

8-2011

The Effect of Communism on the Work of the Protestant Churches in Bulgaria

Margarita Todorova

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/ree>



Part of the [Christianity Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Todorova, Margarita (2011) "The Effect of Communism on the Work of the Protestant Churches in Bulgaria," *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe*: Vol. 31: Iss. 3, Article 1.

Available at: <http://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/ree/vol31/iss3/1>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ George Fox University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ George Fox University.

THE EFFECT OF COMMUNISM ON THE WORK OF THE PROTESTANT CHURCHES IN BULGARIA

by Margarita Todorova

Margarita Todorova is a United Methodist pastor in Sevlievo, Bulgaria, and in charge of Methodist women's work for the entire country. She was educated in Bulgaria, receiving the M.A. from Russe Technical University and then in England, having received two M.A.s, one from Cambridge University and the other from Anglia Polytechnic in pastoral theology and training for ministry. Rev. Todorova served as a member of the Executive Committee of the World Methodist Council.

The 500 years of Turkish dominion shaped the submissive side of the Bulgarian character and stirred up the instinct of self-preservation, but the most dominant was fear of the oppressors and fear of losing national identity. Endurance and submissiveness grew to such extreme proportions that they became a way of life. The events after the liberation from the Turks strengthened the suspicious side of the nation towards foreigners, foreign influences and foreign interference. The terror accompanying the first five to six years of consolidation of Communist power stirred up and deepened the fear of those in power and their instinct for self-preservation.

1. Stages of the Communist Takeover.

As a direct result of Anglo-American strategic planning during WW2, Bulgaria was left in the hands of the Soviet Union. (Wolff, 1974:249-267; Boll, 1985) The invasion of the Red Army was followed by a coup d'état. However, the consolidation of Communist power was achieved gradually, accompanied by terror.

1) First stage (1944-1945) - Eradication of any possible anti-Communist and anti-Government opposition.

The first stage saw the eradication of any possible anti-Communist and anti-Government opposition. A decree established so-called "people's courts" for the trial of "war criminals". It sentenced not only Nazi collaborators but many prominent Bulgarians. This eliminated a great part of the national leadership. It is believed that the number of executions was between 7,000 and 11,000. (Semov. 1995:152) This was the severest purge in a country where there were few "war criminals." Genuine "war crimes" by western standards were almost non-existent. (Dellin, 1957:121; Wolff, 1974:293)

2) Second stage - Attack on the non-Communist and non-conformist allies (1946).

During the second stage the non-Communist and non-conformist allies were attacked. A dozen fake trials were held throughout 1946. The Bulgarian Orthodox Church was required to be truly a "people's democratic church". (Documents B4:4;F7; also Beeson, 1982:292; Raikin, 1984:281-292) By the fall of 1946, all opponents within the Government apparatus were eliminated.

3) Third stage (1947-1948) - Eradication of the legal opposition, identified with the Agrarian Union, led by Nikola Petkov.

The third stage saw the eradication of the legal opposition, identified with the Agrarian Union. A day after the ratification of the peace treaty by the US Senate the leader of the Agrarian Union, Nikola Petkov, was arrested, tried on false charges of conspiracy and high treason, and executed. That dissolved all active opposition. The 1947 Constitution, and the official proclamation

of Bulgaria as a "people's democracy," set the legal framework for Communist domination in the form of Stalinism. The essence of Stalinism in politics was the concentration of power, which was justified in the name of the perfect society. To ensure the functioning of this system terror was used. (Schopflin, 1986:3-4)

4) Fourth stage - Main target was Western influence (1948-1952).

The main target in the fourth stage was Western influence. Political, educational, information, religious, and ethnic institutions with foreign ties were destroyed or put under full control. Foreign schools were closed in 1948, including the Methodist School for girls in Lovech. (Documents A2; A4; A23; A137) In March 1949 the leading 15 Protestant pastors were convicted on false charges of espionage. A second trial behind closed doors followed a few months later. Open attacks against the US diplomatic representations and of five Bulgarians employed by the US Legation followed on charges of espionage and sabotage. In February 1949, the government revoked the credentials of the Apostolic Delegate, followed in September 1952 by a trial of 40 leading Catholic priests and laymen on charges of espionage. Thus the Communists aimed to eliminate the religious organizations as potential political rivals and to isolate the country from Western influence.

5) Purge within the Communist Party.

A purge within the Communist Party followed. The conflict was between the "Moscovite" and the "home" communists. Many leading "home" communists were tried, sentenced and eliminated. Thus by June 1950, 20% of the Party members were expelled from the Party. (Dellin, 1957:127)

The terror of these first five to six years stirred up and deepened the basic features of the nation's character: fear of those in power and the instinct for self-preservation. The numerous show trials proved that nobody was safe. People realized that the courts were not interested in justice and truth, but in eliminating opponents at any cost. Nobody could rely on proper defense because all attorneys, by definition, were bound to take the interest of the state as their point of departure. (Gsovski, 1959, a:665) The broad and loose formulation of the penal clauses allowed varying interpretations, denying any certainty. (Gsovski, 1959, b:987-990) An eloquent testimony of this total fear was demonstrated during elections: for 45 years the Communist Party won each election with a majority of 99.98%.

6) Obtaining unlimited economic and ideological control.

With the seizing of complete power the Communists also obtained unlimited economic and ideological control. Ideological control was achieved by the separation of church and state and the passing of the Law on Religions in 1949, helped on the way by the 1949 Constitution which provided control of family, church, education, art, science, and health. Thus all human activity was legally under government guidance and control. Communist ideology was elevated as a state doctrine and everyone was told what to believe, what to think, what books to read and what films to watch. (Documents A54; A55; A56; A84; A100; A103) People were constantly exposed to brainwashing propaganda. (Documents A38; A61; B3) The writing of a new history textbook was ordered. The text was to be approved by the Central Committee of the Party. (Document A59) It was to prove that Socialism and Communism were inevitable stages in the development of society.

2. The Effect of Communism on Church Structure and Organization

a. Structure and Organization. Restrictions on Travel and Contacts Abroad.

Communism didn't tolerate any political rivalries because their mere existence would undermine the legitimacy of the Communist Parties as the only force able to bring progress to the nations. Religion was seen as a potential and very influential political rival. So from the very beginning the Communists set off with the clear goal to eradicate religion and any religious notion by marginalizing and maligning the Church. All religious denominations suffered severe repression and administrative sanctions. That finally led to secularization of society as a whole. The approach towards the various denominations varied depending on their international support and influence within the country. Thus the Catholic Church and the Protestant denominations were subjected to more apparent repression than the Orthodox Church. To achieve an effective impact the regime had to direct its attack at an entire religious organization, keeping the illusion of democracy and religious freedom. The first chosen target was the Evangelical Union and its Supreme Council, consisting of all denominational leaders (consisting of Evangelical Congregationalists, Methodists, Baptists, and Pentecostals). Thus the Protestant Churches were attacked as an institution. (Documents A14, A128; also Kochev, 1949; Kulichev, 1994:355-364) Though the Politburo decided to organize 4 more trials against each denomination without much publicity (Document A128) there was only one more trial. Eight more pastors were sentenced. Nearly all pastors trained abroad were put behind bars.

All denominations had to elect new "suitable" leaders, faithful servants of the Committee for Religious Affairs. Metodi Markov became superintendent and later, contrary to the Methodist Book of Discipline, Bishop of the Bulgarian Methodist Church. (Document B30:8,9; Kulichev, 1994:377) After his resignation and death, the Committee appointed as his successor pastor Ivan Nozharov. Nozharov had only recently been expelled from the Congregational Church for immoral behaviour. The document proving that he had been on the State Security payroll disappeared from the Methodist archives in the early 1990-s, soon after its existence was made known. Both leaders caused a lot of damage.

