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NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

15 June 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR: AC/SE

SUBJECT: Review of Activities Relating to Albania

1. I am enclosing herewith several documents written by [] and brought to the attention of Mr. Wisner. The one in which you have particular interest is his piece concerning Albania. The portion of that paper of major significance is the recommendation by Mr. Armstrong that the United States itself diplomatically declare its position in favor of a free and independent Albania, with a government of its own popular choice, and use its good offices with the Italian Government to extract a comparable declaration, renouncing any Italian pretensions in that country.

2. You will recall that on 15 April 1953 there was forwarded to Mr. Horsey a request, over the signature of CPP, that State Department consider favorably substantially the proposals propounded by [] . You will also recall that in a memorandum of 22 May Mr. Horsey replied that action on these proposals was then considered untimely and recommended that the question be raised again "around the middle of July." His reasoning was that action should be delayed in any event until after the Italian elections and until some "natural occasion" should arise for either the United States or Italy to make a pronouncement concerning Albania. He also expressed tentative belief that such action should preferably await Italian association with the recent Turkish-Yugoslav-Greek entente and suggested further that the question of Albania be discussed with the British and the French prior to either U.S. or Italian declarations.

3. I did not wish to press this matter further at the time, but now the Italian elections are over (unless new elections should be called), and the question has been raised again by [] , I believe we might well reopen the problem, at least informally, with Mr. Horsey. I personally do not believe there is any real reason to delay U.S. or Italian declarations any further or that there is any reason for them to depend upon discussions with either the British or the French. Although Italian adherence to the Balkan entente might well expedite over-all action with respect to Albania, I do not feel it at all prerequisite to statements of the sort proposed. I should be happy to raise the question again formally with Mr. Horsey, if you concur, but I should also suggest that an informal discussion of the problem with him would be in order. I should be happy to attend such a discussion or to make arrangements for it.

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4. With respect to

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4. With respect to the remaining portions of [] paper, I believe we have been well aware of, and have taken due precautionary measures with respect to, the several concerns which he expresses. I am inclined to believe that [] exaggerates the Greek position, and I also feel that the Yugoslavs, although naturally suspicious of Italy, are not as much worried about our activities in Italy as they may have given [] to believe. I am sure, for example, that the Yugoslavs are well aware that Greece, not Italy, is our base for operations into Albania. I also think that our recent conference in Belgrade on this subject operated to allay Yugoslav suspicions of our intentions. The question raised by [] as to whether our Albanian activities are worth the cost of their possibly bad effect on Yugoslav-Italian relations has been hashed out repeatedly over a course of years and the answer has repeatedly been in the affirmative.

5. Mr. Wisner inquired particularly concerning [] statement that "our parachutists have missed their way and have been dropped over the border in Yugoslav Macedonia." No such incidents, to my knowledge, have occurred although on one or two occasions our agents have made their way into Yugoslavia for refuge or for flight to Greece. [] may have reference to these incidents, or he may be simply ill-informed as in the case of the alleged use of the Italian air fields.

6. I am expecting a representative of WPE to come here shortly for a discussion of the Albanian problem (he has some ideas, the nature of which I do not know). I will let you know in advance so that you can have a discussion with him. When this discussion, and that with Mr. Horsey, have taken place, Mr. Wisner requests that we review once more our over-all "Albanian Plan."

[]
Deputy Chief
Political and Psychological Warfare

cc: DD/P

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Excerpt from letter dated June 1, 1953, from []
[] accompanying attached memorandum.

". . . I might add that the French Ambassador in Belgrade told me it was his impression that Tito had been somewhat disappointed in his London visit - not in his reception there, but because he had been led to expect a more formal British guarantee than was forthcoming. Tito was said to have put down this change (if there was one) to the more conciliatory Soviet attitude toward the West, and concluded that perhaps the West will not feel such a need for Yugoslav cooperation if ever it reaches an understanding with the Soviets. I saw no signs of such uneasiness myself in talking with him; but I do feel that our attitude toward future regimes in Albania and other satellite states (as described in the accompanying notes) is an important one to consider and keep clear in our policy statements and in our psychological warfare.

". . . I hope that if you issue a joint declaration at the Bermuda Conference it will contain a short and simple statement that the captive peoples of the Soviets should have the right to choose their own forms of government. I would emphasize freedom and nationalism rather than a program of liberation, which in Eastern Europe, rightly or wrongly, connotes war."

ALBANIA

The Albanian problem has not yet come to the fore, but it already colors the relations of Italy, Yugoslavia and Greece and is a factor in the Yugoslav attitude toward Trieste. All the elements of the Trieste problem are known; and a compromise will be possible following the Italian elections if outside Powers bring strong pressure on both sides equally. But the aims of the three countries directly interested in Albania are not clear, and each is suspicious of the others. The objectives of the United States in Albania are not clear either, and some of our actions have awakened suspicions that we are committed to programs that are not acceptable to Belgrade and Athens.

Jugoslavia contains a large Albanian population and supports a revolutionary Albanian committee at Prizrend, in the Kossovo region. Greece has territorial claims in Northern Epirus, though the Papagos government states it will never try to achieve them by forcible measures. Fascist Italy conquered and annexed Albania before the War; and today nationalist elements of the Italian press are reviving old irredentist claims to Fiume, Zara and Dalmatia, and there is talk, even in circles included in the De Gasperi coalition, of regaining Italian influence in the Balkans and the Near East generally. De Gasperi's visit to Athens in an effort to prevent the signature of the Greek-Turk-Jugoslav tripartite defense pact and War Minister Pacciardi's visit to Egypt were not liked in either Athens or Belgrade.

