

117th CONGRESS

1st Session

Rep. Brendan F. Boyle
1133 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-6111
Fax: (202) 226-0611
CC: Reps Dingell, McClain, and Tenney

Dear US House of Representatives Speaker,

Dear Representatives Boyle, Dingell, McClain, and Tenney,

As constituents from Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan and other Midwest states, we encourage you in the undersigned petition you to vote AGAINST the proposed House Resolution 741, which urges the US House to support the designation of the month of September 2022 as “Macedonian American Heritage Month” and to celebrate "the Macedonian language, history, and culture of Macedonian Americans and their incredible contributions to the United States "(hereafter referred to as HR 741).

We strongly object to HR 741 because it intentionally and deliberately misrepresents the heritage, language, culture and identity of an important group of US citizens of Macedonian heritage, namely the Macedono-Bulgarian Americans. In the late 19th and early 20th century, Macedono-Bulgarians constituted a vast majority of the Slavic-speaking population in a territory that included modern day Republic of North Macedonia, Northwestern Greece, and Southwestern Bulgaria. They identified their ethnic and national origin as Bulgarians residing in the geographic region of Macedonia. Ethnic Bulgarians living in Macedonia or Macedono-Bulgarians are well-documented in academic publications, U.S. media, and population censuses in the United States. For additional details see Exhibit 1 in the Appendix.

When immigrating to the United States, many of these individuals identified themselves as ethnic Bulgarians from the geographic region of Macedonia or Macedono-Bulgarians. Therefore, Macedono-Bulgarian identity is distinct from the Macedonian identity of many of the immigrants originating from the territory of the former People’s Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Macedonia (now North Macedonia) who settled in the United States after the 1950s and 1960s. Instances of notable Macedono-Bulgarian American immigrants include Tom and John Kiradjieffs of Cincinnati, Ohio, the American author of Macedono-Bulgarian descent Stoyan Christowe of Dover, Vermont, and the American Olympic and World champion and surgeon of Macedono-Bulgarian descent Peter T. George of Akron, Ohio whose origin, identity and culture have been misrepresented in the proposed resolution.

Let's consider, for example, Tom Kiradjieff who created Cincinnati chili, a beloved American dish named in 2013 by the Smithsonian as one of the “20 Most Iconic Foods in America”. His son Joe Assen Kiradjieff clearly stated in the Veterans History Project, run by the Cincinnati and Hamilton County Public Library, that his parents’ ethnicity is Bulgarian rather than Macedonian and that his parents are from Bulgaria, probably from Macedonia (see the video, 46:30 min:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SnJO_6YL7Xw&t=2714s). This is a clear indication of

Macedono-Bulgarian identity in their family memory. Additionally, U.S. immigration records show that

his mother Sika Kiradjieff was born in Sofia, Bulgaria and identified herself as Bulgarian. For additional details see Exhibit 2 in the Appendix.

Another notable example is Stoyan Christowe, an author of an autobiographical book *This is My Country*, which was one of the five books found on President Franklin D. Roosevelt's bedside table when he passed away. In it, Christowe describes the life in his native village of Konomladi/ Makrochori in Macedonia where young men "had dreams of becoming famous *komitadjis* like Deltcheff and Boris Sarafoff and driving the Turks away" from their native land (Christowe, p. 15). He further notes that, upon arriving in the United States, his and his compatriots' "native speech was Bulgarian" (p. 39) and that they identified themselves as "*Bolgari, Bolgari*" (i.e., Bulgarians, Bulgarians) when meeting Greeks on Market Street in St. Louis, Missouri (p. 50).

In his autobiographic work, Christowe reaffirms once again his Bulgarian identity when visiting Bulgaria's capital later on in his life noting that "though born a Bulgarian, I had never before been in Bulgaria proper, having come directly to America from Macedonia" (p. 262). While in Sofia, Christowe met with the Bulgarian political and literary elite which included King Boris III, as well as authors like Balabanoff and Elin Pelin whose works he had translated into English. Elin Pelin welcomed him with the words "there is a Bulgarian for you. Came all the way from America to see free Bulgaria. Once a Bulgarian, always a Bulgarian. American, American but blood is thicker than water" (p. 268). In his book, Christowe comments directly about his Bulgarian language by saying, "my speech crude and rusty when I arrived in Bulgaria, began to flow from my mouth with marvelous facility. Thoughts and ideas formed themselves in my mind in Bulgarian. I even began to dream in Bulgarian. Constantly in the mind of artists, people from the theater, statesmen, molders and masters of the native speech, I soon became better able to express myself in Bulgarian than in English" (p. 294-5). For additional details see Exhibit 3 in the Appendix.

Another Macedono-Bulgarian, Dr. Peter George, in an article from 01/09/2014 in *Macedonian Tribune*, the newspaper of the Macedono-Bulgarian Americans, writes that "in 1944, to dissuade the people in the territory of Macedonia from thinking of themselves as Bulgarians who want to be reunited with their mother country, President Tito officially incorporated the geographic area into Yugoslavia as the Socialist Republic of Macedonia. To encourage a distinct Macedonian identity, he ordered linguistic scholars to change the structure of the alphabet of the language used by these people to just enough to differentiate it from Bulgarian." In the same article, Dr. George goes on to discuss his and his parents' identity noting "my parents however, were Bulgarians born in Macedonia. I, therefore, must say that my nationality is Bulgarian." For additional details see Exhibit 4 in the Appendix.

The development of Macedonian identity as distinct and separate from that of the Bulgarians occurred in the 20th century well after these notable Americans or their parents had already immigrated to the United States. Therefore, they like many of the earlier immigrants and their descendants cherished and preserved their Macedono-Bulgarian identity. If Congress were to adopt HR 741, this act would basically amount to denying those immigrants their "inalienable right to self-identification."

We, the descendants of Bulgarians and Macedono-Bulgarians, firmly believe that Resolution 741 is divisive and discriminatory with regard to the Macedono-Bulgarian identity of many of our ancestors as it denies their and our right of self-identification based on ethnic or national origin. It constitutes a misrepresentation of who our ancestors were and a mischaracterization of who we are as their descendants. Therefore, Resolution 741 robs people who have passed away and their living descendants of the basic human right of ethnic and national identification.

