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5 Apr  
VII-167BULGARIACOMMUNIST PARTYCadets  
PersonalitiesSTATE APPARATUS

Government

EDUCATIONElementary schools  
TeachersAGRICULTURE

Collectivization

Report On VINISHTA (MIHAILOVGRAD)

SOURCE TRIESTE: Letter from a Bulgarian emigree from VINISHTA Prov. MIHAILOVGRAD) who escaped from Bulgaria toward the end of October 1951.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: October 1951

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The village of VINISHTA in MIHAILOVGRAD (ex-FERDINAND) province is located 60 kilometers east of the Yugoslav border, 34 km north of the village of KEMENY RITZA and 17 km northwest of MIHAILOVGRAD, the capital city of the province.

There are about 1,500 persons living in VINISHTA and almost all of them are farmers of Bulgarian nationality. The village has its own independent commune and administers the sub-commune of the village of KLISURITZA.

The mayor of VINISHTA is a Communist, KRSTEV Jordan Prvanov, who joined the Party after 9 September 1944. He formerly was a militiaman in the same commune, and in 1947 he was elected mayor. A tailor by trade he holds a diploma from the third middle school grade. He is a simple, modest person but a faithful executor of Party orders. There is no evidence that he is responsible for mistreatment of the citizens, theft, murder or other crimes against the population.

However, in March 1946, while still a militiaman in VINISHTA he played into the hands of the Communists, who planned to compromise, certain important farmers of the opposition parties and thus brought about their arrest. The plan was to hide arms in the homes of these persons and then to "discover" them to the prejudice of the citizens involved, among whom was included one LUKANOV Todor. KRSTEV took an active part in this plan, but the trick was disclosed and the arrested farmers were released without having to undergo a trial.

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BULGARIA

(1)

The tax collector for the Commune is the neo-Communist DIMITROV Boris. Under the past regime, and until 1946, he was accountant at the oil producing plant in BRUSSARTZI (LOM province) from which post he was dismissed for having embezzled one million Leva. DIMITROV escaped punishment through the influence of his father (fnu), a Communist of long standing. Despite this background and because he was a fanatical Communist, the Party entrusted DIMITROV with the posts of secretary and treasurer of the commune of VINISHTI. In 1948, while still holding these posts, he bought the house of the former secretary (NU) of the commune of GORNA VERENITZA (MIHAILOVERAD province) who was "liquidated" as a Fascist without the benefit of a trial. For this real estate, which was then valued at two million Leva, DIMITROV paid the ridiculous sum of 900,000 Leva.

The present secretary of the commune is the Communist BOJKOV Trifon, the councillors are: LASHKOV Krstiu, LEKOV Jordan Krstov and PRVANOV Todor. KOLOVA Vanka Metodieva was expelled from the communal council in September 1951 for having made the following anti-Soviet statement:

"When we had no Soviet tractors we used to eat bread made of pure wheat; now that we have the tractors our bread is made only out of corn."

Chief of the commune archives is GORANOV Petar, mayor of VINISHTI until 9 September 1944; chief of military section (Voenna Otchetna Sluzhba) is the Communist KOLOV Kusman.

There are six militiamen (NU) on duty in VINISHTI, all of whom come from different villages.

In VINISHTI there is an elementary school and a middle school under the direction of STANTSHEV Zahari, secretary of the village section of the Communist Party and secretary of the committee of the Popular Front. STANTSHEV is a fanatical Communist of long standing and has a vicious character. Before 9 September 1944 he was a teacher in the same village. The peasants of the village confirm that it was STANTSHEV's wickedness, which made his father hang himself in 1944.

The village section of the Communist Party was organized after 9 September 1944 and originally numbered 142 members, both men and women. In 1949, this number had decreased to 43, and this is about the present strength of the local Party section. Many of the peasants left the Party, disillusioned by the promises not kept by the Party and outraged by the illegal actions taken by the Communists.

The village kolkhoz was set up during 1947 with the participation of Communists only. In 1949 only 40 peasants of a total



BULGARIA

(2)

of 300 landowners belonged to this kolkhoz. Alarmed by this lack of success, on 3 May 1950, the Communist authorities ordered militia to surround the village, thus preventing the peasants from going to their fields. Only those who requested admission to the kolkhoz were given permission to circulate freely and to leave the village to work their lands. Thus most of the peasants were forced to join the kolkhoz, while the more obstinate, among whom DRENTSCHEV Mitko and GORNAOV Stanoj were declared "enemies of the people" and their best land was confiscated.

The president of the kolkhoz is PRVANOV Todor; the accountant STANTSCHIEV Atanas; his assistant is MILANOV Kusman; all three are Communists.

Until October 1951 the manager of the kolkhoz was the Communist STAMENOV Filtscho. Caught in flagranti with a married peasant woman named LINKOVA Vanka STAMENOV was dismissed from his post, while the LINKOVA woman hanged herself.

EVAL. COMMENT: Matters correspond with previous similar information from other sources. The cited names, except KRSTEV, PARVANOV and STANCHEV are Unknown.