

SPECIAL ATTENTION: Political Advisor
Audience Analysis

EH
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BULGARIA

<u>COMMUNIST PARTY</u>	(0600)
<u>Ideology and Cadres</u>	(0603)
<u>MORAL AND GENERAL MOOD</u>	(2000)
<u>Political Situation</u>	(2004)
<u>PROPAGANDA</u>	(2600)
<u>Radio</u>	(2600)

AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

SOURCE ATHENS: A 19-year-old Bulgarian border guard refugee.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: Until April 1956.

EVALUATION COMMENT: This report is a valuable and objective contribution to the study of the Bulgarian listeners' attitude toward Bulgarian-language broadcasts of Western European radio stations. The suggestion that religious programs should be eliminated cannot be generalized. The report also supplies ample material for the study of the situation in the country, as well as of the attitude of Bulgarians toward major internal and international problems. The exact contents of leaflets, as seen by source in 1955, have not been reported from any other source. Up to present, as source correctly points out, the Bulgarian press and radio service cautiously refrained from criticizing RFE activities. Only on November 15 did the BCP organ "Rabotnichesko Delo" come out with a direct attack on RFE and BBC, headlined "No, Gentlemen, Your Hypocritical Tears Are in Vain."

This article accuses "the imperialistic press and radio stations" to have diligently and minutely prepared "the bloody capitalistic action in Hungary, which was aimed not only against this country, but against the Socialist structure in general." The author of this article stresses "that during these days of tremendous anti-Soviet and anti-Socialist propaganda, the efforts of RFE and BBC have increased. These hypocrites say that they are 'concerned' with Bulgaria's fate and think only about the country. Who are really those who shed these heart-rending tears of hypocrisy for the Bulgarian nation, and who pretend to be its saviors. Our nation knows them very well. No matter what disguise they use, no matter how they hide behind the microphones of foreign radio stations, they will

(over)

remain what they are-disdained, severed from everything Bulgarian, traitors to the nation, who are ready to do anything for dollars and pounds."

All types of Bulgarian radios produced by the "Kliment Voroshilov" plant, the 'Pioner,' 'Hristo Botev' and 'Rodina' sets are equipped with short-wave bands and thus are able to receive Western broadcasts.

At the beginning of 1954, the BCP had 455,251 members among them 368,142 regular members and 87,109 candidate members, or the Party members represented 6.1 per cent of the nation's 7,467,000 inhabitants. The percentages of members from the different walks of life are as follows: workers: 155,081 Party members, or 34.06 per cent of the BCP total membership; compared to the nation's total of 875,000 workers this is 18 per cent; peasants: 180,998 or 39.76 per cent of the total BCP membership, or six per cent of Bulgaria's 3,000,000 peasants; employees: 81,664 or 17.94 per cent of the total BCP membership, or 81.7 per cent of Bulgaria's 100,000 employees; miscellaneous professions: 37,508 or 8.24 per cent of the total membership in the BCP.

It results from information available here that a considerable number of BCP members show no interest in Party life, and that many workers and especially peasants have left the Party. All office jobs, including the lowest ones, are filled with Party members only. This explains the rather large percentage of employees-members of the BCP, compared to the rest of the population.

The average daily earnings in Bulgaria do not exceed 16 leva.

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Western Broadcasts

Source's family owned a "Toulon" (French make) battery radio because there was no electricity in his natal village of VELLINO, District KOLAROUGRAD. In 1950, while living in KOLAROUGRAD, they converted it so that it worked using electricity. The radio set was registered with the government, but source does not remember the amount of tax they paid.

From 1954, source listened frequently to Western broadcasts. His father, a Communist, never listened to the Western stations, so source tuned in mainly when his father was out of the house. He did not have the opportunity of listening daily.

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Source remembers hearing RFE and Radio LONDON and occasionally the Voice of America. He had never heard Radio Gorianin and did not know of its existence. In source's opinion, RFE is the most popular. However, he did not have a clear idea about the various Western stations. To him, all these stations were "The Voice of the Free World."

Source said that he could not remember any particular program. He stated that almost all programs are very good and are on the whole more than satisfactory. The Western broadcasts disclose all that the Communists want to conceal. There are few bad points in the programs of Western stations, and for the most part everything is as it should be -- absolutely necessary, and the programs are listened to with the greatest interest.