Another direct attack upon the church's organization and structure was in connection with the approval of the constitutions of the four denominations. In March 1947 the Committee for Religious Affairs sent to the Supreme Council of the Evangelical Union a draft regulation of the structure and organization of the Bulgarian Protestant Churches. The chairman of the Union argued that the problem could be solved with the approval of the constitutions of each denomination. Having studied them, the Committee was displeased by the fact that there were no provisions made for control by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the financial authorities. The denominations could work according to their creeds but were obliged to follow regulations as well. (Document C4) The 1949 Law on Religions demanded all denominations to hand over their constitutions for approval. They did so before June 1, 1949, but an approval or rejection was never issued. Thus the Protestant Churches were denied the status of legal entities and were left helpless. Their existence was merely tolerated. (Document C58)

Another blow was the restrictions on travel abroad and contacts with the foreign sister churches. In some cases the Committee "intervened" on behalf of the Protestant pastors, but the refusal was imposed by the Militia. Official visits by Western Christians were also restricted. According to the Law on Religions, the Churches "could maintain relations with other religious institutions, organizations or official persons whose seats or residences were abroad only with the prior permission of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs", which was never granted.

Secure in the Churches' obedience in 1968, the Orthodox Church was allowed to become

a member of the World Council of Churches. The regime wanted to exploit any contacts with the Churches from the third-world in order to exert influence. (Document C72:8,9; also Documents C34; C37; C42; C50) In 1975, for the first time, representatives of the Protestant Churches were allowed to go abroad and participate in denominational conferences. (Document C35) In 1968 "Bishop" Nozharov applied for permission to attend the Methodist conference at Keswick, Great Britain, but it's not known whether permission was granted. (Document E17) Just a select few, usually those faithful to the regime, could obtain permission. Delegates were required to go to the Committee for Religious Affairs for a briefing. They were instructed what to say and who to contact or not. On their return they had to report to the Committee. (Documents A27; C53; C65)

Denominations were required to report in detail the visits or any contacts with foreign Christians. (Documents C36; C42; C48; C49; C53; C60; C62; C65) On the rare occasions when Western Church representatives were officially allowed to visit the country, their activities and visits were closely monitored and controlled by the Committee. They were diverted from their planned route (Document C42:1), while being bombarded with propaganda materials. (Documents A87; D41; D43)

b. Buildings, properties, finance.

Church buildings and properties were persistently targeted because they were seen as means by which denominations could transform their potential influence into an active, aggressive, militant force, securing new converts and combating anti-religious efforts. The attacks continued until the early 1990s.

Church buildings and other properties were expropriated or rented out by local authorities as most appropriate for specific purposes, "for the benefit of the public". The believers were given 24 hours to comply, leaving them no time to appeal. Since the Churches had no legal standing they couldn't defend their rights in court. Once taken away, it was more or less impossible to claim the properties back and the process could last for years. (Documents B10:9,10,13,32-36; C41) All denominations were affected. (Documents B11:46,48,50,53,54,118; B10:57-67,93,95,97,100; B12:4,10; B26:93-99; B28:7; C6) The Methodist Church in Lovech was turned into a factory warehouse (Document E6), the churches in Varna and Pleven were turned into Puppet Theatres, there were several attempts to take away the church in Russe and the Russe Manse for a picture gallery, the Russe Baptist Church was turned into an atheistic club. If a property was taken away the local authorities were obliged to provide other appropriate places for worship and/or pay compensation. They usually didn't bother. The Law on Religions provided permission to buy new properties and build new churches, but since the Protestant Churches were denied legal status the obtaining of new properties or buildings was in fact impossible. (Documents C38; C70) However, they were not prevented from selling their properties if they wished to do so. Thus the Methodist Church lost more than half of its properties and church buildings. The money from the sales either disappeared or was used to cover Nozharov's salary, which exceeded by three to five times that of any other pastor or lay worker. (Documents D51; D52:5; D53; E5; E6; E7; E11; E13; E14; E19; E25; E26; E27) In the 1970-s Nozharov in a number of letters to the Committee complained about not being compensated for years for expropriated Methodist properties or not receiving rents for the properties, already used by local authorities for their own purposes. (Documents E6; E7; E8; E10; E11; E12; E13; E15; E18; E19; E20; E21; E24; E28; E29; E30; E31; E32)

Often, when Pentecostal churches lost their buildings the congregations were "encouraged" to share a building with the already existing Methodist, Baptist or Congregational churches. Thus the authorities hoped to exploit the differences among the various groups in order to weaken

religion in general. In the rare occasions when compensation was paid, the churches received far less money than their properties were worth. And if they were given in exchange other properties for worship, the buildings were “smaller and in remote places in order to limit their opportunities for religious impact”. (Document C58, b) The reason for all attempts in 1982 to expropriate the Shumen Methodist Church was the fact that a new international hotel was build next to it and, as the Committee pointed out “it could become a place visited by foreigners staying at the hotel which in itself could stir up and stimulate the church activity”. (Document C58, a)

By 1982 the Committee had realized that by compensating the denominations with money or alternative properties, they would be able to apply their “strategy for limiting the material foundation of the Churches” without causing discontent. When a congregation, whose place for worship had been taken away, couldn't name at least 25 members, its building was taken away and the Church was compensated with money instead of a property. (Document C58, a) Because of the constant intimidation, especially of young and intelligent believers, it was not always easy to find 25 volunteers to put their names down.

The Communists realized that the control over the churches' finances and budgets would allow the state to exercise control over the life and activities of every denomination. (Document B4) According to the law, all denominations were required to present their budgets to the Committee for Religious Affairs “for information”, the financial activity of the denominations was subject to control by the state financial organs, and any financial help from abroad could be received only with the permission of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, which was never granted. (Documents F8; B26)

This allowed the regime to carry out unexpected auditing of prosperous congregations and denominations. Discovering “irregularities” the inspectors imposed severe fines. (Kulichev, 1994:379-383) In the early 1980-s one such “irregularity” was discovered. The monthly donations by church members were listed as “gifts”. According to a recently issued law any financial gift given by citizens was to be taxed. Because of the word “gifts” in the financial papers the congregation under inspection was “taxed” an enormous amount of money. Warned about this, all denominations changed the wording from “gifts” to “membership fees”, avoiding similar traps.

Another easy way of limiting the church's finances was achieved by taxing properties that had been rented out. The congregations were forced to rent out their properties, and then pay taxes on those properties that were higher than the rents. (Document B30:42-47,60-62) Many unscrupulous people refused to pay the full rent. (Document C58, b)

Another financial pressure was achieved via the provision of pensions. All denominations were paying the required pension taxes. They were not allowed to organize their own pension funds and the retired workers were legally entitled to state pensions. However, some local pension departments argued that the Protestant Churches were not legal entities and refused to give pensions to people who had worked there. (Document C29)

c. Church archives and publications.

In October 1944 the Council of Ministers issued a decree for the “decontamination” of bookshops and libraries of Fascist and unscientific literature. (Document B3) It gave the regime opportunity to exercise control over the Churches' archives and libraries. In compliance with the instructions congregations started an inventory of their libraries and archives, cleaning them from “harmful” items. (Document C6) At some point local authorities ordered the Churches to hand over their archives to the local archives departments for “safe-keeping”. Later, in some instances, the documents could not be found, being replaced by other documents. (Interview G6) The Law on

Religions demanded all denominations to send to the Committee for Religious Affairs (for information) any letters, circulars or publications they had issued. Therefore many pastors avoided writing down in detail or even mentioning the activities undertaken by their congregations. So, not surprisingly, today the central archives of all denominations are shabby.

The only thing the Protestant Churches were allowed to produce and distribute annually was a limited number of calendars. The media was out of reach. The only officially published books, usually historical, theologically non-controversial and of interest only to the Orthodox clergy, were those published by the Orthodox Publishing House and were distributed by their single bookshop in Sofia. The Bible was never published. The only Bibles, hymnbooks, and theological books available, were those smuggled into the country from abroad or the ones that had survived from before WW2.

3. The Effect of Communism on the Work of the Church

a. Children and Young People.

The Communists saw the susceptibility and impressionability of young minds as a suitable target in their ideological war. The first step in isolating the young people from any other ideological influence was getting rid of religious education at school. The decision was taken by the Ministry of Education in the summer of 1945. The 1947 Constitution declared education as “secular, with a democratic and progressive spirit”. (Triska, 1969:163) In September 1948 the Council of Ministers issued a Decree, stating that “the Church should not carry out special religious propaganda among the children”. (Document A14:16) This was legitimized in the 1949 Law on Religions. To prevent even an indirect influence of religion on the young minds, the regime closed in 1948 all Foreign Schools. (Document A2) This marked the end of the greatest and brightest achievement of the Protestant and Catholic Churches.

