

ES
April 21
V-769/D

BULGARIA

EDUCATION (1000)
Special Schools (1006)

NORTH KOREAN STUDENTS AT THE YAMBOL AGRICULTURAL SCHOOL.

SOURCE ISTANBUL: 19-year-old escapee, Bulgarian tractor-driver who worked at YAMBOL and who had contacts with students attending the agricultural school..

DATE OF OBSERVATION: Until December 1955.

EVALUATION COMMENT: Although this office possesses no information on the YAMBOL Agricultural School, the details supplied seem genuine. The presence of North Korean children in Bulgaria has been reported previously, both by RFE Items and regime information media; however, we cannot confirm the presence of Korean students in YAMBOL. Preferential treatment granted such children has also been reported by other sources.

+ + +

The agricultural school located on the southeastern outskirts of YAMBOL was known as the "Zemledelsko Uchilishte" until 1953, at which date it was renamed "Zemledelski Tehnikum." Formerly, students having completed secondary school were accepted at the school where they had to study for five years before graduation. Since 1953, secondary school graduates being admitted to the "tehnikum" must study only two years before graduation. As far as source could tell, prior to 1953 the school was preparing agronomists while nowadays its graduates are simply technicians who have a knowledge of handling agricultural machinery. The school has a model farm which is part of the complex YAMBOL D.Z.S. (state agricultural farm,) and students are given practical instruction in the fields.

Graduates of the YAMBOL "tehnikum" are given jobs at D.Z.S. (State Farms) and M.T.S. (machine tractor stations) as machinery overseers, repair mechanics and fitters. As far as source could learn, graduates of the YAMBOL school are not entitled to continue their studies with the aim of becoming mechanical engineers or agronomists.

(Over)

Annual enrollment at the school is limited to 300 students. Secondary school graduates who can present the all-important political good-conduct certificate are accepted to the school after passing an entrance examination. All students at the school are boarders but source could not tell the amount of the annual tuition fee which includes board and food as well. The students have a uniform consisting of black trousers and a black jacket à la Russian, i.e. buttoned straight up to the collar. The insignia on their black caps shows a hammer and a key and bears the inscription "Yambolski Tehnikum." Only males are admitted to the school. The main building is 100 x 40 meters large and has three stories. A number of smaller buildings serve as dormitories.

According to source, one of the most interesting facts about the school is that it has roughly 100 North Korean students. The entire third floor of the main building is occupied by these students who have their classrooms and dormitories separated from those of their Bulgarian fellow-students. When source first went to YAMBOL in 1953 the Koreans were already there. In late 1955, when he left the town, the Asiatic students were still at the school.

From his talks with Bulgarian students attending the school source has gathered that the Koreans are orphans who were brought to Bulgaria after hostilities ended in Korea. Source, who had met a few of the Koreans, guesses their average age to be 18-19. He said that the Asiatics resembled one another to such an extent that their Bulgarian colleagues had difficulties differentiating them. The Koreans wore the same school uniform as the Bulgarians with the exception that they wore no caps when going into the town or when parading during national holidays.

To source's knowledge, the Koreans have to attend much more extensive courses than their Bulgarian colleagues. While Bulgarians graduate in two years, the Koreans, who have been at YAMBOL for three years, still continue their studies. Source was told that the Koreans will graduate as agronomists and zoologists. Although they have been in Bulgaria for over three years, the Korean students spoke very little Bulgarian which led source to believe that they were taught by teachers who spoke Korean. In his contact with the Koreans source remarked that some of them spoke pretty good Russian. Source's belief that the Koreans attend special courses is strengthened by the fact that during parades held on national holidays the Asiatics parade in a separate group and while the Bulgarian students carry a banner with the inscription "Yambolski Tehnikum" the "Koreans" banner reads "Yambolski tehnikum po zemledeliето." (ED: Source made a rather confusing statement. He claims

(Over)

that during the parades the students of the school carried the portraits of STALIN, MAO-TSE-TUNG and DIMITROV. Asked whether he was sure that the students were not Chinese, he could not answer, but insisted that the Asiatics were known as Koreans. He also stated that during parades students carried the flags of Bulgaria, the Soviet Union, North Korea and Czechoslovakia. He could not explain the presence of the Czechoslovak flag.)

Students of the school also carried posters with slogans immortalizing STALIN:

"Vechna slava na drugaria STALIN" (Long live STALIN's immortal fame);

"STALIN umre no deloto mu shte prodilji dokray" (STALIN is dead but his work will be carried on until the end.)

End