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29 November 1949

MEMORANDUM FOR: ADPC

SUBJECT: Revaluation of the Project BGFIEND

1. Pursuant to your instructions the attached document is forwarded for your consideration. The main portion of the paper follows the outline you specifically requested. The six appendices contain recommendations and discuss various problems only briefly mentioned in the body of the report. They are intended to give a more comprehensive picture of operation BGFIEND. In Appendix E there is also attached the Psychological Warfare Annex which outlines all the essential elements necessary for the conducting of a propaganda campaign against the Hoxha regime. The details of this contemplated program may be of interest to you.

KERMIT ROOSEVELT
Acting Chief, Programs & Planning

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE/METHOD/EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
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SUBJECT: Revaluation of the Project BGFIEND

1. ORIGINAL CONCEPT OF THE OPERATION

a. Attainment of U.S. Objectives

The original OPC Plan for Albania was based upon the following statement of over-all U.S. policy: "Current U.S. policy with regard to Albania has as its objective the restoration of Albanian independence through the overthrow of the Moscow-controlled regime and its replacement by an enlightened government acceptable to the people of Albania. Such a government would enjoy the support of the United States as long as it remains friendly to the U.S. and its objectives and hostile to the Soviet Government and its objectives."

The underlying assumption was that the opportunity existed for achieving U.S. objectives in Albania, particularly in view of Albania's isolated position resulting from the Tito-Cominform split. In May 1949, an OPC project was activated which was aimed at placing the Soviet position in Albania under great strain and which, if ultimately successful, might result in the overthrow of the Hoxha regime. The project had three major phases:

- (1) First phase--the formation of a refugee Albanian committee to serve both as a front and as a rallying point for subsequent activities.
- (2) Second phase--reconnaissance and propaganda.
- (3) Third and ultimate phase--the actual overthrow of the Hoxha regime. (This was predicated on the successful completion of the first two phases.)

b. Relations with the British

The British Services which contemplated a limited operation in Albania contacted OPC with the suggestion that a joint U.S.-U.K. operation be undertaken. After considerable discussion the British agreed to a joint undertaking along lines of the U.S.-planned BGFIEND and agreed to modify their Valuable Plan accordingly. It was further decided that the broad direction and control of the U.S.-U.K. inspired operations would be conducted through a combined British-U.S. Policy Committee located in Washington. Field command of the

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operation would be exercised jointly by an OPC and a British field operations chief.

The British indicated that the problem of security was not of great concern to them. OPC emphasized in these discussions with the British the importance of the security aspects and stressed that all possible security precautions should be taken. However, it is impossible to prevent other Intelligence Services from learning of such activities. This was realized from the start and OPC security efforts have been aimed mainly at preventing the Soviets from acquiring conclusive proof which could be used to support charges in any international body.

2. DEVELOPMENTS

- a. The first phase of these operations, which has been completed, had as its objective the formation of a refugee Albanian committee to serve both as a front and as a rallying point for subsequent activities. This committee, known as the Committee for Free Albania, was formed in August, 1949, in Paris. Since the death of its first Chairman, Midhat Frasherri, the Committee has not been able to agree on a satisfactory successor because of internal dissension. The appointment of a prominent Ballist as chairman, however, now appears probable. This is in accord with U.S. desires.
- b. The second phase involved two aspects, reconnaissance--the infiltration into Albania of specially trained Albanians--and propaganda.

(1) Reconnaissance--It was originally planned that eighty Albanians would be infiltrated in an attempt to determine: (a) the potential centers of resistance throughout the country; (b) the strength, loyalty, and disposition of the government forces; and (c) the strength and number of Soviet personnel within Albania. The British succeeded in landing thirty men in groups of five in the southern third of Albania from Malta. Fifteen subsequently fled into Greece. One group of five is continuing to send w/t communications; the rest are either known to be or presumed to be dead or missing. (See Appendix A for an analysis and reconstitution of the reconnaissance phase.)