The Communists always saw the separation of the church from the state and the school as an effective way of “eliminating the basic channel for regeneration of religion”. (Asenov et. al., 1987:72) So, additional measures were undertaken. Atheist education at school was made compulsory. All textbooks were rewritten so as to reflect the new “democratic spirit”. (Dellin, 1957:198) A lot of school activities were planned to coincide with religious festivities. Numerous books on atheism, atheist upbringing of children, and the atheistic views on religion were published. Personal records were introduced and were handed from one institution to another. Any “religious connections” could lead to disastrous repercussions. Teachers and militiamen made sure that no children or young people would attend church, especially during religious festivities.

The issue of “intensifying the struggle on the ideological front” was a regular item of the agenda of nearly every Communist Party congress. (Documents A53; A68; A71; A85; A87; A91; A102; A103; A104; A117; A118; A120) Often a concern was expressed about the “revival among the religious organisations and activists, who were increasing their influence and defiantly were trying to find a place for religion in the developed socialist society, and even in communist society.” (Document A87:156) The Fifth Congress in December 1948 paid special attention to ideological warfare. The Education System was to be drastically improved by reorganizing all schools and universities, their curricula and textbooks, and the selection of the staff. Marxism-Leninism was to become a compulsory subject in all universities. The aim of the education system was to train “active and conscientious participants in the political leadership of the country and the building of socialism”. (Document A53:20,21; Dellin, 1957:198)

All this was to be achieved by publicly discrediting religion and by atheistic propaganda at all levels. Religion was presented as a distorted reflection of reality which carried with it a false

and wicked morality. (Bociurkiw and Strong, 1975:7,11) The only valid, true and progressive views were those held by "scientific atheism". Atheistic upbringing was the only way of developing the correct values of the "new people". Therefore, it had to start from a very early age, in the kindergarten. (Document A120:23; Galcheva, 1987) The success of this methodology depended on family influence. So, as late as 1986/1987 parents were "advised" never to contradict what their children were taught at school, so that "the young minds would not be confused". (Budnaja, 1986; Galcheva, 1987) Thus the regime not only prevented the church from working directly with children but also exercised control over family life.

These tactics were so successful that the regime could boast in the second half of the 1960-s that fewer children and young people were attending church and had religious convictions. It was also concluded that the process of overcoming religion was clearly on its way. All Sunday Schools were closed and there was no organized work with young children, but despite constant pressure, most pastors did not "ban" children from attending worship.

A great worry for the authorities was the increased number of young people attending Easter and Christmas services. Various measures were undertaken every year to prevent this. (Documents A70; A107; Interview G8) The Militia and the special forces, often dressed in civilian clothes, were sent outside the churches "to provide safety and order during the services". Extremely interesting and popular programs were shown on TV. Special trips were organized for the international university students with Christian convictions. The Orthodox Synod was instructed to distribute all tickets for Easter and Christmas services only to elderly believers. Many school headmasters issued decrees about expelling students from school if they were caught in church. (Document A107:2)

b. Social Work

Direct social action was undertaken shortly after WW2 when food and clothing parcels from the WCC became an important aid. (Document B21) For a short time the Communist government allowed it, thus easily obtaining needed medications (Document B9:222-224,228,231,232,240-242) and gaining few desirable points in their favor during elections.

In 1949 the government closed all church-sponsored hospitals, orphanages and similar institutions for being foreign-run institutions (Document A4; Walters, 1988:288), cutting out the most popular work of the Church among the people and further limiting its influence. The Law on Religions and the 1947 Constitution declared social welfare as exclusive responsibility of the state. (Document F8; Triska, 1969:162,163)

c. Worship and Work with People in General. Community Life.

The only place allocated to the Church was in the sphere of worship. Worship was to be limited within the church premises, and could involve only church members. Any outdoor activities were subject to special permission by the Committee for Religious Affairs, which was never granted. These restrictions were a direct attack on mission and evangelism. Religious propaganda was forbidden and anti-religious propaganda was at first recommended, and later legitimized by the 1971 Constitution. (Anonymous, 1987:13,117; Nedjalkov, 1978; Morris, 1984:66) There were often attempts to exercise control on the contents of the sermons, before they were preached. (Kulichev, 1994:393) Since some congregations organized visits to other congregations or religious places the authorities interfered by forbidding the hire of buses. (Document C52)

Many pastors saw the church's sacramental and liturgical life as its most significant activity and as the highest good in the circumstances. This limited pastoral care to simply supporting the

“Christian remnant”, neglecting those who were outside the congregation and withdrawing from the world around. (Greinacher, 1982:29,30)

Fear was the most powerful and effective weapon in the hands of the regime. It was often enough to ensure compliance, so there was no need for further repressive measures. Fearful pastors restricted the life and work of their own congregations. Fearful Christians were easily “persuaded” to become informers. (Document A3; Schlossberg; 1991:63) The regime did not hesitate to recruit even children. The uncertainty led to a deeply embedded mistrust and suspicion, which to a great extent damaged community life. (Semov, 1995:267; Schlossberg, 1991:63; Kulichev, 1994:374,375)

Practicing Christians were treated as second class citizens. They suffered restrictions in education, career and social prospects, and exclusion from political power. (Morris, 1984:67,68; Brown, 1976:19) To prevent people from attending church different compulsory activities were organized on a Sunday or during religious festivities. Sometimes people had to go to work on Sundays. (Document B11:31,32,35) If a pastor died, the local authorities often delayed or didn't allow a replacement to be sent, thus using the lack of a preacher as a pretext for closing down the church in question. (Documents C41; C51) They refused to register new congregations (Documents C18; C53) and it was forbidden to worship in an unregistered congregation. Noncompliance could lead to persecution. Life was made very difficult for believers in hopes that on their own volition they would give up their beliefs.

In 1971, at the Tenth Party Congress, it was announced that Bulgaria was “building the Developed Socialist Society”. It was unacceptable that at such an advanced stage religion was not only in existence, but was growing. A decision was taken for increasing the struggle against the ideological sabotage. (Document A117) In 1970, new rituals were introduced which had to replace the existing Christian ones. (Documents A86; A108; A109; A111) The regime saw its failure in the lack of good facilities, professionally trained staff, and highly attractive ceremonies. And all that compared to “the rich tradition of the Church and its rich material foundation”! (Document A111; Babris, 1978:334) This led to intensifying the attack for “limiting the material foundation of the church”. (Document C58, b)

4. The Effect of Communism on the Human Element of the Church.

a. Leadership.

To isolate the believers from the larger society and reduce the “damage done by the religious infection” it was necessary to discredit the Church leaders. This was achieved by mock trials which were given maximum publicity. (Schlossberg, 1991:67,68; Wolff; 1974:564) All pastors arrested in 1948 were subjected to physical and psychological torture (Naumov, 1992:4-7) in order to confess and accuse each other of spying on behalf of the West. (see Kochev, 1949; Tsvetkov, 1991; Mateev, 1993; Popov, 1994) And in the midst of all that, one could read the speeches of the Prime-Minister about the unprecedented freedom enjoyed by the Church. To make the downfall of the Protestant leadership complete, during the trial, representatives of the Committee for Religious Affairs visited prominent Protestant believers and congregations “enquiring” whether they would make written statements in favor of the existing religious freedom in Bulgaria and denounce “the espionage activities” of the accused pastors. (Document B26:35-38) Afraid of possible closure of churches, some congregations and a few believers, together with the leaders of all other religious groups sent letters and telegrams to the Committee and to the United Nations denouncing the accused pastors and praising the great religious freedom they enjoyed. (Documents A128; B22; B23; B25) All letters and telegrams were duly published in the leading newspaper. In its deviousness the regime would have gone as far as allowing the re-establishing of the Protestant newspaper

Zornitsa, if only they could find loyal people to run it and use it to further discredit the Protestant Church leadership. (Document B26:38)

