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CURRENT INTELLIGENCE STAFF STUDY
SOVIET - ALBANIAN RELATIONS, 1940-1960
(Reference Title: ESAU XIX-62)

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SOVIET-ALBANIAN RELATIONS, 1940-1960

This is a working paper, reviewing the course of Soviet-Albanian relations from the birth of the Albanian Communist party in 1940 through the walkout of the Albanian leaders from the meeting of the 81 Communist parties in Moscow in November 1960. The paper examines the origins and course of the Soviet-Albanian differences and their relationship to the Sino-Soviet controversy.

In preparing the paper we have had valuable assistance from a number of analysts and components of the Agency. Personnel of the Biographic Register of OCR have been very helpful in assisting us to obtain information on the early members of the Albanian Communist party; and others of OCR, as well as OO/FDD and OO/FBIS personnel, have been helpful in obtaining for us useful documents and translations of foreign books.

[redacted] of the Sino-Soviet Bloc Area of OCI and [redacted] of ONE have given us useful comments and suggestions. We are especially grateful to [redacted] of SSBA/OCI, whose excellent files have proven invaluable and who has offered many helpful suggestions throughout the preparation of the study.

The Sino-Soviet Studies Group would welcome further comment on this paper, addressed to Carroll VanDeventer, who wrote the paper, or to the coordinator of the group, both at [redacted]

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SOVIET-ALBANIAN RELATIONS 1940-1960

SUMMARY.....	i
CONCLUSIONS.....	viii
I. STABILIZATION OF THE ALBANIAN PARTY AND LEADERSHIP, 1941-1952.....	1
Early Party History, 1940-1947.....	2
The Break With Yugoslavia.....	5
The Party Purged of Titoists.....	7
The Soviet Role in the 1948 Purge.....	8
Hoxha Consolidates His Control of the Party.....	10
II. THE SOVIET-ALBANIAN HONEYMOON, 1948-1955.....	12
III. THE SOVIET-ALBANIAN DISPUTE BEGINS, 1955-1957.....	15
The Jakova-Spahiu Purge.....	16
Albanian Cold To Yugoslav Rapprochement.....	17
Tirana Conference, April 1956.....	19
The Gega Affair.....	19
Pressure to Rehabilitate Xoxe.....	21
Albanian Third Party Congress, May-June 1956.....	22
Soviet Pressures Relaxed.....	24
Soviet-Albanian Relations Improve.....	26
IV. AN ERA OF IMPROVED RELATIONS, 1958-1959.....	31
Yugoslav-Bloc Polemics Resumed.....	31
Khrushchev's Visit to Albania, May-June 1959.....	36
Sino-Soviet Differences Emerge.....	39
V. SINO-ALBANIAN RELATIONS, 1949-1959.....	40
VI. MOSCOW LOSES A SATELLITE.....	46
Albanians Reflect Chinese Views.....	47
Warsaw Pact Conference, February 1960.....	49
Bucharest Meeting, June 1960.....	52
The Abortive Attempt at a Coup.....	53
The Purge of Belishova & Tashko.....	54
The Moscow Conference, November 1960.....	57
China Gains a Satellite.....	59

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

ANNEX A

THE ALBANIAN WORKERS PARTY - Early

ANNEX B

THE ALBANIAN POLITBURO MEMBERS, 1941-1961

ANNEX C

THE ALBANIAN CENTRAL COMMITTEE, 1948-61

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SUMMARY:

1. The Soviet-Albanian dispute dates not from the Bucharest meeting of the Communist parties in June 1960, as Khrushchev and the Albanian leaders have claimed, but began developing shortly after the death of Stalin when the Soviet leaders embarked on a policy of rapprochement with Yugoslavia. Indeed, the seeds of the dispute had been planted in the early post-war years, when Soviet policy supported Yugoslav hegemony over Albania and abetted Yugoslav aims of incorporating Albania into a greater Yugoslavia.

2. The Albanian leaders welcomed Yugoslav aid in founding the Albanian Communist party in 1941 and seizing power during World War II. However, as the Yugoslavs proceeded to increase their political and economic stake in Albania in the early post-war years, Albanian leaders became increasingly restless. The party, ridden with factionalism and endeavoring to establish firm control over a bankrupt nation, was in no position at that time to resist Yugoslav encroachments.

3. Throughout this period (1940-1947), Soviet-Albanian party and state relations remained minimal. The Albanian party that emerged from World War II had no Soviet-trained nucleus, and the first official contacts between Russians and Albanians were made in the summer of 1944 when a small group of Soviet military officers arrived in Albania. Diplomatic relations were established in November 1945, but it was not until the spring of 1948--as Stalin's quarrel with Tito became acute--that the USSR initiated steps to increase its assets in Albania.

4. The Soviet break with Yugoslavia in 1948 provided Albanian Communists the opportunity to accept a new overlord, further removed from Albania and capable of providing the country increased prestige in the Communist movement. The Albanian leaders gladly grasped this opportunity, and Hoxha, with Soviet support, was able to strengthen his grasp on the party by purging Koci Xoxe and his supporters as Titoists. During the remainder of Stalin's lifetime, Hoxha devoted his efforts to strengthening his control over the Albanian party and his relations with Moscow. Throughout this period, Albania was clearly one of the most obedient of satellites.

5. The Albanian leaders had little choice, but to adapt themselves to the new course after the death of Stalin in 1953, but they did so slowly and hesitantly, apparently fearful that any changes in course would disrupt the tight control the party had succeeded in establishing. They were also probably wary

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of initial Soviet gestures to improve relations with Yugoslavia, but it was not until Khrushchev's visit to Belgrade in May 1955 that the Albanians began to resist Soviet policy. Throughout 1955-1956, Albania made sporadic moves to tone down its propaganda against Yugoslavia, but it refused either to rehabilitate Xoxe or to carry through any significant deStalinization measures along the lines Moscow was encouraging. The Hungarian revolution reversed the course of events, and Hoxha and Shehu were relieved of any further pressure to inaugurate internal reforms. But the threat to their own positions in 1956 had been clear, and their confidence in the Soviet leaders had been seriously weakened. It was at this point that they appear to have become conscious of growing Chinese interest in Eastern Europe and to have sought to encourage it.

6. As with its early relations with the USSR, the Albanian leaders had paid little heed at first to the Peiping regime, which was established in October 1949. After Stalin's death, however, there was a marked increase in Chinese attention to Albania, and after 1956 the Albanians began to manifest increased interest in China. Hoxha and Shehu were apparently impressed by their initial contact with the Chinese leaders in Peiping in October 1956, and probably returned with some assurances that the Chinese leaders better appreciated their position with respect to Yugoslavia than did Moscow. Relations between Albania and China continued to improve after 1956 and became even closer after the institution of the Chinese campaign against Yugoslav revisionism in May 1958.

7. The growing schism in Soviet-Yugoslav relations at the close of 1957 cleared the way for a renewed period of firm and cordial relations between the USSR and Albania. During 1958 and 1959, the USSR strengthened its physical presence and posture in Albania and resumed its attacks on Yugoslavia. The Albanian leaders for their part continually proclaimed their fealty to the USSR, and on a number of occasions appeared to go out of their way to reassure Moscow that their loyalty and subservience had never been in question.

8. Nevertheless, the continuing ambivalence of Khrushchev's attitude towards Yugoslavia during this period probably made a deep impression on the Albanian leaders. On the one hand, some of his statements appeared to vindicate the Albanians' reluctance to modify their policies in accordance with Yugoslav and Soviet pressure in 1956, and to be an implicit admission that he had been mistaken in believing that concessions to Tito would bring Yugoslavia back into the bloc. On the other hand, his call for a limitation on polemics in July 1958 and expression of intent

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to continue to seek contact with the Yugoslavs suggested that he adhered to his basic ambition to return Tito to the fold.

9. During the first six months of 1959, Soviet-Albanian relations reached their zenith and Albania assumed an extraordinary prominence in bloc affairs. In mid-May Albania was signally honored by having the tenth anniversary meeting of CEMA held in Tirana, and the stage was set for the personal visit of Khrushchev to Albania ten days later.

10. Khrushchev's visit to Albania (25 May-4 June) exceeded in length any of his numerous visits to other bloc countries with the exception of that to China in October 1954. As it was the first visit by a Soviet leader (since Zhukov's in 1957), its length was probably intended in part to compensate for any feeling of neglect on the part of the Albanian leaders. But more importantly, it was probably intended to provide Khrushchev the time and opportunity to obtain a better view and understanding of Albania, its problems and its leaders, and to wipe away the residue of friction between the two countries.

11. The visit was probably not as successful as it appeared at the time. Khrushchev was disappointed with the backwardness of the Albanian economy. Khrushchev also probably became more acutely aware of the dogmatic approach that Hoxha and Shehu took toward their problems. The Albanian leaders, similarly, were probably disturbed by Khrushchev's continuing insistence that they subordinate their fears of Yugoslavia and direct their attention primarily to their own internal problems.

