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KUBARK-FPBBERM Meeting in Belgrade on 16-17 February 1953

Introduction

1. On 21 November 1952, in the belief that a service level discussion with the Yugoslavs on the subject of Albania would be profitable, KUBARK Headquarters instructed [] to attempt to arrange such a meeting. At the outset FPBERM was not particularly receptive to the proposal but on 16 January 1953 agreed to a three-day meeting in Ljubljana, or Zagreb, to be attended by two representatives of each service. FPBERM subsequently agreed to hold the meeting in Belgrade, and KUBARK agreed that a two-day meeting would be sufficient and that three FPBERM representatives might participate instead of the two originally scheduled.

2. In view of the great sensitivity attached by both FPBERM and KUBARK to a meeting of this kind, all possible precautions were taken by both services to prevent any inkling of the meeting from becoming known to other intelligence services or governments. The two KUBARK representatives, [] and [] entered Yugoslavia via the Orient Express on the afternoon of Sunday, 15 February 1953, arriving in Belgrade at 0900 hours on 16 February. After a slight initial mix-up occasioned by the failure of an FPBERM representative to make contact with [] as scheduled, [] and [] were conducted to a very pleasant and comfortable villa on the edge of Belgrade which appeared to have been put in order especially for their visit.

3. The reception accorded the KUBARK representatives was excellent. Two waiters and a cook had been provided, and there was an abundance of excellent food and drink (at no time, however, was any slightest pressure placed on [] or [] to urge them to drink).

4. Assuming that the villa had been "miked," [] and [] were careful when alone to say aloud only such things as might be calculated to produce a good reaction on the part of FPBERM if their conversation was indeed being monitored.

5. The first session was held from 1630 hours on 16 February until 0015 hours the following morning, with time out for dinner. On the second day three sessions were held, one before lunch and the other two in the afternoon. The final session was followed by a dinner attended by all those who had participated in the meetings, plus [] although his participation had been desired by KUBARK, FPBERM demurred on the grounds of (a) [] diplomatic status, since the discussions were to be on a purely service level and (b) the non-participation of [] FPBERM liaison contact, FPCAMP).

6. The FPBERM representatives were introduced under names of which KUBARK has no record and which are assumed to have been false, especially since two of the three have been tentatively identified as, respectively, the foremost Yugoslav authority on Albania and one of the FPBERM representatives who participated last year in a meeting with emissaries of ex-King Zog. Throughout this paper, however, the three FPBERM representatives will be referred to as "Mr. B.," "Mr. C.," and "Mr. S.," initials of the names under which they were presented.

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7. From their close acquaintance with the area under consideration, their frankness in discussion, their authoritative manner in speaking, and the almost complete absence of any tendency to evade certain questions on the grounds that they would have to refer them to higher authority, it appeared that the three FPBERM representatives were quite competent and on a sufficiently high level to make the meeting worthwhile.

8. The discussions were carried on in English and Serbian. [redacted] and [redacted] spoke in English, which was then translated by FPSAND (the former FPBERM liaison contact with [redacted]) into Serbian, monitored by [redacted]. The FPBERM representatives spoke in Serbian, which [redacted] translated into English with FPSAND monitoring his translation. [redacted] received numerous compliments on his fluency, and his running translation into English was excellent.

9. While obviously slowing up discussion, the need to translate from one language to another provided opportunity for full and detailed notes to be taken. [redacted] serving as secretary of the KUBARK team, took down some 76 pages of notes in abbreviated longhand. After leaving Belgrade [redacted] and [redacted] together carefully reviewed these notes to make sure they were intelligible, accurate and complete. In addition to the material contained in these notes, the following report of the discussions includes previously prepared statements which were presented by [redacted] and [redacted] as indicated. It is felt that such a complete report may be useful not only as a matter of record but also to permit of close and detailed study of the Yugoslav point of view as presented in the course of this meeting; for that reason, insofar as possible, all statements made by the FPBERM representatives are reported, even when there is obvious duplication of what may previously have been said.

10. In presenting the KUBARK position, it was agreed by [redacted] and [redacted] that [redacted] as the senior member of the team, as being primarily interested in the PP and PO aspects of the discussions, and as having come direct from Headquarters and being completely familiar with current Headquarters views, would take the lead. For these reasons, and because [redacted] was engaged in making as faithful a record as possible of the discussions, most of the KUBARK questions and answers were submitted by [redacted] at times on the basis of suggestions by [redacted].

11. Time permitting, this entire report would have been passed to [redacted] in Istanbul for his concurrence before being distributed to interested offices here. Insofar as this report has not been reviewed, in its final form, by [redacted] it should be considered tentative and subject to possible modification. It is believed, however, that any changes [redacted] might propose would be rather minor in nature, and that he would find this report acceptable in its present form.

Agenda

12. Although the agenda for the meeting had been the subject of conversations between [redacted] and his FPBERM contact in Belgrade, and of cable exchanges between [redacted] and Headquarters, final FPBERM agreement on the agenda was not received until after the arrival of [redacted] and [redacted] in Belgrade. At that time they were given an agenda, in English, which corresponded reasonably well with the one originally

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proposed by KUBARK. This agenda, which was followed in the ensuing discussions, is quoted verbatim below:

Aims of the conference:

Exchange of information and views in the purpose of reaching a better understanding of mutual problems and methods of work in A.;

Analysis of the most important factors which determine the situation in A.;

Find out the real interests of the A. people in the present situation;

- I. Reports given by both sides concerning the general appraisal of the present situation in A., including conclusions.
- II. Discussion on the most important external factors concerning A.
 1. The attitude of the USSR
 2. The attitude of other countries which can influence the development of the situation in A.
 3. The A. emigration

Conclusions

- III. Critical summary of the present exchange of information and mutual assistance;

1. Exchange of positive information
2. Exchange of c.e. information
3. Discussion on operative experiences
 - a. Training and equipping of agents considering the specific conditions in A., exchange of experience concerning this;
 - b. Support to be given to the agents in A., (supply, communication, shelters, etc.)
 - c. Collection of documents: identity cards, permits, etc.
 - d. Providing and use of foreign currencies

Conclusions and recommendations

First Session

13. The first session was held on 16 February 1953 beginning at 1630 hours. [] initiated the conference by a general statement to the effect that he and [] were delighted to have the opportunity to meet with the FPBERM representatives and to discuss certain matters relating to Albania which might lead to mutually beneficial results. [] then expressed appreciation for the friendly reception accorded him and []

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14. [] then said that, before proceeding, the KUBARK representatives would like to be sure that certain basic principles governing the meeting were mutually agreed to. These principles were that (a) the discussions would be on a strictly service level, (b) knowledge of them would be restricted to their respective services and governments and would be kept secret from all other services and/or governments and (c) any agreements which might be reached at this conference would be subject to confirmation by KUBARK and FPBERM headquarters.

15. [] next expressed the view that the two services had mutual interests in Albania for several reasons, among which might be mentioned the following:

a. Albania under its present government is an outpost of Soviet imperialism and can serve as a base of hostile activities against the friendly and free countries which, together with the United States, are attempting to build a firm front against Soviet and Soviet-satellite aggression.

b. Albania occupies such a position, both geographically and politically, that any change in the status quo may affect and complicate relations among her neighbors.

c. The United States and Yugoslavia are mutually interested in and concerned with the victims of Soviet imperialism; KUBARK agrees with Marshal Tito's recent statement to the effect that Albania should be independent and free.

d. Both KUBARK and FPBERM know that the other service is engaged in activities relating to Albania.

16. [] hereupon expressed the hope that this meeting would lead to the development of a relationship between KUBARK and FPBERM which would lead to the attainment of certain things advantageous to each service, more specifically:

a. Better comprehension of the complex situation inside Albania;

b. A thorough analysis of all the factors which influence the area or have a bearing on it, primarily external factors;

c. A determination of areas of mutual interest;

d. The establishment of relations leading to a more effective exchange of information of all kinds, and eventually to a coordination of effort to attain such ends as might be mutually desirable.

17. In conclusion [] stated that both FPBERM and KUBARK possessed certain important and effective assets in their spheres of activity relating to Albania, and that through coordination and possibly eventual collaboration the two services could make more rapid progress in the future if such was deemed desirable.

18. At that point [] proposed a review and discussion of the agenda to assure that it was fully understood by both sides. This was done and it was agreed to proceed with the agenda as submitted by the

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FPBERM representatives. At this point Mr. B. stressed that the discussions would be on the service level only.

KUBARK Estimate of the Situation in Albania

19. With that it was agreed to pass to Point I of the agenda, a general appraisal of the present situation in Albania, with conclusions. [] presented the KUBARK general evaluation, as set forth below:

a. In Albania there is very widespread dissatisfaction with the present regime among the general public, but the strict controls and severe repressive measures of the police state, based on a widespread informer system, have been more than adequate thus far to prevent the development of a well enough organized or sufficiently powerful opposition movement to seize control. During the past year resistance activity has increased, and rumors of plans to overthrow the Hoxha regime have circulated within the country. A resultant loss of confidence in the long-term prospects of the regime and an increased sense of personal insecurity appear to have developed even in official government circles. This frame of mind is encouraged by the rivalry between Hoxha and Shehu, a generally accepted fact which can hardly fail to have its effect upon not only senior officials of the government and the party but upon the rank and file as well, thus tending to weaken the government structure and the party organization. Further, there is considerable disaffection among the armed forces, whose loyalty to the Hoxha regime in the event of any action to overthrow it is estimated as being half-hearted at best. Even in the Sigurimi, which in the past has been regarded as the most loyal support of the government, there are known to be elements willing to work actively to accomplish the downfall of the Hoxha regime.

b. Despite the fact that Albania is an economic liability and a militarily indefensible outpost, there can be little doubt that the USSR desires to keep Albania within the Soviet bloc indefinitely, for a variety of reasons of a strategical and psychological/political nature. It appears certain that, without continued Soviet economic, political and military support, the Hoxha regime would speedily collapse. In this connection there are some indications, however, that the Soviet Union is not prepared to go all-out to maintain the present regime, especially if her doing so would appear to entail grave threats of a third world war in the near future.

c. No single group within or without Albania is strong enough of itself to command the support of a majority of the Albanian people, nor is any such group likely to arise in the foreseeable future, given the relatively primitive political development of the Albanian people and their history of loyalty to tribal or other leaders on an individual and usually local basis. Under the circumstances - while admittedly it does not include all the numerous and frequently incompatible elements of existing Albanian political parties or groupings - the National Committee for a Free Albania, embodying in a single organization those parties with the largest combined following both inside and outside Albania, is a factor of capital importance in any discussion of the future of Albania.

d. In an overall review of the Albanian situation it is impossible either to ignore or to divorce the natural and legitimate interests of immediately adjacent countries - Yugoslavia, Greece and Italy.

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e. In conclusion, in the light of such evidence as is today available, it is felt that:

(1) The Soviet Union intends to maintain Albania as a Soviet satellite as long as possible, and to provide such support as appears necessary to accomplish this end short of provoking a third world war;

(2) Given continued Soviet support, the Hoxha regime is today sufficiently strong to assure the maintenance of the present government in Albania; and.

(3) The opposition to the Hoxha regime is not sufficiently strong or cohesive to assure the success of a spontaneous internal revolution.

20. After [] had presented the above estimate of the situation in Albania several questions were asked by the FPBERM representatives as indicated below:

- Mr. B.: "You have reviewed the weak points of the regime - what are the strong points?" (This question was left for FPBERM to answer later.)
- Mr. C.: "In case the Soviet Union should discontinue its support of the Hoxha regime, how would it collapse?" (Discussion of this question was deferred until later in the conference.)
- Mr. S.: "How strong is the opposition in Albania?" (In reply to this last question [] estimated that 85% of the people in Albania were in opposition to the present regime but stated that they are completely disorganized and able to carry out only sporadic acts of resistance, partly because of the widespread informer system and partly because of the very bad economic situation which makes it necessary for a large part of the population to bend all its efforts to the problem of merely staying alive.)
- Mr. C.: "Could the Hoxha regime be overthrown without organized opposition?" (This question was answered in the negative.)
- Mr. S.: "If such a large part of the population is in opposition to the Hoxha regime, why have all parachuted agents been picked up?" (To this question [] replied that some parachuted agents had been picked up but that KUBARK was by no means prepared to admit that all of them had been picked up.)
- Mr. C.: "According to your general estimate, resistance has increased in 1952 - why do you think so?" [] replied that this estimate was based upon the increased tendency on the part of persons in government circles to vacillate, the greater willingness on the part of the people to assist agents, and an increased number of reports of sporadic acts of resistance.)