Having crushed the existing leadership of the churches the regime started replacing it quite successfully with loyal people, less efficient, more compliant, easily manipulated, morally corrupt and with no leadership skills. (Documents B30; C6; C22; C23; C39; Schlossberg, 1991:66,82-84) Leadership in Communist society was seen as a totalitarian dictatorship of the Communist Party and the Communist ideology. All decisions were made at the highest possible level with minimal or no input from the people who then were supposed to carry them out. As a result no one was in the habit of decision-making, trained and tested in it. (Drucker, 1992:120,121) All leadership, at all levels, was appointed and controlled by the Party's Central Committee. The required skills were "faithfulness to Communist ideology". (Documents A25; A29; A30; A31; A77; A78; A80; Wolff, 1974:526; Ionescu 1967:60,61; Echikson, 1990:88) The main leadership qualification the personnel received was ideological indoctrination. (Documents A17; A91) Everyone at lower levels was expected to follow instructions without questioning them. Those who dared to contradict or criticize were declared traitors and reactionaries. For example, in 1951 when the regime prescribed deep ploughing, requiring the use of tractors, although there were nowhere near enough tractors to go around, the new Minister of Agriculture himself decreed that shallow ploughing was "reactionary, harmful, and anti-revolutionary, an act favoring capitalist exploitation, and a blow to mechanization. Even agricultural specialists", he declared, "did not fully realize the anti-state character of shallow ploughing. Deep ploughing, on the other hand, was socialist." (Wolff, 1974:529)

Leadership was seen not as a responsibility but as rank and privilege, which gave complete power. So, it was never shared. (Semov, 1995:59,60,162-164; Zinov'ev, 1981:64,65; Ionescu, 1967:19) To secure support, many leaders promoted their children or relatives to leadership positions (Holmes, 1993:97; Brown, 1991:192), and would cringe before their bosses.

Only after 1989 was it possible to replace the corrupt Church leadership. Some resigned, others had to be removed. But the new church leadership to a great extent is demonstrating similar features as that of the political and economic leadership. Some see their role as that of a totalitarian dictator, trying to control everything and to impose decisions from above. They don't share leadership and try to surround themselves not so much with competent and gifted workers but with faithful followers, preferably relatives. Once in a leadership position, many gain the confidence of know-it-all and seek no advice. They believe that the moment they take a leadership role, history commences. (Semov, 1995:355,363) Any criticism, even if constructive, is treated as a personal attack and the critic quickly falls in disgrace. To keep their positions many are ready to cringe before higher authorities, paying allegiance and respect not to the person but to the office. In 1993 Superintendent Bezlov, who was awarded the 1992 World Methodist Peace Award, died. A local pastor dedicated the entire 4 pages of the new issue of the Methodist Church newsletter to the newly appointed superintendent, sparing just few lines on his predecessor. (Interview G10)

b. Ordained and Lay Work

The two trials of pastors left the Protestant Churches without their most effective, highly qualified and capable pastors. The Law on Religions made sure that such people could not work as clergy. While in prison the pastors were constantly submitted to ideological indoctrination so that they would "realize their mistakes, correct their ways of thinking and become good citizens of the People's Republic". Their families had a rough time, too: exiled, denied jobs and food coupons, their children had problems at school and even when sick were denied access to

sanatoriums. (Interviews G5; G11; G12) In the mid-1960-s all pastors, already out of prison, experienced difficulties as ex-political prisoners to find work and to make a living. Many had to continue paying heavy fines as part of their sentence. (Documents D11:1; D31; D35; D59; D62) Years later, classified as "rehabilitated persons", some got permission to work in the church, far away from the capital, and others were strictly denied to preach or speak in public.

The 1947 Constitution gave all citizens the right and duty to engage in "socially useful work". (Triska 1969:162; Dellin, 1957:100) And since the regime treated pastoral work as socially useless those engaged in it were treated with disregard and were denied food coupons. (Documents B26:4; B28:16) Church buildings were closed down (Document B26:102), taken away or forcefully rented out. (Documents B26:4,9,10,93,98, 121,122; B28:7; C22; C41; C43; D32:2) Sometimes congregations were prevented from meeting for worship and were deprived of their Bibles. (Document B28:36) Easter and Christmas were declared work days. Often appointments for vacant pastors' positions or moving of pastors were promptly denied, purposefully delayed, permission was never granted nor denied or "The questions raised would be discussed and solved gradually." (Documents B28:14,19; C8; C51; D58:1) And in most cases, as it was customary for the Committee's dealings with the Churches, the statement, if ever made, was delivered orally. (Document C8)

Every pastor had to be registered and approved by the Committee for Religious Affairs. The registration form required extremely detailed information. (Documents B24; C6; Walters, 1988:138) The names of the registered pastors were sent, confidentially, to the State Security Department. (Document C6) The names of all job-holders in the congregations had to be submitted as well. Many church members declined taking on any jobs or in some cases did the work but refused to be named as the job-holders. The name of the pastor was given instead, since it was already included in the State Security list. This led either to burdening the pastor with too many jobs and responsibilities, which further enforced the growing notion of no job and leadership sharing, or to changes in the congregations' perceptions of the pastor's responsibilities. Even today there are a lot of church members who think that every job in the congregation's life is a responsibility of their pastor. Denominations were not forbidden to carry out annual meetings but they were not allowed to do so either. (Document D11:6) In this way they were deprived from any centralized planning and guidance. The Methodist Church was not allowed to hold its Annual Conferences until 1993. Effective pastors and lay workers were forcefully replaced by the Committee and moved to other places "where they could cause less harm" (Document D32:2; Schlossberg, 1991:71), or in some cases different "restricting" measures were applied. (Document D35) Active church members were often called for interviews by State Security officers and put under pressure to become informers (Document D32:2) or could face persecution and even trial on criminal charges. (Document F5; Todorov, 1979; Anonymous, 1980, c) They often had to sacrifice their social status and professional career.

In the 1970-s some retired pastors were denied pension because they had worked in an organization which had no legal status. The problem was solved in favor of the pastors not simply because they had the legal right but because "the denial of financial support of retired pastors could increase the congregations' unity, something contrary to the results expected of the restricting measures". (Document C29)

The greatest damage for ordained and lay work came from lack of theological training. By law, all denominations could open theological schools or send young people abroad for training only with the permission of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, which was never granted. (Document C38) Pastors were not allowed even to participate in correspondent courses available from the

GDR. (Document D11:7) The only existing seminary was the Orthodox Theological Academy. However, the candidates had to provide an Orthodox baptismal certificate. (Document B30:34,36-41) Often the authorities assumed the right to decide who could attend the seminary. Mediocre candidates were preferred over persons of higher quality or of uncompromising nature. (Brown, 1976:14-21) And since the Academy was an institution for higher education, communist ideological subjects became an integral part of the curriculum. The lack of theological training led to a widespread ignorance and naivety among the congregations. This is one of the reasons for the success of the numerous cults that flooded the country after the collapse of Communism.

c. Missionary Work

Few Bulgarians were aware of the missionaries' activities prior to WW2. In the few articles concerning their work, their activities were always portrayed as purposeful attempts of infiltrating American influence and interests to the detriment of the Bulgarian people. With the closing of the foreign schools the missionaries were left with no other option but to leave. Missionary work during Communism could only occur within the context of Christian literature and material relief smuggled in from abroad. (Documents D11; D32; D35; D44; D45; D50; D52; D53; D54; D58; D60; D61)

The first missionaries to visit Bulgaria after the falling of the Iron Curtain were the representatives of various cults who took advantage of the spiritual vacuum and people's ignorance. Quickly they found followers not only among the searching atheists but also among some believers. And since they all declared to be Evangelical Christians, the Protestant Churches were under constant attack by the Orthodox Church, nationalistic groups, local authorities, the media and ordinary citizens. (Kulichev, 1994:407-412). The damage caused by the cults made it difficult for real Christian missionaries to obtain visas and work permits.

d. Human Personalities

One of the most damaging effects of Communism was on human personalities. Communist ideology saw people not as individuals but as a collective entity which had to behave according to a set of rules and standards, elevated to the status of "true scientific values". (Van den Bercken, 1985:269,270) Therefore, the regime was determined to re-fashion the values of the entire nation and to mold its perceptions, attitudes and behavior. (Bociurkiw and Strong, 1975:151) By using brainwashing and other "re-educational" techniques, the totalitarian regime compelled people to repudiate what they held "most sacred", first and foremost God (if they were believers), then their family, friends, the past, "down to the very last drop of personhood that might have assisted them in recreating their personality, their humanity". (Galeriu, 1991:68)

Indoctrination was enforced at all levels, even in art and culture. Film directors and writers were expected to affirm the great achievements of socialist reality and way of life, and not to depict the negative side of present day life. (Document A104:17) A failure to do so was seen as defection due to foreign influence, mainly Western. (Document A100:9)

