the farm and for a number of years worked as its store-clerk. In 1955 he became the purchasing agent of the village cooperative. His highschool graduate son serves as an officer of the troops of the Ministry of the Interior.

Other Communists at STRANDZHA known to sources are Yani SIRAKOV and Yani KARAMANOV, both TKZS members, but they hold no posts in the village administration.

End.