In addition, by intentionally excluding the Macedono-Bulgarian Americans from the text of the

Resolution and by misrepresenting their origin and legacy, we believe that Resolution 741 violates the key principles on which American democracy is built, namely the principles of inclusivity, equity, and nondiscrimination on the basis of ethnic or national origin.

To that end, we beseech you to Vote AGAINST HR 741 because its current language by deliberately omitting to mention the Macedono-Bulgarian origin of many Macedonian Americans and their contributions shows disrespect and disregard for the very values it purports to support. The ratification of such a divisive text will only serve to further exacerbate the tensions and disagreements between modern-day Macedonians and Macedono-Bulgarians both in the United States and abroad.

Appendix

Exhibit 1: Evidence for Macedono-Bulgarian identity documented in academic research, public media and U.S. censuses

Document 1.1. Evidence from Chris Anastassoff's Book, *The Tragic Peninsula*

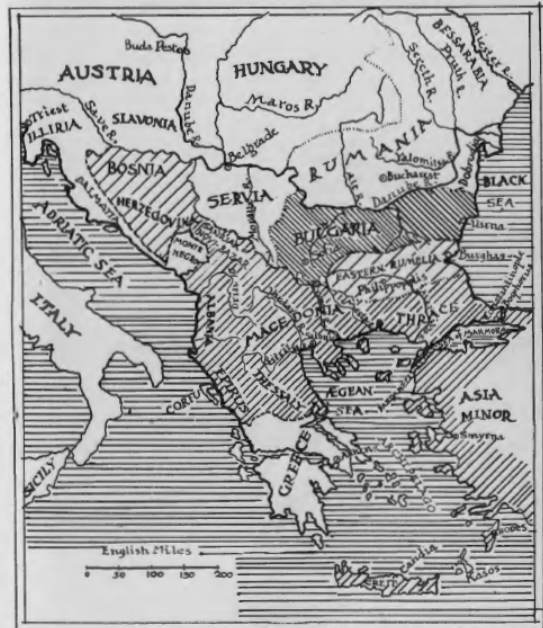
of the Sultan, but it was to have, as to its internal affairs, a sort of "administrative authority" with a Christian governor.¹¹ The districts of Pirot, Nish, Zaichar, and Vrania, in the western part of Bulgaria, were given to Servia, and the Sandjak of Novi-Bazar, Thrace and Macedonia were given back to the Sultan Abdul Hamid; while Bosnia-Herzegovina was handed to the then Dual Monarchy for the purpose of "administration."

Macedonia, of course, constituted by far the largest providence of European Turkey. Because of its geographic situation, Macedonia was greatly valuable both for commerce and military strategy. This is because Macedonia is situated in the heart of the western half of the Balkan Peninsula. It is traversed by the only natural and the shortest road from north to south which combines middle Europe with the Aegean Sea and the Near East. One cannot appreciate the meaning of the Macedonian situation without having a definite conception of the geographic conditions of the country. It is essential, therefore, to give a brief sketch of the geography of Macedonia.

In general, the topographic features of Macedonia are quite irregular and rather mountainous; the geographic boundaries of the country are, for the most part, natural. On the east, Macedonia is bound by the River Mesta and the Rhodope Mountains. On the north, it is bound by a range of mountains starting with Shar Planina (Shar Mountain), Cherna Gora, and the Osogov Planina. These mountains extend from west to east, with some irregularities which assume a north-easterly (Cherna Gora) and southerly direction (Osogov Planina). The western boundary of Macedonia is a line along the eastern part of the Albanian border, running in a rather southerly direction, passing west of the Ochridsko Ezero (Lake Ochrida). The southern boundary of Macedonia

¹¹ See Articles XI-XXI of the Treaty of Berlin, 1878.

The OTTOMAN EMPIRE in EUROPE AFTER the TREATY of BERLIN, 1878
The TERRITORIAL REDUCTION of SAN-STEFANO BULGARIA



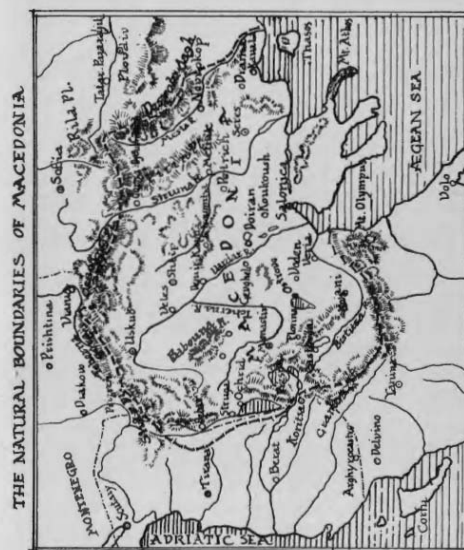
begins with the mouth of the Bistritsa River, runs along this river to its origin, and extends to the Albanian mountains west of Lake Ochrida. (See map). Macedonia, as indicated by her geographic boundaries, is surrounded entirely by high mountains, except for her outlet to the Aegean Sea. Thus, she assumes an inclined plane which slopes southward. There are three rivers—Vardar, Struma, and Mesta—which run through from north to south and empty into the Aegean Sea. The most important valley, however, is that of the Vardar. First, because the Vardar River is the largest and therefore the most fit for commercial purposes, and secondly, because the Vardar Valley is connected thru the low mountain passes near Vrania with the Valley of Morava, which leads to the Danube and thus opens the way toward Middle Europe. Thus, then, Macedonia occupies a central position in the southwestern part of the Peninsula with Thrace on the east, Albania on the west, the Aegean Sea on the South, and Shar Planina on the north.

Within these boundaries Macedonia covers about 67,000 square kilometers, or nearly as much territory as the State of Missouri. Altho the country shows a mountainous character, it, nevertheless, contains numerous plains with very fertile soil. The climatic conditions are quite agreeable for residence and also for agriculture. The main industry of the country is agriculture. The total population of Macedonia, as estimated in 1912, is 2,260,000,¹² out of which 55 per cent is Bulgarian, 20 per cent Turkish, 10 per cent Greek, 10 per cent Albanian, and the other five per cent made up of Jews, Vlachs, Gypsies, and others. From this data the heterogenetic character of the people is obvious; nevertheless, the predominating group, the one that plays the major role in the affairs of Macedonia, is that of the Bulgaro-Macedonians.

