

# BRITAIN IMPUGNS SOFIA TESTIMONY

## Note Calls 'Completely False' Allegations in Confessions in the Trial of Pastors

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

LONDON, March 12—The British Government, in a note to Bulgaria published tonight, impugned part of the testimony in one of the confessions at the recent trial of fifteen Bulgarian Protestant pastors. From this "clear example of misrepresentation," the British Government concluded that the whole of the testimony was "suspect."

The note, which was handed to Vasil Kolarov, Bulgarian Foreign Minister in Sofia, yesterday by the British Minister, specifically branded as "completely false" allegations made during the trial by some of the pastors that they had taken part in espionage at the instigation of members of the British Legation.

The testimony cited by the British in refutation of the allegations was that of the Rev. Vasil Ziapkov. He testified that in October, 1944, Stanley Burt-Andrews and his brother (who was head of the air mission on the Allied Control Mission, the note observed, and not connected in any way with the British Broadcasting Corporation as asserted at the trial) visited the pastor. It was also alleged, the note added, that further contacts had been made with Mr. Burt-Andrews in November and December of 1944 and in February, April and October of 1945.

"In point of fact," the note said, "Stanley Burt-Andrews did not reach Sofia until March 30, 1946, after which date his contacts with Pastor Ziapkov were solely connected with his duties as British Vice Consul and specifically as officer concerned on the civil side with the celebration of marriages."

The note declared the British Government drew its own conclusions from the use of such statements. Neither the Government nor the British people, it said, are "deceived" by Bulgarian attempts to misrepresent the trial.

Expressing "deep concern" over the severity of the sentences, the British Government said it was convinced "that religious freedom in Eastern Europe is under deliberate general attack and further that the Bulgarian Government has no intention giving effect to its solemn obligations under the terms of the treaty of peace to guarantee the fundamental freedoms to its people."