

U. S. SOFIA OFFICE CALLED SPY CENTER

Espionage Indictment Against Five Bulgarians Implicates Heath in Alleged Plot

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

SOFIA, Bulgaria, Feb. 21—An indictment against five Bulgarians charged with spying on behalf of the United States, which was published here today, asserted that the United States Legation in Sofia had been turned "into a center of plots and espionage against the People's Republic of Bulgaria."

The 5,000-word indictment issued by the Sofia district prosecutor contained the alleged confession of one of the prisoners implicating Donald R. Heath, United States Minister in Sofia, and other legation officials.

Named in the indictment were Michail Todorov Shipkov, 39, former translator in the United States Legation; Jivka Tomova Rindova, 32, former United States Legation telephone operator; Stefan Georgiev Kratunkov, 23, former student; Nikola Lubomirov Zinov, 23, and Vassil Malchev, 19. All are Bulgarian subjects.

They are charged with espionage as agents of the American Intelligence Service to which they allegedly supplied political, economic

and military information—the secrecy of which was necessary for the well-being and security of Bulgaria—and with preparing to leave the country during 1949 without official consent.

Mr. Shipkov and Mr. Kratunkov are accused of falsifying official documents, and the latter of possessing firearms without permission. All are charged under an article of the Penal Code that provides punishment of death or life imprisonment.

The indictment began with accusations of United States imperialistic activity in the Balkans after World War II and especially in Bulgaria through Georgi M. Dimitrov, former Agrarian leader now in the United States. It said that Mr. Dimitrov escaped to the United States with the aid of an American political representative in Sofia, Maynard Barnes, and was replaced by Nikola Petkov, who split the Agrarian Union and created an opposition center under the direct leadership of Mr. Barnes.

After the elimination of this "plotting organization" and the arrest of Mr. Petkov, the indictment said, Mr. Barnes was unmasked and forced to leave Bulgaria. "The hostile activity of Barnes was continued by Heath," the indictment said.

Recalling the trial of Protestant pastors and of Traicho Kostov, the indictment continued:

"All this shows that United States diplomatic representatives in Sofia turned the American Legation into a center of plots and espionage against the People's Republic of Bulgaria."

The indictment gave extracts of Mr. Shipkov's written statements confessing his activity as a spy of the British and American Intelligence Services, which it said he had begun as official liaison officer of Bulgarian military authorities to the Allied Control Commission's British section. The alleged confession revealed his contacts with Gen. William Oxley, head of the British Military Mission, and secret information that he supplied to General Oxley about the movement of Soviet troops in Bulgaria and of other matters.

Mr. Shipkov allegedly said through General Oxley that he came into contact with United States Legation Secretary Robert J. Strong and Mr. Barnes.

After dismissal from the Bulgarian Army, the indictment said, Mr. Shipkov was appointed as a translator in the United States Legation by Mr. Barnes.

Mr. Shipkov was said to confess that he supplied important information such as production, capacity, number of workmen, equipment and the annual index of a coal mine to Mr. Strong and that to Mr. Heath he gave information concerning a resolution of the Communist party's plenary session last June.

According to the alleged confession, he informed Mr. Heath about this warning and Mr. Heath advised him not to call at the police again but to hide himself in the Legation. This he did from Aug. 20, 1949, until Feb. 11, according to the confession.