

Bombs Raze Heart of Sofia; Mass Exodus Adds to Panic

By JOSEPH M. LEVY
By Wireless to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

ANKARA, Turkey, Jan. 13 (Delayed)—Two more bombings like the ones of Monday will "wipe Sofia off the map," said a traveler who arrived today from Bulgaria. The center of the Bulgarian capital is already almost entirely destroyed and Sofia has

ceased to function as a city, he added. Thousands were killed, but it is impossible to assess the casualty total, as the bodies are still buried under the debris. Nearly all the public utilities are out of commission.

This informant went on to say that by train, bus, automobile, donkey cart and on foot the terror-stricken survivors of the Sofia attacks are fleeing to adjacent country areas—some even going to the more remote provinces. To facilitate this mass exodus all available trains are running on a continuous shuttle service, stopping at each end of the run only long enough to load and unload their human freight.

The situation of those remaining in the city, he said, is serious because there is no water, no electricity and little food. Many bakeries have ceased to function and the rest are unable to produce bread because of the lack of water. The breakdown of telephone and cable communications has added to the confusion.

Almost all of the streets of the city, he declared, are littered with broken glass, timber and bricks from the destroyed buildings. The pavements are broken and there are large craters made by the bombs that did not score direct hits on the buildings. Many of the buildings also are fire-gutted as the fire brigade, lacking water, could do nothing to combat the blazes started by the rain of incendiaries. The Town Hall is among the buildings destroyed by fire.

Both the homeless left in the city itself and those evacuated are subjected to considerable hardship and some danger from exposure because of the extreme cold, ac-

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accompanied by snow flurries, he said.

Civilians Not Warned

Bulgarians who saw the bombing estimate that 400 Allied planes participated. The first alarm, evidently the American attack, began at noon Monday and lasted until 2 P. M. The bombs were falling ten minutes after the sirens sounded. This first raid knocked out the city's electrical system, and when the second attack came twelve hours later, around midnight, the sirens did not sound, and the attack was a complete surprise so far as the civilians were concerned.

Being unaware of the danger, the people did not take shelter, and this is believed to be the reason for the extremely high number of casualties. It was announced that in the future church bells would sound the alarm.

The Russian Embassy, which is

located near the Royal Palace, was hit during one attack, and the palace itself was slightly damaged.

The postoffice was entirely demolished and practically all the postal officials were killed, these informants said. The Ministries of Communications and Interior were heavily damaged. A considerable part of the Palace of Justice was also leveled. The Government, they said, is trying to find places in the provinces to which to transfer the various Ministries.

Sofia, they concluded, is a shambles and bears little semblance to a living city.

The morale of the Bulgarian capital is completely broken and the people's only thought is to get away and find a haven of safety.

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