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Mr. S.: "Do the constituent parties of the National Committee for a Free Albania, all of which have been formed since World War II, have adherents in Albania?" (To this question RIVETT replied in the affirmative and MAURY pointed out that not all Albanian parties represented in the National Committee for a Free Albania had been formed after World War II, calling attention to the fact that the Balli Kombetar actually antedated the Albanian Workers (Communist) Party.)

FPBERM Estimate of the Situation in Albania

21. At this point Mr. S. presented a lengthy FPBERM estimate of the situation which continued from 1730 hours to 2000 hours. He prefaced his remarks by stating that the FPBERM representatives considered the meeting with the KUBARK representatives to be a serious one, that the FPBERM representatives had prepared seriously for it, and that they hoped that definite conclusions would be reached. The FPBERM estimate of the situation in Albania, as set forth in the following paragraphs, was introduced by certain prefatory remarks.

Introduction

a. Because of the physical location of Albania and the Albanian minority residing in Yugoslavia, the Yugoslavs are in a special position to study and to know this people. In Albania a primitive and patriarchal system obtains. The very close ties which the Communist Party of Yugoslavia has had with the progressive movement in Albania during the past fifteen years enables the Yugoslavs to have a very good comprehension of the Albanian Communist Party, which must be regarded as a decisive factor in any question regarding the Albanian people. As a result of these close ties, the Yugoslavs possess an intimate knowledge not only of Albanian Communist leaders but also of Albanian party members on the middle and lower echelons. Yugoslav understanding of the Albanian situation is based not only on reports coming out of Albania but also on years of close collaboration which permits the Yugoslavs to understand individual phenomena within the Albanian Communist Party. The Yugoslav attitude toward Albania is based on these factors.

b. The fact that many Yugoslavs fought in Albania during World War II gives them an intimate knowledge of the local terrain and conditions, and the Yugoslavs have no need to rely upon information obtained from Albanian refugees. The Yugoslavs are therefore freed from tendentious information, especially that coming from emigre groups or individuals - such information is particularly characteristic of the Albanian emigration. This factor should be kept in mind in examining the Yugoslav position with reference to Albania.

c. If we consider the situation of Albania separate from that of the other satellites, we shall be making a mistake, since many points are not peculiar to Albania alone.

d. The FPBERM estimate will be presented in two parts, first the weak points and then the strong points of the regime. This estimate of the situation will refer to the Hoxha regime, although General Mehmet Shehu is the more important figure.

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22. Mr. S. then presented the weak points of the Hoxha regime as seen by FPBERM.

Weak Points of the Hoxha Regime

a. The national independence and integrity of Albania are closely linked with Yugoslavia, by which Albania has never been threatened. The Albanians are very proud and sensitive with respect to their national independence. Their entire history is one of resistance. With them national independence comes first and economic independence is only of secondary importance, as witnessed by Albanian resistance to the Italian occupation when, although the economic level of the country was raised, the Albanians resisted with great vigor because their independence had been taken from them. Yugoslavia has always desired the friendship and independence of Albania. Yugoslavia has always maintained a policy of friendship with all her Balkan neighbors, contrary to the colonial policy followed by the great powers. As evidences of Yugoslavia's friendship for Albania may be cited the assistance given the Albanians in their struggle against Turkish domination, the asylum given Zog in Yugoslavia, and the assistance rendered Albania by Yugoslavia during and after World War II.

b. Every power which has been interested in occupying Albania has attempted to destroy the friendly relations existing between Albania and Yugoslavia and has attempted to isolate Albania, as shown first in the case of Italy and now in the case of Russia. The same situation applies with reference to Bulgaria. After the establishment of the independence of Albania, Yugoslavia was the only neighboring country which did not attempt to control it. Yugoslavia has never attempted to control any other neighboring country. This policy of the Yugoslavs has left a deep impression on the Albanian people, and their faith, even among those who are anti-Communist, is without reservation. That the activity of Albanian emigre groups in the West became possible only after the break between Yugoslavia and the Cominform is proof of this. The friendship of Yugoslavia is considered by the Albanians as a guarantee of their freedom. It is the Yugoslav conclusion that the basic weakness of the Hoxha regime is the direct result of the break in continuity of the friendship between the Albanian and Yugoslav governments. The same situation is also true to a certain extent in the case of Bulgaria.

c. The second weakness of the Hoxha regime arises out of the Soviet occupation of Albania. The Soviets have seized the whole economic, political and cultural life of the country and have taken complete direction of the Albanian armed forces and security forces - this must be especially stressed. The first thing the Soviets did was to settle accounts with all patriotic elements in the country, liquidating high party and government officials. The victims of this activity were the chief defenders of Albanian independence and constituted the principal obstacles to the complete subjugation of Albania to the USSR. As evidence of this we note that the only survivor of the original Central Committee of the Albanian Communist Party is Enver Hoxha.

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d. The real ruler of Albania is Mehmet Shehu, who enjoys the complete confidence of the Soviets, holds key party, government and army positions, and has conducted a purge of all Albanian government agencies. The elevation of Shehu to this strong position is a Soviet tactic which is seen not only in Albania but in all satellite countries, where the Soviets have set up rival cliques to form a balance of power so that they may blackmail one group with another and thus ensure their own complete control of the party.

e. The above is true not only of Albania but of all satellite parties. Bulgaria is especially interesting in this respect, since in that country there was a national liberation movement. Thus there were two groups in Bulgaria, one from the national liberation movement, and the other coming from the USSR. Now the only survivor of the resistance fighters is Anton Yugov, who was on the point of being liquidated but who is now being built up as a counterbalance to Chervenkov. A similar situation obtains in Hungary, Slovakia and Poland. This is a standard Soviet tactic to maintain friction for purposes of control. It is thus possible to explain all errors by blaming them on an individual who is in the process of liquidation.

f. Although the Soviets made no contribution to the liberation of Albania they now take credit for it; this offends the Albanians, who know it is not true. There is a similar reaction in Hungary, Slovakia and especially in Poland.

g. Any criticism of Soviet policy is paid for with one's head. A good example of this is the case of Niazi Islami, who at one plenum of the Albanian Communist Party Central Committee complained that repainted, used trucks had been sent by the Soviets to Albania as new trucks; after the meeting was over, Islami was arrested and shot by Shehu.

h. After the Yugoslav-Cominform break, Albania again lost her independence. The same is true of Bulgaria.

i. The Soviets hold under their control not only key positions in the government, army and police but also in the counties and districts and in small economic enterprises. Russification in Albania has reached the point where anything not serving Soviet ends is regarded as treason. Nevertheless, the Soviet occupation and its effects are of secondary importance i.e., less important than the break between Yugoslavia and Albania.

j. One of the serious features at the present time is the total isolation of Albania from outside influences. In order to diminish the bad effects of this isolation the Soviets employ all means to persuade the Albanians that the Soviets are the sole guarantors of Albanian integrity and freedom. Soviet propaganda stresses the dangers from the surrounding areas, especially from Yugoslavia, and creates fear within the country. However, in contrast to the other satellite countries, Albania does not have any treaty or agreement with the USSR. The Albanian people blame this on the Hoxha regime because it refused the only treaty which was offered to Albania - by Yugoslavia. However, even if the Soviets gave any

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guarantees, it would not be in the Albanian tradition to attach themselves to the USSR, in this case in contrast to Bulgaria; in these matters traditional feelings play a role as, for example, does the traditional anti-Russian feeling in Rumania.

k. The isolation in which Albania now finds herself has placed her in an unenviable position because no one respects her sovereignty and she is unable to defend it alone.

l. A third weakness of the Hoxha regime is the Soviet Union's economic exploitation of the country. The Soviets exploit those resources (oil, chrome, copper, meat, etc.) which they need, exporting these items and importing some machinery (which is mostly used) and a small quantity of food. The Soviets completely control Albanian foreign trade.

m. A similar situation obtains in the case of other satellites, where the Soviets have created joint companies, their contribution to such companies consisting of German, Italian, Rumanian, Hungarian and other foreign capital in the particular country in question. However, this situation does not apply in Albania where there never have been any considerable foreign assets; Albania has therefore been obliged to contribute agricultural products which, in turn, has provoked resistance on the part of the peasants. It is interesting to note in this connection that, despite drastic measures imposed on the peasants, they have not offered greater resistance, whereas in Bulgaria there have been local revolts which have forced the authorities to change their policies locally, as was true in the case of the revolt in the Vidin-Kula area last year (1952), when 400 Bulgarian peasants crossed over into Yugoslavia.

n. In 1944-1948 Albania was on the road to economic and political independence as a result of her friendship with Yugoslavia, but with the Yugoslav-Cominform break she became a poor, small satellite and was consequently obliged to be relegated to a secondary position plans designed to benefit the Albanian economy. The Soviets are forcing the exploitation of oil and chrome without making any compensating investment and thus are continuing the exploitation which the Albanians suffered at the hands of the Italians and Germans. It should be noted that the Soviets and Albanians have completed only those economic projects which were initiated with Yugoslav assistance.

o. The Soviet policy aimed at preventing economic independence is followed in all satellite countries. In Bulgaria, for example, they have stopped all large-scale electrical and heavy industry installations. In Hungary and Rumania, where there was already a certain amount of heavy industry, the Soviets have taken complete control through their joint companies, which require that Soviet needs be satisfied rather than that goods be produced to raise the standard of living in those countries. Since all the satellite countries have planned economies, the joint companies get preferred treatment and enjoy a privileged position, obtaining all needed raw materials, which others are unable to get.

p. Another factor aggravating the economic position of Albania is the maintaining of a strong army (containing the most productive element of the population), which entails a heavy expense.