In source's opinion, the only subject that does not interest the Bulgarians are the medical talks of Dr. ZDRAVKOV. He feels that instead of this program, other subjects should be given emphasis, as for example political subjects or satire. He thinks that the rate and the extent of political talks, as well as the news, should be increased. According to source, people listen to the news despite fear and are convinced of its truthfulness. The news is heard with the utmost interest by anti-Communists, neutrals and even Communists.

Religious talks and discussions would be of no interest, source said. Owing to the fact that the youths of Bulgaria receive no religious education either at home or in schools, they do not believe in God. They lack a religious conscience. Even though religion is officially free, it is in fact under constant persecution. If a schoolboy attends church services, he will be expelled from the DSNM, and once expelled from the DSNM, he would not be able to go on with his studies or get a job.

Concerning musical programs, source stated that many of the people like music. In the villages they like popular music in particular. The young people like jazz music very much, and they seldom hear jazz over the Bulgarian stations. Swing music, source said, has met with immense success in Bulgaria and is now very popular there.

The best listening hours, source said, are between 1400 and 1600 hours, but the most convenient hours for people to listen are the night hours between 1900 and not later than midnight. People are back from work then, and the broadcasts can be heard relatively more clearly during those hours.

Source said it is extremely difficult to listen to Western broadcasts because the stations are jammed. Source

(over)

doubts if any listener has been able to listen clearly to an entire program. On a small hill near KOLAROVGRAD there is an antenna 20 meters high. It is believed that it is the antenna of a jamming station, but source is not certain about that. However, listening to the radio in KOLAROVGRAD is sometimes quite impossible.

Although reception is difficult, people insist on listening. They are always cautious not to be overheard, for they are afraid spies and their next door neighbors might report them. Then they would be considered enemies of the regime, and this might well cost them their jobs. That is why group listening is possible only among families or very close friends in whom one has the utmost confidence. Dissemination goes by word of mouth. Although there are laws against repeating news heard over a Western broadcast, it still spreads very rapidly throughout entire communities, source said.

Source stated that all the Western stations have influence on the Bulgarian people. They raise their morale, inspire and encourage them. "People seek to know the truth," said source. "They often learn about things which were not known to them previously. The Western broadcasts disclose the things that the Communists would prefer be kept secret and disclose the things that the Communists want to purposely avoid and hide. These broadcasts reveal the truth and help the people to discern where the political and other events actually stand and not as they are presented by the local press. They help explain problems to them that are left unexplained by the press on purpose and to understand why there are shortages of different items."

Source cites the following as examples: When STALIN died and CHERVENKOV was replaced, RFE broadcast the most accurate comments and analyzed the causes. From these comments the Bulgarian people understood the confusion reigning in Russia and Bulgaria. The Western broadcasts answered the question "Why is there no bread in Bulgaria?" by telling the truth, "because the wheat is taken away to Russia." The regime pretends that the people waste bread, even feeding it to their hogs. There are posters showing a farmer feeding his pigs big hunks of bread and saying: "Eat, beloved animals, and let the neighbor die of hunger."

When a lie is being repeated indefinitely, it comes to take the shape and color of truth. The Western broadcasts are helping the people remember that a lie is still a lie, source said. Listeners to Western broadcasts believe what they hear. They do not think they are being fooled or bombarded by propaganda. The programs make the people feel more enthusiastic,

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their hope and morale is increased, and their anti-Communism intensified. Anything against Communism, even the most trivial bit of information, gets a welcome. As the years go by, the importance of the Western stations and the interest in their broadcasts increases proportionately to the instability of Communism. The people need answers and solutions to their many problems from Western broadcasts.

According to source, the situation of the regime is very unstable lately. People are expecting that it will soon collapse, and the end of the regime is going to come very soon. This is shown very clearly by the lack of a straight and constant policy of the regime on any subject. That is why people listen to the Western broadcasts with more and more interest and live with the hope of help from the West. Source said that Bulgaria will be liberated only through outside help. Without help from outside, nothing is possible.

