

Partial transcription of the trial for war crimes of Asen Bogdanov, former head of police of the Skopje area (during the Bulgarian occupation), which took place on November 21, 1948 in Skopje

Public Prosecutor:

- Why did the accused Bogdanov, upon coming to Macedonia, get the impression that the Bulgarian authorities cannot deal with the Movement for Liberation?

Asen Bogdanov:

- I got that impression in the second half of 1943, because the Bulgarian authorities were totally powerless, having no support by the people. The Macedonian people, except a small percentage, was in a bad mood towards and considered the Bulgarian authorities as an enemy. The people produced the participants in the Movement. The systematic growth of the number of those persons was evident, and the Bulgarian authorities had the support of just a few individuals.

Public Prosecutor:

- What were your impressions regarding the nationality of the Macedonian people upon your arrival in Macedonia?

Asen Bogdanov:

- Before I came to Macedonia I was under the impression that here there really is a Bulgarian element. That notion was planted in our minds for years: that Macedonia belongs to Bulgaria, that those people are Bulgarian, that the Bulgarian Empire existed here. It was a great surprise to me. I realized that the Bulgarian element was present only in few wealthy persons, who came close to the Bulgarian authorities, a handful of intellectuals that belong to the organization of our people. All others lived with the notion about their nationality, about their heritage - that they are Macedonians.

Juror:

- Who organized the special forces for bulgarisation of the Macedonian people?

Asen Bogdanov:

- They were organized by a decision of the Council of Ministers, under direct control of the Ministry of Interior.

Juror:

- What was required from the persons sent by the Bulgarian administrative and police machinery?

Asen Bogdanov:

- They had to be abundant with the notion for bulgarisation of the Macedonian people and for keeping of these parts, at any cost, under Bulgarian rule. They had to have the qualities of fighters against the Movement for People's Liberation.

Juror:

- Did they meet the expectations of their superiors who sent them to Macedonia?

Asen Bogdanov:

- Yes.

Juror:

- How?

Asen Bogdanov:

- With the struggle they lead and the unconditional application of the Bulgarian government's measures of terror, liquidation, execution, arson etc.

Juror:

- Who did the killings: was it the military or the police?

Asen Bogdanov:

- Both.

Juror:

- How were they killed: by hanging, slaughter or shooting?

Asen Bogdanov:

- There were shootings, some died after being beaten to death, and some after being thrown into Vardar [river].

Source: Jovan Pavlovski, "Sudenjata kako posleden poraz", ("Trials as a last defeat"), second edition, 1979,

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