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SUBJECT: Reevaluation of Project EGFIEND

As the second phase of the joint US-British Secret Service undertaking aimed at ultimately overthrowing the Hexha regime has thus far been unsuccessful, an exhaustive policy review of the entire operation is in order. On the basis of this review recommendations will be made as to the future course of OPC activities in Albania.

A. Status of the Operation

1. The British agreed with the EGFIEND plan and specifically agreed to regard the undertaking as a joint operation modifying their original Valuable Plan to fit EGFIEND. It was agreed that coordination with the British would be achieved through the establishment in Washington of a combined policy committee for broad direction and control of the operation. Field command of the operation would be exercised by our field operations chief and his British opposite number. Recently the joint committee was constituted in Washington and has been fulfilling its function satisfactorily.

2. The first phase of these operations, which has been completed, had as its objective the formation of a refugee Albanian committee to serve both as a front and as a rallying point for subsequent activities. This committee, known as the Albanian National Committee, was formed in August 1949. Since the death of its first Chairman, Midhat Frasherri, the Committee has not yet been able to agree on a satisfactory successor because of internal dissensions within

it connected with the fight for power. The appointment of some prominent Ballist as chairman, however, now appears probable. This is in

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accord with U.S. desires.

3. The second phase, which commenced with the infiltration into Albania of thirty British-trained Albanians, involved two major aspects, namely, reconnaissance and propaganda.

a. Reconnaissance—It was originally planned that eighty Albanians would be infiltrated in an attempt to determine:

- (1) the potential centers of resistance throughout the country;
- (2) the strength, loyalty, and disposition of the government forces; and
- (3) the strength and number of Soviet personnel within Albania.

The British succeeded in landing thirty men in groups of five in southern Albania from Malta. However, fifteen men subsequently fled into Greece and only one group is continuing to send w/t communications; the rest are either known to be or presumed to be dead. It is estimated that the value of the mission performed by these agents was negligible.

In order to perform a similar mission for the other two-thirds (north and central areas) of Albania, it was originally considered necessary that approximately fifty additional US-trained agents be recruited and dispatched to Albania. However, the inability of the non-Ballist members of the Executive Committee to recruit and make available in time even twenty agents forced the suspension of these reconnaissance operations based from Malta. The British had stipulated that the agents must be trained and dispatched from Malta by the first of December, as they plan to close down the facilities then in keeping with their cover story.

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b. Propaganda—Our joint plan envisaged that simultaneously with the infiltration of the reconnaissance teams, an intensified propaganda campaign would be undertaken involving; (1) the use of a ship in the Adriatic to blanket out Radio Tirana, (2) the dropping in of propaganda leaflets, and (3) the use of other propaganda media. In this connection a PW Annex was prepared stipulating methods, propaganda themes, phasing, and timing. Owing to difficulties encountered in procuring the necessary ship and equipment and in handling other technical matters, no propaganda attack has been inaugurated to date.

4. In view of the foregoing, a joint US-British policy decision was made to suspend actual operations until such time as a new plan could be properly constituted and the major base and operational difficulties overcome.

B. Major Problems to be Resolved

1. In order to continue the joint British-US operation as presently conceived and authorized by both the Department of State and the Foreign Office, the following problems and issues must be resolved;

a. A satisfactory base of operations for the training and holding of a minimum of 250 Albanians must be obtained (In this connection preliminary negotiations are being conducted with the High Commissioner for Germany, who seems to be favorably disposed to granting the necessary permission).

b. A satisfactory forwarding area within range of the target must be obtained for the handling of personnel and supplies in

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transit from the training base to the target.

c. A suitable ship for propaganda purposes must be procured and arrangements for the necessary Commo facilities must be made.

d. Adequate provisions must be made to provide for the necessary security and cover requirements.

e. The advisability of organizing a substantial "shock" force and of re-enforcing it with other more intelligent and vigorous nationals, namely, Peles (Experience has shown that the Albanians cannot adequately supply inspired or competent leadership).

f. The proper integration of the successive phases of the operation with respect to reconnaissance, the creation of resistance nuclei, the dropping of arms and ammunition, and the launching of the ultimate phase.