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q. Even though the factors mentioned above are not of primary importance, they nevertheless weaken the position of the Hoxha regime.

r. Another weakness in the regime is the antagonism between the north and the south. The National Liberation Movement in Albania made great strides toward elimination of this antagonism, upon which pre-World War II regimes supported themselves, especially Zog and foreign occupiers. Until the Cominform Resolution, both the north and the south enjoyed equal representation in the Albanian government, but this situation has since changed to the detriment of the interests of the north. This constitutes another factor which weakens the Hoxha regime.

s. The Albanian Workers (Communist) Party is the most influential social organization in Albania and constitutes a basic factor in the Hoxha regime. In all satellite states the most significant single factor is the Communist Party. The Albanian Communist Party is a young party which was developed in the course of the war of liberation, something which is not true in the case of other satellite countries. This is advantageous for the Albanian party, which was formed through the coalescence of several groups with progressive ideas. It is important to note that before World War II there never existed in Albania any political party with a clearly defined program and traditions. The formation of parties in Albania otherwise has been attempted through tying them to individuals, and not binding them with specific programs. For example, the sole program of the Legality Party was the maintenance of Zog on the throne. The situation was entirely different in other satellite countries, where traditional parties exercised influence and enjoyed a following, especially the peasant parties like that of Maniu in Rumania and the peasant party in Bulgaria. Before World War II these parties had a decisive influence upon the peasant population. However, the Bulgarian Communist Party did not have a close connection with the peasant party, which explains the fact that Nikola Petkov had more than 100 deputies in the Bulgarian Parliament even after the war. A similar situation obtained in Rumania and Hungary, where it took the coming of the Soviet army to make the peasants conscious of the influence of the Communist Party. In Hungary and Rumania the Communist Parties have only recently taken over full control, which demonstrates that the Communist Parties had to take into consideration the strength of the other parties, something which was not true in the case of Albania.

t. The first party with a definite political program in Albania was the Albanian Workers Party. Before the Cominform Resolution, the Albanian party tried to purge itself of individuals who attempted to bind the party to themselves as individuals. (This tendency to tie parties in with individual leaders represents a basic weakness in all Albanian parties.)

u. The Yugoslav Communist Party aided the Albanian Communist Party in the consolidation of the party management. With the aid of the Yugoslav Communist Party the Albanian Communist Party created its program and then struggled for it, for the freedom of Albania, and for the advancement of the people. The Soviets were dissatisfied with this development because a pure and united party cannot

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become a tool of the Russians, as has been demonstrated by Yugoslavia. The sort of party desired by the Soviets was one in which rival cliques could be maintained in order to secure Soviet domination. Soviet Minister Chuvakhin profited by Hoxha's weaknesses and pushed him to eliminate all individuals constituting obstacles in the party and at the same time brought into prominence Mehmet Shehu who, because of his partisan attitude and interests, had been excluded from the Central Committee of the party and who was only a third or fourth-rate personality at the time of the Cominform Resolution.

v. In a plenum of the Central Committee before the elimination of Koci Xoxe, Hoxha was obliged by Chuvakhin to bring in Mehmet Shehu, Liri Belishova, Fadil Pacrani and Bedri Spahiu, who had earlier been excluded from the Central Committee upon the initiative of Koci Xoxe. At this time they were taken into the Central Committee to assure the elimination of Xoxe, Pandi Kristo, Kristo Themelko and others. Accordingly, accusations were made against Xoxe and others at this plenum on the ground that they were leaders in Albanian cooperation with Yugoslavia. The absurdity of these charges may be seen in the fact that Hoxha himself had been the bearer of thanks to Yugoslavia for aid given by it to Albania.

w. After the First Congress of the Albanian Workers Party (November 1948) the purge of the party continued. Everyone who thought with his own head and felt the incorrectness of this line and was unwilling to listen to Chuvakhin was liquidated. In three large purges of the party a total of thirty-three members of the Central Committee were expelled, that is to say, the equivalent of the entire present strength of the Albanian Communist Party Central Committee. Among the most important of those who were liquidated were Xoxe, Pandi Kristo, Nesti Kerenxhiu, Kristo Themelko, Vango Mitrogjorgji, and Vasko Koleci. A large number of people were also liquidated from the middle and lower echelons of the party.

x. In a plenum of the Central Committee held in February 1950, another large-scale purge was initiated, this one including such figures as Niazi Islami, Abedin Shehu (who had originated the struggle for liberation in the Luma area), Nexhip Vincani, Shyqri Kellezi and Gjin Marku (who had been one of the most popular partisan leaders). Islami was killed, as noted in paragraph 22, g, above. Abedin Shehu was expelled because he described the Soviet Union as being far off, Albania small, and Soviet aid negligible.

y. In March 1951 a third purge took place. Tuk Jakova, who was criticized for his errors at this time and would normally have been expelled, remained in the Central Committee as one of Hoxha's personal followers. This is another manifestation of the Soviet policy to strengthen Hoxha in case Mehmet Shehu should become too strong. This purge continued and at the time of the Second Party Congress several members were excluded, including Kahraman Ylli and Spiro Pano. It is interesting to note that at this congress Bedri Spahiu, who had been a member of the Politburo and served as secretary of the Central Committee, was demoted and made a simple member of the party despite the fact that he had been brought into a position of prominence at the same time as Mehmet Shehu.

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December 1, 1952 issue of Review of International Affairs (Belgrade) gave following table on arrival of Albanian refugees in Yugoslavia from July 1, 1948 to September 30, 1952:

<u>1948</u>	<u>1949</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1951</u>	<u>1952</u>
775	699	323	652	199 - 2648

State Intelligence Report No. 6204, Frontier Controls of the USSR and Soviet European Satellites, March 3, 1953.

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z. The above situation in the party cannot fail to have a weakening effect upon the masses of Albanian Communist Party members, especially since there are very few of them who have been in the USSR, most of them having come up in the party in Albania.

aa. Another weakness of the Hoxha regime, and one against which it is conducting a determined fight, is the Albanian emigration in Yugoslavia and the organization which represents it. In Yugoslavia there are approximately 5000 Albanian emigres of both sexes and of all ages. This large number of persons has fled to Yugoslavia because of the confidence which Albanians feel in that country. In addition to the traditional friendship between the two countries, they know that they can count on the hospitality and support of Yugoslavia, which has always accepted Albanian emigres.

bb. The Albanian emigration is the first group of emigres in Yugoslavia to be organized, and it is organized in a single and united body known as the Union of Albanian Emigres in Yugoslavia hereafter referred to as the Prizren Committee. This organization contains all emigres who agree with the program of the organization, regardless of their religious, political or tribal loyalties. It is not a coalition but a single, united group.

cc. The program of the organization consists of four points:

(1) The struggle against Hoxha and his clique and against the economic and political subjugation of Albania by the USSR.

(2) The struggle against foreign occupational tendencies in Albania and against all those who would sell Albania to foreigners.

(3) Efforts to unite all forces in Albania and in the Albanian emigration in support of an independent and indivisible Albanian republic.

(4) Friendship with all countries which respect the independence of Albania and especially with Yugoslavia, which has always been a sincere friend of the Albanian people.

dd. The Albanian emigration in Yugoslavia, in addition to the traditional ties between the two countries, is also bound by many ties of kinship and friendship.

ee. All the above factors represent a serious threat to the Hoxha regime, since the fight for freedom finds its basis in the program outlined above. Accordingly Hoxha and his propaganda have concentrated their efforts primarily against the Albanian emigration in Yugoslavia, describing it to the Albanian people as Enemy No. 1; they do this because they know, on the basis of historical experience, that the liberation of Albania can be expected from the Albanian emigration in Yugoslavia.

ff. One of the brightest pages in the history of the Albanian people is its struggle for liberation during World War II. For the Albanians, Yugoslavia served as the example and the initiator of the struggle. The Yugoslavs aided the Albanians materially and

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politically, supplied key personnel, and organized the Albanian Workers Party, the Albanian army and the People's Authority. The struggle for liberation is the pride of every Albanian patriot. After World War II Yugoslavia helped Albania in every way, and was ready to assist it to maintain its independence. The Greek Communist Party did not participate in this work.

gg. As a related side issue the Yugoslavs also played an important role in the liberation of Bulgaria. The first Bulgarian resistance units were formed in Yugoslavia and were aided by Yugoslav personnel. The most important figures in the Bulgarian resistance movement were closely connected with Yugoslavia.

hh. As for Rumania, if one may speak of resistance there at all, such resistance was to be found only in the section bordering on Yugoslavia. When Rumanian resistance units were formed, the Soviets gave orders for them not to fight on their home territory but only to prepare themselves to fight at the appropriate time. Gheorgiu-Dej had an opportunity to escape from prison but received instructions from the Soviets not to do so, but rather to hold himself in readiness to act at the proper time.

ii. Any attempts of the Hoxha regime to deny or belittle the Albanian resistance movement reacts against the government because it offends the pride of Albanian patriots.

23. Having completed his analysis of the weak points of the Hoxha regime, Mr. S. proceeded to enumerate and describe the respects in which his service considered that regime to be strong.

Strong Points of the Hoxha Regime

a. It is characteristic that the number of Communist Party members in the Albanian emigration in Yugoslavia (and elsewhere) is very small. This is the result of the strong ideological tie to the Communist revolution felt even by those who have been excluded from the party. The party is responsible for the liberation of the country and for economic and social reforms. In addition to the cadre of the party, Hoxha holds the army and police. When speaking of present day Albania it is necessary to differentiate between the Albanian Communist Party and those other Communist parties which did not wage a war of liberation - this fact is often overlooked. Despite purges in the party and despite the betrayal which it has suffered at the hands of the Hoxha regime, the party is still a factor which must be considered in Albanian affairs. Whereas former leaders and influential people in Albania either gave in to the Italians or fled the country, the Albanian Communist Party remained behind.

b. The broad masses in Albania are interested in the achievements accomplished by the revolution. Therefore, any frontal attack against the party itself is regarded by them as a threat to its achievements and to the national independence. It must be remembered that, in the agrarian reforms in Albania, over 70,000 peasant families received land - land which formerly belonged to the very people who are now in the Albanian emigration abroad. Knowing the psychology of the peasants, we must keep in mind that the peasants will fight

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for their land and for those who gave it to them. The slogan of the National Committee for a Free Albania, "Death to Communism," plus the fact that the people using that slogan are the ones who used to own the land which has since been distributed to the peasants, makes it obvious that the peasants will turn against the former land-owners to hang on to the land which they now possess.

c. Large-scale emigration from Albania following the Cominform Resolution, and intensive activity from outside Albania, have forced the Albanian authorities to take drastic and terroristic measures. Mass arrests, internment and various forms of punishment, the creation of concentration camps, the strengthening of police services, and large-scale arming of the civilian population and the creation of special police brigades are some examples of these measures, which have been personally supervised by Mehmet Shehu. This has had its effect on the Albanian masses and has resulted in a certain demoralization of the people. The consolidation of police force has produced the result that all activity against Hoxha now emanates from outside Albania. At the same time such activity is tied in with various intelligence services, a fact which has enabled the Hoxha regime to represent the emigre groups and their teams inside Albania as the bearers of foreign aggression and as threatening the independence and territorial integrity of Albania.

d. In the second phase of the consolidation carried out last year, the Albanian authorities began to release those imprisoned and interned, and in some cases have given them arms. Armed peasants, remaining loyal to the Albanian authorities, use their arms in the pursuit of teams infiltrated from outside Albania. The peasants give loyal support to the Hoxha regime and are used by it to protect the border zones. FPBERM knows definitely of at least 6000 armed peasants and considers their total number to be probably much greater.

e. Similar conditions obtain in Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria. For example, the Bulgarians have established a special security zone extending from the Yugoslav border as far as Sofia, a belt approximately 70 kilometers wide. Each village has its own organized units which carry out patrols. It is particularly significant that the regime can trust them to the point of issuing arms to them.

f. In his propaganda Hoxha keeps playing up his role in protecting the independence of Albania, and on that basis succeeds in mobilizing the country behind him, which he is able to do because efforts to overthrow his regime are connected with foreign activities and are pictured as carrying with them the threat of partitioning of Albania and a return to pre-World War II conditions.

g. With reference to the Kosmet, one of Hoxha's propaganda measures has been to accuse the Yugoslavs of attempting to destroy the Albanian minority in Yugoslavia. However, the Hoxha regime simultaneously makes claims against the Kosmet in full agreement with the policy of the Soviet Union. It is difficult to understand how this Soviet propaganda has found fertile ground among certain prominent leaders in the West who take a very similar line. In the National Committee for a Free Albania the representative of this line is Sajd Kryeziu, a member of the Executive Committee. This line is also to be found in all Radio Free Europe and Voice of Free Albania broadcasts and in other publicity. This line has not been limited to propaganda, but Kossovian teams of Xhafer Deva which have

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been infiltrated into Albania have promoted this hostile campaign. This policy may result in uniting the "greater Albania" chauvinists with Hoxha on the assumption that they could expect, with Soviet aid, to attach the Kosmet to Albania. Naturally this strengthens the position of the Hoxha regime. It also shows the relationship between internal and external problems relating to Albania. The "Death to Communism" slogan also applies to all those who have been purged from the party and implies that even those who have been expelled from it would be liquidated. Any such policy strengthens the Albanian Communist Party under Hoxha control.

h. In line with Soviet policy, Chuvakhin was replaced by Ambassador Levychkhin, whose arrival in Tirana initiated a new line. The Albanian authorities corrected themselves on many points, as is reflected in the policy with respect to the villagers, the relaxation of measures for the compulsory collection of agricultural products, and a diminishing of terrorism in the country, even though temporary.

