

Bulgaria 6/1/29 - 12/27/41



LEGATION OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 262

Sofia, June 1, 1939.

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Subject: Bulgarian Foreign Policy. *cm: E*

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
JUN 1 1939  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

~~STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL~~

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JUN 26 1939

ADVISED ON POLITICAL RELATIONS  
MR. DURN  
JUN 25 1939  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
OF STATE  
JUN 2 1939  
A.M.C.

Honorable  
The Secretary of State,  
Washington.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
JUN 30 1939  
DIVISION OF  
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

I have the honor to report, based on conversations I have recently had here, more extended than ordinarily in view of many contacts as a result of the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Sofia University, that public opinion continues bitterly disappointed that the foreign policy of the King and the Prime Minister apparently offers no hopes for the territorial revisions so ardently desired here. Secondly, I have noted an outspoken and growing criticism of the democratic powers, more especially directed toward England, since...

JUL 5 - 1939

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since through the English and, incidentally, French guarantees given to Rumania and Greece and, finally, the Anglo-Turkish accord, the bases on which Bulgaria hoped to negotiate with these countries for her entry into the Balkan Pact. have been completely altered if not destroyed altogether. In fact, since April 13 not only has Rumania taken a very definite attitude against any approach to discussions looking towards a return of the Southern Dobrudja, but undoubtedly, as escaped prisoners have proven, permitted official connivance in a series of murders of Bulgarians at Belitza, reported in the Legation's telegram No. 29, of May 15. Such an action can but be interpreted as a warning to Bulgaria against any pretensions in that area.

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In the Legation's despatch No. 223, of March 23, reference was made to the Prime Minister's visit to Ankara and the hopes entertained at that time for a policy based on Bulgarian-Turkish understanding. On April 26 when Mr. Potemkin first visited Sofia on his way to Ankara, he discussed with Mr. Kiosseivanoff Bulgaria's entry into the Balkan Entente, and the Prime Minister at some length outlined the attitude of Bulgarian public opinion in this connection and apparently was most hopeful that Mr. Potemkin in his conversations at Ankara would be able to carry a stage further the discussions which Mr. Kiosseivanoff had himself initiated during his visit there. However, on May 7 Mr. Potemkin, on his return from Ankara, again visited Sofia and I am informed he advised the Prime Minister that since Mr. Kiosseivanoff's conversations...

conversations with Mr. Saraçoğlu and especially since the guarantees of April 13 and the announcement of the Anglo-Turkish accord, the attitude of the Turkish Foreign Minister had undergone a change, and Mr. Potemkin saw little likelihood of any Turkish good offices to facilitate Bulgaria's entry into the Balkan Pact. Indeed, on the contrary, since the Italian descent on Albania Turkey has had from six to eight divisions on the Bulgarian-Thracian frontier and, although the official reason given is that these troops are a precaution against an Italian invasion of the Balkans, my Greek colleague has pointed out the Prime Minister's references to the Aegean (see Legation's telegram No. 23, of April 21) and contends the stationing of these troops is necessary as a warning to Bulgaria against military action in seeking an outlet to that sea.

The other wing of the Prime Minister's foreign policy since 1937 has been close cooperation with Yugoslavia. However, with the recent German-Italian alliance, it is anticipated here that very shortly pressure may be brought upon the Yugoslav Government to consolidate further her present accord with Italy, even to join the Berlin-Rome axis. Such a development would further thwart the Prime Minister's foreign policy, since up to the present I can see little if any sentiment in this country for joining the axis, and Bulgarian opinion likewise believes that public opinion in Yugoslavia is also strongly anti-German.

It is...

It is interesting in this connection, however, to consider the Prime Minister's remarks, reported in my telegram No. 33, of May 23, in which, conscious of the apparent obstacles that exist now in further conversations with the Greeks and Turks, he still envisages the possibility of a Balkan Pact against outside aggression to include Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Rumania.

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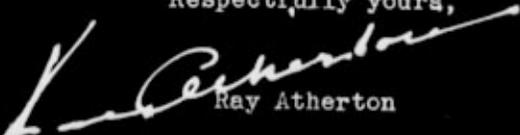
In this situation the arrival of a new German Minister to Sofia is followed with considerable interest. In his conversations with the Government, I am informed he has referred to the close ties between Germany and Bulgaria during the Great War, the present economic interdependence of the two countries and, while not attempting to exert any pressure, has said his Government's policy was for further developing the good relations between the two nations. I am also informed from an official source, however, that he has stated Germany would continue to make deliveries of war material to this country without imposing any political conditions. On the other hand, I learn that in recent conversations here, other German officials who have been in Bulgaria have pointed out that the commitments of the democratic countries in southeastern Europe do not permit any room for Bulgarian aspirations; that little economic assistance may be expected from either England or France (see Legation's despatch No. 261, of May 26); and that Bulgaria will do well to maintain at all costs her independent policy, both political and economic, the evident assumption being that time will prove to Bulgaria that her eventual...

eventual interests may lie with Germany, Italy and Yugoslavia in a totalitarian drive towards the Aegean.

The President of the Sobranié, Mr. Stoitcho Moshanoff, considered the strongest candidate to succeed the Prime Minister, accepted Hitler's invitation to visit Berlin on the occasion of his fiftieth anniversary and, although reportedly strongly pro-French in sentiment, this visit unquestionably made a deep impression on him. He has had conversations with the present German Minister and I venture to attach as of interest a report of a newspaper interview given to Mr. Roubaud of the French paper LE PETIT PARISIEN early last week.

I have attempted here briefly to outline certain considerations which must predominate in the determination of Bulgaria's future policy. As in the past, the final decision will lie with the King; but those closest to him insist he will endeavor to maintain Bulgaria's independent policy and neutrality, and there is little doubt but that the Prime Minister's hold on his present position is due to the fact that it would be impossible to replace him with any other Bulgarian capable of carrying on this policy as effectively.

Respectfully yours,

  
Ray Atherton

Enclosure:  
Translation of  
newspaper article.

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Enclosure to despatch No. 262,  
of June 1, 1939, Sofia.

TRANSLATION OF INTERVIEW GIVEN BY  
PRESIDENT OF SOBRANIE TO FRENCH JOURNALIST.

In the "PETIT PARISIEN" of May 19, 1939, Louis Roubaud publishes an interview with Mr. Stoitcho Moshanoff, the President of the Sobranié.

"The incident of Belitza is very untimely, Mr. Moshanoff said. If you had come a few days before the incident, you could hear people speak of Rumania with sympathy. The bitterness we feel about the Rumanians is not hatred. We have not forgotten the old times of Turkish rule when the Bulgarian revolutionists used to find a friendly shelter in Rumania. The excitement the incident of Belitza aroused is increasing every day. Cinema performances are interrupted by unknown speakers and the public replies by singing the national anthem. Whereas we are endeavouring to improve our relations with Rumania, this incident re-opens a sore which cannot be cured - the sore of Dobrudja.

"Let me answer your more general question: what is, at this time of expectancy, the attitude of public opinion in Bulgaria? You remember that in 1919 Bulgaria was forced to sign at Neuilly an unfortunate peace treaty. Although we consider ourselves as the victim of an injustice, we accepted and loyally carried out the provisions of the treaty. We paid reparations. We observed the strict and humiliating provisions which abolished our national defense. In the last 20 years all treaties have been abolished except ours. Everything was conceded to the strong nations, nothing to our small and pacific country.

"In the present grave atmosphere in Europe we are determined to keep our self-control so as to avert a war which we do not desire. After the cruel lessons we had in the recent past, we shall wait in silence and peace until we receive justice. Let me give you an example of our restraint: after having waged three wars for the liberation of our brothers, we keep silent to-day on the largest part of our rights. But we cannot live without this part of the Dobrudja on which the existence of Varna and Roussé depends. We want the cession of the territory (South Dobrudja) which was given to us in 1877 in Berlin. Instinctively the people feel that this cession is of capital importance. South Dobrudja has become an obsession. You know that the Rumanians fought in order that this province be given to us and that none of them has lost a drop of blood in order to take it from us. This province represents 16% of our wheat production, whereas it is only 1% of the Rumanian wheat production. This practical and economic consideration is closely connected with our political activity. The German market

absorbs . . . .

absorbs 80% of our exports. It does not depend on us alone to find new markets for our products. We made offers which were rejected everywhere except in Germany. England may purchase and consume all the products we sell to Germany. When an English economic mission undertook a tour of information in the Balkans, it stopped in Rumania, Yougoslavia and Greece, but Sofia was not on its itinerary. Economics and politics are closely connected here as everywhere, but you must not conclude that we are fatally driven against you by these circumstances.

"It is true that certain recent events have had a painful repercussion here. A favorable movement for a Bulgaro-Rumanian understanding appeared after the annexation of Bohemia, which frightened Bucharest. But the English guarantee given not only for the Hungaro-Rumanian frontier but for the Balkan frontiers of Rumania as well, did away with the desire for understanding on the part of Rumania and strengthened her intransigent attitude as regards Bulgaria. In spite of that, at a time when almost all our neighbors have resorted to a smaller or larger mobilization, we remain the only country which has not mobilized one man. Briefly, our desire for peace in the Balkans is obvious. We have been treated, however, as the pariahs of the Balkans. The Balkan Entente is directed against us whereas if we were in it, it could form a military bloc of experienced soldiers.

"Instead of asking for a complete redressment of all the mistakes which have been made, we are prepared to be satisfied with a minimum of justice. The Bulgarians like and admire your country; the general desire is that war should be averted. For this reason we tell you: Help us in order that we may remain neutral!"



