

Preparatory document

Source: the 2008 UNESCO exhibition dedicated to the rescue of the Bulgarian Jews (note the difference between the Bulgarian and the French title of the exhibition).



Rapport du
ministre plénipotentiaire
à Sofia Beckerle au ministère
allemand des Affaires étrangères
à Berlin, faisant état
de la réticence du gouvernement
bulgare à déporter les Juifs bulgares
vers les provinces orientales
allemandes.
Sofia, 16 novembre 1942.
Archives centrales d'Etat,
KMF 06

Доклад на
германския пълномощен
министър в София
Бекерле до германското
Външно министерство в Берлин
за нежеланието на българското
правителство за изселване на
българските евреи в германските
източни провинции.
София,
16 ноември 1942 г.
ЦДА, КМФ 06

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deutsche Gesandtschaft
A 4318/42

Sofia, den 16. November 1942 106

Auf den Drahterlass Nr. 1769 vom
16.10 und im Anschluß an Draht-
bericht Nr. 1839 vom 2.11.
Inhalt: Umsiedlung der Juden
3 Doppel
1 Anlage (3-...)

Auswärtiges Amt
D III 1039.9
Eing. 21. NOV 1942
Fid. () () - Dopp. b. Eing.

Handwritten notes:
Der Ministerpräsident sprach sich heute wegen der Judenfrage an, wobei er grundsätzlich die Möglichkeit begrüßte, die Juden nach dem Osten abtransportieren zu können, aber wieder darauf hinwies, daß ein Teil der männlichen Juden als Arbeitskräfte zum Straßenbau z. St. noch nicht entbehrt werden könne. Er begrüßt es dankbar wenn vor dem Abtransport ein deutscher Berater hierher kommt, der bei der Durchführung der entsprechenden Maßnahmen hilft.

Heute ist nun auch eine Verbalnote der bulgarischen Regierung über diese Frage hier eingegangen. Wie ich schon in dem oben angezogenen Drahtbericht darlegte, habe ich die Frage nur mündlich mit dem Ministerpräsidenten besprochen. Auf die Bitte des Generalsekretärs im Auswärtigen Amt ist dann nur eine formale Aufzeichnung als Gedankenstütze über einzelne Punkte für die Beratung im Ministerrat zur Verfügung gestellt worden. Denn in der Verbalnote von Buchalien die Rede ist, so wahrscheinlich deshalb, weil ich abgedeutet habe, daß der Abtransport gegebenenfalls vielleicht im Zusammenhang mit dem rumänischen Juden vorgedächsen werden kann.

Zusammengefaßt ist es also möglich, das Großteil der bulgarischen Juden zu erfassen und sie, abgesehen von einigen männlichen Juden zu Arbeitszwecken, die noch einige Zeit hier bleiben müssen, abtransportieren.

K207547 *Jeschke*

An das
Auswärtige Amt
Berlin

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Testimony of Dionysis Anagnostopoulos (1931-2015) to the deportation of the Jews in Drama:

“There were about 1,200 Jews in Drama, living in harmony with the other citizens. Some of them were rich merchants, others were artisans, and many were poor workers. Soon they were forced to place the Star of David with the name of the head of the family written in Bulgarian on the front door of their houses. Another star was attached to their garments. The marked houses and people made the neighborhood appear as if it were quarantined! I remember a Jewish boy, very thin, very pale, selling some razor blades. His intelligent black eyes had an expression I will never forget. Every so often he looked at his star and, in the middle of this unjust persecution, you could sense that his soul was free, proud, erect.

One day the Bulgarians arrested the entire community and placed them in a tobacco warehouse by the lake. In the morning, the women were allowed, under guard, to get water from the lake. I saw some of the women wearing ill-fitting men’s trousers; these were very pretty girls who were trying to hide their beauty and pass unnoticed.

In a few days we all knew they were taking them all away. The main street was filled with people. The tragic procession was escorted by heavily armed guards. The old people walked with difficulty. Some sick men and women were carried by those who were younger and stronger. Babies and children were crying. Some tried to maintain their self-discipline, but most just stared ahead.

Suddenly I saw Mr. Jacob with his wife and five children. I told my mother, who was holding my hand: “Mr. Jacob, the repairman!” He was a middle-aged man, as poor as could be. Every spring he used to service our wood burner. He heard my voice, turned toward us and, moving his head politely, greeted us. We moved our hands, returning his greeting. He tried to

smile, but his smile was only a bitter complaint, a big “Why?” My mother said, “Patience, it will pass.”

Soon some Christian boys, becoming more interested, began pushing the crowd to see better. I heard “Here is the ice cream man. I see him!” He was 35 years old, dressed in white during the summer. He knew the names of all the boys and used to tell us jokes. Now he held his youngest boy in his arms. A seven or eight year old boy was walking next to him, holding him by his pants. Next to him was his wife, holding a baby in her arms and trying to hold back her tears. The boys started yelling, little realizing the magnitude of the tragedy: “Hi, ice cream man!” He looked at us with tears in his eyes and a very painful expression on his face. “Farewell,” he said with great difficulty. “You will not eat my ice cream again.” Seeing our friend crying, we started crying too, although we did not fully understand what he meant.

The last one in this procession was Samouyas, the “crazy man” of the city. He lived alone in a hovel of a room and he liked to tease people and be teased by them. The Bulgarians did not pay any attention to him. They did not know he was Jewish. But when Samouyas saw the great procession, he joined it at the end. The guards ordered him to leave but he would not. “I am a Jew too,” he repeated many times. “Where all the Jidio (Jews in Ladino) go, I go too,” and smiled with self-satisfaction at his many Christian friends.” At that moment the Jewish conscience of the scorned and mentally sick Samouyas rose proudly and made him join his people. None of them returned”.

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Source: Michael Matsas, *The Illusion of Safety. The Story of the Greek Jews During the Second World War*, Pella Publishing Company, INC, New York, 1997, pp. 79-81.
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