

Ivan Mihailoff Dies in Rome at 94; Macedonian Rebel in Futile Fight

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In the 1920's and early 1930's, when he waged terrorist attacks on Bulgarian Government forces from a mountain hideout, Mr. Mihailoff was known as the "bandit king" of Macedonia. His Interior Macedonian Revolutionary Organization, or IMRO, was said to have killed 3,500 of its enemies in a 12-year struggle that included factional fighting among rival Macedonian revolutionaries.

Among the killings was the 1925 assassination of Todor Panitza, a fellow Macedonian leader, by Mr. Mihailoff's wife, Menicha Karnitcheva, in Vienna. Mr. Mihailoff himself acknowledged that he had ordered the execution of Alexander Protogueroff in 1928 in Sofia. The victim was another Macedonian chieftain, who had been held responsible for the assassination of Todor Alexandroff, the top leader of the revolutionaries, four years earlier.

Declared Outlaws by Bulgaria

The Mihailoffs contended that many of the killings for which their organization was blamed had in fact been carried out by Serbians and Bulgarians seeking to suppress Macedonia's independence movement. The Mihailoffs, declared outlaws by Bulgaria, fled to Turkey in 1934.

Turkey, then at odds with Bulgaria, refused to extradite the Mihailoffs, who spent the rest of their lives advocating Macedonian liberation from abroad. Mr. Mihailoff's wife died in the 1950's. After World War II, he continued his struggle for Macedonian independence without success. He sought help for his cause from national leaders and the Vatican, and wrote a book, "A Free and Independent Macedonia - A Switzerland in the Balkans."

He also wrote four volumes of an autobiography and was at work on the fifth when he died.

Mr. Mihailoff is survived by a brother, Atanas, of Sofia, Bulgaria.