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ITEM NO. 6068/56

EH
June 16
VII/2041

BULGARIA

FOREIGN RELATIONS (1500)
Foreign Visitors

RETIRED SCHOOLTEACHER REVISITS HER NATIVE ITALY.

SOURCE TRIESTE: Confidential source.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: April 1956.

EVALUATION COMMENT: None.

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Maria STEFANOVA was born in 1894 in BOLOGNA (Italy.) Her father, a tradesman, died many years ago. He was one of the first of textile machinery importers to Hungary.

Source went to Bulgaria with her parents in 1904 settling at GABROVO, where her father started teaching textile machinery assembly line. Source went through grammar school at the Aprilov school of GABROVO and through high school. During the thirty years she taught, she stayed in various parts of Bulgaria, but mostly at GABROVO, where she taught Italian and Latin at the local high school. In 1918, she married Stefan IVANOV, a local merchant in GABROVO. In 1948, she was pensioned by the Bulgarian Government receiving a monthly pension of 360 leva. She lives with her only married daughter, a pharmacist, at GABROVO. Despite her old age, source is busily engaged in homework, takes care of her grandchildren, and gives private lessons in Italian and Latin.

For eight years, source succeeded in laboriously saving from her pension the necessary amount to give herself the luxury of a trip to Italy, where she has a brother in BOLOGNA and a sister in CATANIA. She also hopes to meet

(over)

there another brother of hers, who lives in LYON (France.)

Since 1954, Mrs. STEFANOVA had filed an application with the SOFIA Ministry of the Interior in order to obtain the passport and an exit visa. For two years the authorities refused to give her a passport, under various pretexts. She was not requested to present two warrantors for the issuance of the exit visa. This is to be explained with the fact that Mrs. STEFANOVA is of Italian extraction. She had some trouble in withdrawing her passport, as hundreds of Bulgarian and foreign citizens in Bulgaria have been lately waiting for their exit visas. Long queues are always to be found in front of the various counters in the Bulgarian Government offices waiting for their documents.

Source will return to Bulgaria, where her family lives, shortly before the validity of her passport expires.

End

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