Telling or living the truth was inconceivable. (Sawatsky, 1991) To sustain the rightness of Party policy it became increasingly necessary to declare as real what was obviously untrue. For their own safety, and sometimes benefit, people had to behave as if they believed, thus living a double life. (Document F1; Mojzes, 1992:152; Hoare, 1990:172-180) Double living was especially strongly expressed where religion was concerned. People were entitled to religious freedom only as private individuals and not as social beings. (Anonymous, 1987:115; Greinacher and Elizondo, 1982:30,31) And since religion was a private matter, it was subject to all sorts of limitations. A sense

of inferiority and helplessness was imposed on believers. Permission for the few things Churches and Christians were allowed were usually granted not so much because they were within their legal and constitutional rights but because that little freedom suited best the interests and aims of the authorities. (Document C29)

The collapse of Communism left the nation in a spiritual vacuum and in identity crisis. The Communist regime had achieved its major aim of eradicating religion, marginalizing and compromising the Church so that for decades the prevailing secularized society looked at the Church, and Christianity, as an institution that had only historical merits for the preservation of national identity whose present day function was that of a ritual place to be visited just at specific times of one's life - christening, marriage and death. This is a tremendous challenge for the Church and it will take time to overcome it.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Documents from the Central Archives of the Bulgarian Communist Party

The first column gives the code number of the documents, used for reference in the dissertation, the second column gives the actual identification, and the third column gives a brief information concerning the documents.

- A2 F.1 OP.6516 Decision of Politburo of CC of BCP from 14.7.1948, concerning the closure of the foreign schools.
- A3 F.1 OP.6520 Decision of Politburo of CC of BCP from 21.7.1948. A report by the Minister of Internal Affairs, Anton Jugov, concerning the Militia and the State Security forces.
- A4 F.1 OP.61117 Decision of Politburo of CC of BCP from 9.11.1950, concerning the expropriation of properties belonging to the closed religious branches, foreign schools, etc.
- A14 F.1 OP.8190 Decision of the Secretariat of CC of BCP from 2.11.1948 concerning the Pastors Trial. A report concerning the Protestant Churches and the Protestant pastors under arrest. Decree No.29 of the Cabinet forbidding the Church to carry out special religious propaganda among the youth, 17.9.1948.
- A17 F.1 OP.8545 Decision of Politburo of CC of BCP concerning the appointment, via the Committee for Science, Art and Culture, of the teachers in Political Economy and Marxism-Leninism, 11.9.1949.
- A23 F.1 .P.81465 Decision of the Secretariat of CC of BCP from 15.4.1950 concerning the liquidation of bookshops, libraries and institutions supported by imperialist countries.
- A25 F.1 OP.82688 Decision of the Secretariat of CC of BCP from 6.10.1951 concerning the appointment of University leadership bodies.
- A27 F.1 OP.86542 Decision of Politburo of CC of BCP concerning the appointment of Pasko Kirov as an instructor in the commission of CC of BCP for control of the delegates or people sent abroad,
- A29 F.1 OP.86730 Decision of Politburo of CC of BCP from 20.10.1964 concerning the approval of Krum Dzhivanov's appointment as director of the Research Textile Institute.
- A30 F.1 OP.87019 Decision of Politburo of CC of BCP from 30.8.1965 concerning the approval of Marko Markov's appointment as a rector of the Technical Institute of higher education in Russe.
- A31 F.1 OP.87162 Decision of Politburo of CC of BCP from 9.2.1966 concerning the appointment of Minko Atanasov as a director of the Scientific research Institute in Economics and Organization of Mechanical Engineering.
- A38 F.1 .P.1575 Information from the manager of the Propaganda Department, R. Levi, to the Secretariat of CC of BCP concerning the decontamination of the publishing houses, the bookshops, the schools and the libraries from fascist literature. 10.8.1945.
- A53 F.1 OP.15235 A resolution of the V-th congress of BCP. December 1948.
- A54 F.1 .P.15290 An opinion concerning the reorganisation of the publishing work in Bulgaria. 15.3.1948.
- A55 F.1 .P.15334 A suggestion by the manager of the Propaganda Department to the Secretariat of CC of BCP concerning the taking off of one's hat while passing by G. Dimitrov's mausoleum. 21.11.1949 - 5.12.1949.
- A56 F.1 .P.15340 A plan for the public propaganda of Marxism- Leninism during 1949.
- A59 F.1 .P.15359 A program and suggestion by the manager of the Propaganda Department to Politburo of CC of BCP concerning the approval of authors and editors for the writing a History of Bulgaria, the basic sections and units of the History. 10.10.1949- 14.12.1949.
- A61 F.1 .P.15388 A suggestion by the manager of the Propaganda Department to the Secretariat of CC of BCP concerning the decontamination of the public libraries from reactionary and unscientific literature, magazines and newspapers. A resolution by the Propaganda Secretary of CC of BCP. 30.6.1949 - 18.7.1949.
- A68 F.1 OP.15692 A report by the Propaganda department concerning the religious activities and propaganda in

Bulgaria. 4.9.1957.

A70 F.1 OP.15711 Information concerning activities in the capital in relation to the anti-religious propaganda and the behavior of the priests. 11.4.1958.

A71 F.1 OP.15727 Information concerning the fulfillment of the decision of Politburo of CC of BCP about the measures regarding the increase and improvement of the atheistic propaganda in the country. 16.7.1959.

A77 F.1 OP.3675 Decision of Politburo of CC of BCP from 21.3.1968 concerning the increase of the number of listed leaders about whom a statistical information is being collected.

A78 F.1 OP.36115 Minutes of the meeting of the Secretariat of CC of BCP on 22.4.1968 concerning students' grants for studying in the Federal Republic of Germany, the improvement of the ideological work among the intellectuals and students, etc.

A80 F.1 OP.36162 Minutes of the joined meeting of the Secretariat of CC of BCP and the Bureau of the Council of Ministers, 12.6.1968, concerning military education for students at school, etc.

A83 F.1 OP.36379 Minutes of the meeting of the Secretariat of CC of BCP, 23.1.1969, concerning the control over the Committee for Religious Affairs by the propaganda Department of CC of BCP, etc.

A84 F.1 .P.36450 Minutes of the meeting of the Secretariat of CC of BCP, 2.4.1969, concerning publishing of political literature, international relationships of organizations whose activities are monitored by the Propaganda Department, etc.

A85 F.1 OP.36819 Decision of Politburo of CC of BCP from 23.2.1970 concerning the confirmation of the delegation, led by Venelin Kotsev, which was to take part in the meeting in Sofia of the Ideological Secretaries of the Central Committees of the brotherly Communist parties.

A86 F.1 OP.36975 Decision of Politburo of CC of BCP from 26.5.1970 and a report concerning an additional paid worker in the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee who should be responsible for development and introduction of the new civil and socialist rituals and traditions.

A87 F.1 OP.361282 Minutes of the meeting of the Secretariat of CC of BCP from 21.1.1971, concerning radio propaganda addressed to foreign tourists and visitors in Bulgaria, the selection of students to be sent to study abroad, the continuing fight against the ideological sabotage of imperialism, etc.

A91 F.1 OP.4037 Activities of the propaganda department during 1966. Information concerning the Marxist-Leninist education of the leaders and the intellectuals.

A100 F.1 OP.40164 Minutes of the manager's meeting of the Propaganda Department, 20.11.1969, concerning the import of foreign films, etc.

A102 F.1 OP.40212 Information concerning the fulfillment of the decisions of the X-th congress of BCP regarding the mass scale political work of the Party. 1970.

A103 F.1 OP.40258 Issues of the fight against the bourgeois ideology and the ideological sabotage of imperialism. 28.3.1969

A104 F.1 OP.40280 Information concerning the fulfillment of the decisions of the X-th congress of BCP and some basic decisions of Politburo and the Secretariat of CC of BCP in respect of the issues of the ideological work. 1970.

A107 F.1 OP.40284 Information concerning the Easter festivities. 29.4.1970.

A108 F.1 OP.40339 Minutes of the manager's meeting of the Propaganda Department, 8.2.1971. Reports concerning the introduction of civil rituals; the improving of lecture propaganda; basic trends in the Party education for 1971/72; the tasks of the Clubs for Political Education and the Party Rooms, etc. 28.1.1971 - 8.2.1971.