12. During the summer of 1959, Sino-Soviet differences, especially over Communist international strategy, were becoming more pronounced, and it was perhaps at the 10th anniversary celebration of the Peiping regime in October 1959 that the Albanian leaders became fully aware of the significance for themselves of this growing estrangement between Moscow and Peiping. Prior to September 1959, the Albanians had given every evidence of viewing Khrushchev's coexistence policy strictly within the context of its impact on Yugoslavia's role within the bloc. The wider ramifications for international Communist strategy, including relations with the Western powers, had not appeared to concern Albanian leaders. But following the Peiping celebration, they began to adopt positions in support of the Chinese on both ideological and international issues.

13. It was in mid-October that the Albanians began clearly aligning themselves with China on controversial issues. On 15 October Radio Tirana for the first time in almost a year referred to the Chinese communes, praising them for transforming "a poorly developed district into a rich one in a short time." A letter by Hoxha to border guard representatives of the Union of Working Youth, broadcast by the Tirana Home Service on 23 October, was similarly pro-Chinese, inconsistent

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with Moscow's efforts to improve international relations and reflecting Tirana's fear of the consequences of a genuine East-West detente. Events surrounding the fifteenth anniversary of Albanian liberation on 28 November again pointed up the growing cleavage in Soviet-Albanian relations and the increasing warmth in Sino-Albanian relations.

14. The year 1960 opened ominously for the Albanian leaders, and relations with the Soviet Union were to deteriorate precipitately throughout the year. On 6 January, Vukmanovic Tempo, the head of the Yugoslav trade unions and a member of the Politburo, left Belgrade for a three-week vacation in the USSR. It was the first visit by a high Yugoslav official to the Soviet Union since November 1957, and was preceded by talks between Khrushchev and the Yugoslav Ambassador in Moscow and Tito and the Soviet Ambassador in Belgrade. Although Vukmanovic's talks with Khrushchev and other Soviet leaders during his stay were unproductive, they seemed to demonstrate Khrushchev's continuing interest in rapprochement. The Albanians may well have been alarmed over the purpose of the talks and have expressed their reservations to Moscow.

15. In any event Soviet-Albanian relations had significantly deteriorated below the level indicated in public statements when bloc leaders assembled in Moscow in early February 1960 for an agricultural conference and a meeting of the Warsaw Pact. At the agricultural meeting, Hoxha attacked Polish agricultural practices. Khrushchev angrily replied that the Albanian comrades should tend to their own affairs, which were none too good. At the Warsaw Pact meeting on the following day the Albanian leaders found themselves again under indirect attack from Khrushchev. At this session, Sino-Soviet differences over foreign policy were brought for the first time before an assembly of the bloc leaders. Hoxha and Shehu returned to Albania on 9 February--angry, humiliated and apparently determined to support China to the best of their ability.

16. On 26 May 1960 an Albanian delegation headed by politburo member Gogo Nushi departed for Peiping to attend the WFTU meeting, and on 3 June a second delegation, including Haxhi Lleshi and Liri Belishova, both politburo members, departed for a month's tour of China and Asian bloc countries. Thus two high-level delegations were in China during the first three weeks of June, when Peiping was actively lobbying among Communist parties for support in the dispute with Moscow.

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17. Hoxha and Shehu were well aware that if they attended the Rumanian party congress in June, which Khrushchev and all other satellite leaders were attending, they would be under extreme pressure to take a pro-Soviet position on the charges Moscow was preparing to bring against Peiping. Hoxha and Shehu probably hoped to avoid any outright commitment--either against Moscow or for Peiping--by not attending the congress, sending the third-ranking Albanian, Hysni Kapo, to head the Albanian delegation. Circumstances at the congress forced Kapo to adopt a pro-Chinese position, and two weeks later the Albanian central committee issued a communique on the Rumanian congress making amply clear that the Albanian leaders had adopted a stance of all-out support for the Chinese.

18. The Albanian leaders had thrown down the gauntlet and it was now the Soviet turn to respond. The USSR appears to have done this through two channels. First, Maurice Thorez, the leader of the French Communist party and a longtime acquaintance of many Albanian Communists, was dispatched to Albania at the end of July in an unsuccessful effort to convince the Albanian leaders of their folly. At almost the same time, the USSR apparently marshalled its strength within Albania to overthrow the Hoxha-Shehu leadership. The CPSU sent a letter in August asking the Albanian party to join forces in condemning China. When the Albanians refused, the USSR launched a surprise attack on Albania, pressuring certain leaders to turn against the Albanian leadership, and inciting the army to overthrow the party leaders. The plot was suppressed in its early stages and about 200 persons were arrested.

19. With the uncovering and quashing of the August plot, neither Moscow nor Tirana made any further serious effort to disguise the rift which had developed between them. Moscow began applying all the means of pressure in its possession short of direct military intervention, and the Tirana leaders moved boldly to eliminate any suspected pro-Soviet party elements.

20. At a central committee plenum on 9 September 1960, two longtime party officials, Liri Belishova and Koco Tashko, were ousted from the leading organs of the party. Shortly thereafter, Belishova's husband, Maqo Como, was removed from his post as Minister of Agriculture. These ousters were followed by a shakeup of party and government provincial leaders and many arrests. And in mid-September, the regime announced that Shehu would head the Albanian delegation to the UN General Assembly which Khrushchev and all other Satellite party first secretaries were attending. Hoxha's failure to attend was another evidence of the rift which had developed in Soviet-Albanian relations.

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21. Having failed to overthrow the regime by an internal coup in August, the USSR increased its economic pressure and enlisted the support of its satellites. The Soviet bloc turned down an Albanian request to supply 75,000 tons of wheat to meet Albanian needs. The USSR also began at this time to withdraw its technicians from Albania, as it had done earlier (July) in China. To mitigate the increasing Soviet pressure on Albania, China offered to supply Albania with 45,000 tons of wheat, of which 9,000 had arrived by 10 October.

22. At the UN session in New York, Shehu was snubbed by his bloc colleagues. For their part, the Albanians took issue with bloc disarmament proposals, and after his return to Albania Shehu publicly attacked these proposals as well as other facets of Soviet policy. There was no longer any doubt of the position the Albanian leaders would take at the forthcoming conference of Communist parties which was assembling in Moscow in early November.

23. Hoxha's and Shehu's last visit to Moscow, in November 1960, was surely an unpleasant one for them. They arrived apparently determined not merely to support fully the Chinese position, but to express without reservation all their pent-up anger with the Soviet leaders. In his speech to the conference, Hoxha supported emphatically the Chinese case, and catalogued Albania's grievances against the Soviet leaders, particularly Khrushchev. He opened with a strong defense of China's position on foreign policy and ideological issues, and an accusation that Khrushchev confused and jumbled Lenin's theses. He then proceeded vehemently to state all Albania's grievances against the Soviet party. In his response on 23 November, Khrushchev dismissed Hoxha's charges with the claim that records would disprove all that Hoxha had said. But then, Khrushchev concluded, "Who wants to argue with Hoxha?"

24. Two days later, Hoxha and Shehu abruptly left Moscow by train for home, leaving Kapo and Alija behind to sign the multiparty declaration, papering over the dispute in the camp, which was signed on 1 December. On 27 November, Mao and Chou En-lai attended a reception at the Albanian embassy in Peiping in honor of Albanian liberation day, and the Chinese party dispatched greetings to the Albanian party which stated that the Chinese party was "proud to have such unyielding comrades-in-arms as the Labor party of Albania. The Chinese people deeply appreciate the enormous support rendered to them by the Albanian people."

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25. Though another year was to elapse before Khrushchev was to attack the Albanian leaders publicly and break diplomatic relations, the last Albanian ties with the Soviet leaders were severed with the early departures of Hoxha and Shehu from the Moscow conference in November. From that day onward Tirana's only powerful friend in the Sino-Soviet bloc was Communist China. By December 1960, it was clear that Moscow, Tirana, and Peiping were in agreement on at least one of Khrushchev formulations: namely, that "the USSR has lost an Albania, China has gained an Albania."

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SOVIET-ALBANIAN RELATIONS, 1940-1960

CONCLUSIONS:

Much of the significance of the Soviet-Albanian break has been overshadowed by the overall dispute between Moscow and Peiping, and the Albanian defection has been viewed primarily in terms of its impact on this larger quarrel. But a review of Soviet-Albanian relations since the founding of the Albanian Communist party in 1941 makes evident that the dispute originated independently of the Sino-Soviet controversy and that it has significant implications in itself for Soviet control of the international Communist movement.

With hindsight, and with the benefit of the revelations that both Moscow and Tirana have made in their exchange of mutual recriminations, it becomes clear that the Satellites' subservience to the USSR rests not so much on any kind of Soviet control mechanism, as upon a common Communist ideology and the allegiance of the Satellite leaders to Moscow. The reliability of their allegiance is partially based upon the degree of their political and economic dependence on the USSR; and it has also been influenced by the early history of their parties. Those parties which operated under the direct tutelage of the USSR during World War II and were installed in power by the Soviet Army at the close of the war have generally been reliable. Those which seized power without direct military support and the leaders of which had almost no contact with Moscow throughout the war (Yugoslavia and Albania) have proven unreliable. This lesson has not been lost on the Soviet leaders, and probably is important in their evaluation of the Cuban Communist movement and of other parties which may attain to power without direct Soviet assistance.

