

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS
WESTERN DIVISION

FILED

JUN 10 2013

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,)
)
Plaintiff,)
)
v.)
)
A 1937 PACKARD SUPER 12)
AUTOMOBILE, VIN: 1035-447,)
)
Defendant.)

S. G. BRUTON
CLERK, U.S. DISTRICT COURT

No.

13 0502 01

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

VERIFIED COMPLAINT FOR FORFEITURE

The UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, by GARY S. SHAPIRO, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, brings this verified complaint against the above-named defendant property and alleges as follows in accordance with Supplemental Rule G(2) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure:

NATURE OF THE ACTION

1. This is a Verified Complaint for forfeiture *in rem* brought pursuant to the Convention on Cultural Property Implementation Act, 19 U.S.C. § 2609, for seizure and forfeiture of one 1937 Packard Super 12 automobile.

THE DEFENDANT IN REM

2. The defendant property consists of one 1937 Packard Super 12 automobile, VIN #1035-447 and engine # 906647, currently located at Historic Auto Attractions, 13825 Metric Drive, Roscoe, Illinois 61073, within the Northern District of Illinois, Western Division.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

3. This is an *in rem* forfeiture action brought pursuant to 19 U.S.C. § 2607. This Court has jurisdiction over an action commenced by the United States under 28 U.S.C. § 1345, and it has jurisdiction over this action in particular under 28 U.S.C. §§ 1355(a) and 2461(a) and 19 U.S.C. § 2609.

4. This Court has *in rem* jurisdiction over the defendant property under 28 U.S.C. § 1355(b)(1)(A) as the acts giving rise to the forfeiture occurred within the Northern District of Illinois.

5. Venue is proper under 28 U.S.C. § 1395(b) because the acts giving rise to the forfeiture occurred in this district.

BASIS FOR FORFEITURE

6. The United States and Bulgaria are part of the 1970 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Convention (“UNESCO Convention”) on the means of prohibiting and preventing the illicit import, export and transfer of ownership of cultural property. The UNESCO Convention, although ratified by Congress in 1972, was not formally implemented in the United States until the Cultural Property Implementation Act, 19 U.S.C. §§ 2601-2613, in 1983. Bulgaria entered the UNESCO Convention on September 15, 1971. 19 C.F.R. § 12.104b.

7. Section 2607 provides that:

No article of cultural property¹ documented as appertaining to the inventory of a museum or religious or secular public monument or similar institution in any State Party² which is stolen from such institution after the effective date of this chapter, or after the date of entry into force of the Convention³ for the State Party, whichever is later, may be imported into the United States.

19 U.S.C. § 2607.

8. The Act further provides that:

Any designated archaeological or ethnological material or article of cultural property, as the case may be, which is imported into the United States in violation of section 2606 of this title or section 2607 of this title shall be subject to seizure and forfeiture.

19 U.S.C. § 2609(a).

FACTS

9. After World War II, Joseph Vissarionovich Dzhugashvili (“Stalin”) obtained a few unique Packard automobiles. Stalin gave these automobiles to the leaders of other socialist

¹ Cultural property means those articles “described in article 1(a) through (k) of the Convention whether or not any such article is specifically designated as such by any State Party for the purposes of such article.” 19 U.S.C. § 2601(6). Article 1(b) of the UNESCO Convention includes “property relating to history, including the history of science and technology and military and social history, to the life of national leaders, thinkers, scientists and artists and to events of national importance[.]”

² State Party means “any nation which has ratified, accepted, or acceded to the Convention.” 19 U.S.C. § 2601(9).

³ Convention refers to the “Convention on the means of prohibiting and preventing the illicit import, export, and transfer of ownership of cultural property adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization at its sixteenth session.” 19 U.S.C. § 2601(5).

countries. Stalin gave one these automobiles, the defendant property, to Georgi Dimitrov, the former Prime Minister of the National Republic of Bulgaria.

10. In October 1992, the defendant property was stolen from the National Polytechnic Museum, formerly known as the Georgi Dimitrov Museum, in Sofia, Bulgaria.⁴ Sometime between 1992 and 1997, the defendant property was illegally exported from Bulgaria to Belgium. *See Exhibit A.*

Unique Transportation - Ivan Borisov Kristov

11. On September 9, 1997, the defendant property was shipped from Belgium to Sycamore, Illinois. According to the Bill of Lading, a shipping container containing the defendant property departed from Antwerp, Belgium, destined for Chicago, Illinois, with further transportation to Unique Transportation, located in Sycamore, Illinois, and associated with Ivan Borisov Kristov (“Kristov”).

12. On December 6, 1997, Larry Linhart, with Genoa Auto Sales in Genoa, Illinois, appraised the defendant property for \$1,200. The written appraisal identified the vehicle as a 1937 Packard with serial number 1035447. On December 23, 1997, Kristov used that appraisal to apply for a bonded title through the Illinois Secretary of State’s office.⁵ The bonded title application

⁴ In 1989, Bulgaria became a democratic nation and the Georgi Dimistrov Museum became the National Polytechnic Museum.