In order to perform a similar mission for the northern and central thirds of Albania, it was decided that approximately fifty U.S.-trained agents should be

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-3-

recruited and dispatched to Albania. The inability of the non-Ballist members of the Executive Committee to recruit and make available in time even twenty agents forced the suspension of these reconnaissance operations mounted from Malta. The British had stipulated that these agents must be trained and dispatched from Malta by the first of December, as they plan to close down the facilities then in keeping with their cover story. (See Appendix B for discussion of the training base problem.)

(2) Propaganda--The joint plan envisaged that simultaneously with the infiltration of the reconnaissance teams, an intensified propaganda campaign should be undertaken involving: (a) the use of a radio ship in the Adriatic, (b) the dropping of propaganda leaflets, and (c) the use of other propaganda media. In this connection a PW Annex (Appendix E) to the approved project was prepared stipulating methods, propaganda themes, phasing, and timing. Owing to difficulties encountered in procuring the necessary ship and equipment and in handling other technical matters, no propaganda attack has been inaugurated to date.

c. In view of the difficulties encountered--no training and holding base was available beyond December first--a joint U.S.-British policy decision was made to suspend actual infiltration operations until such time as a new plan could be properly constituted and the major base and operational difficulties overcome. For this reason the third phase has not been activated.

3. SECURITY

The lack of security consciousness on the part of the Albanians with whom the British and U.S. are dealing has made it impossible to preserve the secrecy of the operation. It is known that the French, Greek, and Italian Services* are familiar with U.S.-British operations with respect to Albania, and it is assumed that they suspect our ultimate intentions. Moreover, it is known that the Greek Intelligence Service has interrogated the 15 agents who crossed into Greece and who know the operational details. It is also assumed that the Soviet, Albanian, and Yugoslav Intelligence Services are aware of U.S.-British inspired activities concerning Albania. In spite of the relative transparency of the operation, however, there is no evidence to indicate that the USSR possesses conclusive proof of the operation's full scope.

* For discussion of possible participation by French, Greek, and Italian Services, see Appendix F.

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4. POSSIBLE ADVANTAGEOUS AND DISADVANTAGEOUS REACTIONS RESULTING FROM OVERTHROW OF THE PRESENT ALBANIAN REGIME

The major question which overrides all the operational problems involved in continuing the Albanian project is whether the possible advantages accruing to the U.S. as a result of successful overthrow of the present Soviet-dominated Albanian regime outweigh the possible disadvantages involved.* The various advantages and disadvantages are outlined below.

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

(1) The USSR might send Soviet and/or Satellite troops to buttress the Soviet-dominated regime in Albania, presumably upon invitation of the Albanian Government. This would materially strengthen the position of the USSR in the Mediterranean.

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

(3) The USSR may charge the U.S. and U.K. before the United Nations as aggressors.

b. Possible Non-Soviet Reactions Disadvantageous to the U.S.

(1) The powers friendly to the U.S. namely, Greece and Italy, might conceivably unilaterally intervene in Albania.

(2) Yugoslavia may attempt to exploit the situation by hostile action such as forcible annexation of portions of Albanian territory.

c. Developments Advantageous to the U.S.

(1) It would represent the first instance of the "roll-back" of Soviet power in the Satellites. (The proposed NSC directive 58, drafted by the Department of State, states that such a "rollback" is the objective of U.S.-foreign policy respecting Eastern Europe.)

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

(3) It would considerably reduce the Soviet Union's

* For an estimate of the Soviet reactions following overthrow, see Appendix C.

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ability to reopen the Greek civil war.

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

(5) It would indicate to anti-Communist nationals in the Satellite states that there is real hope of ultimate liberation.

5. POSSIBLE COURSES OF ACTION*

a. The continuation of the U.S.-U.K. inspired operation aimed at overthrowing the Kremlin-dominated Hoxha regime, basing future operations on "armed reconnaissance" guerrilla-type operation outlined in Appendix A.