¹² See Chapter IV, footnote (2), and Chapter XXVI below.

Since the settlement of Berlin, Macedonia has become a tragic scene of events. The Bulgarians in Macedonia, who had been organizing since 1893, rose, in 1903, against the Hamidian regime. The usual Turkish repression and execution was inaugurated. European intervention followed which intended to introduce reforms in behalf of the *rayahs*. To avert this European scheme the so-called Young Turks proclaimed a revolution and deposed Abdul Hamid in 1908. Soon after, the new regime inaugurated a policy of denationalization and suppression in Macedonia. The outcome of this Turkish policy was the formation of the Balkan League, and the war upon Turkey. The latter was defeated, but, in the settlement among the victorious Balkan States, Macedonia was divided among Serbia, Greece, and Bulgaria. The situation in Macedonia under the ascendancy of Serbia and Greece became far worse than it had been under the Turkish regime. Both began to Grecianize and Servianize the Macedonian Bulgars in their respective possessions by closing their schools and churches, suppressing newspapers and periodicals, destroying the libraries and burning all the Bulgarian books. The war for "democracy" and "self-determination" of nationalities, failed to affect the situation in Macedonia. The Macedonians now renewed the struggle against their new oppressors, inscribing on their banner the motto: "Macedonia for the Macedonians." It is for this ideal that the Macedonians of today are struggling against the forces of conquest and oppression—against the brutal and tyrannical regimes of Belgrade and Athens.

In a recent declaration issued in January 1934, by the Central Committee of the IMRO, the following is noteworthy: "The Servian and Greek Governments persist with their policy of violence and denationalization of the Macedonian Bulgarians as well as of all other nationalities in our country. It is to be noted with regret



that the above-mentioned Governments have been morally encouraged in their tyrannical policy by the apparent passive attitude on the part of the League of Nations. According to the Peace Treaties, the Macedonian population was placed under the protection of the League of Nations which was to have taken the necessary measures for a systematic application of the treaty clauses for the protection of minorities, thereby ensuring minimum cultural and national rights for the Macedonian population. Notwithstanding the memorandum of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization issued in 1924, the numerous exposés of lawful Macedonian organizations both in Europe and America, and the numerous steps taken by Macedonian delegations sent to Geneva with the object of setting forth the intolerable situation in Macedonia, and of requesting assistance, the League of Nations remained unmoved before the sufferings of the population in Macedonia and failed to carry out its humane duty.

"....The Central Committee of the IMRO declares once again to the whole world that the Organization is therefore forced to resort to revolutionary methods in its struggle for the liberation of Macedonia on account of the cruel regime of assimilation imposed by the Belgrade and Athens Governments, and the inactivity of the League of Nations. Every change in the regime that would constitute a real guarantee for the unhampered national, cultural, and political development of the Macedonian population will be sincerely welcomed by the Organization as the beginning of a peaceful and equitable solution of Balkan problems. Should this fail, then the IMRO shall continue the campaign for the liberation of Macedonia in the only possible way sanctified by the history of all nations, and by the natural rights of the Macedonian population."¹³

¹³ The text of this Declaration may be found in *La Macédoine*, No. 216, February 1, 1934. This Declaration was signed by the three members of the Central Committee of the IMRO—Ivan Michailoff, Vladimir Kourteff, and Georghi Nasteff.

Altho the Bulgarian people were united, first, by the *Firman* of 1870, which created the national Bulgarian Church, and secondly, by the Treaty of San Stefano, unfortunately, the Congress of Berlin performed the first political division, while the Treaty of Bucharest effected the second political division of the Bulgarian nation. Because of such unjust and shameful distribution of the Bulgarian people from one sovereignty to another, the bloodshed on the Balkan Peninsula for the last forty-five years still continues.

Not even the post-war treaties of 1919 made any settlement of consequence. Still worse, within the present political boundaries of "Yugo-Slavia" another strong movement has developed since 1929. The Croatian-Slavonian people, who constitute the largest single group in the Yugo-Slav state, clamor for their independence. Fraudulently brought under the sceptre of the Belgrade regime, they now raise their voices against the Servian coercive rule. The Croatians vigorously demand the restoration at least of their autonomy which they had enjoyed prior to the "unification" period in 1919. Because of the dictatorial and oppressive regime which exists in Yugo-Slavia since 1929, the friction between the Croatian people and Belgrade has been so intensified that an open revolt is in its dynamic state.

Under the leadership of Dr. Ante Pavelich, the Croatians have organized themselves along the line of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO) and have accepted the latter's tactics against the Belgrade regime. The Ustachi, or Croat Insurrectors, which seek Croatia's independence, cooperate with the IMRO in every possible way that might have bearing against the Belgrade regime. The assassination of King Alexander at Marseilles was a result of IMRO-Ustachi joint action. Vlado Georgieff Tchernozemzky, the assassin at Marseilles, who was connected for nearly two

years with the Croatian insurgents, was a noted Macedonian revolutionist and close associate of Ivan Mihailoff, the present leader of the IMRO. With such a state of conditions existing in Yugo-Slavia, how can we expect peace and tranquillity in Yugo-Slavia in particular and the Balkan States in general?

However, since the Macedonian question is a direct outcome of the work of the Congress of Berlin, the story of Macedonia, and the factors responsible for this tragic situation in the Balkans, will be the subject matter of the chapters to follow.

Document 1.2. Evidence from the *New York Times* from 08/17/1903 about the Bulgarian Character of the Slavic Population in Macedonia

MEMORANDUM FROM BULGARIA TO POWERS

Government Tells of Turkish Atrocities in Macedonia.

A Terrible Record of Massacres, Murders, Torture and Oppression— Particulars All Obtained from Official Sources.

