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14 September 1949

MEMORANDUM

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

1. On 22 June 1949, OPC initiated implementation of a project, whose ultimate objective was, and remains, the overthrow of the Hoxha regime in Albania and the substitution thereof of a representative type government oriented towards the Western Powers. The operation was undertaken with the approval of the Departments of State and Defense subject to the following conditions:

a. that State be kept fully informed of developments in the several successive phases into which the operation was divided and that its guidance be followed on all matters involving political implications of significance, and

b. that the Joint Chiefs of Staff be consulted and approval sought before the initiation of the later para-military phases.

2. In the planning stages of the project, it was determined that the British were developing a limited objective operation directed towards Albania which would inevitably conflict with OPC's plans. As a result, following a series of conferences between OPC and its British counterpart, a fusion of plans was proposed. This proposal was endorsed by the State Department and British Foreign Office respectively and the Albanian operation became a joint one.

3. The first phase of the combined project involved the formation of a national committee or council which would (1) be parallel in structure to other national committees operating in the United States and would include representatives of major and relatively unstained Albanian groups currently in exile, and (2) eventually serve as the organization ostensibly responsible for the conduct of the latter phases of the overall joint US/UK Albanian operation. The main responsibility for the formation of this council was borne by the United States Service (OPC).

a. Initial exploratory conversations were undertaken in the Mediterranean area by OPC representatives in April and included contact with ex-King Zog and Mihal Frasheri. Detailed and complicated negotiations began in early July with the arrival of a full time OPC []

b. In the ensuing two months the following was accomplished:

21 JUN 1949
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(1) Agreement on the composition of the directing element of the council, an Executive Committee, consisting of:

Mikhat Frasheri, Balli Kombetar, Chairman
 Abas Kupa, Legalitet
 Xef Pali, Balli Kombetar
 Said Kryeziu, Independent
 Naci Kotta, Legalitet

(2) Agreement on the composition of the consultative element of the council, a General Committee, consisting of:

Abas Xhamaj, Balli Kombetar
 Halil Mushi, Balli Kombetar
 Vasil Andoni, Balli Kombetar
 Gago Gago, Legalitet
 Gani Tafili, Legalitet
 Aslan Zelmelli, Legalitet
 Myrzi Muleti, Nominee of Kryeziu
 Irena Talha, Nominee of Kryeziu
 Ihsan Topani, Independent
 Muharrem Bajraktari, Leader from East Central Albania

(3) Agreement on a proclamation of the aims and responsibilities of the council.

(4) Implied agreement of King Zog that despite his reservations on the institutional question he would not sabotage the council.

(5) Agreement on military questions, involving the establishment of a six-man junta under the Executive Committee and the allocation of areas of command responsibility for future operations.

e. Subsidiary problems included informing the Greek, Italian and French Governments that an Albanian National Committee was in the process of formation and that it was viewed favorably by the United States Government; approach to the Greek Government for reaffirmation of its statements keynoting desire for a pacific solution of the North Epirus area; and basic planning for subsequent operational phases.

4. On 26 August, the Committee for Free Albania was publicly announced in Paris at an arranged press conference, conducted by Mikhat Frasheri in his capacity of Council President. The news of the Committee's formation and appropriate commentary thereon were carried by the BBC (in their English and Albanian language programs) and by VOA in all broadcasts to Europe and the Near East. This marked the successful completion of Phase I of the operation.

(Radio Tirana reacted vigorously to this announcement with denunciations of the Committee members as "traitors, saboteurs and war criminals".)

SECRET

5. The Executive Committee is now in the United States to arrange details of headquarters establishment in New York. Frasherid is contacting Dewitt Foale today relative to the Albanian Committee's status vis-a-vis the New York Committee for Free Europe. In view of the inability to locate a suitable Albanian currently resident in the United States who would be willing to serve on the Committee and acceptable thereto it is planned that Frasherid himself will remain in this country.

6. Phase I having been thus completed, attention is now focused on Phase II involving such elements of the project as propaganda and reconnaissance, the latter involving the introduction of agents into Albania for the purpose of determining and organizing potential centers of resistance.

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