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ALBANIAN EMIGRANTS DESCRIBE POLITICAL SITUATION IN ALBANIA;  
 CONTRASTING VIEWS ON ALBANIAN MINORITY IN YUGOSLAVIA

A report on conditions and dissatisfaction in Albania, resulting from Soviet exploitation, made at the second annual conference of the Association of Albanian Political Emigrants in Yugoslavia, may serve to illuminate current predictions of imminent trouble and the possible overthrow of the Hoxha regime. Furthermore, the position of the Albanian minority in Yugoslavia was described at the conference as being very favorable; however, in contrast with this viewpoint are two items from satellite papers describing the Albanian minority in Yugoslavia as being persecuted.

Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources.

CONFERENCE OF ALBANIAN POLITICAL EMIGRANTS IN YUGOSLAVIA

About 250 delegates and guests /the 1 Jun 1952 issue of Politika gave the number as about 300 selected delegates/ attended the second annual conference of the Association of Albanian Political Emigrants in Yugoslavia (Savez politickih emigranata Albanije u Jugoslaviji), which opened in Prizren on 30 May 1952 to discuss the political activities of the association and the work and life of Albanian emigrants in general.(1) Representatives of Bulgarian, Hungarian, Rumanian, and Czechoslovak political emigrants also participated in the conference, as well as representatives of the Yugoslav people's authorities and a large number of cultural and civil workers from Prizren.

Apostol Tanefi, president of the Albanian association, opened the conference and expressed his thanks to the Yugoslav government and people for their care and concern for Albanian emigrants.(2)

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Speech by Apostol Tanefi

Apostol Tanefi, temporary chairman, reported on the work and tasks of Albanian political emigrants. He spoke about the general international situation, pointing out that the Soviet authorities threaten world peace, and emphasized that Albania has been transformed into a base for organizing provocations against the friendly Yugoslav people who helped the Albanians during and after the war.

Tanefi said that Yugoslavia has been the only nation to defend Albania's interests at various international conferences. When the ruling clique of Enver Hoxha and Mehmet Shehu cut off friendly relations with Yugoslavia, the USSR applied the old imperialist strategy of promising Kosovo-Metohija to the Hoxha clique, just as Mussolini had promised it to Mustafa Kemal 11 years ago.(3)

Tanefi went on to say that Soviet hegemony in Albania has taken on special aspects. Besides NKVD instructor-agents, Bulgarian "instructors" have been sent to Albania recently to further exploit the country for the benefit of the USSR. Under the guise of brotherly help, these Soviet and Bulgarian instructors are assuming high positions in the party right up to the Central Committee, as well as in the government, economic enterprises, and social and cultural organizations. While an Albanian workman, no matter how large his family, receives 1,500 leks monthly, and a clerk receives 2,000 to 3,500 leks, engineers from the USSR and Bulgaria receive 15,000 to 20,000 leks. A high officer in the Albanian Army receives 5,000 leks, while a Soviet or Bulgarian military instructor receives 25,000 to 35,000 leks. This is paid for by the Albanian people through high taxes and compulsory crop deliveries. A special store is open to these instructors and not to Albanians. Prices here are much lower than in stores where Albanians purchase their guaranteed supplies. With their pockets full of money, these instructors are in a position to buy gold, rings, jewels, and valuable antiques and send them to the USSR or Bulgaria.

Albanian petroleum fills the warehouses of the countries trading with the USSR, while the Albanian people have to pay 2 kilograms of wheat for a kilogram of petroleum (one kilogram of wheat costs 140 leks). The same is true for other compulsorily delivered products, including ores, wool, eggs, and cabbage.

Since Albania has neither economic nor political freedom, dissatisfaction is increasing daily among the people. To stop it, special punitive expeditions are visiting villages and killing patriots, interning entire families, plundering their property, and denouncing enemies of Hoxha and his clique as traitors. Albania is becoming a concentration camp for those who desire freedom or an independent Albania.(2) Arrests, deportations, and the murder of Albanian citizens have become a daily occurrence, while hunger threatens the Albanians.(3) The Second Congress of the Albanian Workers' Party best illustrates how the dissatisfaction of the Albanian people is increasing. Since the first congress was held, several thousand members have been expelled from the party, two members of the Central Committee have been killed, and ten have been expelled and arrested.