A109 F.1 OP.40343 Minutes of the manager's meeting of the propaganda Department, 2.4.1971, concerning the wider introduction of the new civil rituals, etc.

A111 F.1 OP.40406 Information from workers in the Propaganda Department, the Regional Committees, the Central Committee of the Komsomol, the Trade Unions and the State Council of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, concerning the implementation of the decision of the Secretariat of CC of BCP from 11.3.1971 for the introduction of the new civil rituals in the life of the working people. 13.6.1972 - 28.7.1972.

A117 F.1 OP.40436 A report by the Propaganda Department concerning the increasing of the fight against the bourgeois ideology. 3.7.1972.

A118 F.1 OP.40438 Information concerning the fulfillment of the decision of Politburo of CC of BCP regarding the fight against the ideological sabotage of imperialism. 1972.

A120 F.1 OP.40472 Information concerning the issues raised at the ideological meeting in the Central Committee of CPSU, June 1972. 24.1.1973.

A128 F.146 OP.5611 Letters and telegrams concerning the Pastors Trial, February, 1949.

A137 F.214 .P.1369 A report from 27.1.1950 by the commission for the liquidation of bookshops, libraries and institutions supported by imperialist countries.

Documents from the Central Archives of the Republic of Bulgaria

- B1 F.1 OP.120 Letters of protest to the Regents concerning the ban on religious education at school. February and March 1946. A letter to the Regents from December 1944, suggesting that land should be taken away from the Orthodox monasteries and given to poor peasants.
- B2 F.1 OP.135 Letters to the Regents concerning the ban of religious education at school. January/February 1946.
- B3 F.1 OP.149 A list of the Fascist literature that is to be disposed of. October 1944.
- B4 F.88 OP.1243 An argument concerning the issue of separating the Church from the State. 9.10.1944.
- B9 F.165 OP.229 Pp.31-206: Letters between the Religious Department and the Ministry of Internal Affairs and National Health and the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church concerning the Protestant Churches. 15.8.1933, 25.10.1934, 12.11.1934, 17.9.1934, 23.11.1934, 15.9.1936, 18.9.1936, 1937, etc. Pp. 222-224,228,231-232,240-242, 252,259: letters concerning the permission given to the Methodist Bishop Paul Garber to visit Bulgaria and a request by the Committee for Religious Affairs to P. Garber to help by providing medications. Pp.282-284: 2 Pentecostal pastors refused permission to leave the country.
- B10 F.165 OP.230 Letters from Protestant Churches to the Committee for Religious Affairs concerning church properties. 1946 - 1948.
- B11 F.165 OP.231 Letters from the Evangelical Union to the Committee for Religious Affairs that have never been replied to: Pp.22-23: requesting permission to print 8000 theological books. 18.3.1948; p.86: informing the Committee about the annual meeting of the Evangelical Union in the village of Hotantsa. 2.4.1947; p.112: a letter from Ja. Ivanov from 20.11.1946 concerning the organizing of a Methodist Regional Conference; pp.46,48,50,53,54,118: properties of the Protestant Churches, etc.
- B12 F.165 OP.3104 Correspondence between the Adventist Church and the Committee for Religious Affairs concerning the opening of an Adventist theological school. 1948. Kolarov. 1948.
- B21 F.165 OP.3155 45 telegrams and resolutions from Orthodox priests and the Orthodox Church and 1 resolution from the Congregational church in the town of Asenovgrad in support of the policy of the Communist Party and the State. November 1948. Pp.65,95,96: correspondence between the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Bulgarian Legation in Rome concerning subscription to the Vatican official newspaper or magazine and information about the attitude and interests of the Vatican towards the Bulgarian Catholics and the attitude and interests of the WCC and the British Anglican Church towards the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. November and December 1948.
- B22 F.165 OP.3165 56 letters, telegrams and resolutions from Orthodox priests, theological scholars and theological students, Protestant churches and believers, the Catholic Church, the Muslims, the Jews, the Armenians, etc. condemning the pastors charged during the Pastors Trial, and praising the religious freedom enjoyed by all denominations. February and March 1949. Some of these letters and telegrams can be found in Documents B23 and B25.
- B23 F.165 OP.3166 13 letters and telegrams from Orthodox priests, theological scholars, Protestant churches and believers, the Muslims, the Armenians, the Chief Rabbi, etc., condemning the pastors charged during the Pastors Trial, and praising the religious freedom enjoyed by all denominations. February 1949. Most of these letters and telegrams can be found in Document B25 as well.
- B24 F.165 OP.3207 Registration form for priests and pastors. December 1948.
- B25 F.165 OP.3209 11 letters and telegrams from Orthodox priests, theological scholars, Protestant churches and believers, the Armenians, etc., condemning the pastors charged during the Pastors Trial, and praising the religious freedom enjoyed by all denominations. February 1949. 26 telegrams from Orthodox priests, Protestant eaders, the Chief Mufti, the Bulgarian Jews, etc., to the United Nations rebuking the raising of the questions concerning the lack of religious freedom in Bulgaria. The majority of telegrams were sent by the Orthodox Church. April 1949.
- B26 F.165 OP.3210 Letters from the protestant Churches to the Committee for Religious Affairs concerning church budgets, asking permission for organising annual conferences and approval of new appointments of pastors. 7 Letters of protests, sent by Orthodox priests, concerning the ban of religious education at school. 1946.
- B28 F.165 OP.3333 Telegrams and complains by the Pentecostal Church. 1950.
- B30 F.165 OP.3335 Circular letters of the Methodist Church. 1950.

Documents from the Archives of the Bulgarian Ministry for Foreign Affairs

- C4 F.9 OP.7119 Correspondence between the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Religious Cults and the Supreme Council of the Evangelical Union concerning the organization and leadership of the Bulgarian Protestant Churches. 13.3.1947 - 8.10.1947.
- C6 F.9 OP.28805 Letters and information from the Evangelical Union to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and religious Cults concerning a meeting of the Protestant Churches in 1949, reports, etc. 2.3.1949 - 27.10.1953.
- C8 F.10 OP.4191 A letter from the Union of the Pentecostal Churches concerning changes among the pastors and a request to move 5 pastors. 21.9.1961,30.12.1961.

C18 F.10 OP.11620 Letters from the Pentecostal Church, concerning the registration of new churches, etc. 1968.

C22 F.10 OP.12310 Correspondence between CC of BCP and the Committee for Religious Affairs concerning letters from Dr. Ivan Georgiev, an Adventist, containing statements regarding the unlawful attitude of the Committee for Religious Affairs towards the registration of the Adventist Church and its leadership. April - July 1971.

C23 F.10 OP.12312 Information about the leadership of the Baptist Church. 8.12.1971.

C29 F.10 OP.121227 Correspondence among the Pentecostal Church, the Committee for Religious Affairs and the Social Security Department of the Central Council of the Trade Unions concerning pensions to retired Protestant employees. 15.1.1974 - 20.9.1974.

C34 F.10 OP.121463 A report by the Committee for Religious Affairs concerning the international activities of the Churches in Bulgaria. 23.12.1975.

C35 F.10 OP.121479 A report by Tsv. Slavchev, manager of a department in the Committee for Religious Affairs, concerning the participation of Protestant delegates in international Christian events. 28.7.1975.

C36 F.10 OP.121491 Reports concerning visits of WCC representatives to Bulgaria during 1975. February 1975 - 2.10.1975.

C37 F.10 OP.121499 Reports, information and other written materials concerning the organising and carrying out of a meeting of the Working Committee of the Christian Peace Conference in Sofia, 10.4.1975 - 14.4.1975. Dates of the file: 8.2.1975 - 14.7.1975.

C38 F.10 OP.13131 Correspondence between the Pentecostal Church and the Committee for Religious Affairs: a list of the personnel of the Pentecostal Church during 1976. A financial report, church properties, etc. March 1976.

C39 F.10 OP.13133 A letter from the Pentecostal Church to the Committee for Religious Affairs asking for approval of the new leadership. 22.9.1976.

C41 F.10 OP.13298 A statement from the Baptist Church to the Committee for Religious Affairs concerning issues and events affecting the Baptist Church. 23.7.1977.