⁵ According to the Illinois Secretary of State’s office, a bond is required when standard ownership documents (*i.e.*, assigned titled) cannot be surrendered with an Application for Certificate of Title (625 ILCS 5/3-109). The Secretary of State may, as a condition of issuing a Certificate of Title, require the applicant to file a bond in the amount equal to one and one-half times the current wholesale value of the vehicle. The filing of the bond will protect the Secretary of State’s office and any prior owner or lienholder as well as any subsequent purchasers, or person acquiring security interest or respective successors, against any expense, loss or damage due to the issuance of a Certificate of Title.

submitted by Kristov listed the defendant property's vehicle identification number as 1035477 (even though Kristov submitted the Genoa Auto Sales appraisal with vehicle identification number 1035447) and the model year as 1938. On February 7, 1998, MGR Volo Auto Museum appraised the defendant property's value at between \$2,000,000 and \$3,000,000. On February 27, 1998, Dana Mecum Auctions in Marengo, Illinois, appraised the defendant property's value at an unknown amount but more than \$500,000.

13. In June 1998, Kristov filed an application with the Illinois Secretary of State's office to change the defendant property's model year on the title from 1938 to 1937. On June 18, 1998, Kristov received a corrected title from the Illinois Secretary of State's office containing a model year of 1937. On December 9, 1998, Kristov applied for a duplicate title from the Illinois Secretary of State's office claiming the defendant property's original title was lost. Along with the duplicate title request, Kristov submitted a power of attorney showing the defendant property was going to be sold to Bertram Irslinger ("Irslinger") on December 9, 1998. Attached to the duplicate title application and the power of attorney was a written bill of sale dated December 9, 1998, reflecting the sale of the defendant property to Irslinger for \$5,000. On December 19, 1998, Irslinger was issued a title in his name for the defendant property.

Interview of Kristov

14. On September 16, 2012, United States Department of Homeland Security Special Agents interviewed Kristov. Kristov said that he invested in Unique Transportation in 1997 and that his business partner (whose last name he could not remember) stole all the money. According to Kristov, Unique Transportation was created to buy auction cars and resell them for a profit. Kristov

could not provide any paperwork for Unique Transportation and believed the paperwork to have been stolen.

15. With regard to the defendant property, Kristov said Stoil Slavov ("Slavov") shipped the defendant property to him to sell. According to Kristov, Slavov was a Bulgarian associated with Russian organized crime and that Slavov was killed on January 19, 2004. Kristov explained that since its importation into the United States, title to the defendant property exchanged hands between him, Irslinger, and Mari Figved until Kristov eventually sold the defendant property to John Hoshaw for \$200,000. Kristov kept the \$200,000 because Slavov had died by the time Hoshaw purchased the defendant property for \$200,000.

Sale of the defendant property to Bertram Irslinger

16. According to the written bill of sale dated December 9, 1998, Kristov sold the defendant property to Irslinger for \$5,000. On December 18, 1998, Irslinger was issued a title in his name by the Illinois Secretary of State's office for the defendant property. This title subsequently was transferred back to Kristov's name on April 13, 2005.

Interview of Irslinger

17. On November 23, 2011, Inspector Clayton of the Northern Illinois Auto Theft Task Force ("NIATTF") interviewed Irslinger. Irslinger said that he obtained the defendant property from Kristov as collateral for land Kristov purchased from Irslinger. Although a bill of sale was written to indicate Irslinger had purchased the defendant property from Kristov for \$5,000, Irslinger said he did not purchase the defendant property. Irslinger also said he transferred ownership of the defendant property back to Kristov in 2005 after Kristov paid the balance owed on the land he purchased.

Sale of the defendant property to Mari E. Figved

18. On April 13, 2005, the same day Irslinger transferred title of the defendant property back to Kristov, Mari E. Figved ("Figved") was issued a title for the defendant property.

Interview of Figved

19. On September 21, 2012, a United States Department of Homeland Security special agent and NIATTF inspector interviewed Figved. According to Figved, she took possession of the defendant property in April 2005 from Kristov and Irslinger. Figved knew Kristov because he drove limousines for Figved's company and she knew that Irslinger was acquainted with Kristov. Kristov told Figved that Irslinger had owned the defendant property for approximately six years and asked Kristov for help in selling the defendant property. Kristov also told Figved he was unable to sell the defendant property and requested Figved's assistance in locating a buyer. Figved agreed to help and the defendant property was relocated to Figved's residence and the title transferred from Kristov to Figved. While Figved obtained the title to the defendant property, she said she did not purchase the defendant property but assumed she would receive money if she found a buyer.

20. Figved had possession of the defendant property for two years, but was unable to find a buyer. Kristov contacted Figved and said he found a buyer, John Hoshaw, who wanted to restore the defendant property and sell it. Figved signed the title to the defendant property back over to Kristov.

Sale of the defendant property to John Hoshaw

21. On July 26, 2007, Kristov sold the defendant property to John Hoshaw for \$200,000. Prior to the date of the sale, Hoshaw attempted to sell the defendant property on Ebay. The defendant property was listed on July 12, 2007, with a starting bid of \$200,000. The bidding ended

on July 19, 2007, with no buyer. While the defendant property was listed on Ebay, various individuals submitted questions regarding the authenticity of the defendant property. For example:

Q: How can you document that this particular vehicle belonged to Josef Stalin?

