

PLN 1050

SECRET

FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

SECURITY: SECRET (Enclosure
Unclassified)

NUMBER: A-R 1000 597291

TO: Department of State

FROM: AMERICAN EMBASSY, BELGRADE, 768 Apr 11 5, 1951

REF: Embassy's telegram LMOB, March 25, 1951, and LMOB, March 30, 1951

SUBJECT: Yugoslav Concern Over Developments in Albania

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Enclosed with this despatch is a translation of an article from the March 1951 issue of Pravda by Vladimir DEDJER, entitled "A dangerous development in Albania". The author was formerly head of the Yugoslav Committee of Information and is presently a member of the Information Affairs Committee of the Yugoslav Party. He has a long record of political activities and an intimate knowledge of the processes of the Government.

Milovan

Stokanovic

The article begins by pointing out the relationship between recent events in Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Albania involving purges in the communist parties of those countries growing out of resistance to Soviet hegemonic policy. It states that from June 1948 to the end of November of the same year, when the Party Congress was held, fifteen members of the Central Committee of the Albanian Communist Party were either killed, imprisoned or removed, and that a further four members and candidates for membership have since been removed from the reconstituted Central Committee. The present regime is described as going through a crisis, with purges of Party organizations and terrorism throughout the country, taking place. Dedjer then refers to certain events relating to the situation in Albania which are causing concern in Yugoslavia: the recent intensification of "Albanian reactionary emigration" in Italy, particularly the groups led by Beulah ALIJA and Imam KULLI ALIJA. The former is described as having been appointed Minister of Interior in an Albanian cabinet in 1941, by the German Government, after the capitulation of Italy, and as having been Premier in 1944; the latter is described as having been appointed by Count Ciano as first Premier of the Albanian pro-Italian Quisling Government in 1939. Enjoying Italian hospitality, these and similar men are said to be issuing their own publications, publishing leaflets, and obtaining planes for dropping leaflets over Albania. According to Dedjer, planes carrying such leaflets have in

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February of this year, and were met with anti-aircraft fire. He also alleges that "armed groups are being parachuted into Albania, and they are fighting there." In the same paragraph he asserts that leaflets were also dropped in Kosovo and Metohija (Yugoslav areas adjacent to northern Albania heavily populated by Albanians.) A veiled reference is made to "similar aspirations...being expressed in a more concealed form by certain circles in the neighboring country of Greece."

Dedijer makes the cogent point that these foreign activities in Albania constitute a highly dangerous game in that they play directly into the hands of the Soviet Government. He points out that the Soviet propaganda apparatus, as well as the propaganda machinery of the Eastern European Cominform countries, has recently been accusing Yugoslavia of alleged preparations for an attack on Albania. If foreign aggression against Albania, such as that foreshadowed by the events mentioned above, takes place, Dedijer states, it would be a heaven-sent opportunity for Soviet aggressive policy on a broad front [i.e., involving Yugoslavia] under cover of the slogan, "Defense of small Socialist Albania."

In private conversation Dedijer stated that not only leaflets, but parachutists as well, had been dropped into Kosovo and Metohija. He also asserted that similar activity had been undertaken from Greece, but that he had refrained from mentioning specific acts in his article in *Borba* because of the disturbing effects it might have on relations with Greece. He asserted that this activity on Yugoslav soil did not cause his government undue concern because it was kept completely under control by the authorities, but said that the Yugoslav Government was seriously concerned by the potentialities of the current Albanian crisis, abetted by foreign activities, if the Soviet Union should utilize it to involve Yugoslavia as an alleged aggressor against Albania. He said that the aim of the *Borba* article was to rebut the recent Laventia accusation that preparations were being made for an attack on Albania with Yugoslavia as the principal force in the projected attack.

The Embassy is of the opinion that Dedijer's point is well taken, and that if the Albanian situation should degenerate to a breaking point, there may be a real danger of Soviet intervention as an excuse to involve Yugoslavia under trumped-up charges of aggression.

For the Ambassador:

John J. Hermsley
John J. Hermsley
First Secretary

CC: Moscow, Rome,
Athens, Trieste.

Enclosure: Article by Vladimir
Dedijer of March 29, 1951. [] I