i. Looking at the Hoxha regime in terms of Albanian historical perspective, it must be admitted that the Hoxha regime is the strongest which has ever been known in Albania. Although previous regimes have had to contend with frequent rebellions, since the Cominform Resolution there has not been a single revolt in Albania, whereas before the Cominform Resolution they had such cases as the Shkoder revolt in 1946. Apart from minor skirmishes, the regime has demonstrated that, with the armed forces, the police and armed peasants, it can successfully suppress all hostile manifestations.

j. Estimating the situation in the Albanian army, one must remember that the army was developed during the war of liberation, that its present command was also developed during that struggle, that it is ideologically closely tied to the party, and that the army is based on an element among whose achievements has been that of securing land for the peasants. At the present time Albania maintains an army quite out of proportion to its resources and one which, by comparison with the pre-World War II army, is 400 to 500 per cent larger.

k. According to FPBERM estimates the Albanian police force exceeds 6000 men without the special Sigurimi (Security) brigades. In addition there is the cadre of the Sigurimi. In this connection it should be noted that at the head of each district there is a senior Sigurimi officer who has been trained in the USSR. Members of the police are dedicated to the Albanian Communist Party and were developed during the struggle for national liberation.

l. If we take the ratio of all Albanian armed forces, including armed peasants, we arrive at a figure of one armed person for every 22 Albanians or one armed man for every 7 or 8 males capable of bearing arms. This is a factor which strengthens the Hoxha regime.

m. When we examine the character of Albanian refugees, we find a very small proportion of military personnel, and no commissioned officers. Refugees entering Yugoslavia from Rumania and Hungary, on the other hand, are almost exclusively military personnel. In Albania ideological ties keep the people together. In any case they can't flee abroad if the slogan is "Death to Communism." [The full slogan is, "Death to Communism - Freedom to Albania!"]

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n. As regards the question of internally organized forces to fight against the Hoxha regime, certain resistance forces did develop in the country during the first years after the Cominform Resolution, but errors in the political line brought about their destruction. Among these errors may be included differences with Hoxha on the part of certain members of the party. At the present time there is no organized resistance in Albania despite the fact that there is some opposition from the masses. All the struggle against the Hoxha regime is being waged from outside Albania. In view of the lack of organized support inside the country, we are necessarily faced with a lack of success.

o. The worst thing is that resistance forces have not come to the fore within the party. The infiltration of various teams into Albania charged with the responsibility of laying the groundwork for the overthrow of the Hoxha regime is the result of failure to know previous conditions in Albania; it is the fruit of emigre illusion, is not effective, and makes more difficult the struggle of the people inside the country. In addition, teams infiltrated into Albania send out fabricated and exaggerated reports, based on the desires of their emigre leaders, in the hope that they may thus assure their present and future position.

p. FPBERM considers the basic force in Albania to be the people itself, which will find a way to overthrow the present regime when political and other conditions have ripened. At that time it should be provided assistance to find its independence and democratic power.

KUBARK Discussion of the Most Important External Factors Concerning Albania

Estimate of the Position of the USSR

24. At this point (2215 hours on 16 February) [] introduced Point II of the agenda by briefly reviewing the position of the Soviet Union re Albania as it appears to KUBARK. He outlined the strategic value to the USSR of continuing to hold Albania as a base from which action could be launched against Greece or Yugoslavia and from which the entrance to the Adriatic Sea could be dominated, but described it as being militarily indefensible in the event of a major war. He mentioned the political and psychological value of continuing to maintain Albania as a Soviet satellite state and not suffering further losses in the Balkans following the break with Yugoslavia and the setback in Greece. [] also described Albania as being an economic drain for the USSR, which must provide it with supplies, equipment, and other material assistance. In conclusion, [] referred to the lack of any treaty between the USSR and Albania and expressed the view that the USSR would probably not let herself become involved in a third world war over Albania, although it was quite conceivable that she might reply to any attempt to overthrow the present regime in Albania by exerting pressure against Greece and/or Yugoslavia through the use of her Bulgarian satellite.

Position of Greece with Respect to Albania

25. [] then described the position of Greece with respect to Albania as being dictated first by military considerations and the natural Greek reluctance to have its western flank exposed to a Soviet satellite,

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especially in view of the painful experience she had acquired during the recent war with the Greek guerillas and the ever-present possibility that Albania might again be used as a base for launching aggressive action against Greece. [] also expressed the view that the general political situation in Greece would be improved as a result of increased confidence arising out of having in Albania, instead of a hostile nation and a puppet of Soviet imperialism, a friendly or at least a neutral country; any improvement in the political situation in Greece along these lines should help to speed up reconstruction in Greece and be in the general interest of the Balkan peninsula. [] then referred to the traditional interest of Greece in the so-called "northern Epirus" (southern Albania) but indicated that pressure in Greece for any adventure into Albania designed to incorporate this area into Greece had diminished. In this connection he called attention to the statement of Greek Premier Papagos (17 December 1952) to the new Greek Parliament when he said: "Particularly in the case of Albania the government wishes to emphasize that, in accordance with the policy resulting from the Peace Conference of 1946, it casts aside any violence and intends to use only international legal means to adjudicate the problem of northern Epirus, desiring to see a new Albania, free, independent, and democratic and collaborating in a friendly fashion with all of her neighbors." [] also mentioned that among the Greek people there are certain fears regarding Yugoslav intentions with respect to Albania, particularly that Yugoslavia might be considering steps to annex Albania. [] stated that it was not possible to be certain as to the nature of Greek reaction in the event of anarchy or civil war, but felt that Greece would be unlikely to take unilateral action, or make any move into Albania without prior consultation with other powers. In conclusion [] inquired if the FPBERM representatives would care to make any comment upon any agreement which might have been reached between Yugoslavia and Greece with respect to Albania (a) under normal circumstances and (b) in the event of war.

Position of Italy

26. [] touched briefly upon the position of Italy with regard to Albania, mentioning the traditional interest of Italy in that country, primarily for strategic reasons (in view of Albania's location at the mouth of the Adriatic), but also for economic and cultural reasons. [] stated that there was no evidence of any great political activity in Italy with regard to Albania but that Italy would undoubtedly prefer to have a free and independent Albania, friendly to Italy.

Position of Great Britain

27. [] observed that Great Britain has an interest in Albania as witnessed by its benevolent attitude toward the National Committee for a Free Albania. Without going into the matter more deeply, he suggested that the Yugoslavs were possibly in a better position to comment on the British attitude in view of the relatively recent visits of Messrs. Randolph Churchill and Anthony Eden to Belgrade.

FPBERM Review of the Attitudes of Other Countries

28. At 2325 hours Mr. S., in reply to [] reference to Yugoslav knowledge of the British position on Albania, replied that certain questions were not within the competence of the FPBERM officers to discuss.

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The Position of the USSR

29. Mr. S. stated that his service was not in a position to determine the real intentions of the USSR toward Albania. While not pretending to be a military strategist he agreed with [redacted] view that Albania was militarily indefensible. He considered that it was economically of some, although not very great, interest to Soviet Russia. He felt, however, that Albania might serve as a pretext of aggression in the Balkans generally, and specifically against Yugoslavia, because no matter what happened in Albania, Soviet propaganda would show that Yugoslavia was to blame.

30. From the political point of view Mr. S. felt that the Soviets regard Albania as a small socialist country which should be protected and that they consider this especially important in view of the setbacks which they have received elsewhere. Seen from that point of view, the Soviet position with regard to Albania is uncertain; while the USSR has no open responsibilities to Albania, the question of that country is of a special nature which might give the Soviets the opportunity to come to the defense of a country against which some aggression had been launched. On the pretext of defending a small socialist country against aggression, the USSR might attack Yugoslavia. However, FPBERM has no concrete information on which to base this analysis. Mr. S. felt that the USSR was probably unwilling to initiate hostilities but said that the question was complicated and that the USSR might take some form of counteraction against Yugoslavia.

31. With reference to the number and type of Soviet personnel in Albania, and reports that Bulgarians were also being sent to Albania, Mr. S. stated that in 1952 a certain number of Bulgarians entered Albania but that this number, as compared with the number of Soviet "instructors," was very small. //He said there was no indication of any attempt to replace Soviet personnel with Bulgarians.// A small number of Bulgarians are employed in civilian capacities and several Bulgarian officers are to be found at the Tirana airport; the presence of Bulgarian Air Force officers in Albania, he said, suggests that the Soviets are flying direct between Albania and Bulgaria instead of transiting via Belgrade. //He stated that there was no indication of any withdrawal of Soviet personnel and that it is too early to conclude that Bulgarians will replace the Soviets.//

32. Commenting upon the traditional enmity between the Bulgarians and Albanians, and mentioning that even during World War II there was a certain amount of fighting between them, Mr. S. observed that the "instructors" in the Albanian army appear to be exclusively Soviet. He stated that every infantry division and independent brigade has its Soviet "instructor".

33. Four or five such "instructors," he said, are also to be found in each of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Interior, Trade, Finance, Industry, Science and Culture, Justice and Transport and Construction. Every department of the General Staff has its Soviet "instructor", as does every construction job. At the Lenin Hydroelectric Works at Selita there are 50 Soviet engineers and technicians, eight in the Stalin Textile Combine, and three in the auto repair shops at Tirana. In the Tirana Hospital, he said, there are 11 Soviet doctors.

34. Advanced training of Albanian army and Sigurimi personnel is given in the USSR. FPBERM also has information on Soviet investments in certain branches of industry, especially where foreign commerce is

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involved. The investment of capital in such enterprises also entails the investment of specialists. Rather than to any approaching withdrawal of Soviet personnel, indications point in the other direction. Russian is compulsory in all schools in Albania.

Position of Italy

35. Mr. S. commented that it was certain that Italy had not given up its pretensions in Albania. Although the Italians are not currently active, Italy is the seat of the pro-Italian emigration, whose activities with respect to Albania are not being conducted without the knowledge and approval of the Italians. Since Italy has not stated that she has given up her aspirations with respect to Yugoslavia, it may be regarded as certain that she has not done so with respect to Albania. Italian statements regarding the independence of Albania are reminiscent of Count Ciano, who cynically made a public statement regarding the independence of Albania at the same time that he was making a private entry in his diary to the effect that Albania's independence was on the point of coming to an end. The entire Western press has printed reports that Prime Minister Alcide De Gasperi's trip to Greece included a discussion of Albania. In official exchanges with the Yugoslav government the Italians have stated that their activity with respect to Albania was directed by the United States.

Position of Great Britain

36. Regarding the British position in Albania, Mr. S. mentioned only a statement appearing in The Economist a year or so ago in which The Economist warned against any adventures in Albania.

The Greek Position

37. Mr. S. said that the only information that the Yugoslavs had with respect to the Greek position on Albania was that which had appeared in the Greek press before the formation of the Plastiras government. He agreed that the question of northern Epirus was no longer so burning as it had been. Mr. S. said that it could be assumed, in the light of the development of friendly relations between Greece and Yugoslavia, that some agreement on Albania would be reached; however that question was on a higher level than that of the FPBERM representatives.

38. In conclusion, Mr. S. described the Yugoslav position as being that Albania could not be partitioned.

39. After Mr. S. had given the above expose, the first session was recessed at 0015 hours on 17 February.

KUBARK Review of the Albanian Emigration

40. At 1015 hours on 17 February the conference was resumed with introducing the question of the Albanian emigration. By way of introduction he commented that there are still strong ties between the emigre leaders outside Albania and the Albanian people inside the country. Therefore, he said, the Albanian emigration cannot be considered an unimportant factor.

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The National Committee for a Free Albania

41. [] then proceeded to describe the organization and membership of the National Committee for a Free Albania, which was formed in Paris on 26 August 1949 under the chairmanship of Midhat Frasherri, Albanian elder statesman and the leader of the Balli Kombetar, who died on 3 October of the same year. At that time Hasan Dosti succeeded Frasherri as leader of the Balli Kombetar and as chairman of the NCFa.

