

Macedonian Tribune - History of the Macedonian Tribune

Past Editors

Boris Zograffoff Was First *TRIBUNE* Editor

By M. Tsakova

According to the *Macedonian Almanac* (published in 1940 by the MPO), the Central Committee reported at the Fifth MPO convention in 1926 at Steelton about the work it had done to finalize plans to start its own newspaper, the *MACEDONIAN TRIBUNE*.

The original idea of the Central Committee was to bring Krasto Velyanoff from Sofia as the first editor. Velyanoff did not answer in the affirmative. He could not come because of his health. In his letter to the Central Committee he highly recommended Boris Zograffoff of Bitola who worked as editor of *Ustrem* and for the Publishing House of the Bulgarian Foreign Ministry.

"He is experienced, knows French fluently and is a talented journalist and writer. He is also a dedicated and devoted champion of our cause," wrote Velyanoff in his letter.

Zograffoff came in the winter of 1926 - 27. He wrote and edited the first issue of the *TRIBUNE*, published Feb. 10, 1927, and worked for three years in the capacity of editor.

His articles were strong and virtuous. He wrote about Balkan politics after World War I. He dedicated many articles to the bad living conditions of our people under Serbia and Greece and the struggle of our people against this oppression. He championed the human rights of minorities and wrote many articles about the history of Macedonia and its liberation movement. He worked hard to make the paper look attractive.

He showed great respect and appreciation for the women in the movement and the women of the MPO who had recently formed their Ladies's Sections and worked very hard to support the organization and the Macedonian cause.

In every issue of the paper Zograffoff reported on Chapter News, which he called "*The Macedonian in America*," where he wrote about chapter meetings, plays presented by our people, picnics, vecherinkas and all other political, cultural and religious activities of our immigration. He also reprinted short stories, excerpts from novels and poems written by famous writers most of whom were from Macedonia. Prevalent in the paper during Zograffoff's editorship are the political caricatures which showed his sharp political bent.

Zograffoff showed great proficiency as editor. His understanding of the Macedonian movement on this continent made him invaluable as advisor to the MPO Central Committee. He thought that the conditions in America were different than in the Balkans. He was against the involvement of the MPO in the internal fights of the different factions of IMRO at that time. Because this belief was not held by the entire Central Committee, he resigned as editor during the ninth MPO convention held in 1930 at Youngstown. He returned to Sofia where he lived out his life as an editor and writer.

A thank you editorial by the Board of Editors which was published in the *MACEDONIAN TRIBUNE* reads, "We would like to express our gratitude and appreciation for everything he has done for the success of our newspaper and for his great love and devotion to our homeland. He will be missed by the Board.

"As first editor of the paper, Mr. Zograffoff worked with great enthusiasm for its successful development and distribution. He exhibited great loyalty to Macedonia and the Macedonian cause. With his work for the paper, he proved to be a great patriot." The professionalism with which Zograffoff edited the oldest continually published Macedonian newspaper in the world, set a marvelous example for future editors.