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5 January 1952
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BULGARIA

STATE APPARATUS
Government
COMMUNIST PARTY
Personalities

The Controversy Concerning CHERVENKOV Valko.

SOURCE ISTANBUL: report of a Western diplomat in SOFIA.
DATE OF OBSERVATION: June to December 1951.

Many sources have stated that CHERVENKOV had been relieved of all executive duties by his Soviet masters, and that his successor was CHANKOV Georgi, Deputy Prime Minister. However, the Communist press, both in Bulgaria and in foreign countries, gives no indication that CHERVENKOV is in disfavor. "L'Unita," the organ of the Italian Communist Party, published an article in its 6 September 1951, issue, commemorating CHERVENKOV's fifty-first birthday anniversary. The extremely laudatory article, includes the statement that "under the direct and superior guidance of Comrade CHERVENKOV the successes of the Bulgarian nation have been noteworthy."

In reality there are no outward appearances indicating that CHERVENKOV has fallen from power; however, it may be seen that he does not enjoy the same unlimited power he had a year ago. At the same time CHANKOV's power has considerably increased and although it is impossible to judge the comparative powers of the two, it appears that CHERVENKOV is still more influential than his deputy. Furthermore, it is apparent that the authority now granted CHERVENKOV and CHANKOV is not so definite as it was formerly; that is, they may have fuller jurisdiction in some matters, but the latitude of their authority may be expanded or contracted from time to time according to the wishes of their Kremlin masters.

MOSCOW, increasingly suspicious of all satellite officials since TITO's disobedience, probably wants to accentuate the unstable position of CHERVENKOV. Foreign diplomats have stated that "CHERVENKOV could stay in power indefinitely or he could be removed tomorrow." However, the demonstrations held in honor of Freedom Day in 9 September 1951, clearly indicated that CHERVENKOV's position is still solid as the head of the Bulgarian Communist Party. CHERVENKOV occupied the seat of honor on the dais erected for the Communist notables at the parade of 9 September, it was CHERVENKOV who read the usual report on this solemn occasion, and it was again CHERVENKOV and Mme. CHERVENKOVA sending out the invitations for the reception which took place in the evening. These facts are proof that CHERVENKOV is indeed still the number-one-man in the Bulgarian Government and the Bulgarian Communist Party.

EVAL. COMMENT: Generally accurate.