"The foreign stations are nearly always objective," source said, "but they must use the utmost reserve in any promises they make for prompt liberation. It is doubtful that the realization of these promises will be possible very soon, and the Communists make propaganda out of any unfulfilled promise." The people's belief in liberation is being strengthened, and they dare to express themselves because they see that Communism is losing ground.

Leaflets

Source saw a leaflet once in 1955. It said that liberation would come soon and urged the people to resist Communism as well as the TKZS. Source heard that leaflets had been dropped in several parts of the country. They had been distributed often, especially by night. At dawn the militia collects them so the people will not see them. He also heard that leaflets were dropped at the frontier. In a village near the frontier, anti-Communists had posted leaflets on the walls, but the culprits were arrested and tried.

Source heard people speaking about leaflets with great interest. He believes that leaflets improve the morale of the population much more than the broadcasts because they are proof that there is an underground force alive and working against Communism. This gives the people great satisfaction.

Western broadcasts and leaflets are an effective anti-regime weapon. They are disadvantageous only for the existing government in Bulgaria. If either or both were discontinued, it would harm the Bulgarian people greatly. If one or the other had to be stopped, source would prefer that the leaflets

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be continued because they are far more important. Everybody knows the contents of the leaflets are truthful and would like to see leaflets dropped more frequently. The people believe, source said, that the leaflets are dropped by the Americans and that they are issued abroad or printed illegally in Bulgaria. Their contents interest the people because they touch on the more important problems of Bulgaria.

Regime's Counter-Measures

Jamming is the regime's strongest weapon against Western broadcasts. European stations are always jammed. No station can be heard clearly. To listen to an entire program becomes very tiring. No one is able to follow clearly a full broadcast, and only with a very good radio and perseverance it is possible to follow through to the end. According to source, RFE is much more jammed than the other stations. Source has no knowledge of the location and technique of the jamming system.

No attack is officially carried out by the government press or the radio. They totally ignore both the Western broadcasts and the leaflet drops. Mention of them is only made at meetings or in speeches delivered to the Unions. The provincial press sometimes launches an attack; source remembers the "Colarovgradska Borba" in KOLAROVGRAD doing so. Source heard over the loudspeakers a propaganda campaign against the Western nations, talking ironically about their economic and political systems. Beside having the militia collect the leaflets as soon as possible, they spread rumors that foreign aircraft were shot down and the crews arrested and sentenced. But Communist propaganda, source said, does not influence the people because it is not convincing.

Listening to foreign stations is not prohibited officially. There is no direct penalty for listening, and no one is openly tried for having tuned in to Western broadcasts. But the listener is watched, his life made difficult, and at the first opportunity he is brought before a court of justice for some trivial reason. Source does not know what sentence he would get, but he is positive that the least he would suffer is the loss of his job.

Bulgarian Radio and Press

Referring to the Bulgarian radio programs, source said that the Bulgarian people do not believe anything they hear on the radio or read in the newspapers. They believe they

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have always a propaganda slant. They have no influence on the people anymore. What they say is repeated so much that it has lost any interest whatsoever. People are well aware that it is all propaganda and lies. And, source said, "A lie is interesting only when it is fresh." People avoid listening to the propaganda speeches. They listen only to the musical programs, especially folksongs. Source said that the Bulgarian stations are far below the foreign stations because they only serve the Party's purposes.

Everything in Bulgaria is linked with propaganda -- propaganda in the streets, in the movies, in the theaters, in literature, etc. Source said that in Bulgaria one can only read Soviet books. All contain Soviet theories, whether scientific or political. Foreign books are rejected by the libraries. The Russian language is almost compulsory. There are a lot of Russian courses and schools, but they are not well attended, as no one wishes to learn Russian. Only in the Communist circles do they want to show that they have taken Russian lessons. Bulgaria is more of a Russian colony than a nation, source said.

Radios Available.

Source could not estimate the number of radios existing in his neighborhood, but he said many people own radios. In some villages there are only battery radios because electricity is lacking, and they are few in number. The sets in Bulgaria are not sold against coupons, but it is not easy to obtain a radio because they are very expensive. In addition, they are of poor quality. Western broadcasts cannot be heard on the new radio sets; they are made to catch local or Russian stations exclusively. People prefer the old models and use the excuse that they are better constructed.