2. In addition to the above base and operational problems, the following basic policy questions are posed:

a. Is it desirable to undertake the ultimate objective as presently conceived, or should our objectives be limited to what can be achieved without recourse to para-military action?

b. If the Hoxha regime were overthrown by a coup, would sufficient advantages accrue to the U.S. to justify the great expenditure of time and effort which is necessary to accomplish such an overthrow?

c. If the operation were completely successful and the Hoxha regime were replaced by a representative-type government oriented towards the Western powers, would this occurrence considerably

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worsen East-West relations or induce retaliatory action by the USSR which would weaken the U.S. or U.K. security position?

6. Discussion

1. Excluding the problems of a purely technical nature, the main operational determinations that must be made in executing the ultimate objectives as presently constituted concern the types of action which can bring about the overthrow of the Hoxha regime.

2. It is now clear to us and to the British that the Hoxha regime cannot be overthrown in the near future without a great deal of outside aid in the form of guns, supplies, leadership, and propaganda. The Albanian people probably cannot or will not carry on a sustained fight for their own liberation without outside aid. Greater U.S. commitments will have to be made than were contemplated in the program approved in June, 1949, if Hoxha is to be overthrown as a result of U.S.-U.K. inspired efforts.

3. The British reconnaissance teams have achieved very little and with one exception have been killed, captured, or forced to flee the country. In view of their lack of success, it is apparent that the severe Albanian police controls make such reconnaissance efforts impractical.

4. Before new reconnaissance efforts are mounted, it is necessary that a new approach be considered. It is felt that teams which are adequately armed and which are permitted to operate as small guerrilla bands will have a greater chance of surviving and of fulfilling their mission. This concept visualizes that these teams will have a two-fold mission—the organizing of nuclei of resistance and the creating of operational intelligence nets. The resistance nuclei will help the

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"armed reconnaissance" teams to survive and to lay the groundwork for an insurrectionary apparatus.

5. The present Albanian plan provides for a review following the completion of the initial reconnaissance effort and for a decision, in the light of such a review, by the JCS and the Department of State as to whether the subsequent aspects of the planned program are to be implemented. Because of the time required to obtain such a decision, the reconnaissance and subsequent phases ^{will lose their} ~~will~~ ~~lose~~ ~~their~~ ~~effectiveness.~~ ~~effectiveness.~~

6. As an alternative to the program discussed above, there is a more time-consuming non-para-military type of program involving the more or less slow development of courier lines and centers of resistance. This relatively slowly maturing program could only achieve very limited objectives and would almost certainly exclude the possibility of revolt within the foreseeable future. Such a program would not substantially advance U.S.-foreign policy objectives in this area. In addition, it is possible that the present opportunity to achieve major results in Albania may be lost.

7. As there are not many Albanians abroad, it is doubtful whether an adequate number will be available to create the "shock" force originally considered necessary to bring about a rapid overthrow of Hoxha. Therefore, the "shock" force may need stiffening with other nationals if operations are to go forward most expeditiously and effectively. Such a course of action, although possibly desirable from an operational point of view, is not in line with existing U.S. policy decisions, i.e. that the Albanian operation must have the outward appearance of being Albanian sponsored and executed.

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8. It is known that the French, Greek, and Italian intelligence services are familiar with U.S.-British intentions with regard to Albania. Moreover, it is assumed that the Soviet and Yugoslav intelligence services are also aware of U.S.-British sponsored activities respecting Albania. As a result, successful accomplishment of all the phases of the joint British-U.S. program as now approved is becoming increasingly difficult.

9. The British have not at any time been overly concerned with the fact that British sponsorship of this operation might become known. However, as evidenced by their refusal to grant us a permanent base in Cirenaica or Malta, they have shown that they are taking the necessary step to assure the Foreign Office that no conclusive proof will be obtained of their connection with this operation. Therefore, it is felt that the relative transparency of the operation does not constitute a major drawback so long as the Soviets are unable to obtain conclusive proof of U.S.-British participation.