LEGATION OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Sofia, June 14, 1939

No. 269

*EU  
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Subject: Supplementing Despatch No. 262,  
June 1, on Bulgaria's foreign  
policy.

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EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
JUN 29 1939  
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ADVISED ON POLITICAL RELATIONS  
MR. DUNN  
JUL 18 1939  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The Honorable  
The Secretary of State,  
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to my despatch No. 262,  
of June 1, and to report further conversations with  
usually well-informed sources which are interesting as  
they bear on aspects of Bulgarian foreign policy.

In my last conversation with the Prime Minister,  
reported in my telegram No. 33, of May 23, he took  
occasion to refer to the arrival of a new German Minister  
and added there had been no attempt to influence the  
present course of German-Bulgarian relations. This is  
interesting...

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interesting since I am informed that when the Governor of the Bulgarian National Bank attended the last meeting of the Bank of International Settlements at Basel he had instructions at the time to proceed to Germany very confidentially and explain "in certain defined quarters" as from the King that any attempt by Germany to force Bulgaria to abandon her policy of neutrality must meet with failure, since public opinion was very mindful that a departure from this policy had been very costly in the past and, secondly, public opinion at the moment in this country was not friendly to Germany.

Meanwhile there have been a series of German semi-official missions in the country and Dr. Landwehr, Chief of the Department of Exports and Credits in the German Ministry of Economics, is in Bulgaria at the present time. I am informed that in his conversations here reference has been made to the unusual seasonal decrease of German purchases in this country and I am reliably informed, in this connection that the blocked marks account of the Bulgarian Government has been reduced from a figure of 27 millions, reported in the Legation's despatch No. 226, of April 4, <sup>570-60/612</sup> to somewhere in the vicinity of 20 million Reichsmarks today. Dr. Landwehr has stated that he very much regretted the perishable nature of the major part of Bulgarian exports to Germany and stated he would like to increase German purchases of hard grain and durable goods. The Bulgarians, however, are reluctant to reduce wheat stocks in the country now and pointed out that the mining rights and...

and concessions which had been granted to Germany in comparatively recent negotiations must certainly be considered as a basis for increasing Bulgarian exports of non-perishable goods.

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I understand that in Berlin the Foreign Office has suggested to the Bulgarian Minister there that Bulgaria might see her way clear to withdraw membership from the League of Nations. From my observations in this country, I cannot believe that this is a suggestion that will be readily adopted.

26th 62  
Much opinion here is centered on Yugoslavia and especially on Prince Paul's visit to Berlin. Apart from the official communiqués evincing that Yugoslavia has neither adhered to the Rome-Berlin axis nor joined the anti-Comintern pact, nor left the League of Nations, few unpublished details have reached this country. Belgrade press reports published here, however, claim that the Prince Regent showed genuine desire to maintain friendly relations with Germany and the frontiers were "fixed forever." I am informed that the Germans brought forward, inter alia, a plan for a Danubian confederation which would include Hungary, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Rumania. It is reported here that Prince Paul will shortly proceed to London. Meanwhile Berlin continues to press the view that the Bulgarian Prime Minister has not returned the visit of Baron von Neurath made in June, 1937 (see Legation's despatch No. 393, of June 12, 1937), and it is understood here that at some convenient moment, after a suitable lapse....

lapse following the visit of Prince Paul, Mr. Kiosseivanoff may proceed on a visit to Berlin, after which he will return to this capital and probably set out again for further visits to London, Paris and probably Rome and Belgrade. Indeed, with a feeling in this country that Yugoslavia is the most sympathetic of the Balkan neighbors, considered opinion here is increasingly pronounced against any Bulgarian foreign policy that will conflict with Belgrade. In a recent press interview given a foreign journalist by the Prime Minister, he allegedly stated that Bulgaria has relinquished any territorial claims she might have entertained against Yugoslavia. This is very similar to a statement he also made two years ago to a journalist and has caused some criticism among Bulgarian Macedonians. It is of interest in this connection to note that the President of the Parliament, Mr. Stoitcho Moshanoff, in the newspaper interview quoted in part in my despatch No. 262, of June 1, made a very similar statement, though less categorical, to that of the Prime Minister, reported above.

26th 65  
At the present moment there is evidence of a strengthening of Bulgarian-Italian relations. Not only was there a cultural agreement recently signed, reported in despatch No. 268, of June 12, but also a Bulgarian economic mission has left for Rome to negotiate a new clearing agreement to supplement the present one which expires on the 30th of the present month. In these negotiations the Italians are hopeful of increasing export quotas...

quotas and increasing the economic relations of the two countries.

Since the Sofia University celebrations, mentioned in my despatch No. 262, of June 1, the King has limited his interviews and markedly withdrawn from any public participation in affairs, which might be open to false conjecture.

Respectfully yours,

  
Ray Atherton

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LEGATION OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 277

Sofia, June 28, 1939.

Subject: Bulgarian Foreign Policy.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
JUL 28 1939  
DIVISION OF  
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

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JUL 24 1939

ADVISER ON POLITICAL RELATIONS  
MR. DUNN  
JUL 18 1939  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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The Honorable  
The Secretary of State,  
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to my despatches Nos. 262, of June 1<sup>97</sup>, and 269, of June 14<sup>99</sup>, and to my telegram No. 36; of June 26, 4 p.m., in which I endeavored to outline considerations weighing with Bulgarian foreign policy and in this connection to report a talk I had with my Yugoslav colleague recently shortly after his return from Belgrade.

He informed me that the statements appearing here, copied from the Belgrade press, that the Yugoslav Foreign Minister considered that German policy was directed toward...

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE  
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toward obtaining its ends through peace was an understatement of what he had told him. Apparently Mr. Markovitch's impression on his Berlin visit was that Hitler realized a European war would not be a short one and that in the end Germany might well jeopardize not only all she had obtained without bloodshed, but also those advantages Hitler was perfectly convinced he could obtain through creating a series of crises which might eventually decide the democratic powers to negotiate on terms favorable to Germany. My Yugoslav colleague continued that this did not mean that Europe was not still at the mercy of some unforeseen incident very likely involving Poland. It had been pointed out to Prince Paul during his visit to Berlin that the German General Staff war plan envisages an immediate sweep to the southeast through Yugoslavia and Bulgaria to the Aegean, with an Italian Albanian force cooperating against Greece and particularly Salonika before it could be occupied by a British fleet. (The Prime Minister estimates the present Italian military force in Albania, not including aerial or naval units, as between eighty and ninety thousand troops.) This would isolate Rumania and in that case it is doubtful indeed whether she would come into a war at all. Thus, my Yugoslav colleague stated it was explained in Berlin that if Yugoslavia was to ally herself with the democratic powers, her territory must necessarily become the first battleground of Europe. The Yugoslav Minister then stated his country's policy, like that of Bulgaria, lay in maintaining its neutrality, and sentiment in his country was strongly....

strongly against German domination. He thought it unlikely that Italy's aspirations to play a larger rôle in Bulgaria would lead to any great result.

In my telegram above referred to, I stated that the French had withdrawn their credit and the reasons therefor. In my personal opinion this was somewhat childish in that the credit was due to expire in some weeks anyway, and it was most unlikely that any part of it would have been used, since the premium, as explained in other despatches, was prohibitive. In this particular case of the Westinghouse Air Brake contract the French made an artificially low price to underbid the Germans even at a loss, and the Bulgarians realized that as this was probably only a test incident it was doubtful wisdom to upset their whole economic system based on the German clearing agreement for this single gesture on the part of the French. The Government has not made it known that the French have withdrawn the credit and the French Legation has not published the fact; therefore, the criticism of the French gesture is rather limited. I venture in this connection to question the political advisability of the opening of this and similar credits to Balkan countries, with more special reference to Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. In a despatch written in 1937 I outlined to the Department the views of a very able French group who at that time were urging upon the French and indirectly upon the British as well that they should envisage the formation of a Balkan Commercial Company  
with....

with some milliards of francs as capital supplied by the Governments. Such a commercial concern would have brought French and British businessmen into the market places of this and other Near Eastern countries and by their actual purchases of exports on the spot could have obtained such political and economic advantages as would offset Germany and be infinitely more effective and probably not more costly financially than the hit-and-miss policy that England and France have attempted to follow in this part of the world recently.

While my British colleague has never ceased hoping that some part of the British credit may be used, and the Foreign Office informs me the matter is still under consideration, no scheme has yet matured. The British Minister is making various and sundry gestures under the aegis of the British Foreign Publicity Department recently established under Lord Perth. Among these are an offer for a British survey to determine the mineral wealth of the country, scholarships in English universities to brilliant students in Bulgarian highschools, and dissemination of British books, periodicals, etc. etc.; also offers of British teachers on the staffs of institutions of learning whose salaries would be paid by the British Publicity Department. Of course, such a propaganda movement taken in comparison with the propaganda measures of the totalitarian powers is very small, and perhaps carries less weight here because of England's political commitments with the adjoining Balkan states, Rumania, Turkey and Greece.

While....

