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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
**INFORMATION REPORT**

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SUBJECT Port Installations in Durres Harbor; Pilot Facilities; Shipping

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Port Installations:

- Existing damages in the port of Durres, incurred during World War II, are presently being repaired.
- The dismantling of the old wooden landing stage, previously initiated by the Italian authorities during the period of their occupation of Albania, is continuing; this landing stage, which extended from the center of the port to the northern pier, will be replaced by another wooden landing stage, approximately 100 meters in length, with a depth of 21 feet along the western side, which would permit the mooring of 4,000 to 5,000 ton vessels. The depth along the eastern side, by contrast, is not more than 10 feet, and only large motor-sailboats or fishing boats can be moored there.

*// At Durres, Albania*

The western mole is also being reconstructed; it is expected that this will soon be completed. There is a railroad track running along this pier, which permits loading cars to come quite close to the vessels moored there; above these tracks there is another larger track, in the center of the mole, for two port cranes, which are presently being tested. These cranes are each said to have a maximum lifting capacity of more than 10 tons, and the length of their arms is said to be adequate to service any vessels moored there, or handle any type of merchandise. The pier is spacious, and would permit the rapid handling of the many goods which presently just remain stacked up, awaiting loading. //

- Warehouses for perishable goods are located on the northern pier; at the eastern end of this pier there is a small construction yard, where a motor-sailboat of approximately 500 tons and a wooden tug-boat of about 400 HP are being constructed. The motor for the latter vessel has already been received from the USSR.
- The petroleum landing stage has a very small wooden pile toward its outermost end; alongside this are moored the tankers, which throw their mooring cables to the bitts set up along the mole. Originally, the underground pipe-line extended from the mole to the tanks; one of these two lines

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however, had been completely destroyed and removed by the Germans, so that at the present time there remains but the single pipe-line.

6. The only oil tanks which exist in Durres are the three which had been constructed by the AGIP (Azienda Generale delle Industrie di Petrolio); these were damaged during the war, but have since been completely repaired. The combined capacity of these tanks is estimated at approximately 6,000 tons of liquid fuel. The tanks are located at the end of the southern breakwater of the port, along which runs the pipe-line described above.
7. A pumping station is located in a small house next to the tanks; as these pumps can only pump the fuel outward (i.e., toward the moored tankers), there is no means of intake of petroleum when tankers are unloading the fuel, and the vessels themselves must do the pumping toward the tanks. The pipe-line is in a poor state of maintenance, and does not permit the pumping of more than 100 tons per hour. There is no pipe-line between Durres and Tirana, and it is not believed that there is any immediate intention of constructing one. The fuel is transported from Durres to Tirana by means of tank cars, and is sent to other Albanian ports by means of a 25-ton tug-boat which formerly belonged to the Italian Navy.

8.  the maintenance of the tanks has been entrusted to incompetent personnel, who are reported to have themselves voiced their unhappiness with regard to the situation in which they find themselves. The man in charge of this group has no technical knowledge in matters relating to petroleum; since he receives all of his orders from the Kucove refineries, his functions are no more than those of a storekeeper.

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9. In addition to the above port facilities being repaired and constructed, several water-intake points are being set up along the moles and the shore in order to permit vessels to replenish their water supplies. Vessels which do not fly the Albanian flag do not refuel in Albania.


Lighthouses:

10. The lighthouses of Cape Laghi and of Cape Durres, as well as the red and green signal lights of the port, are in regular operation. In addition, approximately 2 miles from the entrance to the port, there are two buoys (one red and one green), with intermittent lights. The red one indicates shoals, and the green one a derelict vessel; vessels desiring to reach the harbor must pass between these two buoys.

Navigational Barriers:

11. According to unconfirmed information, there are no barriers to navigation other than those emplaced by the Italian Navy. A safe route to Durres used by some vessels consisted of following a true course of 17° from point 40° 23' N and 19° 03' E, which brought the vessels to a point two miles off Cape Laghi.\*
12. Nets and cylinders, used for obstruction purposes, are piled up on the western pier; these are in very poor condition.

Customs Inspection; Restrictions on Visiting Vessels:

13. Neither Police nor Customs officials in the port of Durres carry out any searches on board  whether upon arrival or departure; permission for the crew to land, however, is not being granted. A policeman, armed with a Thompson sub-machine gun, remains on duty on board at all times,

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and all civilians who come on board to perform various services are also escorted by a non-commissioned police officer. Prior to the vessel's departure, the captain is escorted to the State Bank for the payment of port rights, and then he is immediately returned on board, at all times under surveillance. These strict security measures are said to have been implemented late in December 1950, following the capture and execution of five Albanian parachutists allegedly flown in from Italy.

Tugboats and Pilot Vessels:

14. The port of Durres has a single pilot, Ahmed Luli, a former non-commissioned officer of the Albanian Port Captaincy Service (now retired) 50X1-HUM

During the absence of the Port Commander, who visits Tirana frequently, his functions are undertaken by the pilot, who is assisted by two young "aspirants" of the Port Captaincy Service.

15. There are presently three tug-boats in use; one of these, which has a motor of about 240 HP, assists vessels executing maneuvers, and tows fishing-boats and other small vessels which are in difficulty. The other two tug-boats, of approximately 80 HP each, are in a state of disrepair, and great difficulty is being experienced in attempting to repair them. In addition, as described in paragraph 4 above, a wooden tug-boat of about 400 HP is presently being constructed.

Radio Station:

16. A small radio station, of approximately 1.5 kw, has been constructed close to the offices of the Port Captaincy in Durres, toward the end of the west mole; the station was being tested at date of this report. 50X1-HUM

Coastal Artillery:

17. A battery, located on the slopes of Cape Laghi, is reported to have fired its guns at an Italian vessel when it arrived in Durres without prior notification. The artillery pieces, which are camouflaged by green foliage, are located on different levels of the hill, on the side of the sea. The fire-control post is located in the immediate vicinity of the former royal villa.

Shipping Traffic in Durres:

18. During the course of December 1950, the traffic of Soviet, Polish, Rumanian and Bulgarian merchant vessels increased considerably, with an estimated average of five vessels per week coming into port during the period 1 December 1950 to 14 January 1951. In all cases the Polish, Bulgarian and Rumanian vessels (of an average tonnage of 4,000 to 5,000 tons) moored at the principal mole, while the Soviet vessels, with only two or three exceptions during the period in question, moored at the former AGIP landing-stage.
19. The Polish, Bulgarian and Rumanian vessels unloaded small quantities of grain and large quantities of iron items (railroad ties, wiring, etc.), while informant was only able to state that the Soviet vessels unloaded merchandise in large and small cases and crates. 50X1-HUM

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- 20. These vessels then loaded chrome, skins and oil.
- 21. The Bulgarian vessel DIMITROV (5,000 tons) was expected in Durres on 17 January 1951, with a mixed cargo of grain and iron items. Another Soviet vessel and two Rumanian vessels were expected to arrive in Durres on 20 and 22 January 1951.
- 22. Equipment for the establishment of a new distillery in Kucove arrived from Czechoslovakia; two Czech technicians arrived at the same time with the equipment.

Miscellaneous:

- 23.   
Porto Palermo is considered to be the locality in which interested powers could easily unload informants. Such points, however, are under special surveillance.

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Comment:   
 the sea approaches to Durres are mined, but that an entrance bypassing this minefield is located 30 miles from Durres. A safe route   
 consists of travelling 16 miles north of Durres, thence southward to the harbor, staying within 3 miles of the shore.

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