SOFIA, Aug. 10.—The Bulgarian Government has presented a memorandum to the powers setting out at great length the condition of affairs during the past three months in Macedonia, since the Turkish Government undertook to inaugurate the promised reforms.

places, and names of persons, are given in the memorandum, the whole constituting a terrible category of murder, torture, incendiarism, pillage, and general oppression committed by the Ottoman soldiers and officials.

These particulars were obtained entirely from official sources, such as the reports of the Bulgarian Consuls and agents of the Bulgarian Government, and, in many instances, the reports made by Turkish authorities. The Bulgarian Government guarantees the absolute truth of every statement, and challenges the Porte to disprove a single charge made in the memorandum.

The memorandum begins by stating that during the past three months the Ottoman Government has taken a series of measures with the alleged intention of inaugurating the era of promised reform and of assuring peace and tranquillity to the Bulgarian population of European Turkey, but which have had the contrary effect of further exasperating this population and reviving the revolutionary movement. Instead of proceeding solely against persons guilty of breaches of the public order, the military and civil authorities have sought every possible pretext to persecute, terrorize, and ruin the Bulgarian inhabitants, alike in the large cities and in the small villages.

Wholesale massacres, individual murders, the destruction of villages, the pillaging of and setting fire to houses, arrests, ill-treatment, tortures, arbitrary imprisonment and banishment, the closing and disorganizing of churches and schools, the ruining of merchants, the collection of taxes for many years in advance—such, proceeds the memorandum, are among the acts of the Ottoman administration of the Vilayets of Salonika, Monastir, Uskub, and Adrianople.

DETAILS OF EXCESSES.

The memorandum next relates in detail a number of such cases in each vilayet. Beginning with the Vilayet of Salonika, it states that in the town of Salonika itself the Bulgarian professors of the university, the students, and shopkeepers—in fact, all the intelligent Bulgarians in the city—have been cast into prison. One hundred and twenty soldiers entered the village of Gorna-Ribnitsa on May 19 and tortured to death five men and two women. During

the first three weeks of July twenty-five villages in the district of Tikvesch were subjected to the depredations of the Turkish soldiers and Bashi-Bazouks. The villagers were beaten and tortured, the women assaulted, and the houses plundered while the administrative authorities looked on.

In the Vilayet of Monastir artillery bombarded and razed the flourishing town of Smerdesch, the 300 hundred houses being left a heap of ruins. At the beginning of July two Greek bands, with the connivance of the authorities, pillaged Bulgarian villages and murdered many of their inhabitants.

In the Vilayet of Uskub the entire Bulgarian population has been systematically persecuted since last May. The Director of the normal school at Uskub was imprisoned because his library contained the "revolutionary" books "Othello" and "Les Miserables." In the districts of Palanka, Koschani, Koumanovo, and Gostigar the prisons are filled with Bulgarian priests, schoolmasters, and merchants. During June soldiers and Bashi-Bazouks terrorized the inhabitants of the Schtif District, torturing the people with red-hot irons.

Similar atrocities perpetrated in the vilayet of Adrianople are cited.

Altogether the memorandum gives particulars of no less than 131 individual and general cases of excesses and outrages committed by the Turkish authorities. In summarizing the specific details of the outrages mentioned the memorandum declares that wholesale massacres were perpetrated by regulars and Bashi-Bazouks in the town of Salonika and the villages of Baldevo, Banitsa, Tchouriloko, Karbinza, Moghila, Smerdesch, and Endje, while the scenes of carnage, pillage, and incendiarism were everywhere terrible. At Smerdesch over 200 Bulgarians were shot, killed with swords, or burned to death. Over 200 houses and the churches and schools were set on fire with petroleum and pillaged, the property being sold by the soldiers and Bashi-Bazouks in neighboring places. Similar scenes occurred at the villages of Gorna-Ribnitsa, Igoumenetz, Dobrlaki, and Nikoden. The villagers there abandoned their homes and fled to the mountains.

Source: <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1903/08/17/102018510.html>

Document 1.3. Evidence from the from the *New York Times* from 12/13/1903 about the Bulgarian Character of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization

BORIS SARAOFF SLAIN.

Famous Bulgarian Revolutionary Murdered at the Threshold of His Home.

SOFIA, Bulgaria, Dec. 12.—Boris Saraff, the most famous of all the leaders of the Bulgarian bands in Macedonia, was shot dead at the threshold of his house to-day by a Macedonian, who at the same time shot and killed another revolutionary chief, named Garvauoff, while the latter was in the act of bidding Saraff farewell.

The murderer is believed to be a man named Panitza, a nephew of the notorious Major Panitza, who was executed by shooting in 1890 for conspiring to assassinate Prince Ferdinand and certain members of the Bulgarian Cabinet.

The crime is attributed to dissensions arising from differences of opinion regarding the disposal of money subscribed to the Macedonian cause.

The police are searching for Panitza, but have not yet found him.

The name of Boris Saraff has been prominent in all the stories of Macedonian uprisings in recent years. From 1903 to the time of his death he was Commander in Chief of the Bulgarian revolutionary forces.

His hatred of the Turks came to him when, as a lad of 14 years, he saw both his father and grandfather tortured, thrown into a dungeon, and then exiled for fifteen years. At that time he swore he would avenge these wrongs.

In order to equip himself for the execution of his purposes, in course of time he entered the Bulgarian Army and eventually became one of its officers. In 1895 he formed a band of desperadoes to raid Turkish territory, and subsequently headed numerous daring raids into that country. At one time he captured the Turkish town of Melnik putting the garrison to flight. Saraff's aim was to organize a vast rebellion with the object of seizing Constantinople and overthrowing the Turkish rule.

It is believed by many he was the real instigator of the abduction of Miss Ellen M. Stone, the American missionary, in 1901. It is said he thought to procure through her ransom the needed funds to enable the Macedonian Revolutionary Committee to organize the insurrection.

At one time Saraff intimated that he might visit the United States in order to obtain sympathy for his cause, but it was pointed out to him that his responsibility for the abduction of Miss Stone might prove a serious barrier to his propaganda in America.

