

December 6, 1944

**Record of Conversation of D. G. Yakovlev of the
Allied Control Commission in Bulgaria with S.
Moshanov, Former Chairman of the People's Council
of Bulgaria**

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Summary:

A discussion in Sofia, Bulgaria between Stoicho Moshanov and D.G. Yakovlev. The two issues discussed were the internal political situation in Bulgaria and British policy in Bulgaria

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Record of Conversation of Deputy Political Counselor of the Allied Control Commission in Bulgaria D. G. Yakovlev with Former Chairman of the People's Council of Bulgaria, Participant of the Negotiations with the Allies in Cairo S. Moshanov¹

December 6, 1944

Top Secret

Sofia

Moshanov stated that he wanted to meet specifically in order to shed some light on some issues that, in his opinion, would help our common goals in Bulgaria. He spoke on two issues.

1. The internal political situation in Bulgaria

The internal situation in the country has become significantly more complicated. The four parties represented in the PF² do not cooperate with each other, but compete--each one is trying to seize the posts and to put their own people everywhere. The struggle for influence and power is going on. The danger to the unity of the Patriotic Front came from the inside, not from the outside.

It is happening, because the party leadership is too immersed in the party issues and forgetting that these issues should be subordinated to our common goal of struggle against the German fascism.

These four parties are becoming isolated; they have restricted the access of other democratic forces to the leadership of the country, monopolized power for themselves, and have now begun to fight for that power among themselves.

The democratic elements and the intelligentsia of the country are standing by, because they are afraid of competition while these elements would be capable to create a counter-balance to the hegemonic aspirations of certain parties; they are being consciously isolated.

According to his opinion, the situation of each party is as follows:

a). The Workers' party. The party took upon itself all the responsibility for the political purges of the country, for Bulgaria's participation in the war, and for the requisitions in the villages for the military needs. All that political negative balance, therefore, is associated with the Workers' party and is subsequently associated with the Soviet Union.

The leadership of the Workers' Party takes the possibility of other bourgeois democratic parties' participation of in the government with too much jealousy, which is unjustified politically; it sees a perspective of strengthening of the bourgeois wing of the Patriotic Front in such participation.

In reality, it allows the farmers and the Zvenari to use their monopolistic situation and to organize protests against the Workers' party without any fear of competition. The societies of friendship with the USSR, which have been created, especially locally, contain representatives of the Workers' party and second-level representatives of the public in their leadership; those people do not allow the broad masses of the intelligentsia and prominent public figures to join the Friendship Societies.

A situation developed where the Workers' party has completely monopolized all the

work on the orientation of the country toward the Soviet Union, while all the strata of the population and the progressive intelligentsia should be involved in this first of all.

On the issue of domestic policy, the Workers party forgets that it is a part of a coalition government, together with the bourgeois parties. Therefore, they made a number of tactical mistakes, especially because they still did not manage to centralize the work of the Ministry of the Interior of the Workers' party subordinated to it, and was not able to make the peripheral organs of this ministry act in accordance with the directives of the central organs, not independently. Due to this fact, mass abuses took place during arrests. The process of powerful reaction of the people, liberated from the fascist suppression, took so long that it acquired a chronic form, and that form became a routine phenomenon.

b) The Farmers' Party. Due to the fact that the most popular leader Gichev is currently under arrest, and that all his supporters, such as Alexander Obov and others representing the politically experienced officials of the Farmers' Party, are barred from their work in the party, all the farmers masses are now in the hands of G. M. Dimitrov 3 -- " a freshman in politics" and apparently a British agent. Just the fact that some time ago Dimitrov was tried as a British spy linked to the military intelligence, and not for his political activity, characterizes Dimitrov negatively and, therefore, the Farmers Union under his leadership cannot be popular in the masses. Dimitrov got to a point now where the Bulgarian-British society works in the building of the Farmers Union, and Dimitrov himself works as an assistant of the chairman of that society.

In general, as Moshanov concluded, it happened so that the WP monopolized the work on the Bulgarian rapprochement with the USSR, and the Farmers' party--with Britain. This became a dividing line for all political arguments that threaten the unity of the Patriotic Front.

Moshanov spoke very negatively about Dimitrov and tried to make an argument that in order to counter-balance and neutralize his clearly pro-British activity it was necessary to get Gichev involved. He would be able to neutralize the influence and power of Dimitrov and to pull the majority of farmers away from him.

In his opinion, Gichev would stick by the Russofile orientation.

c) Zvenari. Moshanov was trying to persuade me that Zvenari are sincere in their attitude toward the Workers' party and that D. Velchev's order (about taking the responsibility off the officers who proved their good behavior on the front before the people's court)⁴ should not be seen as a result of ill will, but as a result of lacking political experience in his work. Zvenari, in his opinion, they did not expect that that order could lead to clashes between the military units and the militia, and to the aggravation of the relations with the Workers' party.