While sentiment in this country continues intransigent and Bulgaria refuses to join the Balkan Entente without some measure of satisfaction in its territorial aspirations, there seems in the public mind here no defense for the Rumanian Government's tolerating such outrages against a Bulgarian minority, reported in my telegram No. 29, of May 15, noon, or for Gafencu, however definite he may be in his statements of Rumanian policy in Bucharest, gratuitously to sound the tocsin in speeches and remarks he is quoted as having made in Ankara and Athens as to the aims of the Balkan Entente. Very recently Bucharest has raised economic difficulties with Sofia. It seems the Bulgarian Minister of Finance went to Bucharest last autumn and concluded a banking arrangement which to date has worked very satisfactorily, particularly in view of the fact that Bulgarian purchases in Rumania (principally gasoline) outweigh tenfold the value of Rumanian purchases in Bulgaria. Instead of liquidating these payments according to the arrangement made last November, I am informed that Bucharest has now made a demand on the Bulgarian National Bank for an immediate payment of balances due in an amount in foreign exchange which probably the Bulgarian National Bank could not advance at the moment without embarrassments. There is a Bulgarian financial mission now in Bucharest attempting to arrange this question, but the result may well be that Bulgaria will continue to buy her gasoline from Rumania but through German sources and the German clearing agreement, which will only tend to put the economic...

economic life of this country still further into German hands. In this connection I venture to point out as of interest that a German recently in Sofia said there were between five and six thousand German investigators, engineers and economists in Rumania fostering German interests there.

Meantime, there are reports of friendly overtures made by Hungary and the conclusion of a Hungarian-Bulgarian cultural pact, and last week General Fischer, special aide to Admiral Horthy, arrived in this country on a visit, carrying a high Hungarian decoration for the King with whom he had an extended interview as well as with the Prime Minister.

In my telegram of today's date I referred to a conversation with the Prime Minister in which he reported his forthcoming visit to Berlin and referred to the economic matters between the two countries. Mr. Bojiloff, the Minister of Finance, is in Berlin at the moment negotiating the sale of Bulgarian wheat and restoring accord among the members of the Bulgarian military mission who are not only in dispute among themselves, but also with the Germans as to the delivery of war materiel on order to this country. I understand the Germans are willing to make immediate delivery of Czech materiel without political commitments, but desire an extension of time for new war materiel in view of the large German orders that must have precedence. It is on this point, I understand, that there is lack of agreement. On the other hand,

Mr...

Mr. Boziloff has negotiated the sale of thirty thousand tons of surplus wheat, to make room for the present harvest, at an approximate price of 3.80 leva per kilogram, and at the same time obtained as an added sweetening German agreement to pay 3 per cent interest on the blocked marks account held for Bulgaria in Germany. It is interesting in this connection to note that Italy is in competition with Germany for Bulgarian wheat, but the Bulgarian financial mission which is now in Rome under Dr. Watchoff, head of the Commercial Section of the Foreign Office, is having hard sledding and has twice come near breaking off negotiations owing to Italian intransigence. I understand the Italian offer with premium for wheat works out only at little more than 2 leva as compared with the German offer of 3.80 leva mentioned above, and that the military supplies consisting mostly of cloth for uniforms works out at a very high figure in comparison with what it may be bought elsewhere.

I am informed that the Bulgarian War Office had hoped to have this new war materiel and uniform cloth available in this country at an early date, since two classes of infantry have been called up for training and manoeuvres during the month of August and it was hoped these might be available.

The Foreign Minister of Egypt on completion of his visit to Bucharest will stop in Sofia next week en route to Cairo. This visit together with the fact that the Argentines have recently opened a Legation office here under a Chargé d'Affaires as separate from the

Argentine...

Argentine Consulate General, and that a Japanese diplomatic officer is allegedly to be assigned shortly to this country, has somewhat restored a feeling of self-importance in Sofia.

Respectfully yours,

*W. V. M.*  
W. V. Merton

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LEGATION OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 362

Sofia, November 21, 1939

Subject: Relations between Bulgaria  
and Soviet Russia.

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EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE  
MR. BERLE

The Honorable  
The Secretary of State,  
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to report that the relations between Bulgaria and Soviet Russia have been gradually becoming more active during the past few months and there are indications that this will in all probability continue. Briefly, the background of this development is as follows:

When Russia opened her negotiations with Turkey for a pact of mutual assistance she returned to a more active policy in the Balkans, and it is not believed here that the failure of these negotiations will deter her from this policy. Though judging

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from reports emanating from Moscow Russia appeared not to be displeased with the conclusion of the British-French-Turkish pact and was satisfied with protocol No. 2 attached to that pact, I hear from several sources in Sofia that Russia has become extremely suspicious of the Turks. This may explain to a large extent the increasingly friendly attitude she has manifested lately towards Bulgaria and her apparent desire to strengthen relations with this country. The reasons are of course self-evident: on account of her geographical position Bulgaria's policy has a bearing on the problem of the Straits. A friendly Bulgaria would not only improve Russia's position in the Balkans generally, but would afford a counterweight to any Turkish hostility towards Russia.

The first indications of Russia's revived interest in Bulgaria were observed some time ago (see despatch No. 313, of August 10). While I have as yet been unable to obtain any authoritative information, and it will be recalled that early this month the Prime Minister assured me that Russia had made no proposition to Bulgaria, I think it is reasonable to assume that some concrete proposals may by now have been made to the Bulgarian Government. The new Russian Minister, who arrived in Sofia two weeks ago, has seen the Prime Minister several times and the prolonged visit to Sofia of Mr. Antonoff, the Bulgarian Minister to Russia, seems to give weight to my supposition that soundings have been made. Given Bulgaria's evidently sincere desire to remain strictly neutral and in view of the King's control over foreign affairs and his natural fear of Russia, I feel sure that the Bulgarian Government would not entertain any suggestions..

suggestions which would jeopardize this country's neutrality. One of the results of the conversations with the new Russian Minister is that "Izvestia" can now be sold in Sofia, all Russian newspapers having been banned in Bulgaria since 1923; and this may be connected with reports that the Russian Minister has assured the Bulgarian Government that Russia will not interfere in this country's domestic affairs.

It is understood that Russia fully approves the policy of independence and neutrality pursued by Bulgaria and presumably, therefore, is satisfied with Bulgaria's unfavorable attitude toward the idea of a neutral bloc, which was doubtless directed against Russia. But though the Balkan bloc appears to have failed, the publicity in connection therewith has given Italy, through her press and radio, an opportunity of asserting her interest in the Balkans, and Bulgaria will have to be very cautious in dealing with Russia so as not to aggravate the situation created by the rivalry among the Great Powers in this part of the world. By the same token and in keeping with Russia's present cautious policy, it is assumed here that the Soviet Government will move with great care in her dealings with the Balkan countries.

It seems likely, therefore, that Bulgaria will gradually improve her relations with Russia without, however, definitely committing herself on major policy, since this country wishes to maintain as long as possible a neutral course in respect of the conflicting influences at work in the Balkans. Such an improvement in Russo-Bulgarian relations would not run counter to this country's policy of neutrality, while at the same time it would  
presumably

presumably strengthen Bulgaria's position in general. On the other hand, Bulgaria's friendship is a valuable asset to Russia not only as regards Turkey, but also in dealing with the other Balkan countries, especially Yugoslavia which has not even normal diplomatic relations with Russia.

While there is nothing definite to go on, I think it not unlikely that some concrete project of a non-political nature is under discussion between the two countries and, though it is only a guess, I imagine that some sort of commercial agreement may be under way. The reduction of troops on the Turkish-Bulgarian frontier has brought about a détente in the relations between this country and Turkey and it is in keeping with Bulgaria's policy of playing no favorites that Bulgaria should equalize this by making some gesture towards Russia. As to commercial relations between the two countries, there is very little that they could normally exchange; but economic negotiations are not likely to arouse serious suspicions and they would probably afford an improvement in the relations between the two countries.

Though the possibility of the spread of Communism is not overlooked, it is not regarded as a real danger by the Bulgarian Government. In this connection, Mr. Antonoff, the Bulgarian Minister to Russia, tells me that the Soviet Government is fully aware that Communism cannot exist in one Balkan country alone and that if Bulgaria were to become Bolshevized, she would be a danger to her Balkan neighbors who would no doubt immediately invade Bulgaria in self-defense. Mr. Antonoff thinks, therefore, that since Russia wishes to strengthen her political influence in the Balkans, she would

not...

not jeopardize her prospects of success by attempting to disseminate Communism in this country, and pointed out that for twenty years Russia had close relations with Turkey during which period she was careful to prevent communistic influence from penetrating Turkey. A Bulgarian deputy who recently visited Russia informs the Legation that this same point was expressed to him by George Dimitroff, the Bulgarian Communist hero of the Reichstag fire, who now occupies the post of Secretary of the Comintern.

The foregoing may explain why, as reported in recent despatches, the Prime Minister does not seem to be impressed by the danger of Communism which the British and Italian propaganda are using as a kind of bogeyman in their struggle for influence in the Balkans. Though closer relations with Russia will undoubtedly encourage Bulgarian Communists, I do not think the Government will have any difficulty in dealing with them, as I believe will be shown in the general elections which begin December 24, next.

In this connection, there is circulating in Sofia the quip that the Bulgarian army is pro-German, the King pro-English, and the people pro-Russian. Though there is some truth in the first two points, there is no doubt about the accuracy of the third one.

Respectfully yours,

*Hugh Millard*  
Hugh Millard  
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

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RAD

JR

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (C)

Sofia

FROM

Dated December 11, 1939

Rec'd 2:20 a.m., 12th.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

ADVISER OF POLITICAL RELATIONS  
MR. DUNN  
DEC 15 1939  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
File Co  
DEC 12 1939  
J.P. L.W.  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

84, December 11, 2 p.m.

Department's 31, December 9, 2 p.m.

A touch of influenza has prevented me from calling on the Prime Minister but he has previously made it clear that his government though desirous of maintaining friendly relations with Russia was concerned over but not unduly apprehensive of Russian political aspirations in the Balkans. As reported in my telegram No. 76, October 30, he stated that he recognized the Russian danger but at that time he was inclined to minimize its imminence. However on that occasion and in our last conversation reported in my 81, November 27, he was emphatic in declaring that Bulgaria would under no circumstances want Russia as a neighbor and he felt that if Russia is determined to take Bessarabia the best way to avert war in the Balkans would be to let her take that province without resistance. The Prime Minister has repeatedly asserted that in his opinion Russia does not desire to embark on a foreign military venture and it is assumed that Russia's attack on

761.74

761.74/1

DEC 11 1939

Finland

-2- 1934, December 11, 2 p.m., from Sofia.

