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May 10, 1949

Dear Pilgrim,

Through another channel you were informed of the essential points raised in recent conversations with Midhat Frasherri and Ahmed Zogu. With this I transmit to you copies of my memoranda of those conversations as well as a copy of a personal letter from Mr. Martini to Mr. Patterson, with an indication of the reply that that letter will receive. You may wish to cut out a certain name appearing in this letter if it circulates.

In preparing for the meetings with Frasherri and Zog it was necessary to give consideration to the reaction those meetings would set up in our own diplomatic missions if the meetings occurred as anticipated in Turkey and Egypt. Knowing something of the normal reaction of diplomatic missions, I thought it desirable to present to the Chief of Mission in each case enough information so that when he learned that I had made a visit to his country and seen certain political personalities he would not become aroused himself and in turn arouse the State Department. At the same time I considered it desirable not to over-build the possibilities and risk having a mission seek to take over the phase of the operation occurring in its country. Following this line of thinking I talked with George Wadsworth when I was in Turkey in the late winter and I made a special trip to Egypt on April 18th. As a result of the latter trip I arranged with Mr. Patterson, our Charge d'Affaires in Cairo, to resume certain contacts in Egypt I had with Balkan nationals during the war, explaining sufficiently to him the problem that he felt informed of what was going on and happy that someone else was doing the work. This approach proved itself worthwhile, as is indicated by the last two enclosures to this letter.

The interviews with Frasherri and Zog speak for themselves. I feel that they went off very well. And now it remains for us to build and build rapidly upon the foundation which we have carefully prepared. In Greece you can count upon us to contribute our utmost but from here on the operation has a wider horizon within which cooperation will be necessary between our own people, particularly in Italy and America, and the Albanians in order to bring the success that we wish.

Yours sincerely,

Cian

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Present at the Frasherri conversation were only Midhat Frasherri, Cicero and Horatio.

Present at the Zog conversation were only Zog, Geraldine, Cicero and Horatio.

In each conversation I had a written statement before me but I spoke with only occasional reference to the statement. When I had finished and the Albanian had replied, Horatio added to my statement a resume of what the Albanian had said. Then I asked the Albanian, so that there be no misunderstanding, to read my prepared statement and what Horatio had added. This was done and in each case each party agreed that the statement contained all the essential points of the conversation. Frasherri signed the statement and Zog offered to sign the original when a copy was sent to him for his files.

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April 30, 1949

MEMORANDUM OF A CONVERSATION WITH MIDHAT FRASHERI

An impromptu meeting was held at Piraeus, Greece, April 30, aboard the Turkish passenger ship ISTANBUL with Midhat Frasher, war-time leader of the non-Communist Albanian resistance movement BALLI KOMBETAR and presently chief of one of the principal groups of Albanian refugees. Frasher was enroute to Italy from Turkey where he had spent the better part of last year.

After the exchange of preliminary remarks regarding the general situation in the Balkans and in Albania, Frasher was informed in confidence that the United States would look with favor upon the formation of a united front of Albanian refugees headed by himself. Such a front should include all anti-Communist refugee groups irrespective of political opinions. Frasher's own group should provide the nucleus. All other Albanian patriots abroad in opposition to the Hoxha regime should be invited to ally themselves with the movement.

Mr. Berry said it should be possible for Albanian refugees to agree that the determination of the question of the regime would be postponed until such time as a free plebiscite could be held in Albania. It was pointed out that refugee leaders of other Soviet-dominated countries, such as Bulgaria and Hungary, had achieved some success in creating a degree of unity among their own refugees and had thereby secured the moral right to be considered spokesmen of their people. A united front of Albanian refugees might hope to achieve the same kind of success.

Frasher was informed that the views which had just been expressed to him would also be conveyed to Zog and the latter's entourage in the immediate future. Since Zog had during the war publicly declared his willingness to leave the question of the regime in abeyance pending a plebiscite, and had recently repeated privately this declaration, it was believed that he would be willing to support a united front under the conditions outlined.