A: I am still waiting for some documentation from the good people of Russia, but I have been waiting so

Q: Can I ask how you came in possession of this car and what proof you have of Stalin's ownership?

A: The car was auctioned of [sic] to raise money for a museum in Belgium.

Sale of the defendant property to Wayne Lensing

22. Wayne Lensing ("Lensing") told agents he followed the defendant property's listing on Ebay. After the Ebay auctioned expired, Lensing contacted Hoshaw. On December 1, 2007, Lensing signed an agreement to purchase the defendant property for \$350,000 with three installment payments. The first installment payment was \$100,000, the second payment, due by January 31, 2008, was \$50,000, and the final payment of \$200,000, was due by December 31, 2008. Lensing made the last payment on or around June 5, 2008, and on July 13, 2008, applied to the Secretary of State's office for title to the defendant property.

Interview of Lensing

23. On October 28, 2011, NIATTF inspectors interviewed Lensing. Lensing said that after making the final payment, he traveled to Kansas City, Missouri, where the defendant property was displayed in a museum. Lensing said he took possession of the defendant property and then transported it back to Roscoe, Illinois. Lensing also said that the only documentation he received

from Hoshaw to prove the defendant property's authenticity was photographs of Stalin on or near a vehicle that resembled the defendant property.

24. Lensing also told officers that he operates a museum called "Historic Auto Attractions" at 13825 Metric Drive, Roscoe, Illinois. Historic Auto Attractions's website is historicautoattractions.com, and, as of May 29, 2013, the website describes Joseph Stalin's 1937 Packard as an exhibit found at the museum in Roscoe, Illinois. See Exhibit B. A pamphlet for Historic Auto Attractions also describes one of the exhibits as "Joseph Stalin's 1937 Packard Super 12 limousine." See Exhibit C.

INTERPOL Request

25. In 2011, an INTERPOL⁶ request ("the request") was sent to the United States for assistance in retrieving the defendant property. The request stated that the Metropolitan Investigation Agency in Bulgaria had initiated an investigation into the theft of the defendant property from the Georgi Dimitrov Museum. The request described the defendant property, with VIN number 1035447, as an armored vehicle with approximately 12,500 miles, red interior upholstery, and having a unique five-pointed star on the right sun visor.

Inspection of the defendant property

26. On November 4, 2011, the Illinois State Police, with Lensing's permission, inspected the defendant property in Roscoe, Illinois. Officers found that the vehicle identification number was 1035477 instead of 1035447. Upon closer examination, it appeared that the original vehicle identification number tag had been removed and replaced. The engine number was then located which showed the numbers "906647." Although the request listed the engine number as 9006647,

⁶ INTERPOL refers to the International Criminal Police Organization.

the 906647 number is in the correct sequence of engine numbers assigned by Packard for a 1937 Limousine V12 engine. Also, as described in the request, the tires bore Russian lettering on the sidewalls, the interior contained red upholstery, there was a five pointed star on the passenger sun visor, and the odometer reading was 15,582, which was close to the request approximation of 12,500.

Cultural Property

27. During the investigation, Ms. Ekaterina Tsekova, Ph. D., Director of the National Polytechnic Museum, Sofia, Bulgaria, and Mr. Emil Davchev, Ph. D., Deputy Director of the National Polytechnic Museum, Sofia, Bulgaria, submitted their expert position on Bulgarian cultural property. *See* Exhibit D. According to Ms. Tsekova and Mr. Davchev, the defendant property is a former museum exhibit and moveable Bulgarian cultural property of national importance.

28. For the reasons stated herein and in the attached affidavit, there is probable cause to believe that the defendant property is subject to forfeiture pursuant to 19 U.S.C. §§ 2607 and 2609(a).

WHEREFORE, the United States of America requests:

A. That the defendant property be proceeded against for forfeiture and condemnation, that due notice be given to all interested parties to appear and show cause why the forfeiture should not be decreed;


B. That the court adjudge and decree that the defendant property be forfeit to the United States and disposed of according to law; and

C. The United States requests that any trial be before a jury.

Respectfully submitted,

GARY S. SHAPIRO
United States Attorney

By:


SCOTT R. PACCAGNINI
Assistant United States Attorney
327 South Church Street
Suite 3300
Rockford, IL 61101
(815) 987-4444

United States District Court)
) SS
Northern District of Illinois)


AFFIDAVIT

1. I, Susan J. Jensen, am a Special Agent with the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (“ICE”), Homeland Security Investigations (“HSI”). I have been involved in several investigations involving the illegal trafficking of cultural property and antiquities.

2. I have read the complaint in this matter and the facts alleged are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief based upon my own personal knowledge as well as information I have received from other agents, persons and documents, and it does not include each and every fact known to me concerning this investigation but is submitted for the limited purpose of establishing a basis to believe the property identified is subject to forfeiture.

3. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on the 7th of June, 2013, in Oak Brook, Illinois.



SUSAN J. JENSEN
Special Agent
Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Homeland Security Investigations

Translation from Bulgarian

MINISTRY OF CULTURE OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

THROUGH

**H.E. MRS. ELENA POPTODOROVA
AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA**

TO

**THE COMPETENT AUTHORITIES OF
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

APPLICATION

By Vezhdi Letif Rashidov – Minister of Culture of the Republic of Bulgaria

Concerning: Recovery and return of illegally exported from Bulgaria movable cultural property.

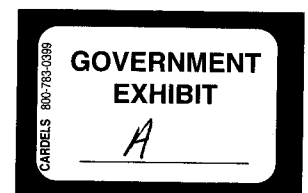
By virtue of Article 7, b. “b”, (ii) of the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, Paris, 1970.

Dear Sir/Madam,

As Minister of Culture of the Republic of Bulgaria and in fulfillment of the obligations vested in me by the Constitution and the legislation of the country, I would like to request you to recover and return to Bulgaria a movable cultural property, namely a Packard automobile, armored, weight - around 5 tons, TWELVE 170B, manufactured in 1937/39, frame # 1035-447, engine # 9006647, mileage - around 15 000 km, national property, illegally acquired and exported.

My motives for the above request are as follows:

Lawsuit # 2035/90 has been conducted at Sofia District Prosecutor’s Office against unknown perpetrator for a theft, committed during a past period, and illegal export of the above mentioned cultural property. The automobile was a gift from the leader of the former USSR Joseph Vissarionovich Dzhugashvili – Stalin to the leader of the KOMINTER and a Soviet Member of Parliament Georgi Dimitrov, subsequently Prime Minister of the National Republic of Bulgaria. It has been kept in the courtyard of the Georgi Dimitrov Museum in Sofia, 66, “Opalchenska” St., and then illegally exported under the pretext of being used for scraps.



Since the Bulgarian side represented by the Minister of Culture has not issued a permit for the export or temporary export under the Cultural Heritage Act, the Regulation for Export and Temporary Export of Movable Cultural Values and EU Regulation 116/09 on the Export of Cultural Goods, we can assume that the car is under an illegal ownership and has been illegally exported from the Republic of Bulgaria.

With regard to the above the Bulgarian side requests the relevant authorities of the United States of America to recover and return the property by virtue of Article 7, b. "b", (ii) of the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, Paris, 1970, which reads, as follows:

"(ii) at the request of the State Party of origin, to take appropriate steps to recover and return any such cultural property imported after the entry into force of this Convention in both States concerned, provided, however, that the requesting State shall pay just compensation to an innocent purchaser or to a person who has valid title to that property. Requests for recovery and return shall be made through diplomatic offices. The requesting Party shall furnish, at its expense, the documentation and other evidence necessary to establish its claim for recovery and return. The Parties shall impose no customs duties or other charges upon cultural property returned pursuant to this Article. All expenses incident to the return and delivery of the cultural property shall be borne by the requesting Party."

The Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Bulgaria has duly furnished and sent the available documentation to the relevant authorities. To this end there has not been a reply from the U.S. side, neither any information for the measures that have been undertaken.

Thanking you in advance, I would like to request you to take the necessary action within your competency with a view of the implementation of the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, Paris, 1970.

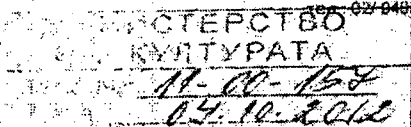
MINISTER:

/VEZHDI RASHIDOV/



МИНИСТЕРСТВО НА КУЛТУРАТА НА РЕПУБЛИКА БЪЛГАРИЯ

гр. София, бул. "Александър Стамболийски", № 17
тел.: 02/ 9407900; факс: 02/ 9818145; джурен тел.: 02/ 9879551; info@mnc.government.bg
www.mnc.government.bg



ЧРЕЗ
НЕЙНО ПРЕВЪЗХОДИТЕЛСТВО
ЕЛЕНА ПОПТОДОРОВА –
ПОСЛАНИК НА РЕПУБЛИКА БЪЛГАРИЯ
ДО
КОМПЕТЕНТНИТЕ ВЛАСТИ НА
СЪЕДИНЕНИТЕ АМЕРИКАНСКИ ЩАТИ

МОЛБА

От

Вежди Летиф Рашидов – Министър на културата на Република България

Относно: Връщане на незаконно изнесени от територията на страната движими културни ценности.

Основание: Чл. 7, б. „б“, (ii) от Конвенция за мерките, насочени към забрана и предотвратяване на незаконен внос, износ и прехвърляне на правото на собственост на културни ценности. Париж, 1970 г.

УВАЖАЕМИ ГОСПОДА,

Като Министър на културата на Република България и в изпълнение на задълженията ми, вменени с Конституцията и законите на страната, отправям към Вас молба за връщане в страната ни на движима културна ценност, а именно – лек автомобил марка „Пикард“, брониран, тегло около 5 тона, TWELVE 170B, производство 1937/39 г., рама № 1035-447, двигател № 9006647, с пробег около 15 000 км, национално богатство, обект на незаконно отнемане и износ.