C42 F.10 OP.13313 A report concerning the activities of the Catholic and Protestant Churches in Bulgaria during 1977.

C43 F.10 OP.13484 Correspondence among the Committee for Religious Affairs, the regional Committee of BCP and the Baptist church in Varna concerning the property of the Baptist Church in Varna. 5.9.1978; 8.9.1978.

C48 F.10 OP.13687 A letter from the leader of the Baptist Church, pastor Chomonev, informing the Committee for Religious Affairs about a letter sent by the World Baptist Union. April 1962.

C49 F.10 OP.13688 Letters from the leader of the Baptist Church concerning letters sent to the Church from World Baptist Union. 1962.

C50 F.10 OP.13696 Information concerning the international activities of the Catholic and Protestant Churches in Bulgaria. 16.10.1979.

C51 F.10 OP.13907 A letter from the Pentecostal Church to the Committee for Religious Affairs concerning personnel changes in the Pentecostal Church. 13.8.1980.

C52 F.10 OP.13926 Correspondence between the Regional Committee of BCP and the Committee for Religious Affairs concerning the ban on children's and youth's attendance in the Protestant churches, annual registration. A report by Tsv. Tsvetkov, chief specialist in the Committee. 24.1.1980 - 10.3.1980.

C53 F.10 OP.14327 Program of the work of the Committee for Religious Affairs during 1981. 9.2.1981.

C58,a F.10 OP.14566 Information from the Committee for Religious Affairs concerning expropriated properties belonging to the Protestant Churches. The property of the Protestant Church in Varna. 15.10.1980.

C58,b F.10 OP.14566 Information from the Committee for Religious Affairs concerning expropriated properties belonging to the Protestant Churches. Instructions for expropriation and ways for compensation. 8.3.1982.

C58,c F.10 OP.14566 Information From the Committee for Religious Affairs concerning expropriated properties belonging to the Protestant Churches. February 1982.

C60 F.10 OP.14706 A letter from the leader of the Baptist Church to the Committee for religious Affairs concerning the X-th World Baptist Congress in Brazil, 26.7. - 3.8.1960. The letter dates from 21.10.1962.

C62 F.10 OP.14723 A letter from the leader of the Baptist Church to the Committee for Religious Affairs concerning a request by the Baptist Church in Britain for information regarding the Bulgarian Baptist Church. July 1962.

C65 F.10 OP.141180 Information from the Pentecostal Church concerning the international activities of the Pentecostal churches in Bulgaria during 1984.

C70 F.10 OP.141500 Information concerning the Religious Organizations and the State. 1.5.1985.

C72 F.10 OP.141502 Information concerning the participation of the Religious Organizations and their activists in the struggle for Peace. 1985.

Documents from the Central Archives of the Central Conference of the United Methodist Episcopal Church in Central and Southern Europe

D11 Bulgaria: Current Files "Report on My Trip to Bulgaria 1976" by Irmgard Pratsch From the File Bulgarien : Geschichte. Pratsch, etc.

D31 Bulgarien: Frau Irmgard [The same as Document D19.] 23.10.1958. Pratsch, 1966-1976

D32 Bulgarien: Frau Irmgard [The same as Document D19.] 6.12.1963. Pratsch, 1966-1976

D35 Bulgarien: Frau Irmgard [The same as Document D19.] 25.6.1965. Pratsch, 1966-1976

D41 Bulgarien: Frau Irmgard [The same as Document D38.] 22.1.1968. Pratsch, 1966-1976

D43 Bulgarien: Frau Irmgard [The same as Document D38.] 12.8.1968. Pratsch, 1966-1976

D44 Bulgarien: Frau Irmgard [The same as Document D38.] 23.10.1968. Pratsch, 1966-1976

D45 Bulgarien: Frau Irmgard [The same as Document D38.] 28.2.1969. Pratsch, 1966-1976

D50 Bulgarien: Frau Irmgard [The same as Document D38.] 24.2.1971. Pratsch, 1966-1976

D51 Bulgarien: Frau Irmgard [The same as Document D38.] 24.6.1971. Pratsch, 1966-1976

D52 Bulgarien: Frau Irmgard [The same as Document D38.] 9.11.1971. Pratsch, 1966-1976

D53 Bulgarien: Frau Irmgard [The same as Document D38.] 27.12.1971. Pratsch, 1966-1976

D54 Bulgarien: Frau Irmgard [The same as Document D38.] 12.2.1972. Pratsch, 1966-1976

D58 Bulgarien: Frau Irmgard [The same as Document D38.] 30.1.1974, 31.1.1974 Pratsch, 1966-1976

D59 Bulgarien: Frau Irmgard [The same as Document D38.] 18.11.1974. Pratsch, 1966-1976

D60 Bulgarien: Frau Irmgard [The same as Document D38.] 25.3.1975. Pratsch, 1966-1976

D61 Bulgarien: Frau Irmgard [The same as Document D38.] 7.7.1975. Pratsch, 1966-1976

D62 Bulgarien: Frau Irmgard [The same as Document D38.] 10.3.1976. Pratsch, 1966-1976

Documents from the Central Archives of the Bulgarian Methodist Episcopal Church

E5 A letter from pastor Nozharov to the Methodist Church in Pleven concerning the church property in that town. 28.7.1965.

E6 A letter from pastor Nozharov to the Chairman of the Committee for Religious Affairs concerning church property. 4.9.1965.

E7 A letter from pastor Nozharov to the Chairman of the Committee for Religious Affairs concerning church property. 29.9.1965.

E8 A letter from pastor Nozharov to the Chairman of the Committee for Religious Affairs concerning church property. 16.12.1965.

E10 A letter from a building company from Botevgrad to the Supreme Council of the Bulgarian Methodist Church concerning the expropriation of the Methodist church building in the town of Botevgrad. 21.7.1966.

E11 A letter from pastor Nozharov to the building company in Botevgrad concerning the church property. 5.8.1966.

E12 A letter from pastor Nozharov to the Regional People's Council in Varna, via the Committee for Religious affairs, concerning the church building in Varna. 22.8.1966.

E13 A letter from pastor Nozharov to the building company in Botevgrad concerning the expropriated church property in that town. 12.12.1966.

E14 A letter from pastor Nozharov to the Methodist church in Botevgrad concerning the sell of the property. 20.12.1966.

E15 A complaint from pastor Nozharov to the Prosecutor's Office in Sofia concerning church property in Varna. 7.3.1967.

E17 A letter from pastor Nozharov to the Committee for Religious Affairs informing them of an invitation from the Keswick Methodist conference and asking permission to attend the conference. 9.5.1968.

E18 A letter from pastor Nozharov to the Town People's Council in Shumen concerning the church property in that town. 20.5.1968.

E19 A letter from pastor Nozharov to the Committee for Religious Affairs concerning the salary of the Church employees. 11.7.1968.

E20 A letter from the Methodist Church in Pleven to pastor Nozharov concerning the church property in Pleven. 29.7.1968.

E21 A letter from the Regional People's Council in Gabrovo to the Supreme Council of the Bulgarian Methodist Church concerning the church property in Sevlievo. 1970.

E24 Information concerning the expropriated and sold properties of the Bulgarian Methodist Church. 27.10.1971.

E25 A letter from pastor Nozharov to the lawyer N. Angelov, demanding the payment of the expropriated church properties in Turnovo. 12.10.1975.

E26 A letter from pastor S. Popov to pastor Nozharov concerning the sale of Methodist properties. 6.2.1976.

E27 A letter from pastor S. Popov to pastor Nozharov, rebuking him for selling Methodist properties and incorrectly

claiming that the Bulgarian Methodist Church is the rightful owners of those properties. 9.2.1976.
 E28 A letter from pastor Nozharov to the Regional People's Council in Vidin concerning the payment of the expropriated church property in that town. 22.2.1977.
 E29 A letter from pastor Nozharov to the Chairman of the Town People's Council in Vidin concerning the payment of the expropriated church property in that town. 3.6.1977.
 E30 A letter from the Regional People's Council in Varna to the Supreme Council of the Bulgarian Methodist Church concerning church property in that town. 26.10.1982.
 E31 A letter from pastor Nozharov to the Regional People's Council in Varna concerning church property in Varna. 1.11.1982.
 E32 A statement by the Regional People's Council concerning the expropriation of the pastor's house in Russe. 15.11.1982.