Source:

<https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1907/12/13/106714190.html>

Document 1.4. Evidence from the from the *New York Times* from 08/14/1903 Documenting that Bulgarian Population in Macedonian Organized the Ilinden Uprising of 1903

A GENERAL RISING EXPECTED

Salonika Authorities Believe It Will Begin To-day — President of Macedonian Committee Arrested in Bulgaria.

SALONIKA, Aug. 13.—Information from Monastir is to the effect that the insurgents have occupied Klisura and Pissordere. Klisura is the chief town of the Sanjak of Nahis, vilayet of Monastir.

Four thousand Turkish troops are bombarding Krushevo, which is still in the hands of the insurgents, and the Bulgarians in the Krushevo and Reka districts are suffering severely.

The civil and military authorities at Salonika wired to Constantinople on Tuesday stating that a general insurrection was expected on Aug. 14, and disclaiming all responsibility unless they were reinforced. Constantinople replied by ordering the immediate enrollment of 2,000 exclusively Mussulman gendarmes for service in Salonika.

The insurgent banner, was unfurled on Aug. 10 at Konsko, near Giervell, showing that the insurrection is spreading eastward.

It is reported that the Bulgarian insurgents have massacred the inhabitants of the large Turkish village of Kenati, near Monastir. Only twenty are said to have escaped.

Insurgent bands frequently visit Kastoria.

A big fight is proceeding at Diavat, near Monastir. Fighting is also proceeding at Chernarcka, near Gumenje, to which place reinforcements have been sent.

Great movements of troops are proceeding at Mitrovitza, Salonika, and Sorovitch.

Source:

<https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1903/08/14/102017635.html>

Exhibit 2: Evidence of Tom and Joe Kiradjieff's Macedono-Bulgarian identity

Document 2.1. U.S. Passenger Manifest for Joe Kiradjieff's mother Sika

The image shows a U.S. Passenger Manifest for Sika Kiradjieff, dated February 20, 1900. The manifest is for a ship arriving at Niagara Falls, N.Y. The passenger's name is Kiradjieff, Sika Petrova, with the name of her husband as Sika Petrova. Her age is 24 years, and she is a female of Bulgarian nationality. She was born in Sofia, Bulgaria. Her last permanent residence is Toronto, Canada. She is coming to the U.S. from Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Her destination is Cincinnati, Ohio. She is coming to the U.S. by ship. Her relative or friend is Sika Petrova, 118 Pittsfield Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio. The manifest is signed by the U.S. Department of Labor, Immigration Service, Form 545, Can. Nat. R. R. #86. To the right of the manifest is a Medical Certificate, dated Jan 30, 1900, signed by Joseph Kelly, M.D., with a signature of S. S. Kelly, M.D. The certificate states that the passenger is in good health and fit to travel.

Document 2.2. List of Manifest of Alien Passengers for US Immigration Officer at the port of arrival documenting Kiradjieffs' Origin as Bulgarian

The image shows a list of manifest of alien passengers for US Immigration Officer at the port of arrival, dated December 26, 1900. The list is for the ship S.S. "MASSACHUSETTS" and is for the date December 26, 1900. The list includes the names of the passengers, their ages, and their origins. The passengers listed include Sika Kiradjieff, who is listed as being from Sofia, Bulgaria. The list is signed by the Immigration Officer at the port of arrival.

Document 2.3. Census from 1920 Documenting the Kiradjieffs' Origin as Bulgarian from Macedonia or Macedono-Bulgarian

STATE Ohio COUNTY Hamilton TOWNSHIP OR OTHER DIVISION OF COUNTY Prosser NAME OF INCORPORATED PLACE Cincinnati ENUMERATED BY ME ON THE 14th DAY OF January 1920

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE - BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
 FOURTEENTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES: 1920 - POPULATION

SUPERVISOR'S DISTRICT NO. 24 SHEET NO. 4 B
 ENUMERATION DISTRICT NO. 2 WARD OF CITY 16th
 NAME OF INSTITUTION _____ ENUMERATOR George Schumann 1269

PLACE OF BIRTH	NAME	RELATION	SEX	AGE	MARRIAGE	EDUCATION	NATIVITY AND BIRTH FORCE				OCCUPATION	REMARKS		
							Place of birth	Birth force	Place of birth	Birth force				
110	136444101	Simpson, Alice	wife	35	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		15707
111	136444102	Turner, Albert	head	28	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		15829
112	136444103	Turner, Francis	wife	24	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		15922
113	136444104	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		16020
114	136444105	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		16120
115	136444106	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		16220
116	136444107	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		16320
117	136444108	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		16420
118	136444109	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		16520
119	136444110	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		16620
120	136444111	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		16720
121	136444112	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		16820
122	136444113	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		16920
123	136444114	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		17020
124	136444115	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		17120
125	136444116	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		17220
126	136444117	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		17320
127	136444118	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		17420
128	136444119	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		17520
129	136444120	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		17620
130	136444121	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		17720
131	136444122	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		17820
132	136444123	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		17920
133	136444124	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		18020
134	136444125	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		18120
135	136444126	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		18220
136	136444127	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		18320
137	136444128	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		18420
138	136444129	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		18520
139	136444130	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		18620
140	136444131	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		18720
141	136444132	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		18820
142	136444133	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		18920
143	136444134	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		19020
144	136444135	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		19120
145	136444136	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		19220
146	136444137	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		19320
147	136444138	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		19420
148	136444139	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		19520
149	136444140	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		19620
150	136444141	Turner, Thomas	son	12	12 31 79	yes	yes	Kentucky		Kentucky		Kentucky		19720

Exhibit 3: Evidence of Stoyan Christowe's Macedono-Bulgarian identity

What had Gurkin to say to justify the airs he was putting on?

Gurkin had plenty to say! And he said it. On the first Sunday following his return he attended church. His visit there occasioned more excitement than if the bishop himself had come from the city. Nobody paid any attention to the liturgy. Everybody gaped at Gurkin, for many people had not gone to his house to see him, and he had not yet come out in the streets to show himself to the populace. He stood there amidst the people conscious that all eyes were fastened on him. He was like some strange emissary from another world. And his gift to the church would have done credit and honor to a prince. No village church was ever before enriched with such a treasure. It was a huge chandelier. A myriad lozenge-shaped crystals tinkled like tiny bells and radiated the hues of the heavens as the thing swayed above the center of the nave. It looked like a miniature heaven hanging from the ceiling of the church, and it was a fitting symbol of the splendor and the glory of the world which Gurkin had discovered.