It was emphasized to Frasher that the proposed united front would be of considerable assistance in keeping the spirit of freedom alive among the Albanian people. It was repeatedly stressed to Frasher that the views which had been expressed were strictly confidential and must under no circumstances become known at present. He might if he so desired, however,

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indicate to a few of his most trusted lieutenants his hope that the United States might look with favor upon the formation of the united front of Albanian exiles but he should not go beyond that for the moment.

In conclusion Frasherri was assured that the United States was by no means indifferent to the present plight of the Albanian people and felt that the proposed union of refugee groups might well prove to be an important first step toward improving their conditions. He was informed that the contact which has been established with certain of Frasherri's lieutenants in Greece would be maintained and that efforts would be made to assist the latter in any way that seemed appropriate. Finally he was assured that there would be occasions for further talks in Italy within the next few weeks.

Mr. Frasherri said that he was entirely in agreement with us as to the desirability of forming a united front of Albanian refugees abroad. He would undertake chairmanship of front and would invite all non-Communist elements to unite urging particularly certain personalities of known merit in the so-called Independent group to join. He desires that Zog and his entourage join the movement, Zog first declaring publicly and precisely that he considers his royal prerogatives in suspense pending a determination of the regime by a free plebiscite in liberated Albania. Mr. Frasherri said he would like to be informed in Rome on an early occasion of the results of our proposed conversation with Zog so that he could plan his future moves. He asked assistance in securing a visa to visit temporarily the United States. He said we could get in contact with him through Halil Maci, officer in the DP camp at Cinecitta near Rome in whom he had complete confidence. He asked that we assist his friends among the Albanian refugees in Greece to leave for Italy.

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH AHMED ZOGU

A meeting was held with Ahmed Zogu at Alexandria, Egypt, on May 5, 1949. Mr. Berry explained that the United States would look with favor upon the formation of a united front of all anti-Communist Albanians abroad. It was pointed out that refugees from certain other Soviet-dominated countries, such as Bulgaria and Hungary, had achieved a degree of unity that enabled their leaders to be accorded the moral right to be considered the spokesmen for their peoples. It is hoped that the Albanians abroad would be similarly successful.

Zog was informed that Midhat Frasheri had declared that he favored the formation of such a united front and would work actively toward this end. Mr. Berry expressed the hope that Zog would adopt a similar attitude. It was pointed out that Zog could greatly assist in this work by endorsing the proposed front and by encouraging his followers to participate. Furthermore, it was felt that Zog could make a most significant contribution to the unity of Albanians abroad by issuing a public declaration stating that he welcomed a united front under the chairmanship of Frasheri, that the question of the future regime of Albania would be left in abeyance pending a free plebiscite by the Albanian people and in the meantime the royal prerogatives should be considered suspended.

Zog was informed of the American opinion that Midhat Frasheri should be the leader of the united front and that his group should form the nucleus of the movement. It was the hope of the United States Government that Zog would wholeheartedly support this proposal, the sole object of which is the establishment of a united front by Albanians abroad.

Zog expressed himself as strongly in favor of the formation of a united front of all anti-Communist Albanian exiles. He also agreed that the question of the future regime should be left to the free choice of the Albanian people. Zog accepted that Frasheri should be the leader of the united front and stated that he would support the movement. He felt that Frasheri should secure as associates one person from the Zogist group and a person of merit from the Independent group. Zog stated that he could not declare his royal prerogatives in suspense as this would be unwise as well as disloyal to his pledge to the Albanian people. Such action, he said, would jeopardize the continued recognition of Albanian anti-Communist (royalist) diplomatic missions in Egypt, Turkey and elsewhere. More fundamentally, he felt that such action would be equivalent to laying aside the

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duty which the Albanian National Assembly had placed upon him before his flight. He stated that the Assembly had upon that occasion charged him to represent the nation abroad until its liberation. He recommends for the sake of the movement that Frasheri should visit Egypt, Syria, Turkey, Italy, Greece and wherever there were significant groups of Albanian exiles, talk to them, secure from them written declarations of support, and thus become recognized as the leader of the united front. Zog also agreed to help in the foregoing and to make a public declaration along the desired lines when it was considered useful.

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Oborri Mbretnuer

Alexandrie, le 7 Mai 1939.