Finland, contrary to his expectations has added to his concern with regard to this part of the world even though there are factors in the Balkans absent in the case of Finland. But regardless of the Bulgarian Government's attitude toward Russian foreign policy Bulgaria dare not give expression to any kind of condemnation; her only course is to foster friendly relations with Russia and make every effort to steer these relations away from the political sphere and confine them to commercial matters (see my telegram 93, December 9).

766661  
The Bulgarian public though admiring Finland's course has been inclined to criticize her failure to make sufficient concessions to avoid hostilities, the majority here feeling that the action of the other Baltic States was wise. A somewhat similar attitude was noted here with regard to Poland's 'intrusiveness'. Popular sympathy for Russia and a fellow feeling toward all revisionist countries including Russia are factors further to be reckoned in weighing the natural sympathy of one small country for another which is attacked by a great power. However this realistic Bulgarian approach does not mean that they approve Russian aggression. There is unmistakably a feeling of satisfaction that a small country

-3- 1984, December 11, 2 p.m., from Sofia.

country like Finland is resisting so well and which may in turn influence any contemplated action by Russia in this area; furthermore Russia's creation of a Finnish puppet communist government, contrary to Russia's action and expressed intentions in regard to the other Baltic States has aroused Bulgarian apprehensions lest Russian penetration in the Balkans be accompanied by communistic interference in internal affairs.

While local communist activity has increased somewhat partly as a result of Russia's new prominent role and particularly in view of the coming elections the Government's repressive measures have likewise been strengthened. The six members of the Central Committee of the dissolved Workers Party which is communist were arrested together with several other communists a fortnight ago. The Prime Minister informed me in my last interview as reported in despatch No. 368, November 28, that he believed many observers in Bulgaria mistook the natural feeling of sympathy of the Bulgarian people for Russia, their liberator as an interest in communism and reiterated that this country is not a fertile field for communism.

HILLARD

**TELEGRAM RECEIVED**

*RDC*  
*2M*  
DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
DEC 18 1939  
*File Co*  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

*ED*  
*AE*  
*PA/2*

JR  
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (B)

FROM Sofia

Dated December 15, 1939

Rec'd 9 a.m., 16th

*Shannon to MID*  
*JAT*

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

ADVISOR ON POLITICAL RELATIONS  
MR. DURN  
DEC 28 1939  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS  
*JAT*  
*1109*

87, December 15, 8 p.m.

*761.74/40*  
*41*

Department's 31, December 9, 2 p.m., and my 84, December 11, 2 p.m.

*761.74*

I called upon the Prime Minister this afternoon.

Answering my question as to what he thought of Russia's present foreign policy he said that it was imperialistic and essentially opportunist and that its success depended exclusively on the development of the war in the west; adding that the more Germany becomes absorbed in the war against the Allies the less she will be able to keep an eye on Russia and therefore the stronger will Russia's imperialistic policy become; and, the Prime Minister stated as he has so often that it was doubly important that efforts should be made to bring about peace before the belligerents became exhausted, otherwise Communism would spread to their countries and Russian influence in Southeastern Europe could not be checked.

761.74/42

DEC 27 1939

**FILED**

As

-2- #87, December 15, 8 p.m., from Sofia.

761.65  
As to the Straits he pointed out that not only was Great Britain in Russia's way but France, Italy and even Germany as well. Asked what Italy could and would do to check Russia, he said that Italy was presumably concerned primarily with Salonica while the Straits were the ulterior aim of Russia. As these two objectives were not in direct conflict he did not think Italy would fight although any Russian penetration in the Balkans was Boudo to alarm the Italians.

He stated that the advantages gained so far by Russia were entirely a result of the war and that any further advantages could be achieved only through a continuation of hostilities. On the other hand it was to Italy's benefit to wait until after the war.

761.71  
Turning to the question of Bessarabia and its bearing on this country, I inquired whether he still felt that the Russians would overrun Rumania if the latter resisted an invasion and he replied yes. I asked directly if this were to happen and the Russian forces demanded passage through Bulgaria what would his Government's attitude be. He said that they would have no alternative but to let them pass unless the situation at that time would make another course of action possible. In any

case

-3- 1937, December 17, 8 p.m., from Sofia.

case he added such a contingency was unlikely. Asked whether he thought the British and French would support Rumania if she were invaded by Russia he replied no and it was his opinion that they too would prefer that the Rumanians should not resist (see despatch No. 350, October 22.)

In reply to a question he said that the Allies now had in Syria 120,000 troops and added that the Turks could muster about 500,000 in all against the Russians. He repeated that the possibility of the Russians pushing towards the Straits was remote unless the belligerents became utterly exhausted. Though I reverted to the question of Russia several times and from different angles at no time did he evince concern but repeated that everything depended on the way the war developed in the west.

2600.61  
I next turned to the Russian invasion of Finland and asked how he could explain the change in Russian policy. I pointed out that Russia was actually at war and that she had created a puppet Communist Finnish Government, both points being in direct contrast to her previous methods. The Prime Minister remarked that the Finnish war was due entirely to a miscalculation on Russia's part. He thought that Russia had felt convinced that a show of force would suffice to overthrow the Finnish Government and bring about

-4- #87, December 15, 8 p.m., from Sofia.

one amenable to her wishes. He believed Russia had had no intention of conducting real military operations and the fact that the Leningrad garrison was the only one engaged primarily proves this but that for prestige Russia must now go through with it. A loss of 200,000 men would be insignificant to Russia whereas if Finland lost this number the main objectives along the Baltic littoral would be attained and the war would come to an end. Finland was writing "glorious pages in her history" as had Poland and will suffer the same fate. He remarked dryly that Bulgaria had in her time also written such pages largely in <sup>vain</sup> ~~vain~~. He felt that the other Baltic States, the Czechs and the Slovaks, had been right in giving in; there was only one intelligent choice a small country could make between concessions and annihilation. Like the Finns their only hope of regaining their former status is at a conference after the war so why add unnecessary misery.

When I questioned him in regard to the puppet government in Finland he did not consider it significant or as an indication of future Russian policy.

Discussing Communist propaganda in Bulgaria he informed me that the Russian minister had assured him yesterday that Russia had no desire or intention in any

-5- #87, December 15, 8 p.m., from Sofia.

way to interfere in Bulgaria's internal affairs. Asked what he thought was Moscow's policy in this country he said that Russia wanted a strong Bulgaria and if it were to become Bolshevized it would be greatly weakened. Furthermore neither Bulgaria's neighbors nor Italy could afford to have Communism here and they could doubtless invade Bulgaria if this happened. Moscow, he stated, was fully aware of this (this same view was expressed to me by the Bulgarian Minister to Russia as explained in my despatch 362, <sup>November 21</sup> on Bulgarian Russian relations).

In reply to an inquiry the Prime Minister said that the Russian Bulgarian air convention (my telegram 86, December 11, 7 p.m.) and the proposed commercial treaty (my 86, December 15, 6 p.m.) had no political strings whatsoever.

WILLARD

CSB



LEGATION OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 378

Sofia, December 16, 1939

Subject: Conversation with the Prime  
Minister principally as regards  
the present foreign policy of Russia.

~~STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL~~

*copy in file*  
DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
JAN 25 1940  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

215 JAN 21 1940

RECEIVED  
AND RECORDED

Distribution Instructions  
MID } in strict  
ONI } confidence  
JAN 31 1940

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
OF STATE  
DEC 31 1939

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,  
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to my telegram No. 87, of  
December 15, 8 p.m. summarizing a conversation with the Prime  
Minister on that day, and to enclose a memorandum setting forth  
the interview in full.

Throughout this conversation I confined my inquiries to  
Russia in order to elicit as much information as possible to  
answer the Department's telegram of inquiry No. 31, of December  
9, 2 p.m. It may be well to point out that Russia is a factor  
seriously....

FEB 6 - 1940

FILED

761.74/49

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
JAN 30 1940  
MR. BERLE

761.74/42

CONFIDENTIAL

GML

seriously to be reckoned with by Bulgaria and it is natural, therefore, that the Prime Minister should be circumspect in any observations which he makes regarding that country. For this reason it was not easy to limit our conversation to the subject of Russian policy. The Department will observe that at no time did Mr. Kiosseivanoff make any observations derogatory to Russia. This restraint was more noticeable in that part of our conversation which touched on Finland, when I referred in caustic terms to Russia's behaviour, thus affording him a convenient opportunity for comment or to indicate some measure of agreement; but he merely let my remarks pass. It should be mentioned in this relation, however, that this is not exceptional since Mr. Kiosseivanoff is habitually cautious in his references to the action of any of the great powers, though he has occasionally referred with asperity to the conduct of some of Bulgaria's neighbors.

As reported in several telegrams and as shown in the enclosed memorandum, I found the Prime Minister still apparently unworried as regards Russia; but that he (and the King) would welcome a predominant Russian influence here is, I am sure, utterly out of the question. Though I do not overlook the fact that for several reasons the Prime Minister would not wish to convey the impression that he was afraid of Russia, I believe that his unperturbed manner reflected his feelings, and I assume that he is counting on the balance of power among the four great states principally interested in the Balkans -- Germany, Great Britain, Italy and Russia -- to save Bulgaria (see despatch No. 370, of December 6). I do not, however, wish to convey the impression that the Prime Minister's attitude reflects any illusion as to the dangers inherent in the position of

a small country trying to remain neutral in the present war. On the contrary, he is only too well aware of these dangers, but I believe that he feels his policy has been right and so far successful, and that Bulgaria is about as well off as she could be, given the wretched state of the world today.

