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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

INFORMATION REPORT

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50X1

COUNTRY Albania

DATE DISTR. 17 May 1951

SUBJECT Economic Situation in Albania

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SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO. 50X1-HUM

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1. The food situation in Albania has become incredibly desperate [redacted] except for privileged Communist Party members. The price of [redacted] corn meal is now 150 leks per kilogram. Many city residents have been forced to sell the few pieces of furniture they still possess in order to obtain money for bread. 50X1-HUM
2. Deaths from starvation have taken place in the Shkoder area. As a result of drought and the Government's requisitioning of grain, peasants of the plains around Shkoder have formed long mule caravans and headed into the mountains in search of bread. [redacted] such a thing has never 50X1-HUM happened before, as the peasants of this area are traditionally large grain producers.
3. Throughout the country, as a result of long suffering, one sees faces which are emaciated and spiritless. Without shoes and nearly naked, young children stare with incredulity at bread when it is offered them. Desperate mothers wander through city streets in search of work to support their children. Pitiful young girls stand in their doorways offering their smiles and their bodies in exchange for food.
4. The people view these scenes with terror. Though they appear merely to shrug their shoulders, they are angered by their powerlessness. The youth, which once was full of hope for its own future and that of the country, today seems worn with age, suspicious, afraid to act, without hope.
5. Fearing a serious and widespread revolt, the Government is taking every possible security measure to hold the population at bay.
6. The Communist hierarchy is unaffected by the country's misery and degradation [redacted] and ruinously continues to exploit what is best 50X1-HUM among the youth. [redacted] the taverns are filled with the reckless gaiety of the Communists, while among the population reign sickness, misery and death. 50X1-HUM

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7. Other information of late April 1951 states that food is not to be found because the population is dying of hunger. [redacted] an Albanian in the Shkoder area recently went to 19 different homes without finding bread. At the end of April a quintal of corn cost 20,000 leka, when it could be found.

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