Мотивите ми за това са следните, на база фактическата обстановка, както следва:

В Софиска районна прокуратура се води наказателно производство № 2035/90 против неизвестен извършител за извършена през минал период кражба и незаконен износ на подробно указаната по горе вещ – движима културна ценност. Същата е била подарък от ръководителя на СССР Йосиф Висарионович Джугашвили – Сталин, на ръководителя на КОМИНТЕР-на и съветски депутат Георги Димитров, в последствие министър-председател на Народна република България. Била е съхранявана в двора на Къща-музей „Георги Димитров“ в София, на ул. „Опълченска“ № 66. Била е незаконно изнесена под декларационна форма на желязо за вторични суровини.

Доколкото българската страна в лицето на Министъра на културата не е издавала разрешение за износ или временен износ по смисъла на Закона за културното наследство,

Наредбата за износ и временен износ на движими паметници на културата и Регламент на ЕС 116/09 за износ на културни ценности, можем да приемем, че вещта е незаконно притежавана и незаконно изнесена от територията на Република България.

Българската страна с настоящето заявява пред компетентните органи на Съединените американски щати искане за връщане на предмета по смисъла на чл. 7, б. „б“, (ii) от Конвенция за мерките, насочени към забрана и предотвратяване на незаконен внос, износ и прехвърляне на правото на собственост на културни ценности Париж, 1970 г., както следва:

(ii) да предприемат, по молба на държава - страна по Конвенцията, съответните мерки за конфискуване и връщане на всяка открадната културна ценност, внесена след влизането в сила на настоящата Конвенция по отношение и на двете заинтересовани държави, при условие, че държавата-молителка изплати справедливо обезщетение на добросъвестния купувач или лицето, което има законното право на собственост на тази ценност. Молбите за изземване и връщане се отправят по дипломатически път. Държавата-молителка следва да представи за своя сметка цялата документация и всички доказателства, необходими за обосноваване на нейното искане за изземване и връщане. Държавите - страни по Конвенцията, не облагат с никакви митнически или други такси културните ценности, връщани в съответствие с настоящия член. Всички разходи, свързани с връщането на една или повече от въпросните културни ценности, са за сметка на държавата-молителка.

За горното, от страна на прокуратурата на Република България, надлежно е изпратена по съответния ред, комплектована цялата налична документация в превод до съответните органи. До момента, отговор от страна на САЩ, както и информация за предприети действия, не е постъпила.

Моля да предприемете необходимите действия в рамките на Вашата компетентност с оглед изпълнение на Конвенция за мерките, насочени към забрана и предотвратяване на незаконен внос, износ и прехвърляне на правото на собственост на културни ценности Париж, 1970 г., за което предвдирително Ви благодаря.

МИНИСТЪР:

/ВЕЖДИ РАШИДОВ/



1. Great Artists & Authors Imortalized In Wax

2. British Royal Family
1948 Daimler Limousine

3. King of Siam
1928 Delage Limousine

4. Evita Peron
1950 Rolls Royce bulletproof Limousine

5. Ronald Reagan
1986 Cadillac Presidential Limousine

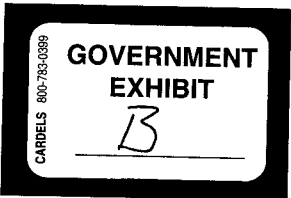
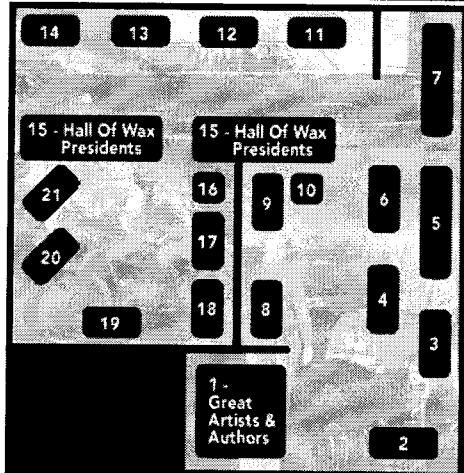
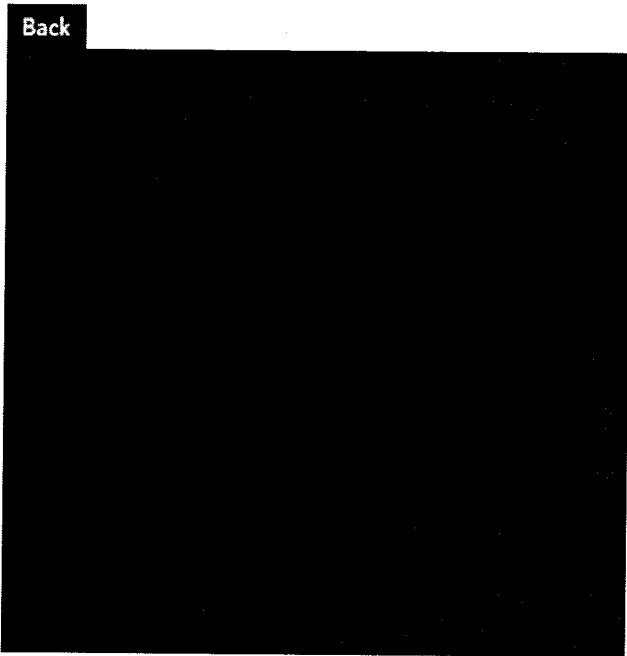
6. Joseph Stalin
1937 Packard Twelve

