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17 January 1952  
A (VII-100)

BULGARIA

BORDER ZONES

Military

ARMED FORCES

Soviet Army

Morale

SOURCE MUNICH: A soldier from Bulgarian Frontier Troops

DATE OF OBSERVATION: Early 1951

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A soldier in the Bulgarian Frontier Troops stated that aside from their dissatisfaction with inadequate food and clothing (two uniforms, three shirts and two pairs of shoes must suffice for the three-year service period,) the Bulgarian Frontier Guards dislike particularly the following factors:

They resent Soviet officers and instructors in all key posts; aside from their actual dislike of Soviet nationals, they resent the fact that such positions go to Russians rather than Bulgarians. They detest the incessant political lectures and especially the stress laid on the need to defend CHERVENKOV, STALIN, the Communist Party, and so on, rather than the need to defend Bulgaria. (In this regard, they detest also the oath of service in which they must swear to defend Communist Bulgaria as opposed to their own Bulgaria.) They are deeply embittered over the conditions in which they find their families living when they are permitted to go home on furlough, and finally they object to the length of their service period.

As a result, this source states, at least four-fifth of the Frontier Troops are opposed to the present government, despite the fact that they are carefully chosen for their presumed loyalty to the regime.

EVAL. COMMENT: Generally accurate (see our Items 1298, 3128, 5109, 8734, 11607, 12190 and 516/1952.)