

Bulgarian Pastors called "dirty-crying cowards" and "squealing little rais" by communist newamen at recent trials held in Sofia, the ministers had "confessed" to charges of espionage for the United States and Great Britain but were ridiculed by the commie press.

NO SIGNS OF DRUGGING

Why Defendants Confess So Readily in Red Trials

(Editor's Note: Richard Kasischke covered the Sofia trial of 15 Bulgarian Protestant pastors and here gives his impressions of why defendants in Communist trials confess so readily.)

By RICHARD KASISCHKE

Berlin (P)-What makes defendants confess so abjectly and volubly in those trials staged by the Russians and their eastern Euro-pean Communist satellites?

Nobody can say for sure ex-cept the secret police who ob-tain the confessions and the de-fendants—such as remain alive. But the police won't talk and the defendants are not approach-able or can't talk freely. But at least a corner of the dark veil was lifted at the most recent of these trials—at Sofia, where 15 Bulgarian Protestant pastors were tried on charge of explonage for the United States and Great Britain and other of fenses.

The observations of this reporter and other western ob-servers admitted to this trial appeared to rule out such theories as drugging and hypnotism.

The more logical explanation appeared to be a combination of (1) duress, involving threats of reprisal against the defendants' families; (2) a wearing in-quisition and (3) persuasion— a subile injection of Commun-

. . . In the 13 years since the Mos-cow trials of 1936-38 many an anti-Communist victim has stood anti-Communist victim has stood up publicly to denounce him-self as "vile" and "rotten" and "heinous." Many a man has called himself a once-benighted soul who now sees "Communism in its true light." He has only one wish-to "be spared my life and a chance to help in construction of the socialist state.' The peep behind the "confessions" curtain afforded western observers at the seven-day Sofia trial was limited. They could not speak to the defendants in iall or in court but they could see them daily on the court floor below and they did not look

can also throw a terrific fright

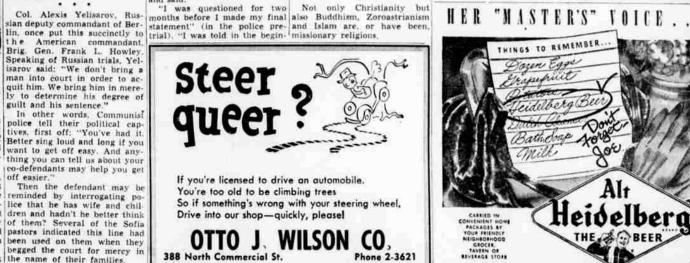
tors' depositions at what they not used on them. The Sofia de-called a "preliminary inquest before the judge of instruction." This is a sort of pre-triat. ...

cent. In the U. S. and Britain ne is presumed innot ent until proved guilty. The Communists take this at least one step further. They say is political opponent, put the screws on him in confinement to get a "confersion." A star worked on sometimes by teams." he continued in Bulgaria on the dates mentioned.
Correspondents got to only one chance. That is to get a "confession." At they step tart was questioned for two in a bury or quies short contact a free man and said.
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How did the Communists work it? What manner of men did they bend to their wills?

did they bend to their wills? At Sofia, as all the defendants came forward with long public confessions and statements of repentance and several sobbed and wept—only the commun-ists derided them. Sitting in the press section, off easter."

ists derided them. Sitting in the press section, Communists of the government press department, pointed at the pastors and remarked to wes-tern correspondents: "Look at dren and hadn't he better think the dirty, crying cowards. Cry babies, they are. You would never see a Communist down there weeping like that." The Communist press took the same line. It called the de-fendants "squealing little rats"



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well as for internal fright.