In the early post-war years, Stalin did set about to establish an elaborate system of control, which, in addition to the normal channels of party direction, consisted of Soviet advisers stationed in all important government and military organizations and in joint stock companies governing the important segments of the satellites' economies. This system of control endured, however, only during the early post-war years, when the satellite parties were almost completely dependent on Moscow for their political survival and for the technical assistance necessary to reconstruct their nations' economies. The system was rapidly dismantled after

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1953 by Stalin's heirs, who recognized that this mechanism of control was rapidly becoming counterproductive, stifling initiative and alienating wide segments of the satellite parties as well as the population in general, thereby hampering the economic development of these countries.

While Stalin's system of control did not endure long enough to be put to a second test after Tito's defection, subsequent developments have proven that Moscow's main asset in each of the satellites is the reliability of its leaders. In every instance of serious differences between Moscow and a satellite (except Hungary where even the party leaders lost control in the last days of the revolt), it has been the satellite leaders who have controlled the situation. Moscow was unable, for example, to prevent the return of Gomulka to power in 1956 in the face of the defiance of First Secretary Ochab and a majority of the top Polish leaders, who were supported by the party ranks and Polish population. Similarly, in Yugoslavia in 1948 and in Albania in 1960, pro-Soviet members existed within the party leadership, but they were unable to topple the top party leaders who controlled the party ranks.

The inherent weakness of Soviet control of its satellites is best illustrated by the defection of backward Albania. Although the Sino-Soviet controversy heartened the Albanians in their resistance, and provided them an umbrella of protection for bringing their differences with Moscow into public view, these differences developed long before the Sino-Soviet controversy became significant. As early as 1955, in conjunction with Khrushchev's efforts to return Yugoslavia to the Communist bloc, the Albanian leaders began to resist successfully Soviet pressures to improve relations with Yugoslavia. After 1955, a distinction in Soviet and Albanian discussions of Yugoslavia was clearly visible, but this was generally regarded as merely a Soviet willingness to permit the Albanians to vent their hatred of Yugoslavia in accordance with their conception of their national interests. It was not until 1960 and 1961, when Moscow and Tirana entered into bitter public dispute, that it became known that Moscow had sought to curtail Albanian invectives against Yugoslavia, and that this submerged dispute had had and would continue to have an appreciable impact on Soviet policy toward Yugoslavia.

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This suggests that differences between Moscow and other satellite regimes are more significant than they sometimes appear and probably place restraints on Soviet policy in some areas. Differences with the East German leaders over Berlin, for example, probably influence Soviet policy on Berlin. Since 1956 the Polish and Soviet leaders have successfully compromised their differences, but this situation might be reversed if the Soviet leaders should endeavor to move toward some accommodation with China and in the process revert to some of their pre-1956 Stalinist policies.

Cognizant of Moscow's sad experience with Yugoslavia in 1948, in contrast to the successful compromise of its differences with Poland after 1956, Khrushchev undoubtedly hoped to resolve gradually differences with Albania short of public denunciation. And until 1960 these differences were successfully submerged. But when the Albanian leaders began to inject these differences into the Sino-Soviet controversy and to align themselves with China within Communist party meetings and in public statements, Moscow was forced to take measures against Albania. As with the Yugoslavs in 1948, the Russians in 1960-1961 found that they had no effective means of control within Albania to force the Albanians to follow the Soviet leadership.

The break with Albania has accentuated Sino-Soviet differences and made more difficult any compromise between the Soviet and Chinese leaders. It has caused additional harm to the international Communist movement by forcing two of the three Asian satellites to incline toward China, and by forcing the more orthodox regime leaders everywhere into a distasteful position. For in attacking the Albanian leaders for their dogmatism, these leaders have exposed themselves to internal party criticism for harboring some of the same views.

For the West the Soviet-Albanian break has been advantageous at least in the short term, by exacerbating the Sino-Soviet conflict and further undermining Moscow's control of the international communist movement. But the longer-term significance of the break is uncertain.

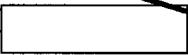
For one thing, backward Albania is surrounded by traditionally hostile neighbors suspicious of the ambitions of one another. If Albania should again become a bone of contention in the Balkans, this would not only create additional policy problems for the West, but its fate might serve to deter other Communist regimes from seeking to defy Moscow's lead.

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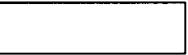
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On the other hand, Moscow's problem is to bring Albania back into the bloc on Soviet terms. Moscow cannot retreat in the dispute without giving the Chinese a major victory and greatly increasing Moscow's long-term problem in imposing discipline on the world movement. To date threats, internal subversion, increasing isolation, and economic pressures have not succeeded in toppling the Hoxha-Shehu leadership. Moscow may be counting in part on Albania's isolation and deep-seated fears of its neighbors to lead ultimately to an internal party coup.

In any event, in view of Khrushchev's apparent belief that Yugoslavia can still ultimately be brought back into the bloc, it seems doubtful that he holds a different position with regard to Albania.

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I. THE STABILIZATION OF THE ALBANIAN PARTY
AND LEADERSHIP (1941-1952)

Although the Albanian Communist Party was founded in November 1941 and the Albanian Communist government established in 1944, Soviet-Albanian party and state relations did not develop on a significant scale until 1948 when Albania threw off its status of satellite to Yugoslavia. Unlike other Eastern European Communist parties, the Albanian party that emerged from World War II as ruler of Albania had no Soviet-trained nucleus, but was composed almost exclusively of Albanians whose Communist experience and training had been obtained either in Albania or in exile in Western Europe. The Albanian party's victory in World War II had been won not by the direct support of the Soviet army, but primarily by a combination of its own efforts, with a sprinkling of Yugoslav assistance and guidance.

The first official contacts between the Russians and Albanians were made in the summer of 1944, shortly before the conclusion of the war in Albania, when a small group of Soviet military officers arrived in Albania. In November 1945 diplomatic relations were established, making feasible more regular contacts with the Albanian leaders. But in the initial post-war years the USSR appeared content to permit Tito and his Yugoslav party to assume the task of providing the necessary economic assistance and political guidance to the Albanian party--a task which the Yugoslav party, already deeply enmeshed in Albanian party affairs and anticipating the ultimate annexation of Albania to Yugoslavia, undertook with enthusiasm. As late as March 1947, according to Tito's biographer Dedijer, Stalin professed to have little knowledge of the Albanian leaders. Hoxha had met Molotov at the Paris Peace Conference in 1946, but it was not until July 1947 that Hoxha, accompanied by Hysni Kapo, visited Moscow for the first time. When the Cominform was established in September 1947, Albania was the only Eastern European satellite which was not invited to participate or to become a member. The Yugoslavs assumed the task of briefing the Albanian party on developments at this meeting. Though Dedijer claims that Stalin was continually querying the Yugoslavs on the status of their relations with Albania (suggesting that the Albanians were complaining to Moscow), it was not

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until the spring of 1948--as Stalin's quarrel with Tito became acute--that the USSR initiated steps to increase its capabilities and assets in Albania.

But if Soviet assets in Albania were meager in the spring of 1948, the Yugoslavs were soon to learn that theirs were insufficient--and no more effective than the Soviets were to prove to be in 1960. Despite seven years of close political collaboration and large-scale economic assistance, Yugoslav control in Albania was so weak that within a week after the June 1948 Cominform resolution, Yugoslav overt capabilities and assets in Albania were completely immobilized.

Early Party History 1940-1947

In the summer of 1940 the Yugoslav Communist Party had sent two leaders of its Kosovo Committee (Miladin Popovic and Dusan Mugosa) to Albania to undertake the task of coordinating the different Communist groups in Albania and establishing an effective Communist underground. These various groups, whose total membership numbered about 200, had diverse objectives and backgrounds and only limited contact, but they had one common aim--obtaining Comintern recognition as a legitimate Communist party. Playing upon this common aim, the two Yugoslavs succeeded in November 1941 in bringing these groups together into an Albanian Communist party which elected an 11-man provisional central committee. One year later, at the first national conference of the Party in December 1942, the Yugoslavs were able to report that the Comintern had recognized the party and to present detailed instructions from Tito on the future activity of the party. Though the central committee elected at this Conference was composed of the same members as the Provisional central committee elected in 1941, factionalism and purges characterized the party's history from its first year, when an extensive purge of the lower levels of the party began. This quickly expanded into the higher levels of the party and was to continue until 1952. By that year Enver Hoxha was the only remaining member of the original central committee still in good standing in the Party. (See Annex A for a listing of early party leaders and their fate.)