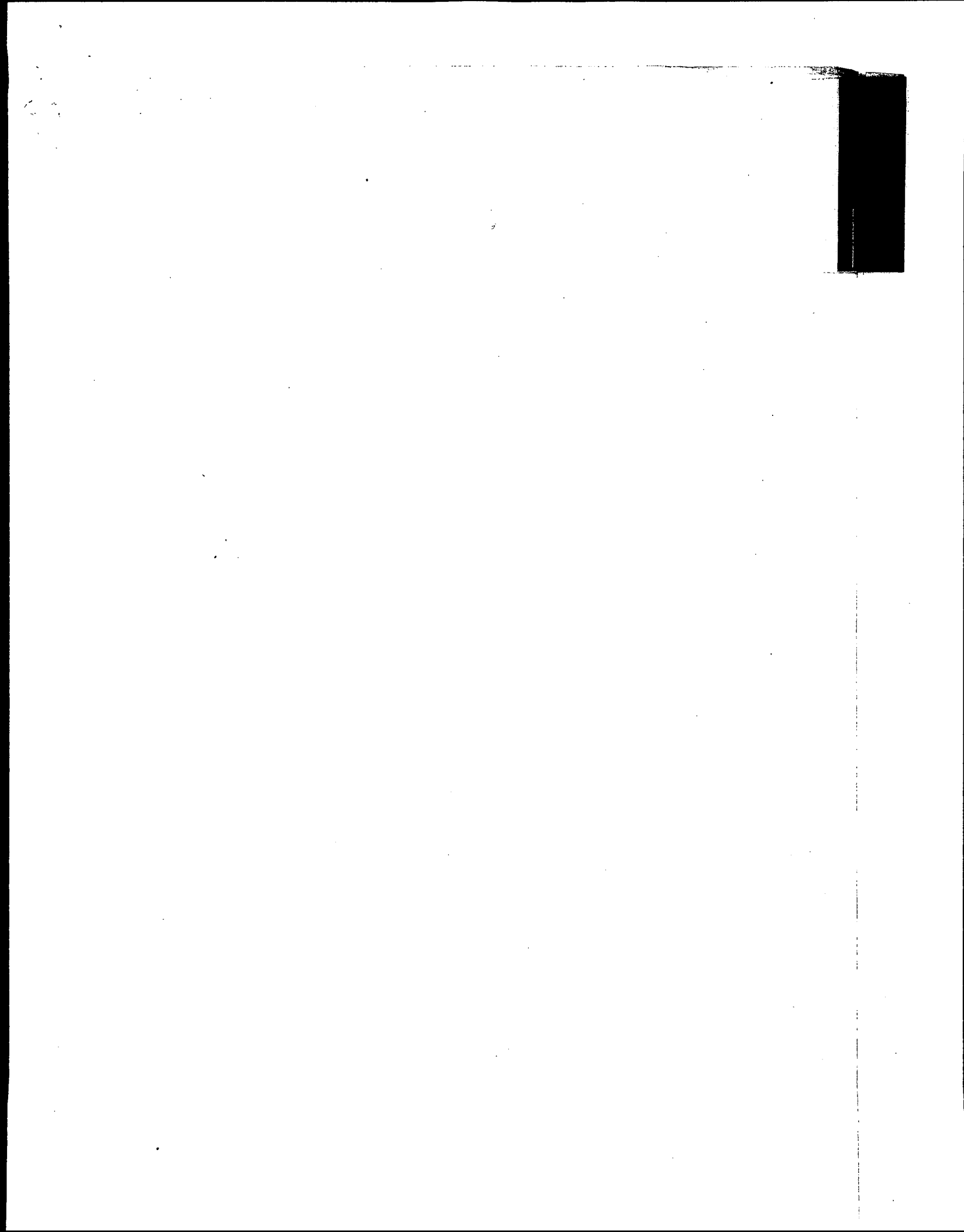
b. The change to a more time-consuming non-military type of operation involving a propaganda campaign, the more or less slow development of courier lines and limited centers and almost certainly excluding the possibility of revolt in the foreseeable future.

c. The abandonment of Albanian activities.

* Recommendations are made in Appendix D.

