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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Bulgaria

SUBJECT Gorna-Banya Officers' Training School

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1. A Bulgarian officers' school has been in operation at the resort of Gorna-Banya since the spring of 1953. It is easy to reach from Sofia, either by railroad or by street way No 5, to Knyazhevo [sic]. The school is directly adjacent to the village. The main entrance is on the Sofia-Knyazhevo highway. The school occupies an area of 350 by 700 meters. There are good concrete walks between the buildings. 25X1

2. The school comprises the following buildings: two three-story barracks, each 40 by 80 meters, housing the staff offices and quarters and the commandant's residence; a three-story house with quarters in the third story for overflow classrooms; three three-story barracks for students; a two-story building, 40 by 80 meters, containing movie theater, infirmary, and quarters for civilian employees; a two-story hospital building. The school ostensibly has no postbox number. 25X1 25X1

3. The school trains young officers for all branches of service except the armored force and cavalry.

4. The commandant is Colonel Marin Orlovsky, a Bulgarian [redacted] who lived until 1945 in the Soviet Union and is a graduate of advanced military schools. The political officer is Captain Sovandzieff, [redacted] who was sent to a Soviet academy in 1949 and recalled in 1952. The deputy commandant is Lt Col Tscholakoff, who before World War II was an army 1st Lt. and was reduced for Communist activity. The training officers are Major Nemkoff, a former partisan [redacted] and 1st Lt. Milecev, also a former partisan [redacted] 25X1

5. There is a liaison staff of Soviet officers who live in Sofia, but appear at the school every day and take an active part in the training. They wear civilian clothing and are never addressed by their titles. Among the members of this staff are Major Nikolaiev [redacted] Major Malasovsky, [redacted] and 1st Lt. Zahariev, an elegant and very well trained young officer [redacted] The Soviets get three times the pay of Bulgarian officers of equal rank.

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6. The service staff of the school consists of 125 Bulgarian military personnel; the supply staff of 85 or 90 Bulgarian military, and there is a civilian staff of 55 or 60.

7. The school has about 1,050 or 1,070 students, who are divided into classes according to their branches of service. The course is three years, but the last year is shorter and lasts only eight months. There are two main branches of instruction: political and ideological, and theoretical and practical training in arms.

8. The day's activity begins at 6 a.m. with gymnastics. There are two hours of political and two hours of military instruction in the forenoon. The political instruction is along two main themes: Marxism-Leninism, and the history of the Soviet Union and the modern economic order. In the afternoon there is theoretical teaching and practical instruction with arms, in the barracks and the immediate neighborhood. Once a week there are general arms and field exercises for all classes either on the Vitosa Planina or the Lulin Planina, both near Sofia. Bad weather is no hindrance. Exercises in defense against partisans are also conducted in the mountains. Practice alarms are usually held once a week, by day or night.

9. The youngest class age is 17, the oldest 20. Students are accepted after completing a course in an intermediate school. They wear the infantry uniform of the Bulgarian Army, but without rank or service insignia. They receive a complete new outfit of clothing on being admitted. Many selected young Communists are also admitted if they have obtained certificates in a quick training (Schnellsieder) course. Applications for admission must be approved in every case by the local Communist Party organization. The parents must be active Party members. Simple Party membership is not enough.

10. The food in the school is excellent, outstandingly better and more varied than in any branch of the army.

11. Leaves are given once a year, in summer. Otherwise there are no leaves except in case of the death of parents.

12. The school is fully motorized. It has 10 passenger cars and 82 or 84 trucks. Students have their own driving school. On turnouts the vehicles are driven by students. There are no armored vehicles nor horses, consequently the school does not train cavalry or armored force officers.

13. Equipment and Armament. There are large quantities of all kinds of light weapons. Of heavy weapons there are 5 light antitank cannon, 8 medium antitank guns, six 76.2 mm field guns, six 152 mm guns, six 122 mm howitzers, eight 37 mm antiaircraft guns, six 85 mm antiaircraft guns, 20 light machine guns, 20 heavy machine guns, twenty 82 mm mortars, twenty 50mm mortars. There are also single pieces of special artillery, much signal equipment and radio and telephone equipment, many modern tools, bridge construction and engineering material, and equipment for gas and air defense, including rubber clothing, etc.

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