42. [] stated that the NCFa was created to represent all Albanians who wished to establish a representative government and fundamental human liberties in Albania and that it included representatives of the principal Albanians in the social and political spheres. He stated that the Committee had pledged itself to encourage the brave Albanian people in their resistance to the cruel tyranny of the Hoxha regime and to organize Albanians abroad to give effective aid to this resistance. The Committee announced its intention to work for the complete restoration of the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the nation.

43. Then [] said that the NCFa had established its headquarters in New York, where it has worked closely with and under the auspices of the National Committee for Free Europe. The propaganda headquarters of the NCFa, he said, is in Rome, where are published a newspaper, Shqipëria, and an Albanian news bulletin, both of which are mailed to Albanians all over the world. At the time of the announcement of the formation of the NCFa both the United States government and the British government indicated their interest in the Committee and expressed their views to the Italian and French governments. Since that time both the British and U. S. governments have shown a benevolent interest in the NCFa.

44. Since its formation, [] said, the NCFa has worked to further its announced aims and to rally around it all Albanian emigres interested in freeing their country from the Hoxha regime. Through Radio Free Europe they now broadcast regularly to Albania, and they also have a clandestine radio station.

45. Major political parties not represented in the NCFa are the BKI (Bloku Kombetar Independent-National Independent Bloc), which was considered unacceptable because of the close collaboration of certain of its members with the Fascists during the Italian occupation, and the Second League of Prizren, which was excluded because the close collaboration of its leader, Xhafer Deva, with the Germans and the delicacy of the Kosovo question made it undesirable.

46. In conclusion [] declared that the NCFa does not have a hostile attitude to the Prizren Committee which has been organized by the Yugoslavs. He suggested that, in view of the location and the way in which the Prizren Committee was organized, the Yugoslavs would be in a much better position to discuss it than the KUBARK representatives.

Legalitet Party

47. [] described the Legalitet Party as being led by Abas Kupi, an Albanian military leader who enjoys great personal prestige and who is loyal to ex-King Zog. Although the program of the party calls for (a) the liberation of Albania and (b) the restoration of Zog to the throne, Zog

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himself has never officially acknowledged the Legalitet Party as his own. The membership of this party is estimated at approximately 500 persons in the Albanian emigration. It is considered by KUBARK, on the basis of reports from inside Albania and an analysis of interrogations of Albanian refugees, to have probably the largest following inside Albania. Abas Kupa is a member of the Executive Committee of the NCF, of which Nuci Kotta, another Legalitet leader, is also a member. In addition to Abas Kupa and Nuci Kotta, the Legalitet Party is represented in the General Committee of the NCF by three other representatives: Asllan Zejnel-Cenaj, Gani Tafilaj and Gaqi Gogo.

Balli Kombetar

48. [] stated that the Balli Kombetar had been organized as a resistance movement against the Italian occupation even before the Albanian Workers (Communist) Party was organized. He said that, contrary to the claim that the Albanian Communist Party was the only one with a definite program, the Balli Kombetar did have such a program, more or less socialist in nature, and in some respects not too different from that advocated by the Yugoslavs, particularly as regards agrarian reform. He mentioned that this party was constituted largely of individuals who were anti-Italian in sentiment. After the death of its original leader, Midhat Frasher, and the election of Hasan Dosti as president, the Balli Kombetar had split in late 1950 into the left-wing faction, which is represented in the NCF, and a more conservative faction under the leadership of Ali Klissura. The membership of the Balli Kombetar outside Albania is now estimated at approximately 300 persons. On the basis of information from inside Albania and the debriefing of Albanian refugees, it is believed to have the second largest following in Albania. In addition to the president of the NCF, Hasan Dosti, the Balli Kombetar is represented in the Executive Committee by Zef Pali and in the General Committee by Abas Ermenji, Vasil Andoni and Halil Maci.

The Agrarian Party

49. The third party to be described by [] was the Agrarian Party of Sajd Kryeziu, a small party organized in 1949 and now estimated to have about 100 followers in the Albanian emigration. Sajd Kryeziu himself is a member of the Executive Committee of the NCF, his party being represented in the General Committee by Ekrem Telhaj and Hysni Mulleti.

The Balli Kombetar Organization (BKO)

50. Among groups of some importance which are not represented in the NCF, [] mentioned first the BKO, or Balli Kombetar Organization, the faction which separated from the Balli Kombetar in late 1950. Under the leadership of Ali Klissura the BKO is now estimated to have approximately 250 members in the Albanian emigration.

The Bloku Kombetar Independent (BKI)

51. [] then mentioned the BKI, which he described as a party founded in 1940 by persons who belonged to the old feudal land-owning families in Albania. The BKI was described as being pro-Italian and having a considerable following among the Catholic element in north Albania, where the prestige of certain of its leaders, and especially of Prince Gjon Markagjoni, is considered to be very great. With some 150 members in the

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Albanian emigration, the BKI claims that between 300 and 400 Albanians in Yugoslavia have applied for membership in it. Although its president, Ismajl Verlaci, is considered influential in his own right, much of the influence of the BKI in Albania is credited to the prestige of the tribal Prince Markagjoni.

KEVA

52. [] referred briefly to KEVA (the Central Committee for the Struggle for Northern Epirus), a pro-Greek society under the leadership of Evangelos Kyrkos, which advocates the liberation of northern Epirus from Albania and its union with Greece. This society is said to have 3000 members in Greece, composed almost entirely of Greek-speaking Albanians of Greek extraction and belonging to the Greek Orthodox church, some of whom have lived in Greece for many years.

53. In rounding out the picture [] also made brief mention of Xhafer Deva and his Second League of Prizren (membership estimated at approximately 500), the independent members of the NCFA (Muharrem Bajraktari and Ihsan Toptani), and Albanian colonies in Boston, New York, Detroit, Paris, Marseilles, Toronto, Istanbul, Australia, Brazil and Venezuela.

Prizren Committee

54. [] described the Prizren Committee as apparently a non-party organization, admitting to membership everyone who wished to join. He expressed the view, however, that because of persistent tribal and traditional loyalties there was a basic weakness in the Committee resulting from the lack of leaders known and with a following in Albania. [] commented that old loyalties still play an important part in the country. He also observed that the Prizren Committee has maintained a hostile attitude to the NCFA, apparently following the line that the NCFA consists of reactionary groups willing to sell themselves to foreign powers.

Ex-King Zog

55. [] commented that Zog has remained aloof from the NCFA and from the Legalitet Party, probably in order to be able to play off one group against another. Nevertheless Zog appears to KUBARK to be the single most influential Albanian leaders. In addition to the support which he receives from the Legalitet Party, Zog enjoys the fear and respect of other Albanian groups. All information received from inside Albania suggests that he is still a figure enjoying widespread respect and that he could be very influential.

56. [] mentioned that, in conversation with [] General Rankovic had indicated that there had been contact between FPBERM and Zog, but had expressed the view that Zog did not enjoy much influence among the Albanian people. [] stated that KUBARK, on the other hand, had received sufficient information to the contrary to suggest that Zog continues to have influence in Albania and that he could be useful in the liberation of the country especially since (according to public pronouncements) he does not seek the re-establishment of his throne.

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FPBERM Comments on the KUBARK Discussion of the Most Important External Factors Concerning Albania

57. The above review of the Albanian parties and individuals having been completed at 1130 hours, Mr. S. initiated the comments by the FPBERM representatives. He said that the Yugoslavs agree that locally traditional and family loyalties continue to exist in Albania, but that the revolution has produced very important changes in that respect. This fact is well known to the Yugoslavs from their own experience, as in the case of Montenegro, where the same type of traditional influences existed but where they are no longer of any importance today. In Montenegro during World War II it frequently happened that fathers fought on one side and their sons on the other, as was true in Albania. In the course of the war of national liberation new heroes arose, as personalities, and proved much stronger than the influence of the local leaders. Because of the primitive character of the Albanian people, which places a great value on personal courage, such individuals attained a high degree of popularity. The fact that these people fought in the framework of the Albanian Communist Party shows that party personalities replaced local leaders in many areas. With reference to the presentation made by the KUBARK representatives, particularly, the influence of certain leaders and groups among the Albanian emigration in the West, it was not pointed out what effect these leaders have on the masses of the party now in power in Albania. The Yugoslavs do not belittle the popularity of anyone who has fought for the liberation of Albania but feel that special attention must be given to the party in power. It is known that there was dissatisfaction in Germany and people who opposed Hitler, but the real danger to Hitler came from people inside the party and only they were able to take successful action against him.

58. Mr. B. then commented that two important facts could be deduced from the American presentation: (a) there is no single organization embodying the entire Albanian emigration and (b) regardless of any efforts to weld the divergent elements of the emigration together, these elements have remained separate and are mutually antagonistic. Such, he said, is the Zog group, which sees the NCFE as completely compromised in Albania because of its adventurous attempts there in trying to develop a revolution as early as possible and thus provoking repressive measures and evoking the dissatisfaction of the peasants with the NCFE leaders. From their contact with representatives of Zog, FPBERM knows that the Zogists do not regard the NCFE as being united. The differences among the various groups in the NCFE are very deep seated, although the Committee is outwardly united. For example, one party is completely devoted to Zog whereas another party is completely opposed to him. The Zogists say that the Zogists in the Committee have no support in the country whatsoever. Further, NCFE members consider the BKI to be completely dead in Albania, but the BKI considers it has a strong influence, based on the traditional tribal position of its leaders.

59. Mr. B. observed that all Albanians agree that Fan Noli, although very old, has a well-known name and enjoys the respect of all Albanians regardless of their political affiliations. Even though Fan Noli is not capable of any activity, every Albanian thinks it would be very useful to have him on his side, since there are very few educated Albanians of Fan Noli's caliber. Mr. B. said that, although Fan Noli may accept money from the Soviets, that fact does not alter matters much. [Bishop Fan Noli of Boston, honorary president of the Albanian organization VATRA, still enjoys a strong following in the Albanian Orthodox Church in the U.S. despite his leftist tendencies and his replacement by Bishop Marko Lipa.]

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[At this point there was a short break during which Mr. B. mentioned to [] that it would have considerable effect in Albania if Fan Noli could be induced to make a statement against Hoxha.]

60. At this point Mr. C. took the floor and said that he would speak frankly, whether the others agreed or disagreed, on the basis of his own experience; he hoped that his views would not be very different from the appraisal of the situation made by the other FPBERM representatives.

61. Mr. C. agreed that traditions in Albania are still very important, but said that, if traditions were discussed, it could not be from only one viewpoint. In the Balkans, he said, there are many strong traditions in every country. Among the strongest of these traditions is the tie between Yugoslavia and Albania. In a given situation this tradition could be of prime significance. We should not forget this traditional tie any more than we should forget the traditional tie between the Bulgarians and the Russians after the treaty of St. Stephen, or the traditional ties between the Greeks and Great Britain, or the tradition of antagonism between Hungary and Russia. All traditions, he said, must be examined relatively and thoroughly. With respect to the traditional leaders in northern Albania he said it should be noted that the national liberation movement cleared the area of all traditional leaders without any help from the outside. Under different conditions, he felt, traditions may play a different role. For example, the NCFM once invited Ndue Gjonmarkaj to join the Committee as an individual, but he refused.

Mr. C.'s Analysis of the NCFM

62. Mr. C. desired to bring to the attention of the American representatives, as friends and allies in the struggle against Soviet Russia, certain matters he felt they should know. Although traditions in Albania are strong, in the NCFM there are currents which are stronger than mere antagonism. The NCFM is composed of four main groups: the Legalitet Party, in support of King Zog; the Balli Kombetar, tied in with the Green International; the Agrarian Party of Sajd Kryeziu; and the independent group of Muharrem Bajraktari. As an example of the currents which exist in the NCFM, it might be mentioned that ex-King Zog killed the eldest brother of Sajd Kryeziu, that during the entire reign of Zog the Kryeziu family lived in Yugoslavia under the protection of King Alexander (in the hope that they would eventually get the Albanian throne), and that there is a traditional enmity between Sajd Kryeziu and Zog which can never be reconciled.