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APPENDIX A

Analysis and Reconstitution of the Reconnaissance Phase

1. It is now clear to us and to the British that the Hexha regime cannot be overthrown in the near future without considerable outside aid in the form of guns, supplies, leadership, and propaganda. The Albanian people probably cannot or will not carry on a sustained fight for their own liberation without this aid. Greater U.S. commitments will have to be made than were contemplated in the program approved in June, 1949, if Hoxha is to be overthrown as a result of U.S.-U.K.-inspired efforts.
2. The British-controlled reconnaissance teams recently infiltrated into Albania were of a low quality, particularly as to leadership, and had as their main objective the procurement of operational intelligence. In view of their lack of success, it is apparent that the severe Albanian police controls make such limited and low quality reconnaissance efforts impractical.
3. If the reconnaissance is to be successful, both its methods and its objectives must be changed. The teams should have higher grade personnel and capable leadership and should be permitted to operate as small guerrilla bands which would "shoot their way out" of difficult situations. In addition, this guerrilla band concept visualizes a two-fold mission--the organizing of nuclei of resistance and the creating of operational intelligence nets. The resistance nuclei will both help the reconnaissance teams to survive and lay the groundwork for an insurrectionary apparatus.
4. The organizing of resistance nuclei will involve the dropping in immediately of limited quantities of arms and ammunition for distribution to these resistance centers. Without this tangible evidence of the seriousness of the reconnaissance teams' intentions, discontented indigenous elements will not actively support the teams or take part in the development of the necessary underground apparatus.
5. The present Albanian plan provides for a review following the completion of the initial reconnaissance effort and for a decision, in the light of such a review, by the JCS and the Department of State as to whether the subsequent aspects of the planned program are to be implemented. Because of the time obviously required to conduct such a review and to obtain a decision, the reconnaissance and subsequent phases will lose their maximum effectiveness. However, if the JCS and the Department of State approved, before further reconnaissance is undertaken, the supplying of limited quantities of arms and ammunition to indigenous elements, this difficulty would be solved. At a later date, final approval would be requested for the supplying of substantial quantities of arms.

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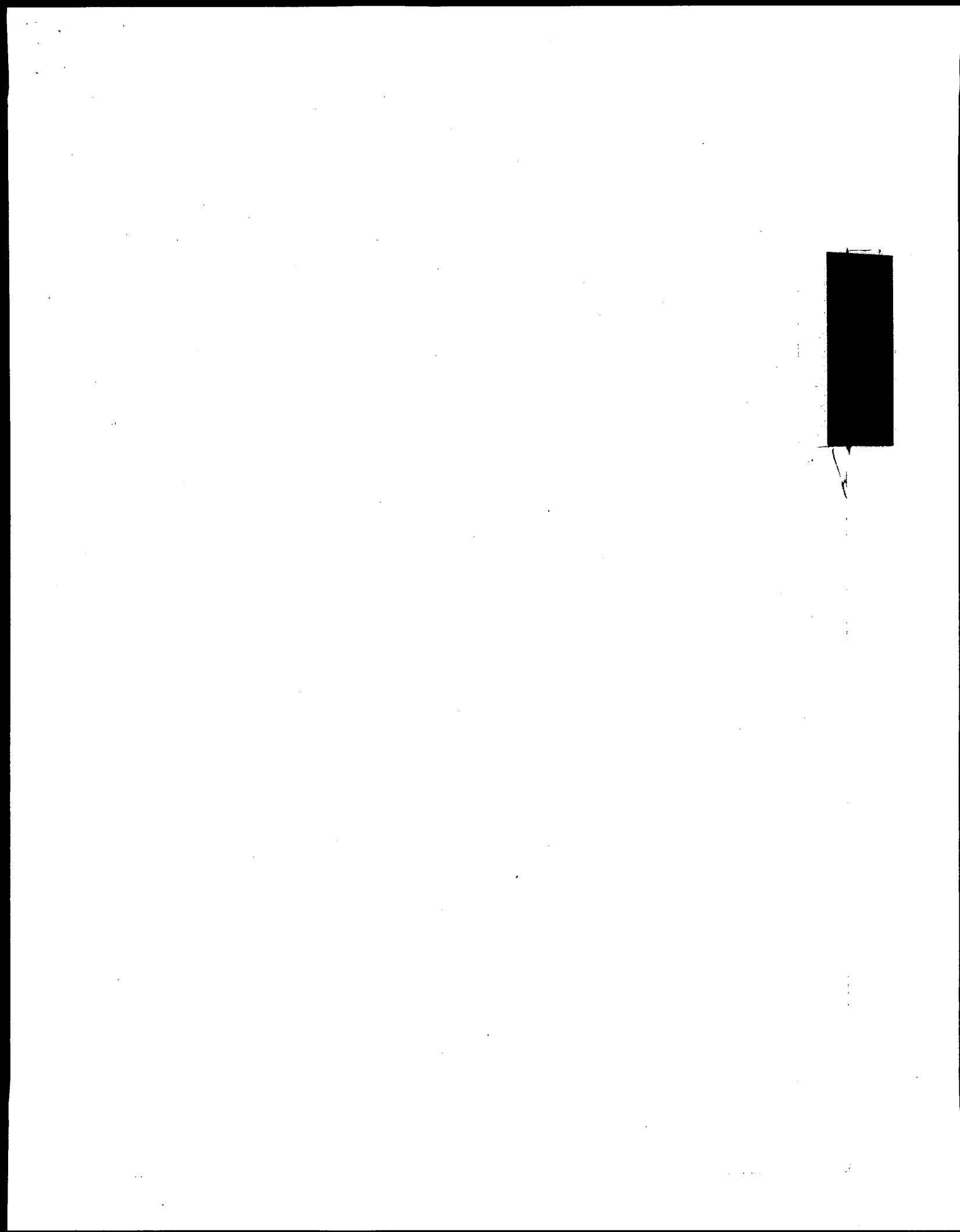
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6. As an alternative to the program discussed above, there is a more time-consuming non-para-military type of program involving the more or less slow development of courier lines and centers of resistance. This relatively slowly maturing program could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