Unfortunately most of the written records on the history of the party prior to 1948 post-date the 1948 break and are therefore highly colored by the subsequent polemics between

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Yugoslavia and Albania. There is little doubt that much of the history during these early years has been rewritten by both the Albanians and Yugoslavs to accord with their post-1948 relations. In these records Koci Xoxe emerges as the pro-Titoist Albanian leader and Hoxha the enemy of Yugoslav ambitions in Albania. Perhaps there is an element of truth in these claims, but there is little evidence even in the late spring and summer of 1948--when the division between the pro- and anti-Yugoslav factions in the party should have been sharply drawn--that differences on this score actually existed. There is, however, plentiful evidence of rampant factionalism and purges in the party prior to 1948 which were undoubtedly abetted by Yugoslav intervention in party affairs during this period. But this factionalism probably stemmed more from differences over tactics during the partisan war, personal rivalries and enmities among party leaders, and personal jockeying for power, than from any concerted resistance by any party faction to Yugoslav domination.

According to Hoxha, he was criticized twice by the central committee at the instigation of Xoxe and the Yugoslavs--once in November 1944 when he was accused of favoring the intellectual faction of the party and again in February 1948. The Yugoslavs have never denied this, but it must also serve their purposes today to claim that they could perceive as early as 1944 that Hoxha was not a trustworthy Communist. All of this appears to run counter to the fact, however, that Hoxha remained the leader of the party and a compliant tool of the Yugoslavs throughout the pre-1948 period. One can at least suspect that if Xoxe had emerged in September 1948 as leader of the Albanian party, party records today might show that it was he, not Hoxha, who was criticized at Yugoslav request in 1944 and 1948.

Factionalism within the party, however, as recorded by party documents led to numerous high level purges between 1943 and 1948. By the end of 1944, when the party had gained effective control of the country, two major factions had developed: a proletarian faction led by Koci Xoxe, Tuk Jakova, Kristo Themelko and Pandi Kristo, and an intellectual faction led by Nako Spiru, Liri Gega and Sejfulla Maleshova. At the party plenum at Berat in November 1944 Hoxha was allegedly criticized for favoring the intellectuals. The principal targets at the meeting, however, were Liri Gega, Ymer Dishnica

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and Maleshova. Nako Spiru, a friend of Hoxha's was also criticized. Gega, a colonel of the General Staff and head of the anti-fascist woman's front, was removed from the politburo and central committee at this meeting. On the other hand, Maleshova was promoted to the politburo. Subsequently, however, he and other leaders of the intellectual faction were also purged. Maleshova was expelled from the party in February 1946 for advocating an opportunist policy toward the Anglo-American imperialist countries. Dishnica, who had been removed from the Politburo earlier for his responsibility for the 1943 Mukaj agreement on cooperation with the National Front (Balli Kombetar) was also expelled from the party in the spring of 1947. In the fall of the same year Spiru was demoted and committed suicide. His wife Liri Belishova was criticized at the same meeting and expelled from the party in February 1948.

The ouster of the intellectuals during the period of Yugoslav predominance in Albania thus supports subsequent Albanian contentions that the Yugoslavs favored the proletarians during this period, but the failure by Hoxha to reinstate any of the intellectuals (exclusive of Belishova) after the break appears to refute the claim that Hoxha either supported or was sympathetic to them. And in the immediate post-war years, as the Yugoslavs moved to consolidate their role in Albania, there was no evidence that either Hoxha, as Secretary General of the Party, Premier and Foreign Minister, or Xoxe as Minister of Interior, was resisting Yugoslav domination in any way.

In these post-war years, the economic plans of the two countries were coordinated, joint stock companies formed, the currencies of the two countries made interchangeable, and work on a customs union begun. By 1947 Yugoslav financial aid amounted to 57 percent of the Albanian budget. Large numbers of Yugoslav economic and military advisers were dispatched to Albania to aid in various economic projects and to support the Yugoslav-Albanian contribution to the guerrilla war in Greece.

While the Albanians undoubtedly resented the growing domination of Yugoslavia and especially Tito's objective of ultimately annexing Albania to a greater Yugoslavia, they

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saw no alternative so long as Moscow apparently supported Yugoslav objectives. Those who dared to resist were demoted or purged, although few were executed for deviation.

In July 1947, Hoxha, accompanied by Kapo, visited Moscow for the first time, and he may well have been heartened by his conversations there to undertake some resistance to Yugoslav plans. If so, this could explain the confidential memorandum criticizing the Albanian program and attitude which the Yugoslavs presented to the Albanian central committee in November 1947. This memorandum accused the Albanian party of an anti-Yugoslav policy, adhering to a Western and bourgeois cultural policy, and harboring an enemy collaborator (Nako Spiru). It also attacked the Albanian Five Year Plan as autarchic and unrealistic. (It is interesting to note the similarities of these charges to those which the Soviets were to level against Yugoslavia a few months later). Three months later in February 1948 a plenum of the central committee was called by Xoxe at Yugoslav request (or so Hoxha was later to claim). Hoxha himself was criticized, and Shehu was removed as army chief of staff and dismissed from the central committee for opposing the introduction of two Yugoslav divisions into Albania in support of the Greek guerrilla war.

Perhaps in atonement, Hoxha wrote an editorial for Zeri i Popullit in January 1948 entitled "What Tito Means to Albania" in which he extolled the love of the Albanian people for Tito and his assistance in both war and peace. In February certain items were placed on free sale in Albania which the Albanian press explained as possible because of economic benefits from Yugoslavia. At that time, too, public tributes were paid to Yugoslavia for progress on the Durres-Elbasan railroad.

The Break With Yugoslavia

But Albanian submissiveness to Yugoslav domination was nearing its end. In February Bulgarian leader Dimitrov and Tito (who sent Kardelj in his place) were summoned to Moscow and severely reprimanded by Stalin for the publication of their plans for a Yugoslav-Bulgarian federation. Stalin also condemned the Yugoslavs for planning to send two divisions into Albania without consulting or informing the Soviet leaders. This suggests that the Albanian leaders at the time of the Albanian central committee meeting in February were seeking Soviet assistance to counter Yugoslav designs on Albania. And shortly thereafter a sudden increase in Soviet interest in Albania became apparent. In mid-March a Soviet military mission, headed by a general and consisting of 15 officers, arrived in Tirana. There was also an

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increase in visiting Soviet delegations in the spring, and by the end of May the Albanians were apparently sufficiently hopeful of obtaining increased Soviet assistance and support that they were willing to slap publicly at the Yugoslavs. On 25 May, Tito's birthday, no official greetings were sent. The Yugoslav-Albanian Cultural Society held a party for the occasion, but the Albanian press gave it only five lines and listed no party members as attending. On the same night there was a meeting of the Soviet-Albanian cultural society. The press devoted 31 lines to the occasion and listed Hoxha, Xoce, and other party leaders as attending. On 31 May Minister of Industry Tuk Jakova (who as recently as February had been Albanian minister to Yugoslavia), announced that a textile mill would be constructed in 1949 with machinery supplied by the USSR, "which is according us very great aid under the attention of Stalin." Prior to this time Albania's aid had come almost exclusively from Yugoslavia. Three days later Jakova announced a vast plan of agricultural machine stations with machines to be sent by the USSR. On 11 June the press announced the arrival of 100 agricultural machines and other equipment from the USSR.

Yugoslav assistance continued unabated during these months, but on 7 June the Yugoslav minister to Albania Josip Djerdja was recalled, never to return. On 24 June the Albanians expelled the Yugoslav Political Commissar attached to the Albanian army. The order was signed by Koci Xoce.

Given the degree of Albanian submissiveness to Yugoslavia prior to May 1948, it seems quite clear that the Albanian leaders had received assurances of Soviet assistance and support and had already made the decision to throw off the Yugoslav yoke before the announcement of the Cominform resolution of 28 June. And within a week the Albanians had completely severed all ties with Yugoslavia, except for the Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Assistance. (This was not canceled until the Yugoslavs did so in 1949). All other agreements, protocols and economic treaties with Yugoslavia were denounced; the Yugoslav book store was closed and the sale of Borba banned; Tito's name was ordered excised from all school books, and his

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pictures removed from public places; rigorous measures along the frontier were instituted; and Yugoslav technicians and advisors were expelled. The central committee met and "unanimously and wholly" supported the Cominform resolution. On 11 July Albania ordered the expulsion of all remaining Yugoslav officials and five days later expelled the last of the Yugoslav youth brigades. Yugoslav overt assets in Albania had been completely destroyed.

Curiously enough in light of subsequent Albanian charges and Yugoslav countercharges, it was Koci Xoxe, the Albanian "Titoist," who took the lead in July and August in denouncing the Tito regime and lauding the USSR, whereas Enver Hoxha was largely inactive during this period. Hoxha was present during the visit of a Soviet military delegation between 9-14 July. In addition to decorating the delegation and delivering an army day address on 10 July, he honored the delegation with a dinner on 12 July and was on hand for their departure on the 14th. He appeared again on 25 July to address a women's convention and to announce that a trade delegation was departing that very day for the USSR. He did not appear again until mid-September.