Along with this, he pointed out that Zvenari were not a political party, but only a group of military--specialists in their profession. They do not understand anything about politics and can make many mistakes. However, he pointed out that Kimon Georgiev, the leader of Zvenari and the leader of the government, although he was a prominent political figure, still had to do the governmental work, and therefore, the political side of the party's activity was not directed by qualified politicians.

Moshanov, it seems, was trying to defend Zvenari and present the case in such a way that the conflict, which resulted from Velchev's order and from the ministry's resolution on the same question, did not pursue the objective of causing conflict with the Workers party.

Moshanov stated that, in his opinion, Bulgaria had all the conditions for joint work of

the parties-members of the PF and that the government representing those parties was recognized and supported by the people. Developments like those that took place in Greece, Belgium, and France, where the governments were imposed from the abroad, and where the people did not want to recognize them, did not take place in Bulgaria.

According to Moshanov, in order to improve the situation in the country, it is necessary to widen the participation of the democratic parties that were left out of the political life in the governing of the country, first of all he implied the democrats led by Nikola Mushanov. It was a paradox, he said, that Mushanov, who was always in opposition to the fascist government, was now arrested by the government that had overthrown fascism. If I was in Sofia and not in Cairo, he said, I would not allow N. Mushanov to become a member of the Muraviev government.

Moshanov repeatedly emphasized in the conversation that the broad democratic elements and the intelligentsia were isolated from the political life. They played the role of observers, and that if we pull those forces to the government it would remove the threat of the Farmers' domination in the future elections to the People's Council.

2. On the British policy in Bulgaria

Moshanov met with the British representative in Bulgaria Boswell twice. In both cases the initiative allegedly belonged to Boswell.

Boswell, according to Moshanov, spoke with him openly and, moreover, emphasized that Moshanov could speak about their conversation where he saw necessary, in order to break the wrong impression that could have developed because of the conscious tendency of the farmers to emphasize their pro-English orientation.

Allegedly, Boswell was infuriated by O. M. Dimitrov's behavior as well as by the behavior of correspondent Levi, who attempted to interfere in the internal affairs of Bulgaria, visited ministers, regents, and public figures, creating the impression that he was acting on behalf of the British. Levi visited democratic leader Mushanov, who is currently under arrest, and he repeatedly spoke at length about the necessity of freeing him, and so on.

Allegedly, Boswell stated that the British sent their representatives to Moscow to sign an armistice treaty not in order to violate the agreement with the USSR regarding the Soviet prevalent influence in Bulgaria.

Those who think otherwise, stated Boswell, were clearly mistaken. Bulgaria remains in the zone of the military operations of the Soviet Army, and therefore everybody here, including the British, should abide by the orders of the representatives of the Soviet Union. Allegedly, Boswell said that he could be told to leave, and he would have to act according to the order.

The general impression was such that Moshanov was speaking on behalf of the British. He tried to persuade me that they would be acting in Bulgaria and were acting now quite loyally to the Sov[iet] interests and were trying to distinguish themselves from the British, and did not share the pro-British tendencies of G. M. Dimitrov and the farmers.

Deputy Political Adviser of the Allied Control Commission
D. G. Yakovlev

1 Copies of the notes were distributed to A. Cherepanov, A. Vysbinsky, A. Lavrishev, to the IV European Department of the NKID USSR and to the files

2 At its creation, in 1942, the Patriotic Front of Bulgaria comprised representatives of the Bulgarian Workers' party (Communist)-(BWP)), the left wing of the Bulgarian Farmers' People's Union (BFPU-"Pladne"), the Bulgarian Workers' Social Democratic party (BWSDP), the political group (from October 1944-Popular Union) "Zveno," and also of the so-called independents, i.e. non-affiliated public figures, mainly from the intelligentsia.

3 Dr. G. M. Dimitrov (Geme, Gemeto) was a leader of the Bulgarian Farmers' People's Union (BFPU-"Pladne")

4 It was Resolution #4 of the Council of Ministers, which was passed in the end of November 1944 on Defense Minister D. Velchev's initiative (he was oriented toward "Zveno"), according to which, the officers who committed political crimes against the people, but who took part in the war against Nazi Germany, should have a right to amnesty, or alternatively should be accused of crimes committed in "special circumstances." On the basis of that resolution, Velchev issued a number of secret orders concerning the Army, which thus was set off against the people's militia, and which gave the officers the right to use weapons "in any attempt of illegal detention."