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APPENDIX B

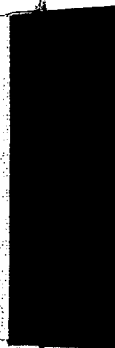
The Problem of Operational Bases

1. A satisfactory base or bases must be obtained for the training and holding of a minimum of 250 Albanians before BGFRIEND in its full scope can be continued. In addition, if this base is not within operational range of the target, a forwarding base near the target will also be necessary. This, however, should not present too great a problem as it would only be necessary to occupy it for 72-hour periods during which the actual infiltration is going on.
2. The British will not permit the use of Malta as a training and holding base beyond the first of December as they plan to close the facilities down to coincide with their cover story. In addition to ruling out Malta, the British have refused to permit the use of Cirenaica as it is under close scrutiny in connection with the UN debates and activities concerning the former Italian Colonies.
3. The Department of State for obvious political reasons will not permit the use of Italy, Greece, or Turkey. However, Mr. McCloy has tentatively indicated that the location of such training and holding bases in the U.S. Zone of Germany might be possible. Discussions between OPC and the High Commissioner's office are at present under way. The Department of State has indicated that it will probably approve any arrangement Mr. McCloy is willing to make.
4. If permission for a 72-hour forwarding base somewhere near the target area can be obtained and Mr. McCloy grants final permission for training and holding bases in the U.S. Zone of Germany, the base problem may be satisfactorily solved.
5. If Mr. McCloy will not grant OPC a base in Germany, or if for some other reason Germany is later considered undesirable, one remaining possibility exists. OPC could bring the French Services into the operation and have them provide a base in French North Africa. (See Appendix F on Advisability of French participation).

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APPENDIX C

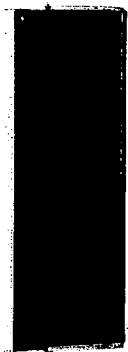
Estimate of Possible Soviet Reactions to U.S.-
U.K. Inspired Overthrow of the Present Albanian
Regime

The current estimates of the Department of State and of ORE/CIA of Soviet intentions in Europe for the near future are that the Soviet Union will probably not initiate military action against any non-Satellite nation or undertake any action which might precipitate armed conflict with the West. Based on these estimates and taking into consideration Albania's isolated position vis-a-vis the Soviet orbit, an appraisal of possible Soviet reactions to a U.S.-U.K.-inspired overthrow of the present Albanian regime is outlined below.

