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RUFFUMBRA



BULGARIA: Reaction to Trial on Papal Attack

Sofia will intensify its media and diplomatic campaign in defense of the Bulgarian officials who were indicted yesterday for complicity in the attack on the Pope. The Bulgarian wire service yesterday denounced the trial as part of a conspiracy against Bulgaria "and socialism by circles in the US and NATO intent on worsening East-West relations." It said that now Bulgaria will work to prove its citizens' innocence and "expose the organizers of the anti-Bulgarian provocation." [REDACTED]

Comment: Bulgaria will try to undermine the credibility of Mehmet Ali Agca—the main witness against the Bulgarians—by highlighting the contradictions in his testimony and charging that Italian officials fed him information about the Bulgarian defendants. Now that its efforts to stop the trial have failed, Sofia is likely to hold quasi-judicial proceedings to build a case for its innocence. It may seek Soviet support in citing the negative effects of the trial on East-West relations. Privately, the Bulgarians may threaten retaliation against Italian diplomats in Sofia. [REDACTED]

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