It was clearly on the cards that Russia should make friendly advances towards Bulgaria, as suggested in my despatch No. 362, of November 21, and I understand that she is being courted by Russia. A flirtation with Russia at this time would tend to enhance Bulgaria's standing in the eyes of her four neighbors as well as the Allies and Italy, all of whom fear and suspect Russia in varying degrees. It is also quite in line with the King's adroit policy to make some gesture toward Russia, the power from which he personally has most to fear; hence the air convention and the negotiations for a commercial treaty (see my telegrams Nos. 85 and 86, of December 11 and December 15) undertaken, I presume, in the hope that such gestures, made promptly, may compensate for the absence of any political concessions later, which the King must dread. At the same time, any gestures which the Bulgarian Government may make towards Moscow are bound to find favor with the Bulgarian masses, who are pro-Russian.

While it is pure speculation, I am perhaps justified in analyzing the possible tactics of the Bulgarian Government in respect to Russia. One can imagine Mr. Kiosseivanoff (and the King) reasoning somewhat as follows: The attitude of the Balkan Entente and the Allies is unfriendly; Russia seeks a friend in the Balkans to offset the loss of Turkey and to act as a counterweight to that country; there is no harm in receiving Russian advances cordially, for the present at least, as Russian troops are still a long way

off ...

off and, furthermore, they have as yet displayed no ability; Moscow does not wish to convert Bulgaria to Communism (see page 9 of the enclosed memorandum and the above-mentioned despatch No. 362, of November 21). The Prime Minister might reason further that such a flirtation with Moscow will impress the Allies and Italy and Bulgaria's four neighbors, and should they complain he could say that after all there is nothing between Russia and Bulgaria but an air convention and commercial treaty negotiations, both quite normal and harmless. He could also assure inquirers, as he did me, that the agreements have no political strings whatever. The Prime Minister could, moreover, point to the well-known pro-Russian feelings of the Bulgarian people and say that his Government cannot ignore this and that obviously it dare not snub Russia. Should Russia, on the other hand, become exigent and ask for political commitments, Mr. Kiosseivanoff could reply that, surrounded as Bulgaria is by four unfriendly countries backed by the Allies, he dare not take such a dangerous step. He could add, furthermore, that Italy, Bulgaria's friend of long standing, has publicly given notice that she does not propose to leave the Balkans to Russia. Even Germany, who does not want her supplies interfered with, might be evoked. It will be noted that the foregoing hypothesis is simply a play on the balance of power which is indispensable to Bulgaria's self-preservation during the present period of uncertainty.

I therefore see in Bulgaria's present relations with Russia no indication of a change in Bulgaria's policy of neutrality; and that she is taking the greatest pains not to antagonize any country or to assume any political obligations towards any country, as reflected in the Prime Minister's assurance to me that Bulgaria would not even accept the Southern Dobrudja unless all the powers acquiesced (see my telegram No. 81, of November 27, 6 p.m.).

It...

It will also be noted in the enclosed memorandum that Mr. Kiosseivanoff emphasized that small countries should yield to the demands of the great powers and thus avoid annihilation and wait until the war is over to seek justice. This matter-of-fact approach may seem hard; but Bulgarians have a hard life and have had a hard history; Bulgarians simply cannot afford to let the sufferings of others engage their sympathy. The Prime Minister's policy may be concisely described as cold and realistic.

A high official of the King's entourage in a recent conversation with the Legation regarding the possibility of Bulgaria's military resistance casually summed up the situation as follows: Should one of Bulgaria's neighbors invade this country she would fight with all her strength; should she be invaded by one of her neighbors backed by a great power, she "would think it over carefully"; should one of the great powers, however, invade Bulgaria, she would not resist.

I believe that Bismarck once said that a foreign policy which is dictated by the emotions is doomed to disaster. Certainly the Bulgarian Government has no intention of falling into this error.

Respectfully yours,

  
Hugh Millard  
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

✓  
Enclosure:

Memorandum of conversation  
with the Prime Minister.

File 710  
HM/MM

3

71

December 15, 1939

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

between

the Prime Minister and Mr. Millard

---

I called on the Prime Minister this afternoon to discuss Russia having in mind the Department's telegram No. 31, of December 9.

I opened the conversation by referring to the air convention between Russia and Bulgaria which was signed in Sofia on December 11, and referred to the rumors of "Russian air bases" to which it had given rise. He smiled and said that there was an unusually large and fantastic crop of rumors at this time. He said the air convention was concluded between the two air administrations only, that it was similar to that which permitted the German, Italian and former Polish air lines to operate in this country. Bulgaria had air navigation conventions with other neighboring states and it was a perfectly natural development. In reply to a question, he assured me it had no political or military ramifications whatever.

I then referred to the commercial treaty negotiations which were officially announced this morning and inquired whether there would be much trade between the two countries. He said he didn't think so, but Bulgaria was anxious to obtain petroleum products without paying free currency as she is compelled to do in the case of Rumania. Asked what Bulgaria would give in exchange, he mentioned...

mentioned tobacco and rose oil. He mentioned that Madame Molotoff, the wife of the Commissar for Foreign Affairs, was head of the Russian trust which made soaps, perfumes, etc. When I suggested that we might soon have an increased fragrance from Russia, he smiled and replied that he feared the Russians would not benefit from these luxuries which were essentially for export. As to the tobacco, he said the Russians were accustomed to the poorer grades which they themselves raised. Asked whether there would be any political commitments in connection with the proposed commercial treaty and he said none whatsoever. I inquired whether the Russians might not use this opportunity to ask for political considerations in the course of these negotiations. He replied he had no reason to believe they would and, furthermore, it would not be with a purely technical delegation of this kind that the Russians would raise political questions, adding that had they had anything of the kind in mind they would have approached him through the Russian Minister in Sofia, and no such approach had been made. Referring to rumors circulating with regard to the treaty negotiations, he said that the only remarkable feature was that there was no treaty between the two countries and that efforts made two or three years ago had succeeded.

I then asked what he thought of Russia's present foreign policy. He said that it was at present imperialist and essentially opportunist and depends almost exclusively on how the war developed in the west. The more Germany's efforts are thrown into the war against France and Great Britain....

Britain, the less will Germany be able to watch Russia and consequently the more will Russia's imperialistic policy grow. For this reason it was doubly important that efforts should be made to bring about peace before the western powers are exhausted, since this would not only bring about the spread of Communism owing to the internal disintegration in these countries, but also the spread of Russian influence in southeastern Europe against which there would be an adequate check. After all Germany was essentially Russia's greatest enemy.

I referred to Italy's new role in southeastern Europe and he repeated what he told me on a previous occasion (see despatch No. 368 of Nov. 28) that Italy wished to take the place formerly occupied by Austria-Hungary. When I expressed doubts whether Italy was capable of playing such a role, he agreed and pointed out that Austria-Hungary had been backed by Germany against Russia; now Germany is supposedly a friend of Russia and the situation in this regard is not clear. Asked what Italy could and would do to check Russia, he said that Italy was presumably concerned with Saloniki while Russia's ulterior aim was the Straits. These two objectives did not come into any direct conflict, though of course any Russian penetration in the Balkans was bound to alarm Italy. He did not think, however, that Italy would fight and referred to Italy's influence over Yugoslavia without indicating how this might be used to check Russia.

He said that the advantages gained so far by Russia were due entirely to the war and any further advantages she might gain could only be achieved so long as the war lasted. It was to the advantage of Italy, however, to wait until after the war. If Britain and France were defeated, Italy would endeavor to gain her objectives at that time. If on the other hand, Germany is defeated, Italy will endeavor to obtain her ends at a conference. In the meantime, she is making money from both England and France and recently sold 300 airplanes to the latter. Thus, she is selling them to both Germany and France. Italy had greatly suffered from the Abyssinian venture which was still costing huge sums. He thought that this was another reason why Italy will remain neutral.

Turning to the question of Bessarabia and its bearing on Bulgaria, I asked whether he still thought Rumania would not resist if Russia took Bessarabia and that Russia would not push beyond her old frontiers if Rumania did not resist. He replied that was still his opinion. Asked whether he thought the British and French would support Rumania if she were invaded by Russia and he replied that he did not, and it was his opinion that they, too, would prefer that Rumania should not resist (see despatch 350, of October 22). Asked whether Germany would object to Russia's absorption of Bessarabia, he said no.

I then inquired whether he still felt that should the Rumanians resist would the Russians overrun Rumania, and he replied that he feared they would march down to  
the...

the Bulgarian frontier. I asked directly if in such an event large Russian forces should arrive at the Bulgarian frontier and demand passage through Bulgaria, what would his Government's attitude be? He said they would have no alternative but to let them pass. Of course, he added that this would depend also on other conditions prevailing at that time. Asked how many troops the Allies now had in Syria, he said 120,000 and added that the Turks could muster about 500,000 in all against the Russians. I asked whether he thought this danger of the Russians pushing towards the Straits imminent and he replied that it was only a remote possibility. He said he was not worried about Russia and at no time during the conversation did he display the slightest concern. He repeated, however, as stated above, that everything depended on the way the war developed in the west, and should the western powers annihilate one another, the Russian danger would be very great.

I turned to the question of Finland and asked how he could explain the apparent change in Russian policy. In the first place Russia had actually gone to war against the Finns (of course the Polish march was not in any sense war) and that Russia had created a puppet Communist Finnish government. These two points seemed to be in direct contradiction to her previous policy. The Prime Minister replied that the Finnish war was due entirely to a miscalculation on

Russia's....