Excellence,

J'ai reçu votre aimable carte-visite et je m'empresse de de vous repondre qu'immédiatement j'ai introduis l'honorable Bery et Mr. Miner auprès de Sa Majesté le Roi.

Ayant en considération la liaison de Sa Majesté le Roi et le Gouvernement Américain qui sont par votre entremise, je tiens à vous mettre au courant sur le développement des entretiens qui ont eu lieu en date de 6 Mai entre Sa Majesté le Roi et l'Honorable Bery, en présence de Mr; Miner.

L'Honorable Bery fit savoir à Sa Majesté que le Gouvernement Américain désire que Mr. Mithat Frasherli soit reconnu comme Chef de tous les émigrants albanais qui sont exilés au Communisme et pour les représenter en participant au Congrès du Front Commun contre le Communisme, qui aura lieu à New York. En même temps l'Honorable Bery a demandé que Sa Majesté fasse une déclaration en demandant de Lui le consentement de Lui pour la nomination de Mr. Mithat Frasherli et de suspendre les prérogatives royales jusqu'à la libération de l'Albanie et d'un plébiscite impartial. L'Honorable Bery à ce moment a fait contrè une déclaration écrite et préparé par lui même.

Sa Majesté le Roi a repondu: "comme tout albanais, ainsi que la nomination de Mr. Mithat Frasherli l'aurait contenté, puisque ne désirant pas que Son Pays reste en dehors de l'Union des Pays participants au Front Commun contre le Communisme, à condition que Mr. Mithat Frasherli doit avoir le consentement de tous les émigrés albanais qui se trouvent en Italie, Grèce, Turquie, Syrie, Etats Unis, Egypte, puisque l'Emigration Albanaise se compose de trois partis: 1; Le Mouvement Légitime; 2. Le Front National; 3. Le Bloc Indépendant. Sa Majesté le Roi donnera tout Son appui à Mr. Mithat Frasherli pour obtenir de la part des émigrés l'autorisation comme leurs Délégué auprès de la Réunion ~~Common Cause~~, selon le désir du Gouvernement Américain.

Il serait donc désirable qu'au lieu d'un seul Représentant avoir trois représentants de chaque parti et de chaque religion: un musulman, un orthodoxe, un catholique.

En ce qui concerne les prérogatives royales, S.M. le Roi lui a repondu que même s'il aurait voulu de se suspendre Lui est impossible, pour la raison qu'en 1939, le mois d'Avril, l'Assemblée

Nationale, a pris la décision en exprimant: en cas que les circonstances, après la déclaration de la Guerre de l'Italie Fasciste, imposent au Roi de quitter le Pays, le Roi est chargé par cette Assemblée de représenter la Nation et de travailler pour les interets du Pays jusqu'à jour de la libération de l'Albanie par l'Occupation Etrangère. Malgré que la représentation d'une Nation de la part d'un Souverain est automatique, la mission exclusivement donné par le Statut de l'Etat, le Roi cette mission mentionné et répété l'a accepté de tout coeur, c'est pourquoi jusqu'à la libération de l'Albanie ainsi que devant un plébiscite impartial Il ne peut pas désavoué Son serment prêter devant l'Assamblée Nationale restant fidèle aux prérogatives royales, par conséquent, Il est le seul ayant tous les droits de représenter le Pays;

L'Honorable Bery a fait savoir que les observations de Sa Majesté le Roi les transmettra immédiatement au Département d'Etat.

Pour ne pas avoir aucun malentendu, Sa Majesté le Roi me charge de mettre au courant sur ces entretiens votre Excellence, en vous priant d'avoir l'amabilité de les faire parvenir le plus tôt au Département d'Etat.

J'assure votre Excellence que de notre part, ces entretiens garderont la plus grande discrétion, et je vous prie de croire à ma haute considération.

/s/ Sotir Martini
Ministre de la Cour Royale d'Albanie

Mr. Patterson told me that in acknowledging Mr. Martini's letter he would give the matter a proper sense of direction by saying that Mr. Berry's trip to Egypt and call upon His Majesty concerned a matter that was outside the concern of the American Embassy in Egypt. Therefore, he had given a copy of Mr. Martini's letter to Mr. Berry, who will attach it to his report, and in due course will communicate with King Zog concerning the points he has raised.