

~~TOP SECRET~~
CONTROL
U. S. OFFICIALS ONLY

16 March 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR: DEPUTY DIRECTOR (PLANS)
SUBJECT: CIA-UDB Conference on Albania

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

1. Attached hereto for your information is a copy of the report on the conference held in Belgrade on 16-17 February 1953 between three representatives of the UDB and two CIA representatives, [] and the undersigned, on the subject of Albania.

2. The CIA representatives met with a very cordial reception. The conference, which was frank, was conducted in a friendly atmosphere. The UDB representatives, although participating under pseudonyms, were on a sufficiently high level and possessed enough knowledge of the Albanian question to make the conference well worthwhile.

3. The agenda included general estimates of the situation in Albania by both sides, a discussion of the most important external factors affecting Albania, and a review of the present exchange of information and mutual assistance.

4. The UDB described the weak points of the present Albanian government in the following order: (a) the isolation of Albania from Yugoslavia; (b) Albania's loss of independence to the USSR; (c) Soviet economic exploitation; (d) the economic burden resulting from the maintenance of a large army; (e) antagonism between the north and south; (f) the debilitating effect of party purges; (g) the Hoxha-Shehu struggle and (h) the Albanian emigration in Yugoslavia. As strong points of the present regime the UDB mentioned the following: (a) the strong ideological tie binding Communist Party members to the revolution; (b) the fact that the Party is responsible for the liberation of Albania and for economic and social reforms; (c) the agrarian reforms, in which over 70,000 families have been given land; (d) wide reaction to the "Death to Communism" part of the slogan of the National Committee for a Free Albania; (e) the demoralization of the people resulting from drastic repressive measures; (f) the lack of any organized resistance within the country; (g) the failure of resistance to develop within the Party; (h) the fact that all resistance activity in Albania is now mounted from abroad and tied in with foreign intelligence services, thus permitting it to be represented as foreign aggression and as constituting a threat to the independence and territorial integrity of Albania; (i) the close bond between the Albanian armed forces and the Party and (j) the loyalty of the Albanian peasants, who constitute a valuable auxiliary defense and security body.

*See in summary
List of
strong points
from
page 2*

DOWN GRADE PER
CLASSIFICATION REVIEW DIVISION
TOP SECRET

81235

Copy #1 of 6 Copies

~~TOP SECRET~~
CONTROL
U. S. OFFICIALS ONLY

-2-

5. The principal UDB conclusions are set forth below:

a. The Yugoslavs favor the overthrow of the Hoxha regime, but only when the international situation is right and internal conditions are favorable, neither of which is the case today.

b. The Yugoslavs do not believe it possible to bring off, in peace-time, a revolution sponsored and assisted from abroad. They fear that any such attempt might serve as a pretext for counteraction, in one form or another, against Yugoslavia. Even if the Soviets did not use this opportunity to pursue a hostile policy against Yugoslavia, it is felt that they would tighten security in other areas, like Bulgaria, which are also of mutual interest to us. Impatience in attempting to overthrow the Hoxha regime could be catastrophic.

c. The best method to work toward the overthrow of the present government is to strengthen opposition elements inside Albania in order to create an organized force, with all external factors being aimed in this direction. Since the overthrow of the regime could readily be described as aggression from abroad, the whole operation must stand up within the U. N. as being completely internal.

d. In developing opposition within Albania we must remember that any frontal attack against the Albanian Communist Party is regarded as a threat to its positive achievements and to the independence of the country, and a threat to restore pre-World War II conditions. The Party constitutes a decisive factor in any consideration of the Albanian problem. In the Party a distinction must be made between the Hoxha clique and the Party masses. The people in key positions are Party people, so it will be necessary to develop and exploit them. There are few opportunists in the Albanian Communist Party, but members who have been demoted or expelled represent a real weakness which should be exploited.

e. In striving to overthrow the present government it is essential to work with all forces, both internal and external. The Albanian emigre groups must themselves find a way to get together. Any known connection between emigre groups and intelligence services is harmful.

f. The Prizren Committee is not capable at this time of liberating Albania, nor of giving the proper development to the country if it were. However, it should serve as a broad popular front to conduct the struggle of liberation from Russia, and against any other foreign group which might seek to interfere in Albanian affairs.

~~TOP SECRET~~

87235