Apparently correct.

Russia's part; he thought that Russia had been convinced that a show of force would be sufficient to make the Finnish Government fall and bring about one amenable to Russia's wishes. It was the same mistake which Great Britain and Germany had made -- each thought the threat of war would frighten the other from fighting. When the bluff had failed, they had to go on for the sake of prestige.

He thought the other Baltic states had been quite right in giving in; the choice was simply between concessions and annihilation. In either event, their only hope of returning to their old status was at a conference after the war. By the same token he thought it would have been wiser for Finland to have submitted to Russia's demands. Similarly, he believed that Poland should have submitted to Germany's demands. Modern Poland had added "glorious pages to her history" but had suffered annihilation. Bulgaria, too, had added "glorious pages to her history" but that glory had cost her a loss of territory and an enormous loss of lives and wealth and increased her misery. Now Finland was doing the same thing. He felt that the fact that the Leningrad garrison was the only one engaged at first proves that Russia had no intention to conduct real military operations, but now Russia must go through with it as prestige demands. Russian troops had been greatly increased and she could lose 200,000 men without feeling it in the slightest, but  
should....

should Finland lose that many the main objectives along the Baltic littoral would be taken and the war would be over. He did not think that Russia had any intentions of pursuing the Finns into the fastness of their lakes and forests, but this was unnecessary.

Throughout the discussion of the attack on Finland, the Prime Minister, as is his invariable rule when a Great Power is involved, made no condemnatory references to Russia, and even though I referred to Russia's behaviour in Finland in the most caustic terms, his attitude was completely noncommittal. He only remarked that a day or two before the wife of the French Minister had referred to the "poor Finns" and how deeply France sympathized with them"; and the Prime Minister observed to me, "the Finns want something more than sympathy."

I then turned to the action of the League of Nations and he said that the withdrawal of Russia would only further weaken the League. He did not, however, suggest what else the League could have done in the circumstances. As to the Bulgarian representative, the Prime Minister said he had "abstained from voting as had several other representatives." In reply to further questions, he remarked "What is the use of antagonizing a Great Power like Russia?"

He then said that in the case of a dispute between two small nations, such as the Pangalos invasion of Bulgaria in 1925, the League's intervention had been effective, but when a Great Power was involved, as in the Corfu affair, the League was impotent. He referred  
with....

with some bitterness to the sanctions against Italy in 1936 and said that Bulgaria still suffered economically as a result of having joined in imposing them and that "the Italians still hold it against Bulgaria and that they don't seem to remember that any other country took part in sanctions."

The Prime Minister then stated, oddly enough, that the only hope of salvation was a world organization, say a reconstructed League of Nations with a powerfully armed force which would compel its members to behave. He said that of course there must first be just frontiers and where they could not reasonably be made to coincide with racial frontiers, minorities should be transferred; colonies in themselves were not so important, but raw materials must be made available in fair proportion, etc. Here again he touched on one of his favorite themes, that there must be no victor or vanquished in the present war if there is to be a just peace; and he stated that 80 million Germans could not be suppressed. If they lose, it would only be a question of time, 10, 20 or 50 years before the same terrible struggle would begin again.

Mr. Kiosseivanoff spoke with considerable warmth and I mention briefly his observations on a "better world" as of possible interest in contrast with his handling of foreign policy of today, which I think can be accurately and simply described as "hard-boiled" realism.

In any event, I had gone to see the Prime Minister  
to....

to elicit as much information as I possibly could on the subject of Russia, and though this memorandum may not reflect it, I was constantly at pains to steer his thoughts in that direction. As my time was running short, I succeeded in turning the conversation from ideals to Communism.

I referred to Russia's policy regarding Bulgaria and reminded the Prime Minister that in previous conversations he told me there had been no Communist propaganda in this country from the outside. He said that this was still the case and that he was assured yesterday by the Russian Minister that Russia had no desire or intention in any way to interfere in Bulgaria's internal affairs. I asked him whether he thought the Russian Government had any interest in disseminating Communism in Bulgaria and he said that he did not. Russia, he believed, wanted a strong Bulgaria. Should Bulgaria become a Communist state, it would be enormously weakened. Furthermore, Bulgaria's neighbors could not afford to have Bulgaria become Communist, nor could Italy, and in such an event Bulgaria would presumably be invaded (this same view was expressed to me by the Bulgarian Minister to Russia, as explained in more detail in my despatch No. 362, of November 21 on Bulgarian-Russian relations). The Prime Minister again mentioned that Tzarist Russia had made the mistake of interfering in Bulgaria's internal affairs (see despatch No. 358, of November 4) and the anti-Russian feeling which this aroused persisted for some years thereafter. He did not think...

think Soviet Russia would repeat this mistake. He said that Communist revolutions had been attempted in Bulgaria in 1923 and in 1925 and had failed completely, first because the country was not a fertile field for Communism and especially because the army, which was strongly nationalist, would not tolerate it. No revolution could take place without support from the army; even Stalin's régime is based on the army.

H.M.

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

*Handwritten marks and initials in the top right corner.*

HSM  
This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased  
before being communi-  
cated to anyone. (Br.)

FROM

Sofia

Dated April 5, 1940

Rec'd 6:52 p. m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

28, April 5, 3 p. m.

*Stamp: DEPARTMENT OF STATE, APR 6 1940, with handwritten initials and signatures.*

*Handwritten notes on the left margin: 740.0011EW, 2227, 962.00*

The Italian Minister, a brother-in-law of Ciano, here direct from being Counselor of Italian Embassy in Berlin, states that German people are growing sicker of war every day and that there is a great change of sentiment in this direction since September 1st. He also thinks since the Finnish war internal sentiment in Russia is bad owing to the fact that the fundamental propaganda of Bolshevists depicts capitalistic states but not Communistic state as constantly shedding blood of working classes for imperialistic purposes. For this reason he thinks Russia will avoid war and not invade Rumania. He also says Italy is using all means to prevent war in the Balkans.

The German Minister states positively that Germany wants no disturbance of status quo in Balkans.

*Vertical stamp: APR 12 1940, with other markings.*

*Vertical stamp on the right edge: 7400011EW, 2227, 962.00*

hsm -2- No. 28, April 5, 3 p. m., from Sofia

741.71  
The Rumanian Minister says Bessarabia is as much Rumanian as any part of his country and if necessary Rumania will fight with all her power to keep it. He admits however that no small country could hold out for long against a great power.

741.74  
The British Minister says "Russia has Bulgaria in her pocket and Bulgaria will do as Russia wants". The Greek Minister says Russia is now beginning negotiations with Rumania for Bessarabia. He is afraid these may take some unsuccessful course as Polish-German and Finnish-Russian negotiations. He is afraid that if the Russian army arrives at the Bulgarian frontier the Bulgarian people may rise en masse and go over to Russia.

It will be noted that the above observations of the British and Greek Ministers regarding Russia are at variance with the views of Foreign Minister reported in my telegram No. 24, April 25, 1 p. m.

EARLE

RR

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

SECRETARY OF STATE  
DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
AUG 13 1940  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ED

JR  
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (br)

FROM

Sofia

Dated August 12, 1940

Rec'd 1:30 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

101, August 12, 11 a.m.

Pro-Russian sentiment of the mass of the Bulgarian people was strikingly illustrated here yesterday in a soccer game between Moscow and Sofia won by Moscow 6-1.

In the stadium jammed to its capacity of 25,000, with the entire police force of Sofia on duty, there were occurrences probably unprecedented in the history of athletics. At every good play of the visitors the crowd roared its approval while remaining completely silent when the Bulgarian team excelled.

Choukanoff, most energetic of the Bulgarian correspondents here, was bitterly called to task by the Bulgarian Foreign Office for reporting to the Associated Press the enthusiastic reception given to the Russian team upon its arrival in Sofia. The Foreign Office felt that any act was unpatriotic that might antagonize Germany with the restoration of the Dobrudja imminent due to German influence.

The London TIMES correspondent, passing through Sofia after an extended tour through European Russia, informs me that

26174

761-74/55

AUG 14 1940

FILED

-2- #101, August 12, 11 a.m., from Sofia.

that there is an increasingly serious shortage of food in that country due primarily to the shortage of food by the Russian Government in anticipation of war with Germany and secondly to bad transportation and to the diversion of so many Russian farmers to warlike occupations.

EARLE

TFV

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

RDS

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (Er.)

SOFIA

Dated September 19, 1940

Rec'd 6:05 p.m.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
SEP 24 1940  
DIVISION OF  
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

Secretary of State  
Washington.

seen by MID  
DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
SEP 20 1940  
File

121, September 19, 4 p.m.

The Foreign Minister informed me today that Bulgaria will continue her policy of patient waiting for an egress to the Aegean with no threats or action of any kind against any nation.

He is delighted with the Dobrudja settlement, contrasting the Bulgarian acquisition of the Dobrudja with its Bulgarian population (once the Rumanian population of 72,000 are repatriated) with the Hungarian acquisition of Transylvania with that part of its population of over 1,000,000 who are not Hungarians.

He believes that Germany wants only tranquillity in the Balkans and has no idea of invading Turkey.

He feels certain that in the event of an Italian-Greek war Bulgaria can stay out.

He says the Bulgarian people and Government are very grateful to Germany for receiving the Dobrudja but that this gratitude will not change Bulgaria's policy of neutrality nor has Germany given any intimation that such is her desire.

770.00  
222  
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770.00/826

GRR

FILED  
SEP 25 1940

-2- #121, September 19, 4 p.m., from Sofia.