From the models of radio sets available at present in Bulgaria, source remembers the following: "Tesla" made in Czechoslovakia and "Christo Botev," and "Pioner," all manufactured in Bulgaria. Russian sets were available but very high in price.

Only A Small Percentage are Sincere Communists

According to source, the vast majority of the people are against the present regime. The leaders may promise much; they may change; but no one believes in them or likes them. They are all the same. With each change they try to give the impression that the situation will ameliorate. CHERVENKOV made promises. He went and YUGOV came. There are rumors that the

(over)

latter will be replaced, probably by General Ivan MIHAILOV. But the situation was, is and will still be the same. Their reforms do not entail a positive change; they are only political maneuvers.

The Communists have no real strength with any particular section of the people. Perhaps their greatest strength lies with the workers, but they are very weak among the farmers and employees. The laborers, 70 to 80 per cent Communists formerly, now realize the impossibility of living under the regime and realize that they were fooled into thinking that when everything would be nationalized, all would consequently become theirs. The percentage has dropped to approximately 30 per cent.

The Communists have supporters among the farmers, but the majority are against them. They are followers of STAMBOLYISKY and are not affected by what the Communists strive to make them believe, that is, that STAMBOLYISKY made some mistakes and that when he discriminated between farmers and laborers, he was actually inspired by Communist ideas. This theory is also taught in the schools.

The percentage among the employees has always been low and now hardly reaches 15 to 20 per cent. Being educated, they understood what Communism means. But presently it is not a question of education; all the people understand and know what Communism really is, and no more than 15 to 20 per cent of the general population are actually Communists. There is such confusion in the Bulgarian Government that the people do not know what to follow. Working conditions are disheartening; wages are extremely low; poor quality tools do not help the work output. In plants where the workers are supposed to get overalls, they have to work in their own clothes. There is a tremendous shortage of materials, especially woollens. Slogans that the farmers should give all the wool to the government and not keep it for domestic use are to be seen everywhere. Those who do not belong to the TKZS are deprived in various ways of the little wool that was left them.

Even the youth on whom the regime has based its hopes is no longer easily influenced by Communist ideologies, as they realize the misery of the people. Approximately 75 per cent of the youths belong to the DSNM. Membership is not compulsory, but without a certificate from the DSNM no one is accepted into a university or can find a job. Thus they are compelled to attend every meeting; in case one misses a certain number of meetings, he is refused good references without which he can do nothing. Out of the total number of DSNM members, no more than eight or ten per cent are influenced by Communism. The remainder join and frequent the centers in order to be left in peace, free to study and help their future careers.

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Only Bad Points in Communism

There are no good points in Communism, according to source, but many bad ones. The worst aspects are: lack of freedom, the fact that it serves Russian interests, low salaries and the abolition of private initiative. If one expresses his opinion freely, he is put into prison. Bulgaria has become a stooge of Russia and can do nothing without Russian authorization. Never has human labor been so little rewarded. The 20 or 25 leva a day the laborer earns is not even enough for his daily food. It is impossible to live on so little money and with only a small amount of food. Bread is poor and insufficient. If wheat which should be plentiful in Bulgaria is actually missing, then other things should exist. Life is unbearable for the entire population.

Source said, "I do not believe that there is anything of what the Communists have instituted which should be retained as it is. I do not admit that the Communists have accomplished any achievements peculiar to Communism and which can only be accomplished by this regime. All they have done would have been done under any post-war regime.

According to source, no Communist leader is popular. They instigate distrust and hatred, and no one believes in them. CHERVENKOV and YUGOV were the most hated Communist leaders. The most unpopular officials are the police, the commissars of the Party, and in general all the active functionaries of the regime. No government or Party official is popular; they are all equally disliked.

Party members are all in very good jobs, well paid and constitute a privileged society. But, source said, only a small number are fanatic sincere Communists blindly devoted to the Party. Source considers the morale of the government employees is low. They are all deeply disappointed, but the fear of persecution and the need to hold on to a good post make them cautious, and they continue in their work because there is no way out. The artists are the most disheartened of all because they are given silly directives as to how to create, write or develop a theme.

