

Five Bulgar Pastors Make Guilty Pleas

Spying Confessions Entered at Rate Of 1 in 45 Minutes; Total Is Now 8

Sofia, Bulgaria, Feb. 28 (AP). Proceedings speeded up in Bulgaria's spy trial today as five more Protestant churchmen pleaded guilty and asked for a chance to work for the Communist-controlled government.

Their confessions were entered at the rate of one every 45 minutes. So routine has the pattern of self-denunciation become that several spectators in the courtroom dozed during the session.

Eight defendants in all have entered pleas of guilty to charges of spying for the United States and Britain, treason and black market money dealings since the trial began Friday. Seven others still must plead.

Former U. S. Aide Named

Those who appeared on the stand today were: the Rev. Georgi Chernov, 46; the Rev. Lambri Mishkov, 41; the Rev. Georgi Vassev, 48; the Rev. Haralan Popov, 41, and the Rev. Ioncho Drianov, 41. Vassev is a Baptist and Mishkov a Congregationalist. The other three belong to the Pentecost Church.

Chernov testified he and other pastors had delivered information to America on Russian troop movements and on military and economic developments.

He said he had been ordered to collect espionage data by Cyril Black, former secretary in the United States political mission here. He claimed he had talked with Black during the period from November, 1944, to the middle of 1945.

American and British authorities in Sofia have rejected all charges made by the defendants in their court recitations. (Black, now a professor at Princeton university, has denied the accusations made against him, as have other Americans accused of complicity.)

Chernov said the Evangelical Church Council of Bulgaria gave orders through Protestant pastors to "praise everything American and slander all that is Russian." The council is an organization of Congregational, Methodist, Baptist and Pentecost churches in Bulgaria.

Accuses Americans

Vassev said he had been asked to collect information by two Americans whom he identified as Dr. William Coon, secretary general of the Baptist Mission in North America, and a man named Leuschner, called a Baptist youth leader. Money was sent from the United States to pay for such espionage, Vassev added.

All the defendants told the court that the secret security police who took their confessions in prison had displayed a "surprisingly noble attitude."

The remaining seven defendants are expected to enter pleas and make statements Tuesday.

In Chicago the North American Baptist headquarters issued a statement denying the church had had any connection with the United States intelligence services.

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DISCUSS TACTICS—Senators John C. Stennis (D., Miss.), Walter F. George (D., Ga.) and Russell Long (D., La.) discuss the fight

Associated Press Photo
they and other Southern Senators plan against a proposed change in Senate rules to kill the filibuster