Though the weather was clear and the streets of the village, usually muddy, were dry, Gurkin had come to church carrying an umbrella and wearing a pair of rubbers. He was dressed in a gray, double-breasted suit, with heavy brown stripes, and his pantaloons were pressed flat and had sharp creased edges in front and in back. Around his neck he had a stiff white thing, like a till-tug, at which he continually pulled, to keep it

14

on in the line they were either pulled aside or the mark was wiped off by another inspector with higher authority.

Nichola was immediately ahead of me, but he kept looking back constantly to make sure I was following. With his bundle and the documents in his hand he looked harassed and lost. The city clothes which he put on at Salonika made him look clumsy and awkward.

After winding through many corridors, being pushed this way and that like dummies, with the building swaying about us (for the sensation of the ship's rocking still persisted), Nichola and I entered a large hall in which there were benches to sit on. Between each two benches, at the farther end of the hall, were desks at which sat other inspectors, some in uniform and others in civilian clothes. These inspectors did not hurry; they took their time questioning the immigrants.

Nichola gave a deep sigh as he sat on the bench, his baggage in front of him on the floor. "You've nothing to worry about," he comforted me. "You're smart, you know reading and writing and how to do figures. It's I who know nothing, have eyes but can't see, that's got to worry. You've got four eyes, Little One, four eyes. That's what schooling does for you, gives you an extra pair of eyes."

"Don't be afraid, Uncle Nichola. Whatever writing and figuring's to be done for you I'll do. I'll tell the inspectors."

We sidled along on the bench, pushing our luggage with our feet, till we came to the desk. Then we both

38

from choking him. To it was tied a ribbon, which extended into the vest.

Everybody was glad when the service was over and the congregation could rush out in the broad churchyard to make a closer inspection of the "American." Gurkin did not go home immediately but very considerably remained in front of the church to display himself to the people. He was instantly surrounded by men and women who had sons or brothers in the country whence he had just returned. They all started asking questions concerning their dear ones. Gurkin was surprised to learn that so many people from the village had followed in his footsteps, for they had gone to many places in America. He was very discreet, however, and answered the questions with considerable grace. He did not wish to cause any unnecessary worries. He answered as though he had seen everyone inquired about on the very day he left America. He said everybody was in good health and working. Working! That was important. That much truth about America had reached the village. If one worked all was well; if one didn't, then nothing was right, even though one was in good health.

We youngsters clustered about and viewed the great man with wonder and admiration. There was not a single one among us who wished to be anything but Gurkin. We had had dreams of becoming famous *comitadjis* like Deltcheff and Boris Sarafoff and of driving the Turks away from our country. But the glamor and spirit of adventure which Gurkin brought to the

15

rose together and faced the inspectors. There were two of them, one seated and one standing. The one who sat was a ruddy man with folds of flesh at the nape of his neck. He was huge, with a protruding stomach that seemed to confirm the notion in Selo that the Americans were orbicular. He reminded me of the bloated Turkish officials who sometimes came to the village.

The other inspector snatched Nichola's papers from his hand and looked at the passport where the name, age and description were written in French.

"What's your name?"

The language in which he addressed Nichola was a kind of basic Slavic, intelligible to us, whose native speech was Bulgarian, as well as to Croatians, Serbs, Poles, Czechs, Russians. Nichola's eyes brightened with joy and his face opened in an innocent smile at the sound of familiar native words in this frightening place.

Before Nichola had a chance to reply, I piped out, "His name's written in the passport!"

"You shut up," barked the man.

"How do you call yourself?" the inspector asked again.

"Nichola Zlatin."

"How old are you?"

"Forty-seven."

"And you are going where?"

"To Santo Louis."

"Have you any friends or relatives there?"

"Yes."

39

unconscious of my sensitiveness, and apparently indifferent to the curious stares of the Americans.

Somebody shouted from a doorway in Greek, "*Isté Hellinés, vré pedía?*"

"*Bolgari, Bolgari,*" exclaimed Nichola. "So they are here, too! You can't get rid of them Greeks no matter how far you go."

A trolley clanged impatiently behind a horse-drawn wagon that limped along the tracks in front of it.

"How much do they charge on the tramways?" I asked.

"Now listen to him," growled Gurkin. "He hasn't earned a penny yet and already he wants to ride on the street cars."

"He only asked what they charged," barked Nichola.

At Fourth and Market, Gurkin turned south. Here there were not as many people and the street was darker; the buildings, too, dwindled in size, with here and there a taller one, quite dark. When we approached Poplar Street a bell rang and two beams with red lights suspended from them fell athwart the street. We set down our baggage to rest our arms. With a kind of volcanic groan a locomotive came blasting through the darkness, its big round Cyclopean eye blinding us for a moment. Box cars issued from amidst the buildings, rattled on the steel and plunged ahead between more buildings.

When the last car with its two blinking red lights disappeared along with the rest, we lifted our baggage

50

magic slips of blue paper like the one Gurkin first sent would come to me every month.

"What! For just sitting here and playing with that thing?" the villagers would say. "Man, that's the wonder of wonders! He doesn't even have to go to America for those slips of paper." And Nichola would exclaim, "Hey, what did I say! The Little One, he's got four eyes. Didn't I say? America comes to him right here. Like the mountain that came to Mohammed. What did I say?"

But I was not in my village. I was in Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria. Though born a Bulgarian, I had never before been in Bulgaria proper, having come directly to America from Macedonia.

Sprawling over a flat area, the Bulgarian capital was an agglomeration of old Turkish quarters with narrow crooked streets, some paved with cobbles and others ankle-deep in mud. Mount Vitosha, rising precipitously above the city to a majestic height, was wrapped in mist. A damp, chill autumnal air hung over the shabby town.

Why had I come here? I felt as though I had suddenly sunk into a mudhole and a feeling of loneliness and futility descended upon me. Just when everything was going so well with me in America, like a fool I had to come here and get stuck in the mud!

