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## CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

## INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY	Bulgaria	REPORT NO.	<input type="text"/>	25X1
SUBJECT	The Sofia-Simitli Road	DATE DISTR.	24 February 1954	
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DATE OF INFO.	<input type="text"/>	REQUIREMENT NO.	<input type="text"/>	25X1
PLACE ACQUIRED	<input type="text"/>	REFERENCES		

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- Between March and December 1953, some general improvements to the road surface and clearing of drainage ditches were made on the Sofia-Simitli (N 41-54, E 23-06) road. In addition, the paved sections between Sofia and Studena (N 43-33, E 23-07) and between the points N 42-31-20, E 23-09-30 (southern junction with side road to the now submerged village of Krapets, N 42-31, E 23-09) and N 42-29, E 23-07 were joined. Thus the paved section is now continuous from Sofia to location N 42-29, E 23-07, a total distance of about 35 kilometers from the center of Sofia. In other sections, the crushed stone and earth surface has been repaired or renewed. As a result, very few and comparatively short sections of bad road remain, and even the bad sections are very reasonable by Bulgarian standards. An average speed of 60 kilometers per hour is now possible between Sofia and Simitli.

Sofia-Studena Section - 18 kilometers

- The Sofia-Studena section of the road, via Rayko Daskalovo (Vladaya, N 42-37, E 23-12) and Tsurkva (N 42-36, E 23-06) is paved throughout and is in excellent condition. It is about five meters wide, and usually has shoulders one meter wide on either side. There are several sharp bends and some slight gradients around Rayko Daskalovo. Shortly after Rayko Daskalovo village, the road descends in a large double bend to Dragichevo (N 42-37, E 23-09) and the valley of the Golem Bryag rivulet. Tsurkva is approached from the east, but the road forks south in the village to Studena. (The other prong of the fork leads westward to Dimitrovo (Pernik, N 42-36, E 23-02)). Near the south exit from Studena village, a road leads southeast to the recently completed Studena barrage which is located approximately 1.5 kilometers southeast of the village.

Studena-Dupnitsa Section - 39 kilometers

- During 1953, the section of the road between Studena (N 43-33, E 23-07) and the point N 42-31-20, E 23-09-30, approximately four kilometers, was paved.

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with set stones. The width of the road is four to five meters throughout, with earth shoulders occasionally as much as 1.5 meters wide on both sides. At Dolna Dikanya (N 42-27, E 23-07), a short bridge (about 25 meters long--sic) carries the road across an easily fordable rivulet. For six kilometers south of Dolna Dikanya, the metalling shows signs of considerable wear and there are numerous potholes; this section is never bad enough to require slowing to less than 40 kilometers per hour. Four kilometers northwest of the level crossing at the north exit from Dupnitsa (N 42-16, E 23-07, now Stanke Dimitrov), there is another small bridge across an easily fordable stream.

Dupnitsa-Kocherinovo Section - 24 kilometers

4. The north-south thoroughfare in Dupnitsa is paved; after this, the standard crushed stone and earth surface resumes. The road is four to five meters wide with earth shoulders one meter wide on either side. The road is in good condition throughout, ditching and resurfacing having recently been completed. Near Kocherinovo (N 42-05, E 23-03), the road ascends eastward to slightly higher ground. Eight kilometers south of Dupnitsa, a very feeble wooden bridge about three or four meters long across a gully is badly in need of attention.

Kocherinovo-Gorna Dzhumaya Section - 12 kilometers

5. This section of the road has a surface of crushed stone and earth and is in good condition. It is between four and five meters wide and has earth shoulders one meter wide on either side. In Kocherinovo the road, after approaching the village from the west, turns sharply to the south to enter Barakovo (N 42-03, E 23-04). In Barakovo, an old narrow Turkish stone bridge 12 meters long carries the road across the Rila River. There is a fairly steep gradient over a short distance outside of Barakovo. Five kilometers south of Kocherinovo, there is a short bridge (three or four meters long) across a gully. One kilometer farther south, there is a short timber bridge marked 14 tons, followed immediately by a steep winding road, ascending to higher ground overlooking Gorna Dzhumaya (N 42-01, E 23-06, now Blagoevgrad). In Gorna Dzhumaya, the road crosses the Bistritsa River over a concrete and masonry bridge five meters wide.

Gorna Dzhumaya-Simitli Section - 21 kilometers

6. Some recent improvements of a general nature have turned this section into a good road with an average width of four meters. There is still a narrow stretch (about three meters with no shoulders) for about one kilometer, hugging a cliff overlooking the Struma River, about six kilometers northwest of Simitli (N 41-54, E 23-06). Immediately south of Gorna Dzhumaya, there is a short section with a gradient of 1 in 10. Some unimportant, short timber bridges carry the road at several points across dry river beds. Four kilometers north of Simitli, the road crosses the Struma River on a steel trestle bridge 2.5 meters wide and 25 meters long. Five hundred meters farther south, a wooden bridge marked 14 tons crosses the Stara River, a tributary of the Struma. Simitli is entered after crossing the standard-gauge main line railway.

The Road Bridge across the Struma River at Simitli

7. Simitli lies at the junction of two major roads, as follows:
  - a. The road linking Sofia with the Greek frontier via Dupnitsa and Gorna Dzhumaya; and
  - b. The road via Razlog (N 41-53, E 23-29) which penetrates into the center of the mountainous region of southwest Bulgaria.

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8. The two roads are joined by a "through" type of steel lattice girder bridge spanning the Struma River. The bridge consists of four equal sections, each 25 meters long, resting (apart from the abutments at either end) on three massive masonry piers standing in the river bed. The bridge is 3.5 meters wide and therefore can accommodate only one-way truck traffic. The height above water level is estimated at six meters.
9. The bridge has every appearance of being in good condition. Although no sentry is posted on the bridge, one or two Militiamen are usually in evidence somewhere in the vicinity of either end.

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[REDACTED] Comment: Unless otherwise indicated, all distances out of Sofia are measured from the southwest exit of the Sofia suburb of Knyazhevo (N 42-40, E 23-15), that is, from a point seven kilometers from the city center of Sofia.

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