

AH
11 January 1952
V/558BULGARIAARMED FORCES
Soviet Army
Personalities
MoraleScant Food For Border Troops.SOURCE ISTANBUL: A 21-year-old Bulgarian escapee in TurkeyDATE OF OBSERVATION: July 1951

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"Our food at Podelenie "Tigar" 5891 was insufficient for the heavy work we were performing. Whenever we mentioned the poor food to our officers they replied that this was all we were receiving from the Ministry of Interior, to which our unit was subordinated, and that we had no right to complain. I ran into trouble one day when I tried to complain to visiting Soviet and Bulgarian high-ranking officers about our poor food."

On 27 July 1951, Lieut.Gen. PANKOV Yonko, 42-year-old commanding officer of border troops, who had lived for 12 years in the Soviet Union, accompanied by a Soviet Colonel named CHUGUNOV (fnu), paid our unit a routine inspection visit. CHUGUNOV, a rather fat, jovial man about 50 years old, feared for his brutality and known for his drunkenness, ordered the 40 of us present to go ahead with our lunch, and joined us at our table. While we ate our poor rations, CHUGUNOV had fresh tomatoes for salad and a bottle of "mastika." After the meal was over, he asked whether anyone of us had any complaints to make. At this sergeant TUTUNCHIEV (fnu), TASHEV Georgi, his brother TASHEV Atanas and I stood up and said that our food was not sufficient. Although General PANKOV ordered us to sit down, we insisted on answering the Soviet colonel. We told him that we wanted more and better food. He replied that the Ministry was going to give us the food which our farmers delivered as "nared" to the Ministry of Agriculture. I got furious and told the General and the Colonel that this was a lie for I remembered giving the best crop I had known all my life to the "nared" authorities, so I saw no reason why the sons of those farmers who delivered all their crops should be obliged to eat rye bread, receive meat only once a month and have dried beans practically every day of the week. The Colonel, who looked drunk, promised to have our food supply improved. After PANKOV and CHUGUNOV had left, our commander, Major BALOV, had the four of us arrested. I was in confinement for 15 days and then resumed my former duties, but I had by then definitely made up my mind to try to escape at the earliest opportunity.

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BULGARIA
(cont'd)

During the night of 15 to 16 August 1951, I was on duty from 1900 until 2400 hours. At my outpost I wrote a farewell note to my wife and to my child whom I had not seen since he was 25 days old, explaining that I would be transferred to another unit and that she should not write to me any longer. At 1400 hours on 16 August 1951 I reported for patrol duty, took my gun, and set out for my routine patrol along the delta of the "Rezvaya." At a certain place near the Black Sea, the "Rezvaya" narrows down to 10 meters and is so shallow that one can cross it by jumping from one stone to the other, and this I did. The moment I reached the other shore, which is already on Turkish territory, I looked behind me and saw two Bulgarian women washing linen a few hundred meters upriver. They immediately ran up the slope of the riverbank and notified the soldier on duty, who signalled to headquarters. But I dropped my gun and grenades and ran fast. By the time my former comrades had assembled for a pursuit I was well inside Turkish territory."

EVAL. COMMENT: UNCONFIRMED except general PANOV Yenko.