Because of this, Tanefi stated, a large number of patriots have left Albania to seek freedom in Yugoslavia, which has accepted them as only a friendly nation can. Albanian children are being educated from grammar school right through the faculties. Albanians have their own reading rooms, libraries, and places to develop their political and cultural life.(2) In this connection, Politika reported that the Association of Albanian Political Emigrants publishes Zastava Slobode (Flag of Freedom), a monthly newspaper published in Pristina.(4) Tanefi also stated that some Albanian farmers have been given land; in Montenegro, and Albanians have founded their own farm work cooperative.(2) Politika reported that more than 1,000 Albanians are today working in mines and enterprises in Kosovo-Metohija, Montenegro, and Macedonia.(4)

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4,500 Albanians Flee to Yugoslavia

It was brought out at the conference that since the Cominform Resolution, 4,500 peasants, workers, and intellectuals have crossed the Yugoslav-Albanian border from Albania. Entire families have fled. Twenty-four peasants fled from the village of Braje in Shkoder Srez at one time, and during the winter of 1951 several families fled over Peshtanit Mountain from Kukes Srez.(4) While crossing the border, escapees frequently had gun fights with Albanian border guards.(1)

Because of mass escapes, the Cominformists have been forced to double military units along the Yugoslav border, but this has not prevented escapes, just as soldiers have not been prevented from talking with the people because they have been forbidden to do so.(4)

Other Albanian Speakers at Conference

A large number of Albanian speakers participated in the conference, all of whom thanked the Yugoslav people and government for their hospitality and aid.

In discussing the friendship between Yugoslavs and Albanians, Ajdini Zeleli Bitici referred to the blood they had both shed for freedom against the Fascists. Reis Shehu, who had been interned, described the terrible life in the Albanian concentration camps, where men, women, and even young children are all subjected to the same torture, to poor food and heavy work.

The Albanian speakers emphasized that the Albanian people are protesting against the Cominform; some are taking to the hills with weapons in their hands. In the meantime, Hoxha's regime is adopting every repressive measure possible to eliminate such protesting forces. Prenk Nue Dusi listed the names of 27 patriots who had been killed by Hoxha's police in his area, because they had dared to protest. Caf Smaili said that the Albanians will never surrender to terror, bloodletting, or the gallows.(5)

Czechoslovak, Bulgarian, Hungarian, and Rumanian Representatives Speak

The president of the Association of Czechoslovak Emigrants spoke of the Russification of Czechoslovakia. Since the war, over 21 million translations of Soviet books have been printed in Czechoslovakia, while only 1,500,000 books by Czechoslovak authors have been printed.(3)

Olina Krejcova declared that although the Soviets are plundering the Czechoslovak economy and imposing their political and cultural ideas, the working class and patriots in Czechoslovakia are finding many methods of paralyzing such actions. As proof, she referred to the fact that one fifth of the Czechoslovak Central Committee has been arrested, that the number of political unreliaables is increasing daily, and that the Czechoslovak government does not dare adopt more drastic action against arrested party leaders.

The Bulgarian delegate stated that the Bulgarian people love freedom and will not submit to Moscow's despotism, and that resistance to it is growing daily.

The Hungarian delegate discussed Hungary's economic submission to the USSR. Soviet advisers are in charge of all factories, mines, and ships, and everything produced by Hungarian workers is sent to the USSR. Since farmers and workers are protesting against Rakosi's policies 1,070 families were deported from Budapest in one night, and concentration camps and prisons are full of patriots.(2)

Stanoi Eremia, president of the Association of Rumanian Political Emigrants, extended his best wishes to the conference.(3)

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Member of Serbian Central Committee Speaks

Dusan Mugosa, member of the Central Committee of the Serbian Communist Party, who, together with Miladin Popovic, aided in the development of the Albanian Communist Party and organized the People's Liberation War in Albania, warned that Italian Fascism is again reaching toward Albania and stressed Yugoslavia's friendly and honorable intentions toward Albania. (3)

Conclusion of Conference

At its conclusion the conference unanimously chose a new committee and adopted decisions concerning its future work. As its most important work, the association is to fight with all its strength for world peace. The association will gather all Albanian political emigrants and work on their political and cultural education in true socialism. The association will also work on refuting the slandering of Yugoslavia and Albania by the Cominform bloc and the West, and for closer ties between the Albanians and Yugoslavs. (5)

SATELLITE PAPERS DISCUSSES ALBANIAN MINORITY IN YUGOSLAVIA

Two Satellite papers present a completely different picture of the status of Albanians in Yugoslavia.