Passive Resistance

Any resistance within the country would be immediately and drastically suppressed, source said, and is virtually impossible. The country's Armed Forces, controlled by the Party, safeguard the regime. Prisons are full. After a small unpublicized riot, the police arrest hundreds of persons.

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The people dare to show their dislike with small acts of sabotage, such as working less than they are supposed to, interfering with the smooth running of the factories, producing poor quality work, mixing coal with rocks in the mines, etc. Generally, they do everything they can to sabotage the work. When they are reprimanded, they excuse themselves, saying it is due to the high normal with insufficient time to fill them. The government imposed fines or punished the culprits in other ways. Now sabotage is occurring so often that the government is unable to take adequate measures. The press does not refer to these incidents, but if one considers the cases brought before justice, then one is convinced there are many people no longer afraid to resist the regime.

Western broadcasts play an important role in this resistance, according to source. It is through them that the people know what is happening and take courage. They clearly explain the bad points of Communism to those who would not accept them, demonstrate that the reforms and changes in the government are made solely to distract the people's attention, and that if prices go down it is only on unnecessary items. They point out the right direction to take and what means to use in resisting. They tell the people what to do in each particular case; as a result, the number of incidents increases in proportion to the number of listeners. Though these incidents be small, they help the people's morale, for they show there is a force alive which grows and grows. "But," source said, "all these riots and acts of sabotage are beneficial only from a moral point of view; they would not bring about the fall of the regime." The riots are faced without much ado, but drastically and cruelly.

Nothing decisive can be achieved from inside; armed resistance is impossible except with help from the outside world. Source feels that freedom is unattainable solely by internal resistance, and the only hope for liberation is war. Even the slightest assistance to the Bulgarian people by a Western military force would start an inevitable conflict within the country. The entire population would arise and assist the army. The soldiers of the "labor army" who are unarmed because they are anti-Communists would prove a considerable force if supplied with arms. A large part of the soldiers in the regular army would cross over to the other side if it was well organized.

Exiles and Refugees

Referring to the exiles and refugees, source stated

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that the great majority of them fled because of prevailing conditions within the country and all, especially the younger ones, are prepared and ready in case of war to offer their lives for the cause of liberation. Their dearest dream is to be called upon soonest. Source said the general opinion in Bulgaria is that the life of the exiles in the Western countries is undoubtedly better than in Bulgaria. While source is not disappointed about having escaped and has no wish to go back, he now thinks it would be preferable to remain in Bulgaria to fight for liberation, as he has now ascertained that the activities of the exiles are very limited. In America the exiles are organized, and their activities for helping the Bulgarian nationalists are considerable but not entirely satisfactory. The Bulgarian people are very much interested in the exiles, and their activity helps maintain the people's morale. They rest their hopes on these exiles. They believe the exiles collaborate closely with the Western countries and especially with the US and that they are united into one all-inclusive organization which represents the Bulgarian nation abroad. They believe the exiles give exact information for the Western radio broadcasts and often take part in these broadcasts. They also believe that some of the exiles have returned to Bulgaria and organized the "Gorianin" movement.

Source personally feels the exiles are not organized enough. They belong to various parties, especially the agrarian and the royalist parties. There are always misunderstandings between these parties which leads to disunity. Source believes all the exiles should unite until the Communists are driven out and free elections can be held. Now there is ground for intrigues, and the Communists know how to take advantage of them. This is clearly shown at the refugee camps where the Communist propaganda and Communist agents work intensively.

The best liked exile leader is Dr. v.G.M. DIMITROV. He is the most famous and loved by the people. In general the Agrarian Party has great authority, and the ideas of STAMBOLYISKY are being accepted by everyone.

Redefectors

Speaking about redefectors, source stated that he believes they are principally those sent by the regime in Bulgaria; if not sent to spy, their job is to undermine the morale of the exiles. They are real imposters and the vermin of the refugee camps, lying, accusing their compatriots unjustly, and often causing great trouble with their actions. Some redefectors escaped purely for adventure, and when nothing exciting happens, they return to Bulgaria. Others escaped without knowing or understanding why, mostly because life in

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Bulgaria is difficult. Finding life in exile difficult and homesick for their native land, they return. Many fall for the Bulgarian propaganda about amnesty.