63. During the reign of King Zog, Mr. C. continued, Muharrem Bajraktari was one of the most important anti-Zog emigres and one who lived longest abroad. Further, there is known to be hostility between Sajd Kryeziu and Hasan Dosti, leader of the Balli Kombetar and chairman of the NCFM.

64. The Yugoslavs know that every team infiltrated into Albania in the name of the NCFM is actually working in behalf of its own party, and each party is working for itself. Therefore, the NCFM inside Albania is presented by these teams as representing whatever party they happen to belong to, nothing more. In other words, teams going into Albania do not represent themselves as coming from the NCFM as such. As a matter of fact, the only places in Albania where the Albanians regard the NCFM as a united group are those places where no NCFM teams have thus far succeeded in penetrating.

*I should have
said Markaj's
name. Although the
father's name
is Markaj
it is my understanding
that the son's name
is Gjonmarkaj
my*

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65. Much of the information which the Americans have secured through the NCFA is false; for example, there have been instances where certain teams reported that they were enjoying considerable success in Albania but actually they were in contact only with their closest friends. The problem of false or exaggerated information of this kind represents a serious weakness in the NCFA.

66. It is necessary to differentiate, Mr. C. said, between Albania and the Kosmet. The latter area is distinctly Yugoslav and embraces some of the oldest Serbian traditions. There were no Albanians in the Kosmet before the Austro-Turkish wars of the 17th century. The Albanians who now live in the Kosmet are entirely different, culturally and economically and in every other way, from the Albanians of Albania. Culturally the Kosmet Albanians are much more advanced, economically they are more stable, and they enjoy more privileges, which have been given them by Yugoslavia. That is one reason why there has been a great movement from Albania into the Kosmet, and not in the other direction. This has always been true but is especially so at the present time.

67. Sajd Kryeziu, he said, has no political influence in Albania at all. Mr. C. knows the entire Kryeziu family well and was a close friend of Gani Beg Kryeziu. As for Sajd Kryeziu, his principal activity in the NCFA appears to have been not so much Albanian as anti-Yugoslav. He was educated by King Alexander of Yugoslavia and is in close touch with ex-King Peter, whom Mr. C. described as being in contact with the Soviet IS.

68. Xhafer Deva, Mr. C. asserted, is not an Albanian emigre at all but a Yugoslav who worked for the Germans and who has lost any influence he ever had. He was elevated to his position (as Albanian Minister of Interior during World War II) under the Germans as a German agent, and is a war criminal.

69. Speaking of the Balli Kombetar, Mr. C. recognized that it had been formed after the Italian occupation of Albania (in 1939), but said its activities and more serious manifestations did not develop until after the occupation of Yugoslavia in 1941. Its basic program was based upon political speculation within the system of the German axis, and its policies were primarily anti-Yugoslav and anti-Allies. What Vasil Andoni thought and what he did may be two different things, but in his actions he bears the closest resemblance to Mihailovic. When Italy surrendered, the Germans wanted peace in one Balkan country, and chose Albania. They created a pseudo government and declared Albania free and independent. They said that Albania was necessary for the movement of German troops but asserted that they would not interfere in internal Albanian affairs. This was clear to all of us at the time, because we were all allies. The Balli Kombetar accepted the German statement and invited all those who had until then been engaged in fighting the Germans to cease resisting them, on the ground that Albania was now free. If we speak of the Balli Kombetar as participating in the struggle against the Axis, we can refer only to the Italians, not to the Germans, as is demonstrated by documentary evidence in the form of written agreements [between the Balli Kombetar and the Germans]. As the KUBARK representatives themselves pointed out, the Balli Kombetar has broken up into different factions, each representing itself as having inherited the program and leadership of the party; however, none of these groups (of which there are actually five) are of any importance.

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70. One of the big mistakes made by the NCFa, according to Mr. C., is its slogan "Death to Communism!" This slogan alienates all the more progressive forces in the country, which could play an important role in the liberation of Albania, and aligns the NCFa with the undesirable elements expelled from Albania in 1944, thus playing into Hoxha's hands.

71. As for the BKI, Mr. C. agreed that its members have retained influence in northern Albania despite the fact that they compromised themselves during the occupation. Nevertheless they have followed more realistic policies than the NCFa. In this connection it should not be forgotten that traditional ties bind Prince Markagjoni and others in the BKI with Yugoslavia, where they have at various times taken refuge. Letters from members of the BKI to friends and relatives in the Prizren Committee indicate that the BKI has correctly understood the role which Yugoslavia must play in liberating Albania from Soviet slavery. FPBERM is in possession of information that KUBARK has had contact with the BKI.

72. Speaking of a realistic Albanian policy, Mr. C. desired to mention the policy of Zog before the occupation, while he was king of Albania. When Zog came to the throne he understood the importance of friendship with Yugoslavia, or at least the importance of friendly relations with Yugoslavia. Under him Albania had no anti-Yugoslav policy, nor was any irredentist policy followed by the Albanian government. It is felt that Zog followed a very realistic policy until 1944, since which time it has not undergone any noticeable change.

Mr. C.'s Comments on the Prizren Committee

73. As for the Prizren Committee, the Yugoslavs do not consider it capable at this time of liberating Albania nor, if it were, of giving the proper development to the country. However, the Prizren Committee can and should serve as a broad, popular front which can conduct the struggle for liberation from Russia and against any other foreign group which might seek to interfere in Albanian affairs. The Prizren Committee takes in all elements, including members of the BKI and independents. There is no participation in the Committee on a party basis, but only as a national liberation movement. The Prizren Committee does not conduct any activity against the NCFa or any other group, but only against those who may now or later advocate foreign intervention. The KUBARK feeling that the Prizren Committee contains no leaders or persons of prominence probably comes from biased sources speaking in their own narrow self-interest. In fact, the Prizren Committee contains several fairly prominent people such as Lutfi Spahiu, Nik Sokolli, Ndue Gjonmarkaj and others who have good reputations and excellent contacts with prominent figures both abroad and in the Albanian Communist Party inside the country.

74. To return to the great weakness of the NCFa, its slogan strikes against at least 100,000 Albanians who fought for the liberation of their country and who can continue to do so. It should not be forgotten that the Albanian minority in Yugoslavia has a tremendous effect inside Albania and constitutes an important factor in maintaining close ties with it. Through these people [i.e., the Albanian minority in Yugoslavia] it was possible for FPBERM to bring over to its side certain individuals close to Mehmet Shehu.

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75. All the above factors, Mr. C. said, should be considered in following a proper course for the overthrow of Hoxha and for mutual collaboration [with KUBARK].

Discussion and Questions

76. After an interruption for lunch the meeting resumed at 1410 hours on 17 February, with [] inquiring if the FPBERM representatives felt that, if the Soviets are unlikely to go to war for Albania, they might nevertheless use any activity in Albania as a pretext for declaring Yugoslavia to be an aggressor and for taking counter action in some form or other. (The reply to this was in the affirmative.)

77. Mr. B. then stated that, from the presentation made by the KUBARK representatives, the FPBERM representatives concluded that KUBARK regarded the NCFAs as the principal force for the overthrow of the Hoxha regime; he wished to know how the overthrow of the regime could be accomplished.

78. In reply [] stated that anything he said in this connection must be considered purely hypothetical. He went on to say that there had been no discussion by KUBARK with the NCFAs or its constituent parties or individuals relative to the date or exact plan for the liberation of Albania. He expressed the view that ways in which such an action could be undertaken should include a plan by which this action could assume the appearance of a spontaneous revolution inside the country in order to protect any of the outside helping countries from charges of aggression.

79. Mr. S. inquired if, in that case, neighboring countries would be used as a base for the overthrow of the Hoxha regime.

80. [] replied that, since such activity could not be based inside the country, it would have to receive support from neighboring countries. The NCFAs would serve as a rallying point to guide and encourage the Albanian people in their resistance, and would use all its propaganda resources for that purpose. Any other forces which could be used would be employed.

81. Mr. S. then inquired if the KUBARK representatives considered such action possible in peace-time, adding that FPBERM did not think so.

82. In response [] said that it might be possible in peace-time but that it would require prior preparation of the ground and coordination with neighboring countries so that action could be carried out swiftly and the USSR and the rest of the world presented with a fait accompli.

83. Mr. S. expressed the FPBERM opinion that, in peace-time, any such attempt would actually be of service to the Soviets because it would give them the opportunity to use this development, not to defend Albania but rather to pursue a hostile policy against Yugoslavia, possibly from other directions. Such a move, he felt would probably provoke an even stronger reaction by the Soviets in other areas, where they would tighten up their occupation even more and would immediately make a special effort to eliminate all such elements as might be likely to work for their own liberation at a later date. Mr. S. believed that the Soviets would not ignore action which might be taken against Albania in peace-time, but said there was no certainty as to how they would react.

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84. Mr. B. then stated that, having in mind the desirability of accomplishing the overthrow of the Hoxha regime, FPBERM believes the best method at present is to strengthen all opposition elements inside Albania in order to create an organized force within the country. External propaganda should be developed with this in mind, and all external factors should be aimed in that direction. Impatience, he said, might easily lead to catastrophic results, and emigres are characteristically impatient. Having the concept of quick action, the Albanian emigration is in a position to harm the attainment of our objectives.

85. Mr. S. mentioned that when Zog marched into Albania from Yugoslavia with three small, armed columns he had to contend with only 8000 armed men in the entire country, whereas today Albania is defended by an army of 45,000 men together with other armed forces.

86. Mr. B. observed that the question of Albania had been discussed without sufficient reference to the interests of the Albanians themselves. Any activity of this kind, he said, must involve civil war and a great deal of bloodshed. Such a situation in Albania would result in the settling of accounts between Communists and non-Communists, between the present land-holders and the former land-owners, between the north and the south, etc.

87. Mr. S. commented that an operation of this kind could readily be described as aggression from abroad, especially since the situation inside Albania at present is such that activity of this kind could not be easily and speedily completed.

88. [] then requested further clarification of the position which should be assigned to the Albanian Communist Party at this time in working toward the liberation of Albania.

89. In reply Mr. S. stated that there are in the Albanian Communist Party certain factors which strengthen the Hoxha regime and other factors which weaken it. One of the weaknesses, he said, is the division of the party into the Hoxha and Shehu factions. Through purges, some of the elements in the party who participated in the national liberation movement and who showed a disposition to oppose the Russians, such as Kristo Themelko, are now outside the party. People like Themelko or Tuk Jakova would represent a greater threat to the Hoxha regime, and a greater rallying point for the opposition, than the entire Albanian emigration.

90. Mr. C. then observed that, in order to succeed, the whole operation must stand up before the United Nations as a completely internal affair. If this can be obtained through the present regime, he said, it will look like the overthrow of the government from inside Albania, and not as a move intended to restore pre-war conditions.

91. Mr. S. continued by saying that we need, for allies inside Albania, people like Tuk Jakova; even the BKI, he said, admits that he would be more influential in their area than Prince Markagjoni himself. Many people who have been expelled from or demoted in the party represent a valuable asset which should be protected and developed, and a real weakness in the party which should be exploited. However, this weakness is not enough in itself to destroy the party. To repeat the strong points of the Hoxha regime, it was the party which liberated Albania; Hoxha still

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enjoys the credit despite the purges which have taken place, and the fact that those who have been purged do not attempt to escape from Albania shows that they are still closely attached to the party.

92. Mr. C. expressed the view that it was also a matter of training, illustrating this remark by saying that Communists do not consider the party line to be wrong but hold that the person who interprets the party line incorrectly is at fault.

93. Mr. S. commented that another strong point of the present regime is that 70,212 families owe their land to that regime, having been given land which formerly belonged to Verlaci, Zog, Toptani, Vrioni, and other feudal land-owners. Of these 70,212 families, 21,000 possessed no land whatsoever before the agrarian reforms introduced by the Albanian Communist Party.