Documents from the Archives of Keston Institute, U.K.

F1 Hoare, R. 1990 Voices of Religious Dissent in Bulgaria, a manuscript. From the File BU/PEN:
 F5 Foreign and Commonwealth Office A letter from D. Lambert, Eastern European and Soviet Department, to Keston College concerning the trial against the 6 Pentecostals in 1979. 22.11.1979. From the File BU 4/4: Law & Religion:
 F7 The Role and the Tasks of the Translation of the speech by G. Bulgarian Church Dimitrov made on 26.5.1946. From the File BU 4/4: Law & Religion:
 F8 Law on Religious Denominations Translation of the Law as it is given in "The Church and State Under Communism", Vol.II, 1965, Washington: Committee on the Judiciary, US Senate, pp.23-26. The Law was issued 1.3.1949.

Interviews

G5 Interview with M.I. - a pastor's wife.
 G6 Interview with D.N. - pastor.
 G8 Interview with E.N. - pastor.
 G10 Interview with M.B. - American missionary in Bulgaria.
 G11 Interview with B.I. - a pastor's son.
 G12 Interview with E.P. - a pastor's wife.

Secondary Sources

ANDREEVA, P. "Evangeliskijat Hram Prinasja v Zhertva Interesite February 1995 na Varnentsi", *Narodno Delo*.
 ANGELOV, T. 1995 "Problemite na Religioznata Tolerantnost v Bulgarija", *Zornitsa*, No.2, pp.1,3.
 ANONYMOUS 1980, "A Local Paper Attacks Evangelistic Activity," *Religion in Communist Lands*, No.1, pp.56-57.
 ANONYMOUS 1980, b "News in Brief: Bulgaria", *Religion in Communist lands*, No.3.
 ANONYMOUS 1980, c "News in Brief: Trial of Bulgarian Pentecostals", *Religion in Communist Lands*, No.3.
 ANONYMOUS 1987 Nasoki za Rabotata na Uchilishteto po Ateistichnoto Vuzpitanie na Uchenitsite, MKNP, Sofija.
 ANONYMOUS 1993 "Evangelistite Zarjazaha Smirenieto, Nezakonno Strojat Ogromen Hram do Uchilishte," *Narodno Delo*.
 ANONYMOUS, Evangelistki Lider Obvini Varnentsi, 24 Chasa, 6.8.1994, p.4.
 ASENOV, B.; SUBASHKI, V.; MUDROV, R.; IOTOV, S. 1987, "Religijata i Mladezhta", *Narodna Mladezh*, Sofija.
 BABRIS, P. 1978 *Silent Churches: Persecution of Religions in the Soviet-Dominated Areas*, Research Publishers, Arlington Heights.
 BEESON, T 1982 *Discretion and Valour: Religious Conditions in Russia and Eastern Europe*, London: Fontana.
 BOCIURKIW, B. and STRONG, J. (Editors) 1975, *Religion and Atheism in the USSR and Eastern Europe*, University of Toronto Press.
 BOLL, M. (Editor) 1985, *The American Military Mission in the Allied Control Commission for Bulgaria 1944-1947: History and Transcripts*, Columbia University Press, New York.
 BROWN, J. 1976 *Conscience and Captivity: Religion in Eastern Europe*, Ethics and Public Policy Center (USA).
 BROWN, J. 1991 *Surge to Freedom: The End of Communist Rule in Eastern Europe*, Adamantine Press.
 BUDNAIA, O.; GARADZHA, V.; GALITSKAJA, I. 1986 *Ateisticheskoe Vospitanie Shkol'nikov*, Prosveshtenie, Moskva.
 DELLIN, L.A.D. (Editor) 1967 *Bulgaria*, Thames and Hudson, London. 1957
 DRUCKER, P. 1992 *Managing the Future*, BCA.
 ECHIKSON, W. 1990 *Light the Night: Revolution in Eastern Europe*, Sidwick & Jackson Ltd., London.
 GALCHEVA, K. 1987 "Za Ateizum v Preduchilishtna Vuzrast", *Ateistichna Tribuna*, No.2, pp.51-55.
 GALERIU, C. 1991 "A Time of Change: Fundamental Options in the Present Dialogue between Believers and Society",

- Religion in Communist Lands*, Nos.1-2, pp.66-74.
- GREINACHER, N. and ELIZONDO, V. 1982 "Between Conformity and Rejection: The Difficult Path of the Church in the Second World, The Editorial" in: GREINACHER, N. and ELIZONDO, V. (Editors) *Churches in Socialist Societies of Eastern Europe*, T & T. Clark Ltd., Edinburgh, pp.vii-x.
- GSOVSKI, V. and GRZYBOWSKI, K. 1959, a *Government, Law and Courts in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe*, Vol.1, Atlantic Books, London, Stevens & Sons Ltd.
- GSOVSKI, V. and GRZYBOWSKI, K. 1959, b *Government, Law and Courts in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe*, Vol.2, Atlantic Books, London, Stevens & Sons Ltd.
- HADZHIEV, V. "Kanadski Sektanti Shturmuvat Devin", 24 Chasa, 12.5.1995 No.127, p.4.
- HOARE, R. 1990 "Chronicle : Bulgaria", *Religion in Communist Lands*, No.2, pp.172-180.
- HOLMES, L. 1993 *The End of Communist Power: Anti-Corruption Campaign and Legitimation Crises*, Polity Press, Oxford.
- IONESCU, G. 1967 *The Politics of the European Communist States*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London
- KOCHEV, Ju. (Editor) 1949, "Protsetsut sreshtu Evangelskite Pastori-Shpioni", Izdanie na Direktsijata na pechata, Sofija.
- KULICHEV, H. (Editor) 1994 "Vestiteli na Istinata, Bulgarsko Bibleisko" *Druzhestvo OOD*.
- MATEEV, M. 1993 Na Slovoto Ti Upovah, ORA - Bulgaria.
- MOJZES, P. 1992 *Religious Liberty in Eastern Europe and the USSR: Before and After the Great Transformation*, Boulder, New York.
- MORRIS, L.P. 1984 *Eastern Europe Since 1945*, Heinemann Educational Books, London.
- NAUMOV, D. 1992 *Konvoi, Svitek Purvi*, Arges, Sofija.
- NEDJALKOV, D. "Na Sotsialno-Etichni Temi: Takiva Prava Nikoi Ne" 12.12.1978 *Vi e Dal, Chernomorski Front*, No.9660, p.4.
- POPOV, H. 1994 *Iztezavan Zaradi Vjarata SI*, DohiPress.
- RAIKIN, S. 1984 "The Communists and the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, 1944-1948: The Rise and Fall of Exarch Stefan," *Religion in Communist Lands*, No.3, pp.281-292.
- SAWATSKY, W. 1991 "Truth Telling in Eastern Europe: The Liberation and the Burden", *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe*, No.4, pp.15-37.
- SCHLOSSBERG, H. 1991 *A Fragrance of Oppression*, Wheaton.
- SCHOPFLIN, G. (Editor) 1986, *The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe*, Oxford.1986
- SEMOV, M. 1995 *Bulgarinut i Vlastta* (Narodopsihologija, II) Slavena, Varna.
- STEFANOV, P. 1995 "Na Otpor sreshtu Sectite," *Shumenska Zarja*, 8.6.1995 No.108, p.4.
- TODOROV, S. 1979, "Iz Zalite na Suda: Ljubov sreshtu Zaplashtane", 31.10.1979 *Chernomorski Front*, No.9891, p.4.
- TRISKA, J.F. (Editor) 1969, *Constitutions of the Communist Party-States*, The Hoover Institution on War and Peace, Stanford University.
- TSVETKOV, Zh. 1991 "Totalitarizmut! Kak Se Sluchi?" *Bog i Satana*, Sofija.
- VAN DEN BERCKEN, W. 1985, " Ideology and Atheism in the Soviet Union", *Religion in Communist Lands*, No.3, pp.269-281.
- WALTERS, P. (Editor) 1988, *World Christianity: Eastern Europe*, MARC, Eastbourne (California).
- WOLFF, R.L. 1974 *The Balkans in Our Time*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge (Mass.).
- ZINOV'EV, A. 1981 *Komunizm Kak Realnost'*, Editions l'Age d'Homme, Lausanne.