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MINING ENGINEERS AND TRIALS AGAINST THEM IN 1953

(Summary)

Engineers' community in Bulgaria before 9th September 1944 consisted of highly qualified professionals who had received their higher education in Western European countries. In the first months after the September events, many of them were subject to arrests; abusive treatment by local Fatherland Front Committees; arbitrary dismissals, and appointments. People of science, engineers did not accept the short terms of the two-year national-economic plan, the storming campaigns of socialist competition, and the lack of long-term and well considered planning of production. The engineering guild found it particularly hard to bear the loss of private practice and the leveling in pay introduced by the Act of the technical competence and the Act on the organization and use of technical specialists with higher and secondary education. The pressure to accept Soviet methods of work was distressing for the engineers, as most of them considered those methods inapplicable in Bulgarian conditions. Quite naturally, some of the technical intelligentsia stood in the ranks of the opposition to the government and shared its unenviable fate. The hostile policy of the government against the technical intelligentsia of Bulgaria reached its peak in the early 1950s when mock trials were organized against groups of engineers working in the most important industries: building, mining, communications, and machinery construction. The scale of arrests and the severity of sentences allow us to talk about well thought out purge of the engineering intelligentsia from people inconvenient for the government. With these processes, the ruling party achieved several goals: incarcerated much of

the “bourgeois” intelligentsia; found someone to blame for its erroneous economic decisions; instilled fear among the technical specialists who were still at work. This article highlights part of the picture of the legal fight against the technical intelligentsia, focusing on its most important for the economy representatives – mining engineers.