

LL  
6 Aug  
VII - 870

BULGARIA

PRISONS AND CAMPS (2500)  
Inmates (2503)

TRADE (3300)  
Foreign

Short Items

SOURCE TRIESTE: A Bulgarian in exile, in contact with high Bulgarian political and commercial circles.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: July 1953.

EVAL. COMMENT: 1. The given data about the forced labor camp BELENE is in agreement with information available in this office. The reported considerable increase of the camp inmates by people from "Pirinska Macedonia" in July 1953 and the statement that among the latter there were many persons sentenced to death are UNCONFIRMED in this office.

2. On 15 April 1953 a long term trade agreement between Bulgaria and Albania was signed in SOFIA. This agreement provides for the exchange of goods and for payment from 1953 to 1955. The protocol for the exchange of goods for 1953 between Bulgaria and Albania was signed on the same day. Under the terms of this agreement Bulgaria will export to Albania machines. The tools reported in this item will go under this category.

3. The Bulgarian press and radio did not yet carry any information on the PLOVDIV Fair, a fact which confirms that this Fair has been postponed to 1954.

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1. There are about 4,000 men being detained in BELENE at present and living in a state of slavery. Their number considerably increases owing to the many persons who arrived there from the "Pirinska Macedonia," and are detained there because they are related to

(Over)

(cont'd)

persons who tried to cross the border or went as refugees into Yugoslavian territory.

These arrests caused great tension and fear among all Bulgarians - particularly in SOFIA - who have relatives, or common interests with refugees living in the Western countries for years. These dispositions have created the impression that similar measures will be taken after the 13th of August, the date which the Bulgarian authorities have established for the voluntary repatriation of all Bulgarian subjects who left their country in a more or less illegal way.

Apart from the internees detained for the abovementioned reasons, there are quite a considerable number of persons imprisoned because they were contrarious to the present regime, and among these latter there are quite a few who are sentenced to death and are, for the time being, not executed but utilized more profitably for forced labor.

2. Through secret channels we learn that Bulgaria is at present supplying Albania with tools (turner, perforators,) electrical equipment, telephone apparatus, central telephone switchboards, telephone cables, etc.

3. There will be no PLOVDIV Fair this year, as we learn from a reliable source. The same source reports that this Fair will take place next year.

End.