94. Mr. C. offered as an example of the attitude of the peasants what happened in the USSR when the Germans came; he said that at first the peasants were fairly passive, but when the Germans attempted to reinstitute the old system of land ownership, the peasants turned against them.

95. Mr. S. then observed that, after World War II, Albania was in a very unenviable position as regards its independence. During this period the Albanian Communist Party proved a very competent defender of Albanian independence until the time of the Cominform Resolution in 1948. In the Albanian Communist Party there are very strong ideological and psychological factors. The directing cadre of Albania today, not only on the top level but also on the middle and lower echelons, came into power with the party and still feels that the basic ideology directing the party is correct. These persons are not in a position themselves to determine if they have deviated from the correct path. Those who have been expelled still remain Communists even though they are no longer in the party. They still feel a strong tie with the party because they do not wish to lose what they fought for, to the point where they are willing to sacrifice themselves if necessary. This explains the close connection which all party members feels with the Albanian Communist Party.

96. A similar situation obtained in Yugoslavia when Lavrentiev handed Tito a letter from the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party containing accusations against Djilas, Kidric and Rankovic, and Tito showed this letter to the Yugoslav Politburo; those accused were willing to abandon the political scene in the interest of general policy considerations, so strong was their ideological tie with the party.

97. Mr. B. then made the comment that admissions of guilt at Communist trials cannot be explained merely on the basis of torture. He felt that a very important factor in these confessions is the exploitation of the devotion of the party members to the party ideology to the point where they are made to believe that confessions by them are actually in the interest of the party. The same loyalty is to be observed all through the lower levels of the party. It is a great mistake to take the propaganda line that persons expelled from the Communist Party are fascist elements, because this very accusation ties them closer to the party.

98. With reference to Albania, we must take the stand that Hoxha and Company are only a clique, and do not represent the Albanian Communist Party. If those who have been purged could have access to the masses of the party, they would straighten the matter out in short order.

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99. Mr. S. then said that, in discussing Albania, it must be kept in mind that those in key positions are members of the party, which means that we must work through the party. The Albanian Communist Party differs from other satellite Communist Parties because it was not forced on the people by Russian tanks and bayonets but came into power through a great struggle and sacrifices, and owes its position to that fact.

100. At this point [] inquired if, in a politically undeveloped country like Albania, it was not possible that the party contained a good many opportunists, and that some of the ideological appeal of Communism had been lost because the party has become the tool of Hoxha and the Soviets.

101. To this Mr. S. replied that we must distinguish between Albania and other satellite countries like Hungary and Rumania, where there are many opportunists because those parties did not have the opportunity to test the party members in the struggle. The Albanian Communist Party, on the other hand, consists primarily of persons who have been tested in the struggle, while those admitted since World War II are constantly screened. Since most of those who have been admitted since World War II were selected from among Albanian peasants who received land as a result of agrarian reforms, they must be regarded as reliable. Of course, some opportunists are to be found everywhere, but they too are tied to the party by the NCFR slogan "Death to Communism!"

102. Mr. S. agreed that some of the ideological appeal of Communism has been lost but said that, since the people in Albania have access only to Albanian papers, they get only a slanted picture. Whatever is to have an ideological appeal to these people, he said, will have to be connected with the gains made during the revolution.

103. [] then asked if it was the view of FPBERM that the Albanian Communist Party must play an important role in the liberation of the country and that the best elements must penetrate into the Albanian government in order to be able to take the right action at the proper time.

104. In reply Mr. S. stated that the first step taken by the Soviets in Yugoslavia was an attempt to destroy the Yugoslav Communist Party. He explained the view that any attempt to destroy the party merely strengthens the Russians. Since it is extremely difficult to penetrate the regime, it is important to have people in a position to penetrate it; this may first require individuals who enjoy good relations with the Soviets and who thus can work their way into the Hoxha regime.

105. Observing that a return to pre-World War II conditions in Albania is inconceivable, [] asked if collaboration with the Albanian emigre groups is considered possible, or if the Yugoslavs consider the Albanian Communist Party as the only possible instrument for the liberation of the country.

106. Mr. S.'s reply to this question was that it is essential to work with all available forces. He explained that, since the KUBARK presentation did not refer to the Albanian Communist Party, the FPBERM representatives had felt it necessary to emphasize the importance of the party as a factor, and a factor working from inside the country.

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107. [] then said that he presumed that we should encourage the collaboration of all anti-Hoxha elements. (With this the [] representatives expressed themselves as being in full agreement.)

108. RIVETT'S next question was whether or not we could assume it would be desirable to secure some kind of coordination between the NCFA and the Prizren Committee, and possibly also with other groups, such as the BKI.

109. In answer, Mr. S. said that these organizations cannot be the creation of intelligence services and that they should themselves find a common ground for meeting and collaborating. He stated the FPBERM view that a broad union of refugees as exemplified by the Prizren Committee would have the most correct program and line and would be best suited for the people of Albania. The Yugoslavs would be very happy if the entire Albanian emigration would reach agreement, because the liberation of Albania is an Albanian problem; it is the Yugoslav view that Albanian emigration groups must themselves, without outside mediation, find means for getting together.

110. To this [] commented that he considered it would be unrealistic to assume that such groups as the Prizren Committee or NCFA are not subject to outside assistance, advice and influence. He suggested that it was not impossible that some of those present might be able to put them on the right road to collaboration, and felt it quite likely that both FPBERM and KUBARK might do something useful in that direction.

111. Mr. C. stated that the Yugoslavs not only provide the Prizren Committee with material assistance but also give it advice. He said the Yugoslavs were in full accord with the idea of collaboration between the Prizren Committee and the NCFA but that the NCFA had published certain articles in its newspaper indicating a suspicious attitude toward the Prizren Committee. As an example of the good will of the Yugoslavs toward the NCFA, he stated that certain NCFA teams had been allowed to enter Yugoslavia from Albania and then return to Albania and Greece. He commented that there had been no similar cases in the other direction, and mentioned one case where a Yugoslav agent team exfiltrated from Albania into Greece and was locked up, one member of the team escaping and returning to Yugoslavia to tell the story but the others still being under detention.

112. Mr. S. said that the fact of many ties of family and friendship between the Albanian emigres in Yugoslavia and the West is sufficient to establish a certain relationship between the Prizren Committee and other refugee groups. The Yugoslavs, he said, do not interfere with the development of such ties, neither pushing them nor preventing them, but regarding them as internal Albanian matters.

113. [] expressed the belief that one of the strongest points on which the Hoxha regime has to lean is the thesis that it alone protects Albanian sovereignty and territorial integrity. If the fears now instilled in the Albanian people with respect to the independence of the country could be dispelled, this would be a severe blow to Hoxha. [] wished to know if the Yugoslavs felt that some convincing gesture, such as a public declaration, would succeed in obviating or diminishing these fears.

114. Mr. S. responded that the Albanians know that the Yugoslavs have no territorial designs against Albania.

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115. [] pursued the subject by asking what reaction such a statement might be expected to have.

116. To this Mr. S. rejoined that Greece did not make any such statement until 1952. He said that DeGasperi had made some rather vague statement in this regard but that Albania's historical experience with Italy was not likely to prove very reassuring.

117. Mr. B. said there had been some talk about persuading Yugoslavia to make a joint statement with Italy. He expressed Yugoslav suspicion of Italian intrigue in this connection. In any case, he felt that such a statement would be without effect, since the Albanians do not trust the Italians. Further, he said, the Yugoslavs would not be inclined to associate themselves with the Italians in any such statement. He called attention to the fact that Yugoslavia was the first country to make a statement of this kind, and concluded that the Yugoslavs were very sensitive about questions of Albanian territorial integrity.

118. Mr. B. observed that two important points had been raised in statements made by the KUBARK representatives: (a) that the loyalty of the Albanian armed forces was half-hearted and (b) that the loyalty of the Sigurimi was also open to question and that certain members of the Sigurimi were willing to work actively to help in the overthrow of the Hoxha regime.

119. [] indicated that these statements were directly related to operational developments and consequently were not a subject for discussion.

120. Mr. B. was inclined to question the accuracy of this information. Previously he had mentioned that much information from emigre sources was exaggerated and that frequently it was attributable to wishful thinking. He said that FPBERM took this position on the basis of its own experience and excellent knowledge of the area and of local conditions derived from information received from Yugoslavs in Albania during and after World War II. He felt that FPBERM was better protected from being taken in by such reports. He said further that this contention was borne out by the experience FPBERM had had with Albanian agent teams which had entered Yugoslavia, and mentioned a team of Muharrem Bajraktari which, having been forced to take refuge in Yugoslavia, reported to Bajraktari that he enjoyed a great deal of support in their operational area and that everyone was eagerly awaiting his arrival there.

121. With reference to [] description of a meeting with Velebit, when Velebit had told him that in the event of a war Yugoslavia would immediately march into Albania to protect her rear, Mr. S. commented that everyone had the right to express his own personal opinion. In the light of their present relations, the United States and Yugoslavia are now accustomed to consult with one another on matters of much less importance than Velebit's statement regarding the occupation of Albania in the event of war. Mr. S. felt that if it was desirable to make a new declaration about the territorial integrity of Albania and related matters, this was a political question which should be decided by the appropriate persons.

122. Mr. S. added that, although Italy claims that Yugoslavia is the only country which desires the retention of the status quo in Albania, it should be clear from the present meeting that Yugoslavia is opposed to the Hoxha regime and in favor of its overthrow, but only when the international situation is right and internal conditions are favorable.

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123. Mr. C. commented that the best agent team KUBARK ever had in Albania was the one under the leadership of Alush Lleshanaku, liquidated in December 1950. He felt that KUBARK received false information through the NCFA, as in the case of the report made to Muharrem Bajraktari by the team referred to in paragraph 120 above. If the Yugoslavs depended on information from refugees and agent teams alone, they would conclude that Hoxha would fall within 24 hours!

124. To [] query as to FPBERM recommendations in view of their belief that a frontal propaganda attack against the Albanian Communist Party was inadvisable, Mr. S. replied that the first thing was to give recognition to the positive achievements of the Albanian Communist Party, distinguishing between the Hoxha regime and the rest of the party. He felt that it was a mistake to describe the 45,000 Albanian Communist Party members as thieves, fascists, or enemies of the people. He considered that the bulk of them were well-intentioned, and desired the best for their country in every way; if they are following a mistaken path, it is not the fault of the party as a whole but rather of the leading clique. Mr. S. felt that it was necessary to destroy the idea that Hoxha has a monopoly on the defense of Albanian independence, and he considered that Hoxha should be accused of being the main tool of Soviet enslavement. He stated that the independence and territorial integrity of Albania can be guaranteed by the positive achievements of the revolution. Furthermore, he said, Yugoslavia alone has declared that Italy has no rights of any kind in Albania. It is essential to separate the idea of the liquidation of the Hoxha regime from the idea of the restoration of the old social and economic system in Albania.

125. [] commented on the numerous references to the inappropriateness of the NCFA slogan of "Death to Communism - Freedom to Albania!", and asked what the Yugoslavs felt would be more appropriate as a rallying cry.

126. Mr. S. said that a slogan should be derived from the program of the organization, that the program of the NCFA should be studied and a suitable slogan devised on the basis of it.

127. Referring to a statement made previously by FPBERM to the effect that, through the Albanian minority in Yugoslavia, it had been possible to bring over from Albania people close to Shehu, [] asked if the Yugoslavs were able to elaborate on this point.

128. Mr. C. replied that these were people whom Shehu had recruited for operations against Yugoslavia.

Final Session

129. The final session of the meeting was begun at 1715 hours on 17 February with a discussion of Point III on the agenda (critical summary of the present exchange of information and mutual assistance). [] stated that it was difficult for the KUBARK representatives to give a critical analysis of information which had been exchanged to date, especially since the number of items which had been exchanged was relatively small. He expressed the view that both services could do better than they had done, and wished to suggest that a joint agreement be reached for a more complete exchange of all types of information. He suggested that one step would be to exchange questionnaires for refugee

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interrogations, KUBARK attempting to use the FPBERM questionnaire in interrogating such refugees as we might have access to, in the hope that the FPBERM representatives would do likewise. [] also suggested a more complete exchange of all kinds of positive and CE information, both internal and external.

