

SECURITY INFORMATION

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PROJECT BGFIEND REVIEW FOR DCI
8 November 1951

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

A. AUTHORIZATION FOR PROJECT BGFIEND

1. Authorization for BGFIEND may be found in NSC 10/2. The pertinent quote from this paper used in the OPC Policy Book No. 15 in paragraph 1-A(1) states that it:

"Authorizes CIA to undertake covert activities in the fields of propaganda, economic warfare, preventative direct action and subversion against hostile states."

2. NSC 58 predicates U. S. policy toward the Soviet Orbit on the fundamental principle that the U. S. "should maintain as its objective the development in Eastern Europe of independent non-totalitarian and non-Communist governments willing to accommodate themselves to, and participate in, the free world community,

"As the most feasible course of action at this time, the United States should attempt, by methods short of war, to disrupt the Soviet Satellite relationship and bring about the gradual reduction and eventual elimination of preponderant Soviet power and influence from Eastern Europe."

B. OBJECTIVES OF PROJECT BGFIEND

1. Approved 22 June 1949, BGFIEND was originally conceived to have as its minimum objective a reduction of Albanian capabilities for supporting guerrilla activities against Greece. Its maximum objective was the overthrow of the Albanian regime. The cessation of the Greek civil war and the intensification of Soviet pressure

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against Yugoslavia have necessitated a continuing review of United States and British objectives with regard to Albania. As recently as 8 August 1951, OPC reviewed the objectives of its Albanian operation with representatives of the Department of State. It was decided that the immediate goal of this operation was to:

(a) Continue to stimulate political unrest within Albania to prevent the regime from making any substantial contribution to Soviet power in the eastern Mediterranean area.

(b) To organize resistance activities within the country to the point where they could be relied upon as a decisive factor in a coup d'etat.

C. ACTION TAKEN TO DATE

1. Since the operational phase of BGFIEND commenced in the fall of 1950, the following projects have been undertaken:

(a) The National Committee for a Free Albania has been established with headquarters in Rome as a member organization of the NCFE. This committee has been used as a cover device for BGFIEND psychological warfare and infiltration operations. Members of the committee have performed a large part of the agent recruiting functions for OPC, and have prepared much of the propaganda material we have used. The performance of the above functions has made the NCFE one of the most active member organizations of NCFE.

(b) In November, 1950, leaflet drops were commenced. These leaflets have been designed to achieve the first objective of

BGFIEND operations, that is, the stimulation of political unrest and the will to resist communist tyranny among the Albanian people.

(c) An NCFA semi-monthly newspaper, Shqiperia, began publication in September, 1950. This is an organ designed to foster recognition of the NCFA among exiled Albanians throughout the world, and to promote the cause of freedom for their country. Shqiperia has also been published in miniature editions for dropping over Albania and for mailing to communist officials in that country.

(d) A land-based radio station in Greece commenced broadcasts to Albania in the name of the NCFA on 18 September 1951. A broadcasting vessel had previously been fitted out and sent to Greece, but tests in the eastern Mediterranean area proved it inadequate for the operation.

(e) A labor service guard company for Albanian exiles, recommended by the NCFA as potential agents, was established near Munich as an OPC holding area. The complement of this guard company was assessed and the best available men selected for agent training. These men were transferred in small groups to the BGFIEND covert training school also near Munich. Upon completion of their training, these men were conducted to the staging area near Athens for infiltration. 39 Albanian OPC agents, comprising ten teams, were infiltrated into Albania between November, 1950 and October, 1951. Of these 39 Agents, 13 exfiltrated, six have defected to Yugoslavia, four have been captured,

SECURITY INFORMATION
SECRET

- 4 -

and convicted as spies by the Tirana Government, ^{nine}~~seven~~ have been killed by Albanian security forces and seven are presumed to be operative. The status of the remaining two agents is unknown. Although a relatively high incident of casualties among our agents must be anticipated, every effort is being made to minimize our losses. It is presumed that some of our casualties to date are due to one, or a combination of the following factors:

(1) The concept of black infiltration which has been employed to date. The apparent ease with which security forces have been able to capture and ambush our teams suggests that we have overestimated our agents' survival capabilities.

(2) An appalling lack of security on the part of Albanians in the NCFA familiar with our operational plans.

(3) Inadequate agent training.

(4) A lack of high calibre agents.

D. STATUS OF OPERATIONS

1. Political Warfare: The NCFA, as one of the few NCFE committees which can be considered functionally effective, has acquired considerable prestige inside Albania and is recognized in the West as the leading spokesman for the anti-communist Albanian people.