In contrast Xoxe was active throughout the period. It was he who signed the orders for terminating the agreements with Yugoslavia, and the party's communique of 16 July rejecting the invitation to the forthcoming Yugoslav party congress. It was also Xoxe who was the principal speaker at the Albanian-Soviet Cultural Society in July at which he was elected President, and who presided at a solemn ceremony organized in Tirana on 2 September on the death of Zhdanov. Thus all signs indicated that Xoxe was strengthening his position, and possibly preparing to assume Hoxha's number one position.

The Party Purged of Titoists

Sometime early in September 1948, however, Xoxe's star waned; and at the central committee meeting, which was held on 13-24 September, he and Pandi Kristo were denounced as the "main agents of the Trotskyite Yugoslavs" within the central committee. Both were removed from the politburo and Xoxe was replaced as organizational secretary by Tuk Jakova who had just returned from Moscow where he had headed the Albanian trade delegation. The decisions of the plenum were not made public until 21 October,

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but on 2 October a Council of Ministers meeting had announced that Xoxe had been removed from his post of Interior Minister and named Minister of Industry.

Hoxha and Jakova dominated the plenum; and Hoxha moved rapidly thereafter to consolidate his control of the party. At the first party congress in November, Xoxe and his supporters on the central committee were ousted from all party and state posts. In addition to Xoxe and Pandi Kristo, Kristo Themelko and Nesti Kerenxhi were dropped from their politburo and government posts. Pullumb Dishnica, Xoxhi Blushi, and Vasko Koleci were ousted from the central committee and their government posts. In May 1949, Xoxe, Kristo, Koleci and two others were tried as hirelings of Tito's Trotskyist nationalist clique. Only Xoxe was sentenced to death. The others have all subsequently been released from prison, though none was ever rehabilitated and exonerated, as many alleged Titoists in other Satellites have been. In the new leadership which emerged from the first party congress it was clear that Hoxha had emerged victorious in his intra-party fight with Xoxe, but a new potential rival had emerged in the person of Mehmet Shehu who had been promoted to Xoxe's number two position in the party and state.

The Soviet Role in the 1948 Purge

Hoxha's silence in August 1948 can best be explained by the probability that he was in Moscow during this period, preparing the purge of Xoxe and his colleagues. The pattern of events in Albania between September 1948 and May 1949 was to become a familiar one in Eastern Europe as Satellite parties proceeded to identify and purge "Titoist" leaders in their midst. Initially the alleged Titoist would be publicly demoted in his government post and subsequently charged as a Titoist and tried. Thus the purge of Xoxe had all the markings of a "made in Moscow" purge.

Both the Yugoslavs and Albanians have claimed that Xoxe was pro-Yugoslav and a Tito supporter. Milovan Djilas, in the account of his conversations with Stalin, also affirms that the Yugoslav leaders in January and February 1948 held Xoxe in much higher esteem than Hoxha, and regarded the Minister of Interior as a trusted ally in the plan to unite Albania with Yugoslavia. But other evidence suggests that in the middle of 1948 Xoxe and his supporters had a majority in the Albanian Politburo and were at least not resisting the break with Yugoslavia. So far as can be determined the Albanian Politburo in August 1948 was composed of Enver Hoxha, Koci Xoxe, Pandi Kristo, Tuk Jakova, Hysni Kapo, Kristo Themelko,

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Gogo Nushi, and Nesti Kerenxhi. Of these eight men, Kristo, Themelko and Kerenxhi were dropped from the Politburo in November 1948 and accused of supporting Xoxe. On the basis of these charges then, Xoxe and his group had a clear majority in the Politburo during August when Jakova and probably Hoxha were in Moscow, and might have been expected to try to seize power if they were working with the Yugoslavs. It seems most unlikely that Hoxha would have departed Albania at this crucial stage if he in fact believed that Xoxe and his colleagues were Titoist sympathizers. Furthermore, there is no evidence that Xoxe made any move to carry out a Titoist coup in August and early September. Instead, he continued to make his usual references to the "beloved leader Hoxha" in his public speeches throughout the period and to intensify the anti-Yugoslav campaign.

While the evidence does not necessarily support post-1948 allegations that Xoxe was Tito's man, there is little doubt that Moscow's intervention in Albania in 1948 was a large factor in determining his fate. Since the Albanian party had been nurtured and directed by Yugoslavia, it and its leaders must have been suspect in Moscow. While it was clearly anti-Yugoslav and had turned to Moscow for support, a new leadership would need to be groomed to assure its reliability over the long run, and the old ranks of the party thoroughly purged. In deciding for Hoxha and the purge of Xoxe, Moscow may well have been choosing the man it considered the weaker of the two, and more amenable to direction. But for the longer haul, Shehu may well have been the man selected by Moscow as the most reliable and competent Albanian to lead the party. This may explain his sudden promotion to number two position in the party in November 1948. He had been a highly successful general in the partisan war, and had spent a longer time (1945-46) in the USSR than other leading Albanian figures. Upon his return he had been named army chief-of-staff, but prior to November 1948 he had never held a position in the party higher than alternate member of the central committee.

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Hoxha Consolidates His Control of the Party

If this indeed was the Soviet calculation, subsequent developments have demonstrated that Moscow was no more successful in transforming the Albanian party into a reliable Soviet-dominated one than had been the Yugoslavs between 1941 and 1948. Moreover, whereas the party was plagued with factionalism during the period of Yugoslav predominance, the Albanian party soon achieved a remarkable stability.

The new politburo elected at the November 1948 Congress consisted of four old members--Hoxha, Jakova, Kapo, and Nushi--and 5 new members--Shehu, Belishova, Balluku, Spahiu, and Koleka. With the exception of Belishova and Spahiu, all those added in 1948 are still members of the Albanian politburo today. Of the old members, Jakova was expelled from politburo in 1951 and from the Central Committee and party in 1955. Thus the politburo today and for the past ten years has included only three men--Hoxha, Kapo, and Nushi--who were members of the politburo in the Yugoslav era of predominance. Kapo was promoted to the politburo in 1946, and Nushi was apparently added sometime after that date.

Between the summer of 1948 and April 1952, a thorough purge of suspected pro-Yugoslav members was undertaken and completed. The central committee and leadership of the Albanian party since that date has been unusually stable.

At the second party congress in April 1952, Hoxha announced that the party, which had numbered 2,800 in 1944 and 29,137 in November 1948, had 44,180 members. He also stated that 6,000 members had been purged since 1948. If one can assume that most of these purged were pre-1948 members, then the figures would indicate that almost half of 1952 membership had joined the party since the 1948 break. (In February 1961 the total membership numbered 53,659, but it is impossible to determine how many of these were members in 1952.)

Of the 59-man central committee elected in 1952, 13 were new members. Ten 1948 members had been dropped in the intervening years. Since 1952 only six have been dropped, while 42 new members have been added. All of these latter are members today. The six 1952 members that were subsequently ousted were:

Bedri Spahiu and Tuk Jakova--ousted from the party and central committee in 1955 for "incompetence." They were later labeled "precursors of Yugoslav revisionist elements" in the party.

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Liri Belishova and her husband Mago Como--ousted from their responsible positions in the party and government in 1960 for their pro-Soviet views.

Maj. Gen. Panajot Plaku--who defected to Yugoslavia in the spring of 1957.

Major Gen. Ethem Gjinushi--named a candidate member in 1952, but dropped at the 1956 Congress.

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II. SOVIET-ALBANIAN HONEYMOON, 1948-1955

The Albanian party escaped from its seven years of Yugoslav bondage in 1948, and for the next seven years enthusiastically accepted Soviet tutelage and the resultant enhancement of its stature within the Soviet bloc. Under Yugoslav hegemony, Albania had been almost totally excluded from bloc affairs. It had not been admitted to the Cominform when it was founded in 1947, and, exclusive of Yugoslavia, it had had military assistance and economic agreements only with Bulgaria. Except for a visit by Hoxha to Moscow and Sofia in 1947, there had been no personal contacts with other bloc leaders. In contrast, the first seven years of Soviet hegemony (1948-1955) opened with Albania's admittance to the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance and closed with the organization of the Warsaw Pact in May 1955, with Albania as a charter member. So long as Moscow carried on its quarrel with Yugoslavia, Albania loyally and unhesitatingly followed Soviet direction. But in 1955, as Khrushchev undertook his rapprochement policy with Yugoslavia in earnest, the Albanian leaders began to show some reluctance to accept Soviet direction.

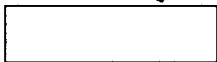
Soviet Ascendancy 1948-1955

As Yugoslav advisers and technicians were forced out of Albania in July 1948, Soviet personnel rapidly moved in. Soviet political, economic and military influence and assistance soon reached a level comparable to that of the Yugoslavs in the pre-June 1948 period. [] in Tirana estimated that there were some 200 to 300 Soviet officers in Albania in July 1948, and that this number had expanded to some 3,000 Soviet military and civilian advisers by the end of the year. This estimate was probably much too high, however, and total Soviet personnel in Albania probably did not exceed a thousand during 1948-1949.