130. At this point, Mr. B. stated that FPBERM was interested in Albanians in Germany because it felt that there must be among them a penetration agent who reported promptly to his superiors plans for contemplated parachute operations [This statement had obvious reference to a recent case involving a Yugoslav Consular official in Munich who was attempting to run an agent operation into the Albanian Guard Company and whose activities in an area of American responsibility had been called to the attention of FPBERM through]e reference to a penetration agent reporting on parachute operations was one of several made by the FPBERM representatives during the conference alleging that all KUBARK parachute operations had failed and indicating that the Albanian authorities had advance knowledge of dates and drop sites].

131. [] replied that our agents were not selected from groups like the Albanian Guard Company, because such groups had been found to be much too vulnerable.

132. Mr. S. made an ambiguous comment that FPBERM possesses some very interesting notes on that subject.

133. [] then requested FPBERM reaction as to the desirability and practicability of increasing the exchange of information between the two services.

134. Mr. S. replied that, so far as he knew, the basic principles for such an exchange had been previously agreed upon. In any case, he said, FPBERM agreed with the general proposal. He continued by saying that although the exchange of information between the two services had been going on for only a very short period of time, it had proved to be very slow. He felt that there should be an exchange of new and fresh information and that the development of an increased exchange of information should proceed on the basis of specific questions asked by the respective services. He stated that FPBERM does not employ a questionnaire because its interrogators know Albania and the situation there very well and consequently questionnaires are unnecessary. He agreed to the desirability of exchanging CE information, which he said would lighten the work load for both services. He stated that FPBERM had already received certain indications which could be very useful to KUBARK if the two services were to exchange information as proposed. These indications referred especially to parachute groups who dropped into alerted areas in Albania, which demonstrated advance knowledge on the part of the Albanian authorities of plans for their infiltration in that region. He stated that FPBERM also had information that members of agent teams had sometimes surrendered immediately upon entering Albania, thus showing that these teams had been penetrated. He observed that this became a very serious question if it were kept in mind that we were opposing not only Albanian intelligence but also that of the USSR and the entire Cominform apparatus. He concluded by saying that his service would like to give a brief evaluation of material which had been received from KUBARK to date.

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135. At this point Mr. C. criticized a lengthy KUBARK report on the organization of the Sigurimi, stating that the report was fairly detailed but that the information was old, dating back to 1949 or before, and that it did not fully agree with facts as of that date with respect to the headquarters and district organization of the Sigurimi. He suggested that if any KUBARK plans had been based on this information, they certainly would have been quite wrong. Since the date of this report, he said, there had been a complete reorganization of the Sigurimi through and through, so that the KUBARK report was quite out of date. He stated that Sigurimi officers are in charge of all police stations and local administrative bodies. He also called attention to the fact that, according to the KUBARK report, one out of every ten Albanians was used as an informer at the time of Koci Xoxe (1948) and that Shehu had increased the number of informers since that time, which would indicate that the first number must have been exaggerated. He also mentioned that the KUBARK report contained the indication that Kadri Hazbiu was disaffected with the regime, and commented that Hazbiu went to the Soviet Union in 1952 to study and had been promoted to the rank of Major General. With reference to a statement that there were some 2000 Yugoslav deserters in Albania, he asserted that there had never been more than 300. He described as quite wrong a statement in this report that Sigurimi officers did not enjoy arrest powers and said that, to the contrary, they were even able to execute people.

136. With reference to other reports received from KUBARK, Mr. C. said that information on highways and bridges failed to include even some which had been built during the Italian occupation, and showed only one new road. He stated that certain information on economic enterprises was erroneous in representing as first-rate enterprises some which were only third-rate, and he felt that more information on this subject was available in the press.

137. Mr. S. commented that information should be fresh and of such a character as to permit of analysis.

138. [] said that KUBARK recognized that these reports contained inadequacies and that it wished to do all possible to improve its reporting. He then explained the sort of questionnaire which he had in mind and described it in such a way as to eliminate the apparent confusion in the minds of the FPBERM representatives with something approaching more nearly our Army EEI's. It was also stated that there would be inevitable delays in our reports and that frequently they would also necessarily be fragmentary.

139. [] raised the question of the coordination of political and psychological warfare lines, such as the line which should be taken with reference to Albania.

140. Mr. S. countered with the statement that discussion of these matters belonged on another level and was not appropriate for this conference.

141. [] then inquired if the same reservation applied to the exchange of ideas as to the direction in which attempts should be made to influence Albanian refugee groups.

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142. Mr. S. replied that it did; however, he went on to say that such groups should be advised to get together on a joint program based primarily on the program which had been developed by the Prizren Committee and which the FPBERM representatives considered to be the best program for Albania and one which would be welcomed by all Albanian patriots.

143. [] inquired if FPBERM recommended that such Albanian emigre groups get together directly.

144. Mr. S. answered that this matter should certainly be handled as the emigres' own business. On this basis FPBERM had no objection to their getting together directly. However, they considered that the connection between intelligence organizations and individual emigre groups is harmful because in that case the connection generally stems from the interest of the intelligence services rather than from interests of the country involved. He concluded by saying that intelligence services could help but that they should not dominate.

145. With reference to the training and equipping of agents and an exchange of information in this regard, Mr. C. stated that information upon which the training and equipping of agents are based is drawn first of all from Albanian refugees, information obtained from them being supplemented by the experience of the service. Provocation and penetration are widespread, he said, and for this reason any activities on a mass basis cannot succeed, all operations having to be conducted very carefully.

146. Mr. C. mentioned one case where Mehmet Shehu had an agent whom the Albanian I.S. attempted to send into Greece through Yugoslavia. FPBERM got hold of him, handled him carefully and doubled him, but nevertheless he failed and was caught by the Albanian authorities even though he was close to Shehu.

147. The fact that Albanians are very talkative is also most important from the CE viewpoint. When anyone returns from a mission into Albania, at least 100 people know of that fact within a few days. The Albanian is a special kind of person and requires much study; the more gold he gets the less he works, and he is ready to deliver any amount of information, but it can't be depended upon.

148. Mr. C. observed that Albania itself is quite a special case, one important aspect of which is the relative lack of roads, all of which are closely controlled. Because of these and similar difficulties, technical assistance which KUBARK could provide would be very helpful, such as W/T equipment, radio telephones, rubber boats, and battery-powered boats. Mr. C. said that FPBERM was awaiting the arrival of a KUBARK technical expert, and hoped that he would be supplied with available technical equipment for demonstration purposes.

149. Mr. C. went on to say that it would be very useful to have some Albanian lek. Since Albania has no commercial relations with anyone it is difficult to get money out of the country. People inside are unable to sell money because they do not have it. Yugoslav agent teams use either Turkish gold liras or French Napoleons, in that order; small quantities of gold, perhaps two pieces a month, can be sold safely to the State bank, but any larger amount arouses suspicion. The use of medicines for exchange purposes is useless and even dangerous. Agents reported to come from KUBARK have a tendency to show their money and claim U. S. support

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and consequently they cannot remain in any one area for more than a couple weeks. It is important to know one Albanian law, that is, that everything goes and that nothing has to be according to law. Mr. C. described the Albanians as being capable of working for more than one service at the same time.

150. Commenting on the recruitment of agents, [] said that if they were taken from some well-established refugee colony their disappearance became a matter of immediate interest and speculation. He also mentioned that the Albanians are great letter-writers and have no conception of personal security, with the result that such things as their recruitment are promptly reported to their friends. This, he said, poses a special problem in finding the right people as agent recruits. [] spoke of the disadvantages of attempting to use large groups and said that KUBARK was much opposed to large-scale agent operations.

151. [] commented that on the previous day the Yugoslavs had mentioned the trials of alleged parachuted American agents. These instances, he said, had happened two years or more ago, adding that we had since acquired much useful experience. He also pointed out that the Yugoslavs (we trusted!) were more likely to learn of our failures than of our successes. He stated that the big problem of agents inside the country is to obtain the protection of their friends and to find means for existence. He said that food shortages were so severe that the local population, even if well disposed toward the agents, was unable to help for any length of time. He inquired if Yugoslavia's experience was similar in this respect.

152. Mr. C. replied that this is still a problem but that it is not so serious now as it was in 1951, when it was worst.

153. With reference to blind parachute drops, [] stated that losses were very heavy because the agents were frequently unable to determine their exact location quickly and, if they were not expected, often had difficulty in locating their friends.

154. Mr. S. said that he did not fully agree and that FPBERM had had cases where wounded agents had been sheltered by people who were completely unknown to them. He expressed the view that in the case of unsuccessful parachute operations the Albanian authorities had been alerted in advance through penetrations or leaks and that the agents fell into ambushes.

155. To this Mr. C. added that when agent teams from the West take refuge in Yugoslavia, the Albanian authorities continue searching for them until the agents have had time to communicate with their headquarters in Italy, at which time the Albanian authorities discontinue their search. This fact suggests a penetration of their headquarters in Italy, especially since such agents are kept quite isolated in Yugoslavia and FPBERM has not had the same experience with its own agents. Mr. C. expressed serious concern over the possibility of a penetration of the NCPA.

156. [] inquired if FPBERM had been successful in attempting to document agents to go to Albania and lead a normal life there.

157. Mr. C. replied that they had had little success along this line, and that this was a very risky business and not a method that FPBERM regarded as particularly promising. He said that communities in Albania were too small, even in Tirana, and that Albanians required special permits to travel, even by bus.

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158. [] then asked if FPBERM considered it feasible to recruit legal residents of Albania and maintain contact with them through illegal agents sent into the country from Yugoslavia.

159. Mr. S. replied that this was naturally the most profitable type of operation but that even here they had found the greatest problem was to get such a legal resident agent to keep his mouth shut. He felt that no one had been able to survive in such a position for more than six months, chiefly because of their own insecurity and of their excessive confidence in close relatives. He described an operation of this kind as being like a blasting cap with a fuse, the time until the explosion depending only upon the length of the fuse. He stated that sons were betrayed by their fathers and fathers by their sons and that the "besa" [Albanian personal loyalty oath] is losing force under the new system.

160. [] commented that most agent teams preferred to try to get along illegally, occasionally falling back on documents in case of need but not relying upon them over much.

161. Mr. S. said that documents had been used extensively during the German and Italian occupation of Albania but that this was not done so much any more.

162. [] stated his understanding that FPBERM was willing to exchange information and advice on Albanian documents.

163. Mr. S. said that FPBERM was ready to put all its document information at our disposal immediately. In this connection he commented that there is now a much higher proportion of literate people in the Sigurimi and that now every district head of the Sigurimi has completed a course in an intelligence school in Moscow.

164. [] expressed the readiness of KUBARK to do anything possible to assist in the case of any Yugoslav agent who might take refuge in Greece, within the limits of security imposed by our relationship with FPBERM. It was made clear to the Yugoslavs that the agent team they described as being under detention in Greece was not, so far as we knew (and contrary to the belief of FPBERM), in American hands. In this case the Yugoslavs felt that their improved relations with the Greeks would permit them to handle the case directly with the appropriate Greek service.

165. Mr. S. mentioned the case of one Mul Bajraktari who had been in Syria and had expressed the desire to go to Yugoslavia. However, he became ill and died in an Italian hospital after writing that he was actually being killed by the Italians. FPBERM suspects that one Resul Begovic is responsible, since Bajraktari had an operation and began to recover but died suddenly after Resul Begovic moved into the hospital.

166. [] reiterated the desire of KUBARK to be helpful in any way it could.

167. This session and the conference concluded with an expression by the FPBERM representatives of their complete agreement upon the desirability of a full exchange of positive, CE and operational information, advice and assistance, and a statement of their readiness to proceed on that basis.

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