Source said these redefectors are persons who were not fanatic anti-Communists but escaped for other reasons. "They are men without steady character, or they would not escape and then spit on freedom and return." Some just cannot bear the hardships, and most are disappointed at long waiting in various camps. Waiting in vain for emigration, homesick, and lonesome for the family they left behind, they ask in their despair to be sent back.

Mainly the redefectors are the impostors sent abroad by the regime or persons with weak character. Once back in Bulgaria they will say whatever the regime pleases or asks of them in order to gain the favor of the regime. They will be led like monkeys from city to city delivering lectures about things they have never seen or heard and agitating against Western and free countries. In the beginning they will be provided with everything and then be rejected as soon as the regime is through with them. Often for minor reasons they may be thrown into prison. Source heard of someone who came back from Brazil. When he completed the usual tour, he was presented with a bill for 16,000 leva for the expenses incurred in his behalf -- a tremendous sum it would take all his life to pay. He was obliged to escape for a second time to Turkey.

Source does not remember having heard radio or press attacks against the exiles. The only propaganda against them is carried out through the redefectors who are presented in the movies, radio broadcasts and in the newspapers. Source remembers seeing in 1955 a movie short presenting the happy life of a redefector from Brazil. A single glance sufficed an objective observer to understand that this was just an act for the sake of propaganda. Source heard the Communists saying about someone "He has escaped to Greece; he will come back willingly or our agents will kill him." The presence of agents everywhere in the Balkans is broadly rumored in Bulgaria. They say the agents do their job working as tavern-keepers, merchants, etc. and that some have succeeded in holding important positions in the government. However, these threats and what the redefectors are doing and saying have no influence on the local population. They consider them all traitors, and nobody believes in or is convinced by "all these monkeys."

De-Stalinization

Referring to the criticism of STALIN after his death, source said today's leaders are merely trying to reinforce their

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own position through all these maneuvers. They put all the blame on STALIN, charge him with every bad point and every misgiving in Russia or the captive countries in an attempt to prove they would start out in a new way in the right direction. But there were no changes and nothing has really happened -- no change in Russia, no change in Bulgaria. The situation is always the same -- all these were just unsuccessful endeavors to give a false impression.

CHERVENKOV was changed because he was a follower of STALIN, YUGOV was said to have other principles and other initiatives, but he was no better than his predecessor, and the situation goes from bad to worse. From the very beginning no one had faith in the proposed changes because whatever the Communists will do, they will always remain Communists.

Referring to TITO, source said he does not know what he is doing, and his policy is not liked in Bulgaria. Life in Yugoslavia is the same as in Bulgaria -- for a short period life seemed to have changed, but now it is the same as before.

Source stated that the conflict in Cyprus gives the Communist elements an opportunity for anti-Western propaganda. They say that Cyprus is a Greek island where the British refuse to grant the population self-determination.

Referring to Suez, source believes that the Egyptian regime, if not openly Communist, is very close to being Communist, and whatever happens to Egypt now is influenced by Russia.

People Would Prefer A Democracy

According to source, the desire for national Communism does not exist. Communism will always be Communism whether it be called national or not. The Bulgarian people would prefer occupation by a foreign power to any national Communism. Any regime would be preferable to the existing one. Source believes that "the followers of democracy have the majority because Bulgaria has tested both monarchy and Communism, and democracy would come as something new. It seems that the Agrarians will come out best, but nothing is absolutely certain yet. The people will prefer the system that stands farthest removed from Communism.

Source personally would like a monarchy because he thinks the situation in the old times was much better than it might ever be. Source has no opinion about BORIS III, but he says King SIMEON is rather liked in Bulgaria, and his life abroad is followed with interest.

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Source said the people have no preference as to who should be the head of the government after liberation -- whether an exile or not. "But," source said, "I personally think that those who have remained behind in Bulgaria have a better right. To go away is an easy thing, but to stay and fight is heroism."

Referring to the economic system, source stated personal ownership is preferable because it gives better chances for a good life and encourages the owner to work his land with more zest. Under no circumstances should there be TKZSs.

Source believes that there is no possibility for a "Balkan Federation," but that good understanding between the nations would be to the advantage of all concerned.

End