In August-September 1948 an Albanian trade delegation, headed by Minister of Industry Tuk Jakova, visited Moscow and concluded the first trade agreement between the two countries. During the course of the following year, all the Eastern European satellites signed trade and cultural agreements and undertook to share in the Soviet program to underwrite the Albanian economy. When the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance was established in February 1949, Albania was included. Military aid also marked the initial Soviet assistance program--much of which was slated for the support of the Greek guerrilla war, which the Albanians were then assisting. By 1951 the USSR and the satellites were subsidizing one-third of the

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Albanian budget and providing the capital goods necessary to undertake the ambitious industrial projects which Albania began in 1949 under its 2-year plan.

By 1954, Soviet personnel in Albania reportedly included the Ambassador and four distinct missions under his supervision. These reportedly included (1) a political mission of 40 functionaries attached to the important governmental ministries or commissions and to the regional and local offices of the Ministry of Interior; (2) a military mission of 120-130 officers attached to the Ministry of Defense, the general staff and the staffs of divisions and brigades; (3) a technical mission of some 3,000 specialists and technicians in mines, factories, agricultural enterprises and military installations; and (4) a small cultural mission consisting of Soviet professors and artists. In addition, small numbers of Satellite technicians and engineers were employed in various spheres of the economy.

As economic and military ties expanded, political contacts broadened. After 1948, there was an increasing number of Albanian party leaders attending Soviet higher party and military schools each year. Lesser officials, students and workers were sent to the USSR for technical training and exchanges of political, economic and cultural delegations between Albania and the bloc countries became a routine affair.

Albanian Adapts to the New Course

Following the death of Stalin and the inauguration of the new course, Albania, like the other Balkan satellites, made the appropriate minimal gestures to conform. Collectivization, which had barely begun in Albania, was curtailed, although no collectives were abandoned. Peasant debts were cancelled and grain delivery quotas reduced. In August 1953 the government was reorganized and the number of ministers reduced in accordance with the Moscow pattern. At that time too Hoxha relinquished his posts as Foreign and Defense Minister, and a year later, in accordance with the principle of collective leadership, First Secretary Hoxha handed over his post of Premier to Shehu.

Similarly the Albanian leaders fell in step with the USSR and the rest of the bloc in the initial moves to improve state relations with Yugoslavia. Following the proposal of the USSR to Yugoslavia in the summer of 1953 that the two countries again exchange ambassadors, the Albanians followed suit, and diplomatic relations were restored in December.

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In August 1953 the Albanians, like other Yugoslav neighbors, finally agreed to an oft-repeated Yugoslav proposal to establish a mixed commission to examine frontier incidents. These negotiations did not proceed smoothly, however, and were temporarily suspended in September by the Yugoslavs, who claimed that the Albanians were stubbornly rejecting all their compromise proposals. During the summer of 1954 a bloc program to reestablish economic relations with Yugoslavia was inaugurated and new agreements soon concluded. A Soviet-Yugoslav trade agreement was concluded in the fall of 1954, but it was not until 17 May 1955 that an Albanian-Yugoslav trade agreement was signed. Three days earlier the Warsaw Pact had been established, with Albania a member.

Thus on the eve of the Khrushchev-Bulganin surprise visit to Yugoslavia at the end of May 1955, party and state relations between Moscow and Tirana were firm and cordial. The Albanians had responded slowly and hesitantly to the Soviet initiative for introducing the "new course" and for improving relations with Yugoslavia, but the other Balkan states had responded similarly. Bloc gestures toward Yugoslavia had been limited to a resumption of trade and diplomatic relations and curtailment of the psychological warfare campaign. The Cominform resolutions were still in force and nothing had been done to renew party relations or to accord the Yugoslav leaders a voice in intra-bloc affairs. Yugoslavia was in effect being accorded the same status and treatment as "imperialist" states, and the new policy towards Belgrade was presumably intended to augment the general Soviet policy at that time of relieving world tensions.

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III. THE BEGINNING OF THE SOVIET-ALBANIAN DISPUTE
(1955-1957)

Khrushchev's bold effort to resume party relations and to bring Yugoslavia back into the Soviet bloc in May 1955 involved a radical change in direction, unnerving the Albanian leaders and creating a hidden fissure in Soviet-Albanian relations which was to widen and deepen with the passage of time.

At the Moscow Conference of Communist parties in November 1960 Khrushchev claimed that the Albanian Politburo and Central Committee as early as 21 June 1954 gave its written approval to the Soviet endeavor to "recover the League of Yugoslav Communists." His statement was in response to Hoxha's claim at the same conference that the Albanians had not been consulted beforehand of Khrushchev's plans and had made known in May 1955 their opposition to a "unilateral revision of the position of the Communist parties" towards Yugoslavia.

Khrushchev's claim of Albanian concurrence in 1954 does not disprove Hoxha's assertion of resistance in 1955, and it appears likely that both statements are valid. In concurring with the Soviet endeavor to "recover the League of Yugoslav Communists" in 1954, the Albanian leadership probably believed that this was a long-term program, involving tactics which would soften up the Yugoslav Communists to the point that they would initiate moves to be readmitted to the Cominform on terms set by the bloc parties. It is most improbable that either Hoxha or Shehu anticipated or foresaw the possibility that the Soviet party on its own initiative, in order to win Tito's favor, would admit that the CPSU, misled by the machinations of Beria, was to blame for the ouster of the Yugoslav party from the Cominform, or would press satellite leaders to initiate moves affecting their own status. In short the program agreed to by the Albanian leaders in 1954 was presumably one in which the Yugoslavs would voluntarily make concessions and admit their errors in order to gain readmittance to the Communist bloc--not one in which the bloc parties would make the concessions and admit the errors. Thus it seems quite likely that the Albanian leaders did register an objection to Khrushchev's initiative in 1955 to re-establish party relations with Belgrade.

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Developments in the summer of 1955 also tend to substantiate Hoxha's claim. Addressing the People's Assembly in late May, Hoxha, Shehu, and Balluku made almost identical remarks on the Soviet-Yugoslav talks then underway in Belgrade, suggesting that they were meeting only minimal Soviet requirements. They expressed confidence that the talks would serve to strengthen further the friendship of the peoples of the USSR and the Peoples Democracies with the "fraternal Yugoslav peoples," and expressed the hope that the talks would "in a Marxist manner" pave the way to cooperation and mutual trust between our parties." Again in a speech on 28 May, Hoxha used almost identical words to describe the Soviet-Yugoslav talks.

After departing Belgrade, Khrushchev met with Bulgarian leaders in Sofia, and with Rumanian, Hungarian and Czech leaders in Bucharest, for a briefing on the results of his trip. At both sessions the Albanian leaders were conspicuously absent. Instead Hoxha and Shehu remained at home and carried out the first purge of the party leadership in three years. A central committee meeting was assembled in mid-June at which two central committee members, Tuk Jakova and Bedri Spahiu, were expelled from their party and government posts for "incompetence." Latter they were publicly labeled by Hoxha as "precursors of Yugoslav revisionist elements in the party," while within party circles it was explained that the two men had pressed for closer collaboration with Yugoslavia and the rehabilitation of Koci Xoxe.

The Jakova-Spahiu Affair

Though the purge of Jakova and Spahiu was a clear reflection of the party leadership's fear that the Khrushchev-Tito meeting in Belgrade would revive factionalism and pro-Titoist elements within the party, it is doubtful that either Jakova or Spahiu was pro-Yugoslav, or in contact with Yugoslav agents in 1955. Instead, it is more likely that they were merely supporting the Soviet line in 1955. Both men had played prominent roles in the Albanian break with Yugoslavia in June 1948. At the crucial Albanian central committee meeting in September 1948, it was Jakova, having just returned from Moscow, who was named to replace Xoxe as organizational secretary and led the attacks on Xoxe and his supporters as "the main agents of the Trotskyite Yugoslavs" in the Albanian party. Similarly, Spahiu

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had been the public prosecutor in the Xoxe trial and in charge of assembling the evidence against him. Neither of these men could be regarded as pro-Yugoslav or indeed favoring closer collaboration with Yugoslavia for its own sake. Both men, however, had lost status in the party under the Hoxha-Shehu leadership and been dismissed from the politburo in 1951 for "opportunistic views." They remained members of the central committee and in this position would have been aware of the Albanian leadership's reluctance to go along with the new Soviet approach to Yugoslavia in May 1955. They may well have seen in this an opportunity to improve their own status within the party, for it must have seemed apparent to them that the party would be required to adjust itself to the Soviet line. They may well have spoken up in the central committee meeting against the Albanian remonstrance to the Soviet party in May, and thereby established themselves as ready targets for the Albanian leadership in its determination to quash in its infancy any encouragement within the party for a change in party line.