For days I kept reproaching myself, and the worse I felt the worse the weather became. A slow, continuous drizzle fell upon the muddy streets. If I had enough money on hand to pay my fare back to America, I am

262

and turned into Poplar Street, following right into the tracks.

At the next intersection, we turned south again for a block and then Gurkin said, "Well, here we are, Plum Street!"

It was a dreary street, flanked by two-story brick houses with stoops, on the highest steps of which sat lone women, wrapped in shawls and silent as ghosts. From a saloon on the opposite corner came the sounds of a player piano making a feeble effort to dispel the gloom.

Half-way down the block, Gurkin stopped. "This is where your uncle lives. Go through the hall into the yard and then up the steps to the second floor. We'll see you tomorrow."

"At last we are rid of him," said Nichola.

We walked through the dark hall and came into the backyard. There was light on the porch and we heard the sound of familiar native words. We were half-way up the creaky wooden stairway when our countrymen came out on the porch to welcome us in old country style, with embraces and kisses on the cheeks.

From the porch we entered a two-room flat, half lighted by a kerosene lamp hanging to a wall. My uncle was not in and I was immediately told that he worked nights. There were six men in the flat at the moment and they worked days, sharing the six beds with a like number of men who worked nights. In other words there were twelve men living in the two-room flat. The beds, placed lengthwise along the walls in the room

51

certain I would have returned, despite the fact that I had told Mr. Dennis I would stay in the Balkans a whole year. In a month I would get my first check from Chicago, but by then I would have spent what I had on hand, and the check would not be enough for my fare back. I began to fear that for a long time I would be stuck in the mud here in the Balkans.

There was one comforting thing. It was my feeling that I had nothing in common with the life and the people. When I was trying to make up my mind to return to the old country, I had some vague fears that a sojourn of a year among my own people might disturb my American balance, which I had achieved after fifteen years of struggle. At the same time, believing that to go back would assist my career as a writer, I tried to convince myself that by now I had integrated myself well enough as an American and had built up enough resistance to be able to expose myself to the influences of my background and traditions.

And it was heartening, therefore, to find that I had so transformed myself that I felt like a foreigner here with my own people. Even my native speech I spoke badly, very badly. The first day in Sofia I stopped in a shop to buy some tooth-paste. When I faced the clerk, I discovered that while I knew the word for tooth, I didn't know how to say paste. I asked for "*paste za zubi,*" mixing English with Bulgarian. Luckily the word for paste was *pastá*. The clerk treated me with the deference Bulgarians show to foreigners but deny to their own people.

263

on you, wanting favors. . . . *Tuè*. . . . All the way from America! Of all people! That I should welcome you in such a fashion! Please forgive me; you must forgive me."

"It's quite all right. It was my fault, I should have knocked."

"Suppose you did forget to knock, suppose even you were somebody from here? Should I have barked at you like that? *Tuè*. . . . That's how we expose ourselves here before foreigners, and then they write bad things about us. Suppose you had been a foreigner?"

"I am, after a fashion."

He buzzed for his servant.

"How long have you been here?"

"Three days."

"Three days! And just now you come to see me? Then you did deserve the welcome I gave you. Whom have you seen? Do you know many people here?"

"I don't know anybody. This is my first visit to Bulgaria."

"You were not born in America?"

"No, in Macedonia."

The servant knocked at the door. "Two coffees," said Elin Pelin.

"And you came to see Bulgaria! That's wonderful. There's a Bulgarian for you. Comes all the way from America to see free Bulgaria. Once a Bulgarian always a Bulgarian. American, American, but blood is thicker than water. You'll like Bulgaria. Poor country! But

268

And so mine was not a life of strife and worry. In fact it was more like a fairy tale. There was poverty and suffering in Bulgaria. People looked worried and woe-ridden, but I myself was living on the fat of the land, thanks to those long and lonely years in America.

Balabanoff was quite mistaken about people envying me. People are more apt to envy you when what you have might have been theirs if circumstances or luck had not placed it in your hands, but if the source of what is enviable about you is of your own making and is quite remote from their reach, they are less apt to do so.

However that may be, this fairy-tale life of mine was slowly displacing from within me the very thing which had made it possible. And that was no revelation to me. As I have already intimated elsewhere, when I decided to visit the Balkans I believed that my Americanism had "jelled" and that there was no danger of its going precipitate on me. In that I was not deceived. Still I found out that among my own people I was in constant danger of reviving certain native bacteria that lay dormant within me and once activated would be too strong for the American bacilli with which I had inoculated myself.

For one thing, my native speech, crude and rusty when I arrived in Bulgaria, began to flow from my mouth with marvelous facility. Thoughts and ideas formed themselves in my mind in Bulgarian. I even began to dream in Bulgarian. Constantly in the midst of writers, artists, people from the theater, statesmen,

294

beautiful. Good people! Poor of course, very poor, but frugal, honest, sound inside."

The telephone rang.

"Pardon." He picked up the receiver.

"Allo! Allo! Here Elin Pelin. Ah, Balaban, it's you! Just in the nick of time. Where are you? Very good, come right over. There's an American here you must meet. . . . Not exactly! He's from Macedonia, but completely Americanized. Yes, he's a writer. What? Of course in English. He's the one that translated those stories of mine you said were better done than the originals. Good. I'll order coffee for you." He hung up.

"It was Professor Balabanoff. You probably have heard of him."

"What Bulgarian has not heard of Balabanoff?"

The servant brought the Turkish coffees in a tray, two squat brown cups like big tropical bugs. We had half emptied them of their thick, sirupy contents, when there was a knock at the door.

"Enter."

