

Petition by MPO (the Macedonian Patriotic Organization) to the United Nations, October 1949

After four years of fierce civil war, on the agenda of the Political Committee of the UN in September-October of 1949 is the Report of the Subcommittee for Balkan Affairs.

Even before the inclusion in the agenda of the Report, the Central Committee of the MPO sends to all members of the Balkan Subcommittee a telegram with “suggestions on bringing peace in Macedonia under Greek yoke”. In the same spirit, many local MPO’s and church communities send telegrams to the Subcommittee.

The Central Committee of MPO takes another step in this direction: after sending the telegrams, a special MPO delegation visits the headquarters of UN in Lake Success, NY in order to present a broad Petition on the situation in Macedonia under Greek yoke. The delegation includes: the Secretary and the Advisor to the Central Committee of MPO Luben Dimitrov and Methody Chaneff, as well as the priests George Nikoloff from Detroit, MI and **Vassil Mihaylov from Toronto, Canada.**

The essential in the Petition:

Using strong arguments, the Petition presents the situation in Macedonia “since the usurpation of the Aegean part of it to the present day”. It accentuates on the fact that all Greek governments follow the same policy of persecution and expelling of the Macedonian Bulgarians from their century-long home. The Petition offers a summary of the events of the last four years of civil war and the bloody struggle between the communist partisans’ groups and the government troops of official Athens. The most suffering falls upon the innocent Macedonian Bulgarians from the Lerin, Kostour, Voden, Enidje-Vardad and other regions stranded between these forces. At the end, the Petition proposes few points to the attention of the Balkan Subcommittee as well as to the 11 states-members of the Permanent UN Security Council:

- General amnesty for all sentenced in Macedonia and for all those sent into exile to the Greek Aegean islands without trial. The amnesty to be supervised by a special team of UN.
- Return of all Macedonian children abducted by the partisans, currently dispersed in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Romania, Czechoslovakia etc.
- International Aid program for the suffering Macedonian population under supervision of UN.
- Guaranteed right of the Macedonian Bulgarians to freely use their mother tongue, as well as to worship in their language in churches of their own.

Added to the Petition was the Resolution of the 28th Congress of MPO in Fort Wayne, IN containing proposals to resolving the Macedonian question. The Resolution brings to light data and facts concerning the other parts of enslaved Macedonia and pleads for the creation in Macedonia a “Switzerland on the Balkans”.

The “Macedonian Tribune” article gives details about the forwarding of the Petition to Secretary General Trygve Lie, also about the meeting between the delegation and the Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs Lester Pearson in his capacity of President of the Political Committee of UN. Mr. Pearson has been charged with reporting to the General Assembly the results of the work of the Subcommittee for the Balkans and about its peacemaking activity.

The next meeting of the delegation took place at the headquarters of the UN with Andrew Cordier, Executive Secretary and General Assistant to the Secretary General of the UN. On explicit order of Mr. Cordier the delegation is given access to the deliberations of the Political Committee on the issue of the situation in Greece.

Another important meeting followed with Ralph Bunche, Secretary General of UNPO (Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organizations), Special Envoy of the UN for the settlement of the Free State of Israel, Nobel Peace Prize for 1950. In the course of this extensive conversation, Mr. Bunche was briefed in detail about the situation in Macedonia

During its stay at the UN the MPO delegation met also with other high responsible personalities: the Executive Secretary to the President of the UN Plenary Sessions, Gen. Carlos Romulo, the Ambassador of Norway Mr. Ivar Lunde, Mr. Peake – General Assistant to the British Ambassador Sir Alexander Cadogan, the Main Assistants to the following Ambassadors – USA, France, the United Kingdom, Turkey, Egypt, Cuba, Ukraine, Argentina (all Members of the Permanent UN Security Council).

In a separate meeting the delegation was received by the Chinese Ambassador, Dr. Tsiang Tingfu, in his private office. During one break of the sessions of the UN Political Committee, the delegation met with the Yugoslav representative Dr. Ales Bebler to whom the Petition was presented completed with the Resolution of the MPO Congress on Resolving the Macedonian Question. A second meeting with the Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Pearson took place.

Meetings with representatives of the Press

At the Press headquarters to the UN, the delegation met with representatives of the American and the European Press. Copies of the Petition was received by the correspondents of the Associated Press, United Press, International News Service, New York Times, of the French and the Canadian Press, as well as by other newspapers and publications. On the next day the New York Times covered the participation of the delegation in the events.

The UN General Assembly session

The article offers a detailed description of the work, the procedures, of the overall environment at the session.

Derived from what was heard at the deliberations and from many conversations the delegation held with UN internal sources and other responsible factors, it became clear that “the work of the UN Reconciliation Commission is hindered and cannot conclude due to obstructions and to the stubbornness of Albania and Bulgaria to collaborate with the international institution.”

That episode shows how communist Bulgaria kept shamefully silent, when the Macedono-Bulgarian emigration defended the Bulgarian population in Macedonia before the UN, the world organization with utmost authority. Today, as some forces try to manipulate and distort the historical facts and events, we collect the bitter and shameful fruits of this silence back then.

The international communist movement not only enflames and adds fuel to the fratricide conflict in Aegean Macedonia, but also cynically exploits for its “revolutionary” goals the rightful hopes of the Macedonian Bulgarians to reject the Greek rule, for autonomy of all Macedonian lands. As the article in “Macedonian Tribune” reveals, official Bulgaria, through its representatives at the UN, was acting energetically against the efforts of the MPO, the last remaining defendant of the Bulgarians in Macedonia outside its borders.

To correct this disgrace, our duty is to remind about the relentless work of the patriots at MPO and to cherish the memory of the founder of the Holy Trinity parish, the very reverend **Vassil Mihaylov**. May his memory live forever!

Vassil Popvassilev

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