Albania Cold Toward Yugoslav Rapprochement

The purge of the Albanian party leadership in June 1955 was followed on 17 and 21 July by a two-part editorial in Zeri i Popullit which clearly indicated that Hoxha and company had no intention of modifying Albanian internal policies or of admitting any past errors in relations with Yugoslavia, as the Soviets were then admitting.

The articles dealt with the party's struggle against bourgeois ideological manifestations, and for the first time in two years referred specifically to the Titoist Xoxe and the damage he had done to the party. "Even at present," the first article noted, "the discovery of anti-party elements in the ranks of the party is not the least surprising," because remnants of bourgeois ideology within the party still existed and the pressure of the class enemy on party members continued. Under these circumstances, the articles concluded, the struggle of the party should be directed against any kind of liberalism and opportunism in the ranks of the party and against bourgeois nationalism.

Another evidence of the coolness of the Albanian response to the Soviet initiative toward Yugoslavia in 1955 appeared in the cultural exchange field. Whereas the exchange of parliamentary, economic, cultural and athletic delegations between Yugoslavia and bloc countries rapidly developed and expanded during 1955, such exchanges between Albania and Yugoslavia were almost non-existent.

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It was not until mid-August, however, that Yugoslavia took pointed notice of the Albanian attitude. Commenting on the slaying of a Yugoslav herder in a frontier incident, the Yugoslav press on 20 August severely attacked the Albanian leaders for opposing better relations and noted that Yugoslav relations with Albania were worse than with any other satellite. Though admitting responsibility for the shooting, the Albanian response to the official Yugoslav note on the incident was no more apologetic in tone than a similar one a year earlier, and the Albanians offered to pay only half of the compensation demanded by the Yugoslavs for the death.

The sharp Yugoslav criticism of the Albanian leaders coincided with Hoxha's first visit to Moscow since Khrushchev's Belgrade pilgrimage. Hoxha departed for Moscow on 18 August and did not return until 3 September. During this time Khrushchev and other Soviet leaders probably devoted considerable effort at allaying Albanian fears and encouraging the Albanian leaders to tone down their anti-Yugoslav polemics--and with some success. Albanian-Yugoslav relations during the remainder of the year gradually improved. In his review of foreign policy on 14 November Yugoslav Foreign Minister Popovic was able to say: "The Albanian government has of late shown readiness to settle some of the existing questions resulting from earlier relations, and the Yugoslav government expects that the settlement of all other questions will create the basis for good neighborly relations between the two countries."

For the first time in the history of the Albanian party its two top leaders departed Albania at the same time in February 1956 to attend the 20th Soviet Party Congress. The reports and conclusions of the Congress were widely publicized in Albania, and in early March 10,000 copies of Khrushchev's report to the Congress were published in Tirana. On 14 April, after his return from Moscow, Hoxha published an article in Zeri i Popullit endorsing the Congress's decisions, including the admission that Stalin in his later years had committed errors. Hoxha also admitted that "errors have been committed in our country," and stressed the need for strengthening collective leadership and the party's relations with the masses, and for guarding against the overzealousness of the security police.

It appeared momentarily that the Albanian leadership was at last moving to modify its internal policies and its relations with Yugoslavia in accordance with the current Soviet policy. But within a month the party leadership was again strongly resisting any changes in its Stalinist practices or its relations with Yugoslavia.

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As elsewhere in Eastern Europe in the spring of 1956, the Albanian leaders were suddenly faced with a surge of nationalism, demands for greater internal party democracy, and for reforms to correct past errors and injustices. But at the first signs of danger Hoxha and Shehu cracked down hard on all potential dissident elements and refused to bow to the Soviet pressures of the moment.

Tirana Conference, April 1956

It was probably the developments at Tirana municipal party conference at the end of April which rekindled the leadership's fears and brought about the abrupt return to previous policies. On the second morning of this conference, seven members of the Tirana municipal committee rose one after the other to criticize the policies and practices of the party leadership. The speakers attacked the party leaders for abandoning the ideals of Communism and practicing the cult of personality, and demanded the rehabilitation of Koci Xoxe. They also criticized Albania's policy of total alliance with the USSR and advocated a "Titoist" policy of relations with both East and West. The tone of the speeches, however, was not inflammatory and they were apparently intended to cause a reasoned reappraisal of the old line and the establishment of a new one. The speeches were enthusiastically applauded, and the only politburo member at the morning session, Defense Minister Balluku, made no answer to the speeches but abruptly adjourned the morning session at 10:45 a.m. By the time the afternoon session convened at 3 p.m. the city was filled with reports of the morning session, and the street outside the conference building was crowded with people. All full members of the central committee appeared for the afternoon session, at which Enver Hoxha castigated the morning speakers as an "anti-party group." He was followed by other members of the central committee who spoke in the same vein. According to a party member who attended the session, the majority of those present (approximately 250) had expected Hoxha and the other leaders to endorse the views of the morning speeches, and sat in stony silence through the afternoon speeches. When the attacks ended, three of the morning speakers made abject speeches of self-criticism. The other four refused to retract and were arrested that same evening.

The Gega Affair

The Albanian security police moved rapidly to apprehend all other potential deviationists. It was probably at this time that Liri Gega, who had been a top party leader in the wartime partisan period, her husband Major General Dali Ndreu, and Petro Bulatova,

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a Yugoslav national, were arrested, Gega had been expelled from the Politburo and party in 1944 in a factional fight with Xoxe, and in 1956 was reported to be a schoolteacher near Fier. Her husband Ndreu had also been a leading wartime partisan officer but was dismissed from the Army in 1948 and given minor economic posts. In 1956 he was reportedly a Deputy Minister of Industry. On 22 November 1956, Gega, Ndreu and Bulatova were executed on charges of being "linked with the espionage of a foreign country" and carrying out "grave crimes against the people and government."

The arrest and execution of these three is clouded in mystery, but the exchange of recriminations between Moscow and Tirana since 1960 make clear that the Gega case played an important early role in Soviet-Albanian differences. At the time of her execution, it was reported that Gega and her husband had been contacted by Yugoslav agents who were attempting to organize some of the former top party leaders to stage a revolt against Hoxha and Shehu. The charges leveled against them by Albanian authorities, combined with the complicity of a Yugoslav national in the affair, tended to substantiate these reports. It seems doubtful, however, that Gega, having been dismissed from power and the party in the period of Yugoslav predominance in Albania, still retained in 1956 any strong sympathy for the Yugoslav party. Rather it would appear more plausible that, like Jakova and Spahiu a year earlier, she saw in the Albanian's leaders resistance to the Soviet liberalization policy an opportunity to strike at her old enemies in the party and regain power and influence by supporting Soviet objectives-- which meant support of Yugoslav objectives also at that time.

The importance of her case is also demonstrated by her execution, along with her two accomplices, as it is almost unprecedented in Albanian party history since 1948. When Xoxe and his accomplices were tried on similar charges in 1949, only Xoxe was executed while the remainder have all been subsequently released from prison. Gega and her accomplices are the only anti-party members which the regime has admittedly executed since 1949. The usual method of disposal of former important party members has been imprisonment and/or assignment to minor positions outside Tirana.

Thus the exchange between Khrushchev and Hoxha over Gega's execution at party meetings in Moscow in 1960 and 1961 assumes additional interest. At the Moscow Conference in November 1960 Hoxha claimed that at the third Albanian party congress (May 1956) "information about the physical liquidation of Yugoslav agents, including a pregnant woman, was put out." And in his

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report to the 22nd Party Congress in Moscow in October 1961, Khrushchev admitted that the CPSU had intervened with Albanian leaders on behalf of Liri Gega. He said that the intervention had "proceeded from humanitarian considerations and from a desire to avoid the shooting of a woman, who moreover, was pregnant." Rather than humanitarian reasons, it was probably Yugoslav pressure as well as a genuine Soviet interest in protecting individuals who were espousing policies which Moscow was endorsing at that time which motivated Soviet intervention in the Gega case. There is little reason to believe, however, that Gega was in contact with Soviet agents or that the USSR was actively promoting her clique as an alternative to the Hoxha-Shehu leadership. All evidence suggests that the Soviet leaders in 1956 directed their efforts at satellite leaders themselves to win their support for more liberal policies, and no evidence that they sought to overthrow any existing leadership by subversive or covert means.

Gega and her husband were apparently under arrest and possibly sentence of death as early as May 1956. Their execution was delayed as a result of Soviet pressure. But at the first opportunity following the Hungarian revolution and the resumption of Soviet-Yugoslav recriminations in November, Gega and friends were executed. It was not until 26 March 1957 that Pravda reported that an anti-party group, including Liri Gega and Dali Ndreu, "which was preparing an uprising was discovered not long ago in Tirana."

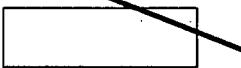
Pressure to Rehabilitate Xoce

But it was not only with the Gega affair that the Soviet leaders were intervening directly in internal party affairs in Albania. In his 7 November 1961 speech on the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Albanian party, Hoxha claimed that in April and May 1956 the Soviet leadership, through M. Suslov and P. Pospelov, tried to persuade the Albanian party "to rehabilitate the traitor Koci Xoce." He noted that this attempt had been made precisely at the time of the Tirana municipal party conference in April, at which opportunist elements had "endeavored to carry out a plot" with the direct encouragement of Yugoslav revisionists.