7. Richard M. Nixon
1969 Lincoln Lehman Peterson Limousine

8. Ulysses S. Grant
1865 Studebaker Landau Carriage

9. Franklin D. Roosevelt
1938 Cadillac Secret Service Limousine

10. Roosevelt cane/radio
Personal belongings of the President





World Leaders
Historic Auto Attractions

Home | Admission & Hours | Location Map | Rental Rates | Contact Us

Museum Tour Home

- 11. Harry S. Truman**
1950 Lincoln Presidential Limousine

- 12. Dwight D. Eisenhower**
1962 Cadillac Fleetwood Limousine

- 13. Lyndon B. Johnson**
1965 Lincoln Lehman Peterson Limo

- 14. Franklin D. Roosevelt**
1939 Ford Secret Service Car

- 15. Hall Of Wax Presidents**
Wax figures of several presidents

- 16. German military motorcycle**
1942 WW II BMW

- 17. Adolf Hitler**
1939 Mercedes G 4 Six-Wheeled Staff Car

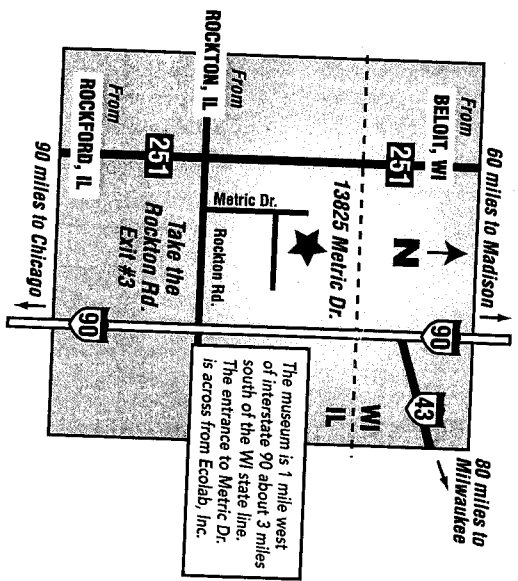
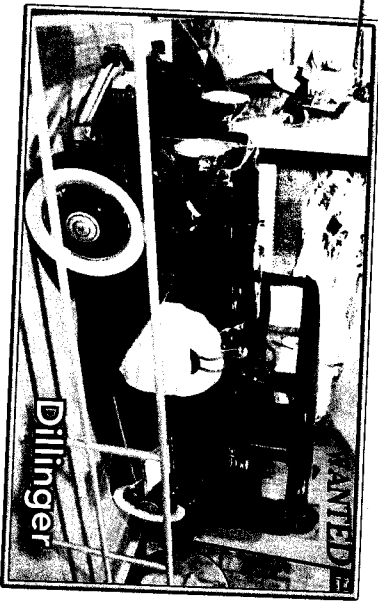
- 18. Benito Mussolini**
1939 Lancia Austra Parade car

- 19. Heinrich Himmler**
1939 Horch 930v Cabriolet German Staff Car

- 20. Emperor Hirohito**
1935 Packard Limousine

- 21. Nikita Khrushchev**
1950 Zim Limousine

CLICK THE EXHIBIT
ON THE MAP YOU
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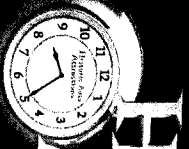
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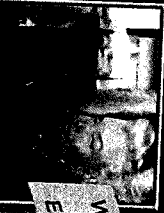
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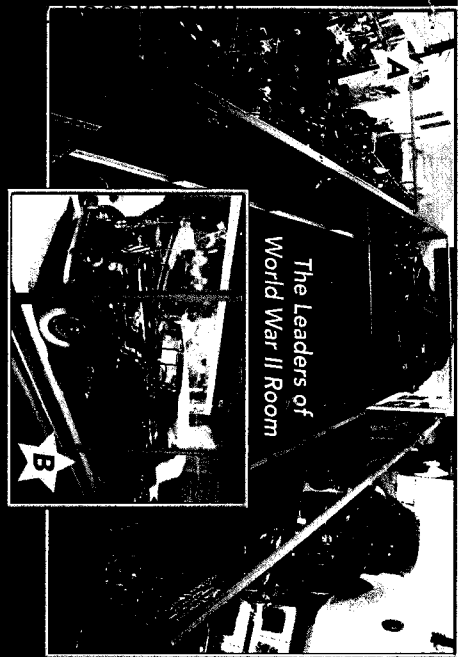
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★ Adolf Hitler's 1939 Mercedes G4 parade car.

