

ASSOCIATION of JEWS from MACEDONIA in ISRAEL

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 7.8.2001

The active role of Bulgaria in the holocaust against the Thrace and Macedonian Jews

Bulgaria headed by King Boris was actively involved in the holocaust by deporting Jews to extermination. Consequently he should be considered a war criminal even if some people attribute him the merit of not deporting 'his' Jews from 'old Bulgaria' to extermination. Therefore bestowing praises upon Bulgaria and Boris without mentioning explicitly his criminal responsibility in extraditing Jews for extermination will be considered as a criminal act of holocaust denial.

In May 1941 Germany handed over the occupied territories of **Thrace and Macedonia** to the complete domination of Bulgaria. Contrary to the whole population in these territories the Bulgarian Government deprived in June 1943 by a special legislation the Thrace and Macedonian Jews from the Bulgarian citizenship, leaving them consequently completely defenseless. This act proves according to many historians the *mens rea* of war criminal Boris.

On February 22, 1943, an official agreement was signed between the two allies according to whom 20,000 Jews were to be deported in the first stage to Poland - 12,000 from Thrace and Macedonia and 8,000 from 'old Bulgaria'. Thanks to the intervention of several Bulgarian personalities, parliamentarians and clergy, who exercised pressure on the King and his Government the deportation of these 8,000 Jews was postponed, later on not carried out thanks to the military developments in the Eastern Front. However the Bulgarian Jews suffered discrimination, persecutions forced labor etc. until the end of the war.

But unfortunately in March 1943 Bulgaria cruelly organized and carried out the deportation of the 11,343 Jews of Thrace and Macedonia to Treblinka where all of them were immediately suffocated in the gas chambers. Moreover, the Bulgarian Treasury confiscated their entire property and paid to the Germans a considerable amount of money for having liberated Bulgaria from these Jews. Since the end of the war Bulgaria consistently reminded its alleged positive role vis-a-vis the Jews of 'old Bulgaria' concealing at the same time both its

cruel anti-Semitic legislation and its criminal acts against the Jews extradited for extermination. **Bulgaria has never admitted its crimes, has never asked pardon from the victims, has never offered to return their property but knew very well to ask credit and recognition for the survival of 'its' authentic Jews. The Jewish people and the whole humanity will remember forever the criminal role of King Boris, Hitler's friend and ally, and his fascist government.** In a telegram n. 442 of April 4, 1943 Joachim von Ribbentropp reported to Beckerle his Minister in Sofia, that Boris told him on April 1st in Berchtesgaden that he has approved the deportation of the Jews of the annexed territories. Thus Boris is not better than other allies of Hitler as Petain and Laval, Antonescu or Horty who helped to exterminate the undesired 'alien' Jews saving some or many of their 'own' Jews.

Therefore all loving truth must reject any Bulgarian pretentious aspiration to be accredited with what it does not merit especially not to commemorate a war criminal and his government that extradited Jews in cold blood to their Nazi ally. Such an act will not only profane the memory of the neglected victims of Thrace and Macedonia but will be rightly considered holocaust denial. The survivors and relatives of the victims will not tolerate any exoneration of war criminal Boris and his country from their war crimes.