I feel that the Foreign Minister is sincere but is somewhat of a Pollyanna.

EARLE

EMB



No. 64

LEGATION OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Sofia, October 4, 1940

Handwritten initials and scribbles in the top right corner.

Division of  
FAR EASTERN AFFAIRS  
NOV 23 1940  
Department of State

Subject: Developments in Bulgarian internal  
and external political situation:  
continued policy of neutrality and  
peace; German activities; German-  
Italian-Japanese Pact.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
NOV 13 1940  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Handwritten initials "com-2" above the stamp.

RECEIVED  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

1940 NOV 8 AM 10 48

DIVISION OF  
COMMUNICATIONS  
AND RECORDS

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COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS  
Department of State

NOV 19 1940  
DIVISION OF  
COMMUNICATIONS  
AND RECORDS

The Honorable  
The Secretary of State,  
Washington.

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT  
SECRETARY FOR  
INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS  
NOV 25 1940  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

NOV 20 1940

Sir:

I have the honor to report certain recent developments  
in the internal and external Bulgarian political situation  
following the return to Bulgaria of the Southern Dobrudja.

As was reported in despatch No. 57, of September 20, 1940,  
the Bulgarian Government and people have unanimously expressed  
gratitude to Germany for the part she played in the return of the  
Southern Dobrudja. Axis sympathizers in this country were  
indignant, however, at the Government's expressing thanks for moral  
support to England and Russia. Similarly, reports are circulating

from...

NOV 29 1940

FILED

from numerous sources that Germany and her adherents here are somewhat displeased with the failure of the Prime Minister to declare in his public statements on that occasion that Bulgaria is openly for the Axis. The Prime Minister continued to avow Bulgaria's desire to remain neutral and the determination of his Government to strive to maintain peace in the Balkans.

The Foreign Minister has stated that this reported German displeasure has not been officially expressed to the Bulgarian Government in any way. However, in several broadcasts in Bulgarian from the official German radio station during the last few days specific references were made to allegations that Freemasonry in Bulgaria has not been dissolved (see Legation's telegram No. 94, of July 29, 6 p.m.) and that Masons continue to occupy prominent positions in the Bulgarian Government. The Prime Minister and Foreign Minister are notable examples. The broadcasts also declared that Bulgarian measures to solve the "Jewish problem" had not so far been successful.

Other German activity in Bulgaria at this time includes a visit of the German economic negotiator Herr Landwehr in connection with the renewal of the German-Bulgarian clearing quotas agreement which expired on September 30. Herr Landwehr is reported to be carrying on only preliminary negotiations in this regard, the final agreement to be reached in Berlin and details of his discussions are lacking for the moment. It is believed, however, by competent observers that Germany desires the depreciation of the lev in relation to the mark and in line with the same policy hopes to get Bulgaria to lower the present premium rates on United States dollar and other free exchange. Such a course would further restrict Bulgarian sales to the United States and other free exchange

countries,...

countries, with the result, in the German view, that the strength of the mark would be augmented. Bulgaria is expected to resist this pressure as far as possible, particularly as it has been the especial concern of the National Bank during the past year to reduce its mark balance and increase its dollar reserve. Considerable success has crowned the Bank's efforts to this end to date and any step which might reverse the situation is known to be distasteful to the Governor of the Bank as well as, to a lesser extent, to the Minister of Finance.

Minister of Agriculture Bagrianoff has been invited to visit Berlin and Rome leaving for the former on October 5 and while his visit is in line with the German and Italian practice of inviting prominent Bulgarians to visit those capitals, it is significant in that Mr. Bagrianoff is not only Minister of Agriculture, but is also generally rated as one of the strongest members of the present Cabinet. His visit may be expected therefore to have a wider scope than the field of agriculture, itself important.

Rumors continue to circulate here that the German displeasure mentioned above may cause a reshuffling of the present Cabinet and the replacing of the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister who are identified with Bulgaria's neutral policy. Pressure to this end, it is stated, is being exerted on the King in whose hands ministerial appointments entirely rest. The King is believed, however, to be unwilling to attach Bulgaria to the Axis at this time when the Axis' military policy in the Near East is still undefined and the outcome of the war uncertain. Bulgaria has since the war of 1914-18 pursued an independent revisionist policy, remaining outside the Balkan Entente and other collective blocs and has had her principal revisionist claim satisfied as a result thereof. The Southern Dobrudja was returned by German pressure but no little satisfaction is

felt in Bulgaria that the approval of the other great European powers has also been forthcoming. The King still has a revisionist nation to steer and it seems that he wishes to retain what little freedom of action he may in order to maneuver. If he should attach the country to the Axis little remaining initiative would be left to him.

Indications are that Bulgaria will therefore continue for the present outward manifestations of friendship and gratitude to Germany, while at the same time declining to make an open declaration in her favor. The German-Italian-Japanese treaty which was received with little surprise in Sofia furnished the occasion for numerous editorials referring to "the new world order", etc., and similar effusions followed Rumania's withdrawal from the Balkan Entente. Large scale ceremonies last Monday attended the renaming, in the presence of the Mayor of Stuttgart, of three Sofia streets after the King of Italy, Hitler and Mussolini.

A further important consideration in dictating Bulgaria's resolve to stay out of the war, if at all possible, is Russia. Russian sympathy in the country is widespread and while the present extent of Communistic sentiment is debatable, the economic exhaustion which might be expected to arise as a result of Bulgaria's undertaking a military venture might lead to social unrest and the consequent extension of Communism, which would not be welcomed either personally or politically by the King.

Respectfully yours,

  
George H. Earle III

File 710  
WB/AM

**TELEGRAM RECEIVED**

**FROM**

MN

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (BR)

Sofia

Dated November 11, 1940

Rec'd 12:40 p.m.

Secretary of State

Washington

153, November 11, noon.

The independence of the Balkan States depends upon the conflicting interests here of Germany, Italy and Russia. If an agreement should be reached as to a course of action by these three countries, with France prostrate and British power and influence reduced to a minimum in this area, the situation would be almost hopeless for the Balkan countries. Therefore Molotov's visit to Berlin is viewed here with grave apprehension.

EARLE

PEG

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H. H. ...

**FILED**  
NOV 11 1940

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JR

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased before  
being communicated  
to anyone. (br)

Sofia

Dated November 13, 1940

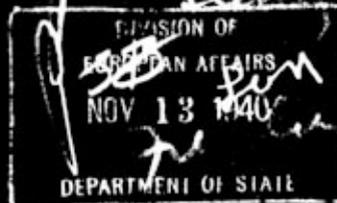
FROM

Rec'd 10:34 a.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

157, November 13, 10 a.m.

My telegram No. 39, April 22, 5 p.m.



75102

Matzhold informs me that an agreement between Germany, Russia and Italy had been reached some time ago and that Molotov's visit to Berlin is only window dressing. He says that a restricted military alliance has been made between these countries which may or may not be made public but he believes a real surprise announcement is in store.

I feel certain that if a military alliance is made between Germany and Russia that the combination of the influence of these two countries will sweep Bulgaria into the arms of the Axis powers and that all efforts of the King and other Bulgarians for neutrality will be futile.

TFV

EARLE

NOV 22 1940

FILED

761.62/791

19/40

**TELEGRAM RECEIVED**

60  
A/E

EH  
This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased be- FROM  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (BR)

Sofia

Dated November 19, 1940

Rec'd 12:20 a.m., 20th.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
NOV 23 1940  
DIVISION OF  
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
NOV 20 1940

162, November 19, 9 a.m.

King's visit to Hitler ominous. Bulgaria faces fate

Czechoslovakia unless she does what Germany wants and  
Hitler needs allies more than victories.

762.74

EARLE

NK

762.74/61

PS/FF

NOV 25 1940

FILED

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

MJM

SOFIA

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (br)

Dated November 20, 1940

Rec'd 3:21 DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS NOV 22 1940 DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Secretary of State

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
NOV 25 1940  
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

Washington.

163, November 20, 3 p.m.

Coinciding with the King's visit to Hitler the Bulgarian censorship has for the first time allowed the publication of articles in which direct references have been made to Bulgaria's claim for a territorial outlet to the Aegean. The following quotation is typical of the tone of these articles: "We do not wish to place our neighbors the Turks in a difficult position. It is not a military solution that we have in mind but a pacific settlement by diplomatic means".

It will be recalled that the Bulgarian censorship permitted similar articles regarding the southern Dobrudja to be published shortly before the meeting at Craiova.

EARLE

HPL

NOV 26 1940

FILED

762.74/62

25/30

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774  
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*Security MID*

*EV*  
*CS*

**TELEGRAM RECEIVED**

AS  
This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (br)

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
NOV 22 1940  
Boris  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

FROM

Dated November 21, 1940

Rec'd 12:25 a.m., 22nd

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
JAN 16 1941  
DIVISION OF  
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

165, November 21, 4 p.m.

*762.74  
note*

The Foreign Minister who accompanied the King to Berchtesgaden on his visit to Hitler has just told me the following: that the King went on Hitler's invitation; that Hitler assured the King that he agreed with him and wanted peace in the Balkans so as to insure Germany's food supply from this region; that Hitler offered a ten year contract for all exportable Bulgarian foodstuffs, payment to be made by Germany by the barter system; that Hitler has invited all the nations of Continental Europe, big and small including France and Russia to join the so-called tripartite bloc; that Hitler, from a lowly position himself had great sympathy for the common people and desired this bloc of European states ensure peace for a hundred years to come; that Bulgaria was studying the invitation but that Popoff could not foretell Bulgaria's decision; that Popoff's impression was that Germany contemplated no military action against Yugoslavia

*662.7431*

762.74/63

JAN 27 1941

FILED Ps/30

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AS-2- No. 165, Nov. 21, 4 p.m., from Sofia.