In walked a short but massively built man, almost as broad as he was tall. His clothes were so tight I feared that if he took a deep breath his vest would burst open and the buttons fly all over the floor. He had no neck to speak of and his huge head was planted between his shoulders. But as if a good job of planting it there had not been done, the head inclined slightly to the right. A crumpled hat with a narrow brim and low crown was perched upon the head like a nest atop a bush and accentuated the enormity of the head. But the removal

269

molders and masters of the native speech, I soon became better able to express myself in Bulgarian than in English. English words would not come to me readily. English idioms eluded me. When I had occasion to speak to some American tourist or member of the legation staff I could sense how the language that I loved was going stale. I haggled over expressions, and could feel myself perceptibly receding into those middle stages when I was learning English in America. Once I wanted to use the expression "pulling my leg," but instead I said "pulling my foot." Sometimes an English word or phrase would buzz and drone about my head like a mosquito and I would reach for it, and snap at it, but I could neither see it nor swat it, so to speak. This made me unhappy. It threw me into moods when I feared that not alone single words, or idioms, but the whole language, and with it my America, was slipping away from me. And if I lost that, I would lose also what I had here in Bulgaria, for that was the source of it. The two things supplemented each other, and yet they excluded each other. The one was apt to destroy the other, and in doing so it would destroy itself. My kind of Americanism was like a proficiency in music that could be maintained at the required standard only through constant practice. You miss a couple of days and you have to practice double. A native American might reside for years in a foreign country without losing his American identity, viewpoint, or approach. I myself might fare as well in a country outside the Balkans, but

295

Exhibit 4: Evidence of Peter T. George's Macedono-Bulgarian identity

Document 4.1. An Article By Peter George in Macedonian Tribute from 01/09/2014 Where He States His Identity as Bulgarian from Macedonia or Macedono-Bulgarian

Am I Macedonian?

By Dr. Peter T. George, DDS

When I was a boy and had to fill in a form asking my nationality, I didn't know what to enter: American, Macedonian, Bulgarian, Turk, Serb, Yugoslavian or Greek? All my ancestors that I'm aware of were born in or near what today is Bitola, Macedonia. So, you may say, "it's obvious, you're Macedonian." But my parents always said they were Bulgarians.


Was Bitola ever in Bulgaria? Yes, for centuries before the Ottoman conquest of the Balkans, Bitola was a city in Bulgaria. Then, for the next five centuries, Bitola was in Turkey. In fact, in 1906, when my father first arrived in the USA from Bitola his passport indicated he was Turkish.

In 1887, Russia declared war on Turkey and freed all of Bulgaria, from the Black Sea to Lake Ohrid. My ancestors along with the majority of the people in Macedonia rejoiced—they were now free and could

call themselves Bulgarians. But Britain and Austria-Hungary became alarmed—they worried that a large free Bulgaria might become an ally of Russia and upset the balance of international power. They quickly persuaded Russia to agree to the splitting off of the Macedonian area of Bulgaria and returning it to Turkey. All my ancestors again lost their freedom and again became Turks.

In 1912, in an attempt to reunite with the Bulgarians in Macedonia, Bulgaria joined forces with Greece and Serbia to drive Turkey completely out of the Balkans. Toward the end of their resultant war, while the Bulgarian army was concentrated at its southeastern border driving the Turks across it, the Serbian army occupied northern Macedonia and the Greek army occupied southern Macedonia. Afterwards, neither of these two armies would allow the Bulgarians to enter Macedonia.

See *Macedonian* on page 3



Dr. Peter T. George, DDS, a Columbia University trained orthodontist, includes Miss Universe, two Miss USAs, and Hollywood celebrities and their children among his list of treated patients, but his list of interests and achievements range well beyond dentistry.

He served as an assistant clinical professor at the John H Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawaii School of Medicine and has lectured internationally. His findings and commentaries on various topics have been published in leading national and international medical and dental journals.

He invented and reported in the New England Journal of Medicine the first oral device to prevent severe obstructive sleep apnea and common household snoring, and is a founder of the American Academy

of Dental Sleep Medicine. His patented inventions to treat medical and dental disorders are extensively used world-wide.

Dr. George is an Olympic Gold Medalist in weightlifting and at the time of his retirement from competition had accumulated more international gold and silver medals than any other athlete in the history of the sport. He was a member of the International Weightlifting Federation medical committee and was selected to coach the 1980 USA Olympic team, which boycotted the Moscow Games.

His biography is in the Marquis Who's Who in America, Who's Who in Medicine and Healthcare and Who's Who in the World. He is the only American weightlifter included in the "History's Greatest Olympians" trading card series.

Dr. George is the son of Tryan and Paraskeva Taleff. He has two sons Barton and Tryan and lives in Honolulu with his wife Lazarina.

Document 4.2. An Article By Peter George in Macedonian Tribute from 01/09/2014 Where He States His Identity as Bulgarian from Macedonia or Macedono-Bulgarian (cont'd)

Macedonian from front page

The Greeks justified their confiscation of Macedonia on the basis that it was the land of Alexander the Great plus their disputed claim that he was a Greek. They therefore claimed Macedonia was theirs and its inhabitants were slavophone Greeks. The Serbs' justification was that in a previous war they had conquered and occupied a large part of Macedonia and even moved their national capitol north Macedonia. They therefore claimed northern Macedonia was really southern Serbia.

When my mother arrived in the USA from Bitola in 1926, her passport indicated she was Serbian. In 1929, Serbia became part of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the inhabitants of Bitola became Yugoslavians. As a child in grade school I would fill in the nationality blank with "Yugoslavian" with no idea what Yugoslavia was.

In 1944, to dissuade the people in the territory of Macedonia from thinking of themselves as Bulgarians who want to be reunited with their mother country, President Tito officially incorporated that geographical area into Yugoslavia as

the Socialist Republic of Macedonia. To encourage a distinct Macedonian identity, he ordered linguistic scholars to change the structure and alphabet of the language used by these people just enough to differentiate it from Bulgarian.

In 1991, after the breakup of Yugoslavia, Macedonia became an independent nation. So then could I fill in the blank that asked for my nationality with "Macedonian?"

No, the word Macedonia, like the words, America, Canada or Australia is a country name indicating a geographical location—it does not does not indicate a racial or ethnic origin. In America when someone asks me what my nationality is, I assume he or she is asking about my ethnic origin. If, for example, my parents were Japanese born in Macedonia, I would say my nationality is Japanese. My parents, however, were Bulgarians born in Macedonia. I, therefore, must say my nationality is Bulgarian.

CS Scanned with CamScanner