1. The USSR will probably not use Soviet or Satellite Armed Forces to put down a revolution in Albania.
2. The USSR will probably not attack any western nation or Yugoslavia as a result of an overthrow of the present Albanian regime.
3. The Soviet Union, however, may possibly send Soviet or Satellite irregulars to aid the present Albanian regime.
4. The Soviet Union may possibly initiate limited retaliatory action elsewhere.
5. The Soviet Union will probably charge the U.S. and U.K. before the United Nations as aggressors whether or not they have any evidence of U.S. or U.K. participation.

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APPENDIX D

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that:

a. In order to carry out U.S. national policy, as set forth in NSC 10/2 and in the proposed NSC 58, drafted by the Department of State, U.S.-sponsored efforts aimed at overthrowing the present Kremlin supported regime in Albania be continued.

b. In order to carry out this Albanian operation, an entirely new operational plan be prepared in the light of experience to date.

c. The reconnaissance phase of this Albanian operation be developed according to the principles of "armed reconnaissance" action, which emphasize the accelerated establishment of resistance nuclei, outlined in Appendix A.

d. A psychological warfare sub-program as outlined in the approved PW Annex (Appendix E) be developed and implemented at the earliest possible date.

e. The JCS and the Department of State be requested to approve the use of "armed reconnaissance" teams of the character recommended in c above.

f. The JCS and the Department of State be requested at this time to approve the supplying of limited quantities of arms and ammunition to indigenous elements.

g. At a later date, the JCS and the Department of State be requested to give final approval of the supplying of substantial quantities of arms.

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APPENDIX F

Participation of French, Italian and Greek Services

1. The French Services under Ribiere are most anxious to join forces with us in all special operations into Eastern Europe and have indicated that they would like to know more about BGFIEND.

2. Reasons for French Participation.

a. The French presumably could make available to us in North Africa or in the French zones of Germany or Austria a base for training and holding the Albanians recruited for phase three of FIEND. There is a distinct possibility that neither the British nor ourselves will be able to produce this necessary base because of difficulties involved.

b. The French Services would be useful in this connection as they apparently operate with a great deal more flexibility in arranging such matters and are not compelled to secure the same degree of clearance from their Foreign Office as either the British or ourselves.

c. Since we may consider it advisable to deal with the French on certain future special operations into Eastern Europe, we could secure French good will by requesting their participation in the present joint British-U.S. operations into Albania. (They are already familiar with many of the details) and by seeking their assistance in the matter of a holding base.

d. The British have apparently reconsidered their initial objections to informing the French Services of the extent of any special operations they are mounting. Originally, the British told the French that nowhere in the world were they engaged in special operations.

3. Reasons Against French Participation.

a. Although admittedly the broad objectives of BGFIEND are known by the Italian, Greek, and French Services, the security of the present operation BGFIEND and any similar operation undertaken in the future will become more and more difficult to control if additional friendly powers are briefed on the scope of OPC operations.

b. As there are numerous cabinet changes in the French government, it is possible that Ribiere might be replaced by a man totally unacceptable to either the British or ourselves which would seriously complicate joint undertakings. In addition, the

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the chances of Communist penetration of the French Services should not be overlooked.

c. At the present time Ribiere is most anxious to treat the larger question of underground resistance in Eastern Europe within the framework of either the Brussels or Atlantic Pacts. This would create even more serious security problems in connection with such operations. There is also the possibility that through this means Ribiere is trying to gain control of such efforts into Eastern Europe.

4. It is felt the participation of the French is not desirable, unless the utilization of French North Africa as a holding base is absolutely necessary for the continuation of the operation.

5. Although some of the above-mentioned reasons are equally applicable to the Greeks and Italian Services, their full participation would create extremely difficult control problems. However, if Greek or Italian permission is necessary in order to utilize Greek or Italian territory as a forwarding area, then their cooperation on a limited basis should be secured.

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