★ Heinrich Himmler's 1939 Horch 930V Cabriolet staff car

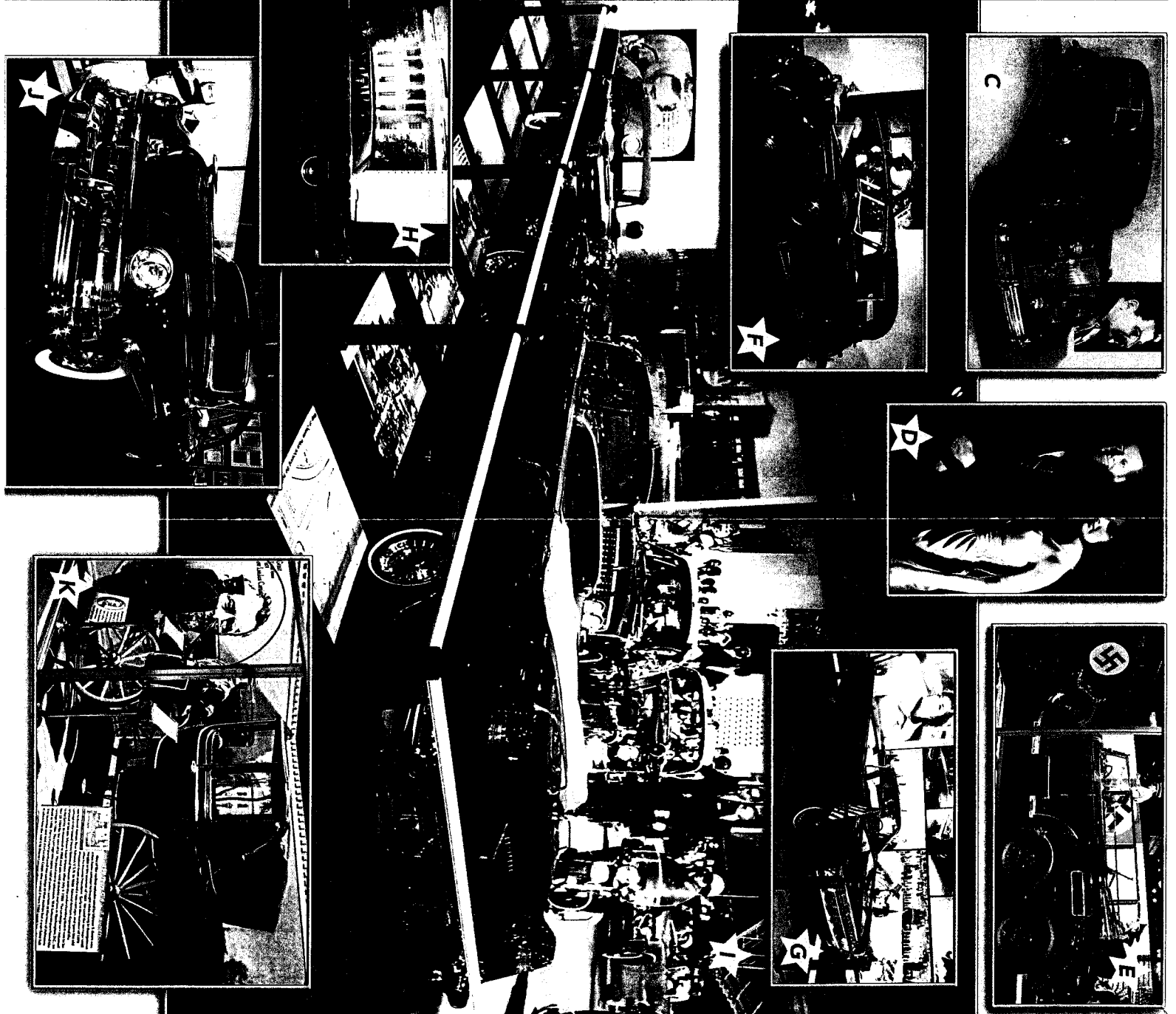
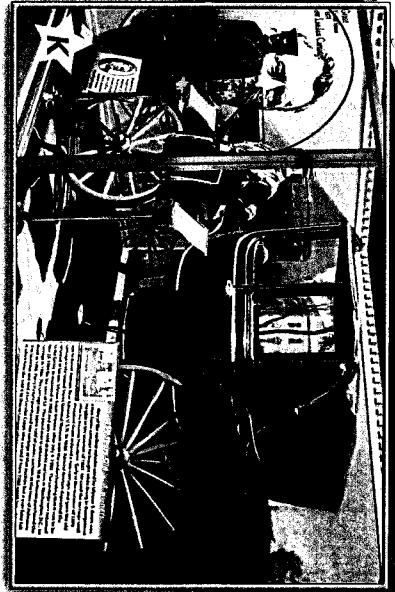
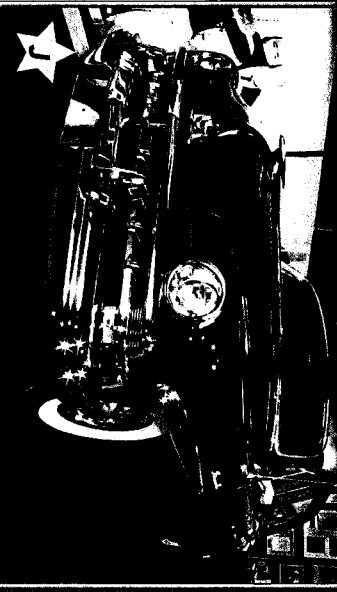
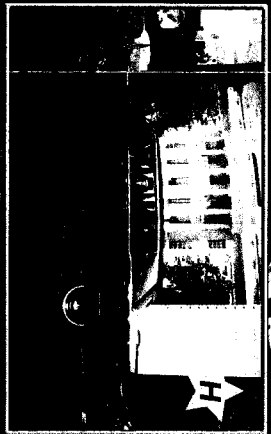
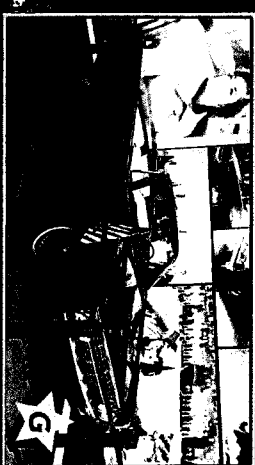
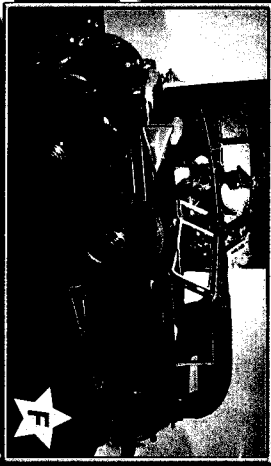
★ 1962 Lincoln Continental Convertible, used by President Kennedy to visit troops during the Cuban missile crisis.