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10. Although Tito probably does not contemplate any action in Albania comparable to the U.S.-U.K. program, Tito undoubtedly knows of our intentions and is preparing to be in a position to exploit the situation as it develops. It may be necessary, therefore, to consider the advisability of reaching some understanding with Tito respecting Albania.

11. The developments which might occur as a result of a U.S.-U.K. sponsored overthrow of the present Albanian regime are enumerated below:

a. Possible Soviet Reactions Disadvantageous to the U.S.

(1) The USSR might send Soviet and/or Satellite troops

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to reestablish a Soviet satellite regime in Albania which could materially strengthen the position of the USSR in the Balkans. However, it is generally estimated that the Soviet Union would not use Soviet or Satellite troops in such an instance, as this would brand them as an aggressor.

(2) If the Albanian ports were denied to the USSR, the Greeks might conceivably attempt to secure a land route across Yugoslav Macedonia.

(3) Soviet planners may feel compelled to take serious retaliatory action elsewhere in the world.

B. Developments Advantageous to the U.S.

(1) Successful overthrow of the Hoxha regime would be the first instance of the "rollback" of Soviet power in the Satellite. The proposed NSC directive 68 states that such a "rollback" is the objective of U.S.-foreign policy respecting Eastern Europe.

(2) Would strengthen Tito's position by removing the present Soviet threat on his Western flank.

(3) Would considerably reduce the Soviet Union's ability to reopen the Greek civil war.

(4) Would directly remove Erenin power from Adriatic and would reduce Soviet influence in the Mediterranean.

(5) Would visibly indicate to antiCommunist nationals in the Satellite states that there is real hope of ultimate liberation.

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12. If the revolt is only partially successful in that it leads to a prolonged civil war, the Soviet Union might intervene as mentioned in paragraph 11, a. above.

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D. Conclusions

1. The achievement of the present objective is highly desirable and is in accordance with the proposed NSC 58 drafted by the Department of State.

2. The USSR will not use Soviet or satellite troops to aid Hoxha to put down a revolution except under circumstances wherein the USSR could conclusively prove that the revolution was induced or assisted by the U.S. or the U.K.

3. The USSR will not attack any western nation or Yugoslavia nor will East-West relations dangerously deteriorate because of an overthrow of the Hoxha regime or because of a prolonged Albanian civil war.

4. The overthrow of the Hoxha regime would tend to deter Kremlin plans for military aggression.

5. Considerable advantages can be gained by continuing the operation, even though it falls short of deposing the Hoxha regime in the near future.

6. The present conception of the reconnaissance phase is inadequate and a more realistic approach must be considered.

7. "Shock" forces stiffened with non-Albanians should not be used, inasmuch as such forces are semi-overt in nature and would greatly endanger the subsequent security of the operation.

8. A considerable amount of outside aid, namely, arms and ammunitions, must be provided or the ultimate results of the joint British-U.S. venture will be negligible, because the nature of the Albanian people requires tangible evidence of the magnitude ^{of} outside support before they will commit themselves to drastic measures.

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B. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. In order to carry out U.S. national policy, as set forth in NSC 10/2 and in the proposed NSC 58, drafted by the Department of State, U.S.-sponsored efforts aimed at overthrowing the present Kremlin supported regime in Albania be continued.
2. In order to carry out this Albanian operation, an entirely new operational plan be prepared in the light of experience to date.
3. The reconnaissance phase of this Albanian operation be developed according to the principles of "armed reconnaissance" action, which emphasize the accelerated establishment of resistance nuclei, outlined in paragraph C, 4. above.
4. A psychological warfare sub-program as outlined in the approved PW Annex be developed and implemented at the earliest possible date.
5. The JCS and the Department of State be requested to approve the use of "armed reconnaissance" teams.
6. The JCS and the Department of State be requested at this time to approve the supplying of limited quantities of arms and ammunitions to indigenous elements.
7. At a later date the JCS and the Department of State be requested to give final approval for the supplying of substantial quantities of arms.

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