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DD/P 468

C/SE

16 July 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Greek-Turkish-Yugoslav Diplomatic Initiative concerning Albania.

REFERENCE: NEW YORK TIMES article of July 12, 1953.

1. I am in full agreement with your comment to the effect that the diplomatic initiative on the part of the Turkish, Greek and Yugoslav Governments as reported in the reference issue of the NEW YORK TIMES, is of exceptional importance. I learned of this development for the first time while still on shipboard, and one of the first questions I asked upon my return to the office was as follows:

"Was this initiative taken as the independent (self-generated) action of the three nations concerned, or was it stimulated by ourselves, the British or both? If they did it on their own, what use does our Government propose to make of this happy windfall by way of fitting it into a broader pattern of diplomatic action focused on the loosening of Albanian ties to the Soviet orbit? If, on the other hand, it was inspired by us or the British, what are the other steps contemplated -- having in mind the interests of other parties including the Italians and the probable desirability of providing US and British guarantees in support of the promises of the three neighboring states?"

In asking these questions of our staff, I had in mind our old paper on Albania and the numerous questions which have been put to us more recently. It will be recalled that we have always maintained that the necessary first step would be in the diplomatic field and that sometime prior to my departure for Europe we were endeavoring to get some action going in the State Department. We visualized (and proposed to State) that there should be a concerting of diplomatic action as between ourselves, the British, the Italians, the Greeks, the Yugoslavs, the Turks and possibly the French -- with a view to arriving at common understandings and agreements concerning the independence and territorial integrity of Albania, to be followed by statements -- not necessarily coordinated -- making the views of the powers concerned known to the world and more especially to the

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Albanians. It was our thought that in order for any of our operations to be really effective, it would be necessary to prepare the proper atmosphere by these diplomatic actions, and we expressed the view that the cumulative impact of a series of declarations would, in itself, be very strong.

2. While on my recent trip, I undertook to prepare our Embassies in London and Rome for the possible reception by them of proposals from the Department to be discussed by them with the British and Italian Governments. Julius Holmes was quite receptive. Our Embassy people in Rome were likewise receptive, but pointed out that the unresolved problem of Trieste would probably stand as a bar to successful negotiations as between the Italians and the Yugoslavs on the subject of Albania (or for that matter almost any other important subject). The Trieste problem in turn is greatly complicated by the weakness of de Gasperi's position and the fact that he cannot afford to make a move at this time which would -- of necessity -- involve some apparent concessions to the Yugoslav point of view. Notwithstanding this problem, I was not discouraged by our Embassy people in Rome, and as well as I recall we left it that they would do what they could upon receipt of an eventual communication from the Department.

3. My latest information on the status of this matter within the State Department is to the effect that no action has been taken by State pending the outcome of the current high-level policy review which is under discussion today.

4. One final point of some significance -- when I asked Rob Scott, the new British Minister here, what he knew about the news item which I showed him in the ship's bulletin, he said that as far as he was aware the British Foreign Office had not stimulated and in any case had played no direct role in the Greek-Turkish-Yugoslav initiative. He was not sure about this but thought he would have heard about it had the Foreign Office engineered the development. It would therefore appear that this initiative was self-generated -- and it would further appear that we should move swiftly to capitalize upon it and fit it into a broader pattern of diplomatic action. It is slightly disturbing to note in the NEW YORK TIMES article the emphasis which is placed upon the fact that only the independence, and not the territorial integrity, of Albania was the substance of the tripartite declaration.

(Signed) FRANK G. WISNER

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Deputy Director (Plans)

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