★ 1965 Lincoln Lehman Peterson Limousine, custom built for President Lyndon B. Johnson.

★ The 1956 Cadillac Secret Service limousine that was directly behind JFK when he was assassinated November 22, 1963.

★ Harry S. Truman's 1950 Lincoln Presidential Limousine. This car features gold plated interior touches.

★ 1865 Studebaker Landau Carriage used by our 18th President, Ulysses S. Grant.



EXPERT POSITION

By:

Ms. Ekaterina Tsekova, PhD – Director of the National Polytechnic Museum, Sofia
Mr. Emil Davchev, PhD – Deputy Director of the National Polytechnic Museum, Sofia

Concerning: Movable cultural property.

With regard to a request for an assessment of an object, which may have the qualities of a movable cultural value, we state the following position:

Until 1992 the Packard automobile, identification KWELVE, manufactured in 1937 in Detroit, USA, frame # 1035-447, engine # 9006647-447, has been an integral part of the funds of the Georgi Dimitrov Museum and their **major exhibit**.

In September 1992 after participation in a retro automobiles parade it was stolen from the Museum garage and illegally exported from Bulgaria. Therefore, our country **lost an exceptional exhibit – movable cultural value of national importance**.

HISTORY: After World War II the leader of USSR Joseph Vissarionovich Dzhughashvili (Stalin) received from Detroit workers a few unique Packard automobiles and some of them he gave away to other leaders of socialist countries, among whom were Georgi Dimitrov (at that moment leader of the KOMINTER and a Soviet Member of Parliament, subsequently Prime Minister of the National Republic of Bulgaria), Nicolae Ceausescu, Josip Broz Tito.

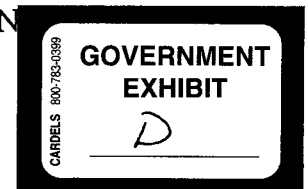
That automobile was the first official means of transportation of Head of the Bulgarian state after the war, as well as the first armored automobile to secure his safety.

TECHNICAL DETAILS: The Packard automobile has 12 cylinders, 8 000 cubic meters, 205 h.p. It reaches 155 km/h, the driver's compartment is leather furnished and the passenger's is plush furnished. The side window panes are equipped with special hydraulic system (each one of the window panes weighs 200 kg.). The automobile weighs between 5-7 tons. Besides the armor of the body of the car the floor is steel reinforced and there are machine gun stands for the driver and the guards.

IN CONCLUSION we state the following:

1. We assess the automobile as a **former museum exhibit and movable cultural value of national importance**.
2. This automobile has a direct connection to one of the most famous persons of the 20th century Georgi Dimitrov, who became well-known in relation with the Reichstag Fire Trial, subsequently a prominent figure in the Communist International and Prime Minister of the National Republic of Bulgaria.
3. There are no more than 15 such automobiles manufactured and only 2-3 have been preserved.
4. The connection USA (Detroit) – USSR (Stalin) – Bulgaria (Georgi Dimitrov) is still under investigation.

With regard to the above we confirm that the unique Packard automobile is a movable cultural value of national importance to the Republic of Bulgaria. The N



Polytechnic Museum would be proud to have this exclusive exhibit in its exposition funds when it is returned to the country. It is a masterpiece which along with some other automobiles could be exhibited in a separate unique exposition.

Respectfully,

Ekaterina Tsekova
Emil Davchev