In these circumstances, the fact that certain American activities in Albania originate in Italy seems to associate us with possible Italian aspirations there. The use made of Italian airfields for American propaganda or intelligence operations in Albania is looked on with suspicion in both Jugoslavia and Greece. The Yugoslavs are particularly annoyed because our

propaganda leaflets are naturally anti-Communist and thus, to some extent, hostile to the Yugoslav form of government. It has happened, too, that our parachutists have missed their way and have been dropped over the border in Yugoslav Macedonia.

It may be doubted whether the local objectives of such operations in Albania are sufficiently important (or are achieved with sufficient success) to justify worsening Yugoslav and Greek relations with Italy and awakening Yugoslav and Greek doubts as to American loyalty.

The question of the future Albanian regime, in the event the present Moscow-controlled government of Enver Hoxha should be overthrown, is much in Tito's mind. If that government were still in power at the beginning of a general war, Yugoslav and Greek forces would at once attack it. Presumably, they would be successful, but conflicts between the "liberators" might occur unless some previous understanding had been reached with inter-Allied approval. At present, there is no such understanding. The successful operation of the tripartite defense pact, which the United States helped to bring into existence, requires that thinking and planning on this point should not be delayed.

The problem may not wait till, and if, there is a general war. The Hoxha government may be overthrown from within, either with or without outside help or connivance. The Yugoslav-sponsored committee at Prizrend is, of course, oriented toward the formation of a "national Communist" Albanian government. The National Committee for a Free Albania, supported mainly by the United States, contains varied elements, including supporters of former King Zog. Neither government is actually committed to either group, but the potentialities of conflict between the groups are clear, and this in turn creates a reserve in the Yugoslav attitude toward the United States and is even a

factor in the Yugoslav position on Trieste.

In this situation the United States might well do two things: (a) seek to remove Yugoslav and Greek suspicions that it is connected with any possible Italian program for regaining Italian positions across the Adriatic; and (b) satisfy the Yugoslav Government that it has not determined in advance the nature of the future regime which it will try to install in Tirana, but will be content to let the Albanian people decide this themselves, reserving only the right to ensure that the choice is free. In this connection, it should aim to commit all parties concerned to the same principle of free choice.

Toward the first objective, it is suggested that our government might inquire in Rome whether the Italian Government has any pretensions in Albania. The answer of the De Gasperi government would certainly be "no." This answer might be published, thereby giving it something like an informal American underwriting. The Yugoslav Government has often asserted that it will respect Albanian independence and territorial integrity, and the Greek Government has stated that it will never seek to secure any adjustment of the present Greek-Albanian frontier except by peaceful means (arbitration, or action through the World Court, was specifically mentioned to me by Premier Papagos). Reiteration of these attitudes might also be included in any declaration made by our Government concerning Albania.

FUTURE OF THE SOVIET SATELLITES

For Marshal Tito the crucial test of Soviet sincerity in any conciliatory moves toward the West will be the Soviet attitude toward the Soviet-occupied states (he always calls them that, not "satellites").

One object of Soviet strategy as Tito sees it will be to isolate Jugoslavia, with the hope of either forcing her or coaxing her back into the

Cominform fold. In his eyes, not even passably good relations can be established between Belgrade and Moscow so long as the Soviets still dominate and exploit the satellite states. It was in order to escape that very domination that he broke with the Cominform and defied the Soviets; he will not risk being subjected to the same sort of pressure again, as he surely would be if the Soviets continued to look on all other Communist states as satellites.

When this pressure on Yugoslavia fails (as Tito asserts that, of course, it will fail), the Soviet aim will be to make Yugoslavia pay part of the price of a Soviet-Western settlement. It certainly is in his mind that if there were a general settlement he and his country would be less useful to us strategically than at present, and he probably wonders sometimes whether we would continue under those conditions to help his country economically and whether we might not even begin to propagandize against his Communist regime, although it has collaborated with the West in the past and continues on a peaceable course.

When I told Tito that in my view we ought to accept whatever regimes the peoples of Eastern Europe freely choose, he asked whether our Government would be "able" to adopt such a "realistic" course. Would it not be tied by ideological pronouncements to support only regimes of the Western type? I reminded him that although Americans do not favor Communism, the U. S. Government has been able and willing to collaborate with his Communist regime simply because it is independent of Moscow, is not a tool of Soviet imperialism and has shown a cooperative spirit toward the Western democracies. This might be taken, I said, as an earnest of our "realistic" attitude in the future.

To make the discussion concrete, I suggested taking the case of Albania. Personally I would consider the formation in Albania of a "national Communist"

government, independent of the Soviets and cooperating with the West, as an event that represented substantial progress. Would he (I asked) consider the formation there of a government of the Western parliamentary type as representing progress too? He said yes. I said that, in this case, there seemed common ground on which our two governments could proceed together.

Have we, in fact, made up our minds as yet whether our main aim is to detach the satellites from Russia or to settle in advance what their future forms of government are to be? The strongest anti-Soviet forces operating in Eastern Europe today are nationalism and the love of freedom. We should make those forces our allies by speaking less of "liberation" (which implies action on our part that seems to involve the risk of war) and more of our determination to ensure eventually that the Soviet-dominated peoples will have a free choice of the sort of government they want.

Our allies in Western Europe will be much relieved by this shift in emphasis, slight though it may seem; and we should receive their support in insisting on securing reciprocal assurances from the Yugoslav Government as regards future action in Albania, and, later, Bulgaria and other neighboring satellites. It is toward making these assurances binding all round, and enforcable, that our policy in this area should aim.