2. Psychological Warfare: It has been reliably confirmed that our FW campaign against Albania has had a wide impact on the Albanian

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SECURITY INFORMATION
SECRET

- 3 -

people. Several recent exfiltrates have advised their motivation for escape was a desire to join the NCFA. Radio Tirana has expressed the Albanian Government's concern with the success of this program by vicious denunciations of the NCFA.

3. Agent Operations: BGFIEND has acquired a good deal of valuable operational intelligence from its agents who have exfiltrated to date. Of the two agent teams now believed to be operative, one has reported success in establishing itself in the area around the town of Kukes in northern Albania. This team has recently been supplied with a W/T operator and helper. Only one badly garbled message from this team has been received to date. Although the condition of our agent program is far from favorable, it is as yet too early to arrive at any conclusions concerning the success of the two teams in the country now.

E. OPERATIONAL LESSONS LEARNED TO DATE

Among the most important lessons we have learned so far are the following:

1. The low calibre agents used to date are unsuitable for our operations.
2. The Albanian security system is far more efficient than intelligence indicated.
3. Albanian exiles being used by OPC are totally incapable of maintaining security.
4. The large holding area heretofore used by BGFIEND as a source for agents is insecure.
5. Agents must be infiltrated into the area from which they came and with which they are familiar.

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- 6 -

6. The populace is much more reluctant to cooperate with NCFAs agents than had been anticipated. Although there is widespread latent support for the NCFAs, such support must be properly solicited. Reluctance to assist committee agents may be partially attributed to harsh penalties imposed upon citizens suspected of complicity in opposition to the regime.

7. Albania has no effective protection from air violations of her territory.

8. Technical Lessons: The Motorola voice radio set is inadequate for agent communications. A one kilowatt medium wave transmitter is too weak to effectively place a signal in the target area from any point in the Eastern Mediterranean because of the high incident of natural and manmade electronic interference.

F. NEW PLANS FOR BGFIEND 1952

1. Propaganda Program: A propaganda supply phase of project BGFIEND is about to be initiated. This phase is concerned with the air dropping into Albania of food and various articles such as razor blades and needles which are in scarce supply. The clandestine radio will continue to broadcast to the Albanian people and leaflet drops at six to eight week intervals are planned to maintain the established level of propaganda activity.

2. Political Warfare: Plans are being formulated to reorganize the NCFAs in an effort to attract a wider following for that organization and to make it more functionally flexible.

3. Infiltration Operations: A complete reorientation of operational plans and procedure is now underway. New plans include:

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- (a) A more clandestine technique of infiltration.
- (b) High level intelligence operations.
- (c) Recruiting by OPC personnel independent of NCFA.
- (d) Withholding all operational intelligence from NCFA.
- (e) A greater emphasis on survival training at the agent school.
- (f) The movement of the training site to a more secure location.
- (g) The possible use of sea infiltration and exfiltration.

G. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Original Allocation	[]
Expended or Obligated	[]
Requested for FY 1952	[]

H. REASONS FOR CONTINUANCE OF PROJECT

A continuance of BGFIEND operations with the amendments discussed above is deemed justified for the following reasons:

1. Albania, because of its very limited defense capabilities, its small size and its isolation from the Soviet block, is an ideal laboratory for experimentation on OPC techniques and for the development of new concepts of clandestine operations such as the propaganda supply drop.

2. The desirable effect achieved by the propaganda phase of BGFIEND to date can only be preserved and enhanced through continued activity at the same or increased intensity. The OPC propaganda program mounted against Albania has not only contributed

to unrest within that country but is considered to be a cause for great concern among adjacent Soviet Satellites. A cessation of this program would rapidly negate the propaganda gains already achieved and greatly undermine the prestige of the NCFA and of the entire National Committee structure. It would certainly discredit U. S. intentions in the eyes of those engaged in parallel refugee movements.

3. The suspension of activities would terminate U. S. influence in Albania and, by implication, weaken our position in the Balkan area. By our default, external influence would be thrown to the competing Yugoslavs, Greeks, Italians and the British whose objectives are often inconsistent with U. S. interests.

4. Because of the relatively defenseless position enjoyed by the present Albanian regime, Albania is unquestionably the satellite most vulnerable to an enforced defection to the West at the time when such a defection would be to the advantage of the U. S. Albania is the logical place to begin a roll back of the Iron Curtain. The downfall of the incumbent puppet government would completely seal off the Mediterranean from Russian influence and would have an incalculable effect on the morale of the people of every other Russian Satellite. The successful establishment of resistance groups in Albania would play a substantial military and political role in effecting such a coup d'etat.