Yugoslavia and Turkey if Hitler felt certain of the strict neutrality of these nations. The Foreign Minister added that Bulgaria was as determined as ever to preserve peace and under no condition would attack Turkey or Greece and he felt certain no German troops would pass through this country or Yugoslavia. He felt Italy, for the time being at least, would ask for no help from Germany against the Greeks as it would be too humiliating.

I had one disturbing impression from this interview which if correct may reflect this country's future course. For the first time since I have been here Popoff, probably expressing the feelings of the King, seemed to believe in ultimate German victory.

EARLE

TFV

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
 DEC 23 1940  
 DIVISION OF  
 NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

EH  
 This telegram must be  
 closely paraphrased be- FROM  
 fore being communicated  
 to anyone. (br)

Sofia

Dated December 18, 1940

Rec'd 7:15 p.m. *See by N 2*

DIVISION OF  
 EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
 DEC 19 1940  
 DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
*Free Cm*

Secretary of State,  
 Washington.

189, December 18, 7 p.m.

Ganovsky, Secretary of the Bulgarian Communist  
 organization (illegal) informs me that Soboleff asked the  
 King for naval and air bases in Bulgaria. Russia in re-  
 turn offered to force Turkey to give Adrianople and Turkish  
 Thrace to Bulgaria and to exert all possible pressure on  
 Greece to cede Grecian Thrace to the Kavala-Drama line.

Ganovsky says that the King has courteously but firmly  
 refused Russia's proposals.

EARLE

EMB

FILED  
 DEC 26 1940

761.74/62

PS/JI

*761.74*

**TELEGRAM RECEIVED**

JR

This telegram must be \_\_\_\_\_  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (br)

Sofia

FROM

Dated December 27, 1940

Rec'd 11:51 a.m.

*Handwritten: cum MLD*

Secretary of State,

Washington.

195, December 27, 1 p.m.

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
DEC 27 1940  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

*Handwritten: 711.74  
mke  
21.21*

Two Sofia newspapers controlled by German money are attacking America for our "mercenary" motives in helping England and "prolonging" the war. There is no doubt German officials here are deeply concerned over our steadily increasing shipment of war materials to England.

711.74/10

King Boris exerting every effort to keep his country out of the tripartite pact and war is, with distaste, permitting these editorial attacks on us and the passage of anti-Jewish legislation as sops to Germany.

I have pointed out to the Foreign Minister the stupidity of these attacks on America the only country in the world he can be certain has only unselfish and humanitarian feelings toward Bulgaria.

FILED  
DEC 31 1940

EARLE

WSB

**TELEGRAM RECEIVED**



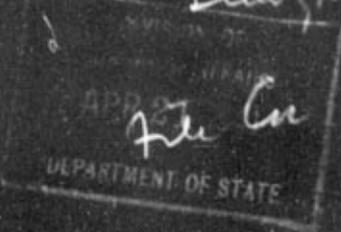
Em  
This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (br) FROM

Date April 19, 1941  
Rec'd 4:05 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

201, April 19, noon.

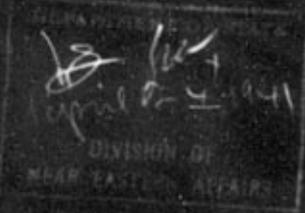
Excellent semi-official Bulgarian source  
informs me official communique will be issued in  
six hours stating for policing and administrative  
purposes Bulgarian troops will move today into  
Grecian Thrace and Grecian and Yugoslav Macedonia  
excepting such military zones as Salonica,  
Ochrid and Struga.



740.0011EW  
2mt  
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E..RLE

HPD



APR 26 1941

FILED

740.001 EUROPEAN WAR 1939 / 10100 PS/AD

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED



Em  
This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased before  
being communicated to anyone. (br)

Sofia

Dated April 19, 1941

Rec'd 4:36 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.



203, April 19, 2 p.m.

A member of the Bulgarian Press Bureau informs me that following the peaceful acquisition of the Southern Dobrudja, the occupation today of Thrace and Macedonia by Bulgarian troops, probably with no or negligible fighting, shows how King Boris has played his hand.

Should Great Britain win in her occupation of Poland as contrasted with Germany here seizure of that country.

EARLE

HPB

Above message received subject to correction.

DCR

APR 26 1941

FILED

740.0011EW  
227  
268.74

740.0011 EUROPEAN WAR 1939 / 10101 PS/A D

Scandy MCD



**TELEGRAM RECEIVED**

*EU*  
*HS*  
*S*

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
APR 26 1941  
DIVISION OF  
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

**FROM**

**SOFIA**

Dated April 23, 1941

Rec'd 11:14 a.m.

JT  
This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (br)

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

DIVISION OF  
APR 24 1941  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

213, April 23, noon.

The Greek Minister has just handed a note to the  
Foreign Minister breaking off relations with Bulgaria.

**EARLE**

PEG

*7-10-3112*  
*26874*

*APR 23 1941*

*FILED*

*APR 28 1941*

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1939 / 100000  
PS / AD

**TELEGRAM RECEIVED**

EH  
This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated.  
to anyone. (br)

Sofia  
FROM  
Dated April 23, 1941

RECEIVED 11:13 p.m.  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
APR 23 1941  
DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
APR 24 1941  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
*seemly*  
*Ju Co*

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

216, April 23, 5 p.m.

The Greek Minister in delivering the note to the  
Foreign Minister breaking off relations with Bulgaria  
informed him as follows:

"You have often complained to me of the treacherous  
way Rumania stabbed Bulgaria in the back in 1913 when you  
were at death grips with Serbia and Greece and that  
Bulgaria would never forget this act of Rumania. Let  
me tell you that Bulgaria's treacherous act in assisting  
the German troops in their attack on us, your neighbor,  
and your occupation of a part of my country after twenty  
years of peaceful and friendly relations will never be  
forgotten by Greece"

He said the Foreign Minister made no reply.

UNSIGNED

EMB

*740.0011*  
*740.0011*  
*768.74*

740.0011 EUROPEAN WAR, 1939/10263 / PS/AD

APR 29 1941  
FILED

EU

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

~~FROM~~ CORRECTED COPY

Sofia via Istanbul

Dated December 27, 1941

MEV  
This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (A)

Rec'd 4 p.m.  
DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
JAN 8 1942  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

December 27, 6 p.m., (SECTION ONE)

Foreign Minister informed me December 25 that  
should Russia attack Japan Bulgaria will be forced  
by the Tripartite Pact to declare war against and  
join in the attack on Russia Bulgaria's action is  
not yet determined. He said that the reason for  
the strained relations between Bulgaria and Russia  
was due to the fact that on Soboleff's visit that  
not only did Russia ask for sea and naval bases in  
Bulgaria (reported in my previous telegrams) but  
that they also proposed that Bulgaria join in an  
alliance with Russia to attack Turkey and take the  
Dardanelles. He added that upon Bulgaria's refusal,  
Russia's attitude has from that time been cold and  
hostile.

FW  
11EW  
17921

2400011 EUROPEAN WAR 1939 / 17921

JAN 12 1942

FILED

PS/VB

EARLE

GW

VII

*Sofia Via Istanbul*

**TELEGRAM RECEIVED**

This telegram closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (A)

Dated December 27, 1941

Rec'd 3:29 p.m.

FROM

Secretary of State,  
Washington,

December 27, 6 p.m., (SECTION TWO).

Popoff said again and again how deeply the Bulgarian Government regretted that declaration of war on America was forced upon them, and that it was compulsory and entirely against their will.

Though so far well treated all Americans are forbidden to leave Bulgaria. This is unquestionably at the order of the German Minister who has an idea that these Americans may be held as hostages for certain Germans or possibly Bulgarians in America. I wanted to stay until I had secured the release of all Americans but the Bulgarian Government would not let me. We had given these Americans four warnings to get out.

On the train to the border, Stanchiff a close personal friend of the King accompanying us told me that Boris was above all a humanitarian and his every action had been directed to keeping Bulgaria out of actual fighting and that should war break out between Bulgaria and Russia, the King and his family would

(\*) Bulgaria

EARLE

VII

(\*) Apparent omission

## TELEGRAM RECEIVED

CORRECTED COPY

MEV

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (A)

FROM Sofia via Istanbul

Dated December 27, 1941

Rec'd 3:43 p.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

December 27, 6 p.m., (SECTION THREE).

Exemplifying the strong pro-Russian sentiment in Bulgaria, the policemen who guarded our Legation were all pro-Russian as well as the three employees on the King's own car on which I went to the border.

We left the Bulgarian people, King and Government deeply depressed and pessimistic due to three simultaneous shocks. First, Bulgaria's forced declaration of war against America, her traditionally old and unselfish friend. Second, the stoning of the American Legation simultaneous with that of the Russian Legation. This action against us was a cause of great shame to all Bulgarians. I have interviewed some of the boys who did it. They were each supplied with three cobblestones and two hundred levas. Third, the one Bulgarian element that was sincerely pro-German was the army officers. This group is shocked beyond words at Hitler, a politician, taking direct command of the army.

Other

-2- December 27, 6 p.m., (SECTION THREE), from Sofia

Other points are: I am informed by an excellent Bulgarian source that there are numerous desertions from the Bulgarian army in Serbia to the forces of the Serbian patriots. The wife of the Swedish Charge d'Affaires just returned from Athens says conditions there are horrible and that hundreds are dying daily from starvation and that the dead are left lying in the streets.

I shall return home as best I can.

(END OF MESSAGE)

EARLE

NK