According to the Bucharest Viata Sindicala, 800,000 Albanians in Yugoslavia are being persecuted. Forty percent of the Albanian officials in Kosovo-Metohija have been discharged, arrested, deported, or have mysteriously disappeared as a result of UDB activities. (6)

The anti-Tito Nova Borba, organ of the Yugoslav Political Emigrants in Czechoslovakia, published in Prague, reported the following regarding the Albanians.

The position of national minorities in Yugoslavia is unusually difficult, with the Albanian national minority occupying the worst position. The Titoists are today carrying out mass physical extermination of the Albanian national minority in Kosovo-Metohija. Under Tito, 800,000 Albanians in Yugoslavia have been terrorized, deprived of economic and political rights, and are being subjected to national and physical extermination.

The Titoists are depending upon the agas, beys, and Albanian-born ruling bourgeoisie to ruin the masses of backward people in Kosovo-Metohija. Although formally deprived of their titles, the agas and beys have maintained their former economic positions, while the villagers, who are slaves without any rights, cultivate the land for them. The village poor are forced by the UDB to work under the worst conditions in the Trepca mines, in the forests, and on strategic installations, where they become exhausted and die.

For its bloody work, the UDB in Kosovo-Metohija has activated all the worst degenerates, such as Dzavit Nimani, Fadil Hodzi, Ismet Sahiri, Mehmet Hodzi, and other criminals and traitors, who were overt agents of Himmler's Gestapo and Mussolini's SIM during the occupation.

The Titoists began the mass slaughter of Albanians in Yugoslavia during the war. Using the cynical excuse that they had collaborated with the occupation forces, the Titoists killed many innocent men, but saved and took as their associates the real traitors and war criminals. In 1944, they killed 300 Albanians of the 4th Macedonian Brigade on the road from Prizren to Ulcinj. Two thousand Albanian youths in the Yugoslav Army were exposed to extermination by forced

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labor in Gorica and Trieste. The Tito gang has also exterminated all Yugoslavs who pledged themselves to brotherhood with the Albanian people, such as Miladin Popovic, prominent friend of the Albanian minority and a high party leader.

Since the treason of Tito's Fascist gang was exposed in 1948, the Belgrade regime has turned its hatred against the Albanian inhabitants of Kosovo-Metohija. Arrests, killings, and abuse of Albanians are a daily occurrence. Among the uncounted victims of Fascist terror are Mirtez Kacatori, member of the Macedonian Youth Central Committee; Isuf Terezi, member of the party committee in Debar; Saligasi, member of the party committee in Struga; Capt Sefhet Fetahu of the Yugoslav Army; Asin Cazini, member of the Bar People's Council; Sabri Daci, public prosecutor in Pristina; Becir Sahalin, former Partisan; and Ismail Cena, member of the Control Commission in Junik.

Mass destruction of entire villages in Kosovo-Metohija is taking place and the UDB is killing Albanian women, children, and old men. They have massacred 2,000 Albanians in Kosovska Mitrovica and 1,000 in Gnjilane. Recently the village of Kohnor near Debar was set on fire, and the women, children, and every living thing was killed.

The Tito regime is waging a relentless policy to separate the Yugoslav Albanians from their native country. Not even the most elementary schools, much less Albanian language schools, are being opened in areas where the Albanians live, and adults are forbidden to speak their mother tongue. The Albanian-born aga and bey rulers, the Moslem priests, those who consider themselves more Turkish than Albanian, those who speak Turkish and not Albanian, and those who are oriented to Istanbul are receiving help from the Titoists in stifling the national sentiments of Albanians, Turkifying them, and separating them from Albania.(7)

## SOURCES

1. Zagreb, Borba, 31 May 52 (article signed by F. V.)
2. Belgrade, Politika, 1 Jun 52 (article signed by N. Smiljanic)
3. Borba, 1 Jun 52
4. Belgrade, Politika, 31 May 52
5. Ibid., 2 Jun 52
6. Bucharest, Viata Sindicala, 27 Jun 52
7. Prague, Nova Borba, 2 Jun 52

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