The Albanian leaders probably regarded these pressures as aimed primarily at their own overthrow and replacement by persons more acceptable to Tito. Substance to this view was probably added by a Yugoslav Nova Makedoniye news article on 14 May 1956 reporting that a bill sponsored by Premier Shehu had been twice defeated in the Albanian parliament. This spurious story was generally interpreted at the time as a Yugoslav effort to force Shehu out.

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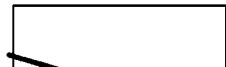


Proof that the Soviet pressure to rehabilitate Xoxe was merely a step preliminary to unseating Hoxha or Shehu or both probably came a few months later when the Soviet leadership made the Albanian leaders privy to a secret communication which Khrushchev sent to Tito on 9 November 1956. This letter stated in part: "We (the central committee of the CPSU) note with satisfaction that since the Brioni talks (September 1956) you fully agree with our position on comrade Janos Kadar as an outstanding personality with revolutionary authority in Hungary. You were fully satisfied with the fact that the central committee of the CPSU, since the summer of this year, in connection with the removal of Rakosi, has tried to have Comrade Kadar made first secretary of the central committee of the Hungarian Workers party."

Hoxha and Shehu were without doubt appalled, though probably not surprised at this point, that Khrushchev had consulted with Tito about the leadership of another Communist party. They must have interpreted this as proof that the pressure to rehabilitate Xoxe was merely a preliminary step in forcing their own removal, just as the rehabilitation of Rajk in Hungary and Kostov in Bulgaria had inexorably led to the removal of Rakosi and demotion of Chervenkov respectively. In his efforts to bring Tito back into the bloc it was clear, in Albanian eyes, that Khrushchev was willing and ready to sacrifice satellite leaders who were obnoxious to Tito. This clear evidence of the treachery of Khrushchev must have severely shaken the confidence of the Albanian leaders in their ties with Moscow. It was high time to find a more reliable ally and it was at this stage that the Albanian leaders began to show increased interest in Communist China (see Chapter 5).

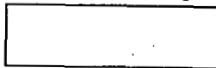
Albanian Third Party Congress, 1956

Yielding just enough to meet the Soviet minimal requirements, Hoxha in his report to the Third Albanian party congress which convened on 25 May paid tribute to the "valuable decisions" of the Soviet 20th party congress. In the area of foreign policy--disarmament and the decision of the Soviet government to reduce its armed forces, the Leninist principle of peaceful coexistence, the normalization of relations with Yugoslavia--he expressed complete solidarity with the USSR. But he then proceeded to make clear that there would be no further deStalinization in Albania and no rehabilitation of Xoxe. Though admitting that the party had committed errors in its evaluation of the Yugoslav party, he put the blame for this on the machinations of Beria, (as the Soviets had done) and on the crimes of Xoxe, whom he flatly refused to rehabilitate. Xoxe had



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"received the punishment he deserved," Hoxha said, "a punishment which had the complete approval of the party." Hoxha also admitted that Stalin in his late years had committed errors and developed a cult of personality, which had some marked manifestations in the Albanian party, but he claimed that the party had dealt with this problem at a central committee meeting as early as July 1954 "and dotted the i's and crossed the t's on this question."

Later in his address Hoxha dealt with the purge of Jakova and Spahiu in June 1955 and the open dissidence manifested at the Tirana party conference in April 1956. Jakova and Spahiu, he said, had attempted to split the party and denigrate the leadership, and had advocated that the "correct" Marxist-Leninist line of the party be abandoned for a general line characterized by "opportunist, Trotskyite, national bourgeois tendencies." The dissident elements at the Tirana Party Conference, consisting of "sickening" intellectuals and bourgeois classes, had asked for the rehabilitation of purged party members and maintained that friendly relations with Yugoslavia were not being developed rapidly enough. Hoxha warned that the party was handling this matter in a spirit of Marxism-Leninism and would not tolerate any outside interference.

Liri Belshova also admitted in her speech to the Congress that many Communist intellectuals, who were "immature" Marxists, had been particularly outspoken since the Soviet Congress in their demands for liberalism in party and state policies and for reconciliation with foreign ideology. She also admitted the existence of anti-Soviet elements in the party who complained that there were too many slogans and too much said about the Soviet Union. She said severe measures had already been taken against those expressing such sentiments.

Hoxha concluded his speech with the affirmation that the party had made no mistakes, "because it followed the central committee on its correct way, because our party has always been correct, because every one of its steps and actions has been made in support of the high interests of our people, and because it has built up its general line on the experience of the glorious CPSU."

To demonstrate the accuracy of Hoxha's claims that the Albanian party line was correct and its membership solidly united, the party congress proceeded to re-elect all the members of the 1952 politburo. The old central committee was also re-elected in toto with the exception of Jakova and Spahiu who had been ousted in 1955, and Major General Ethem Gjinishi, who had been elected a candidate member in 1952.

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Soviet Pressures Relaxed

Although Moscow was probably chagrined at the intransigent Albanian attitude, pressure for change was probably eased with the outbreak of the Poznan riots in Poland at the end of June 1956. The Soviet leaders at this stage began to evidence signs of alarm. On 30 June the Soviet central committee issued a resolution warning that bourgeois internationalists were seeking to cause confusion in international Communist ranks, and on 16 July Pravda denounced "national Communism." The immediate reaction of the Soviet leaders to the Poznan riots was to blame imperialist and reactionary agents who had taken advantage of "certain economic difficulties" and to discourage the Polish leaders from admitting errors or assuming some responsibility for the riots. In the face of growing popular unrest and deepening party factionalism in Hungary, the Soviet leaders concurred in the removal of Rakosi in July but encouraged his replacement by the conservative Stalinist Gero. In early September the Soviet party distributed a secret circular letter warning each of the satellites against following the Yugoslav example and citing the USSR as the correct model.

It is unlikely that the Albanian leaders after July were subjected to any renewed Soviet pressures for further deStalinization or concessions to Tito. Nevertheless, Albanian fears of a resumption of Soviet-Yugoslav pressure were probably revived and exacerbated by the exchange of visits between Tito and Khrushchev in late September and early October. As Hoxha was to state at the November 1960 Moscow Conference, "Why were there so many meetings with Tito in Brioni, and none with us?"

Satellite affairs were indeed a major subject of discussion at these meetings as Tito was to acknowledge publicly in mid-November 1956. During his triumphant tour of the USSR in June, Tito said, he argued strongly for the removal of Rakosi, and at Brioni in September he expressed strong disappointment in his successor, because "Gero differed in no way from Rakosi." Although the Soviet leaders still "had certain wrong and objectional views on relations...with Poland, Hungary, and others," Tito was not too discouraged because he "saw that this was not the attitude of the entire Soviet leadership but only of a part which to some degree had imposed this attitude on others."

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The Hungarian revolution reversed the course of events in Eastern Europe and permitted the Albanian leadership to assume again a more comfortable position towards Yugoslavia. In the immediate aftermath of the revolution, Hoxha was the first of the bloc leaders to attack Yugoslavia and to blame it for partial responsibility for the "Hungarian counter-revolution." And he was able to do so with Soviet support. On 8 November Pravda printed an article written by Hoxha on the 15th anniversary of the founding of the Albanian party. Without specifically naming Yugoslavia, Hoxha vigorously attacked "some elements who want to lure Communists and the peoples with their slogans of some brand of 'special socialism' or some sort of 'democracy' which savors of anything but a proletarian spirit."

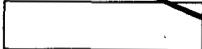
Three days later speaking at Pula, Tito angrily attacked Hoxha personally as "a would-be Marxist who only knows how to utter 'Marxism-Leninism' and not a word more... Such a type has dared not only to slander and stand up against Yugoslavia and still another great socialist country Poland7, but to strike even at the Soviet leaders themselves. Such Stalinist elements believe that men will be found in the Soviet Union of a Stalinist brand who will uphold them and help to maintain them on the backs of their people. This, comrades, is fatal."

With Tito's speech the lid was off and the Albanian press was filled throughout the remainder of November and December with bitter, forthright attacks on Yugoslavia. On 23 November the regime announced the execution of Gega and accomplices who were "linked with the espionage of a foreign country." On the same day Zeri i Popullit accused the Yugoslav leaders of "brutal" interference in Albanian internal affairs, and unrelenting attempts of long duration to discredit and subvert the Albanian party. On 28 November Defense Minister Balluku accused Tito of being a "traitor in the hands of imperialists" and backing all "reactionary movements in Hungary" because of the assistance he receives from the "imperialists." He promised that Albanian Communists would defend their system "against any hostile movement and any agents like Tito."

These vigorous assaults on Tito, which amounted to a complete reversal of the Soviet effort to woo Tito back into the socialist camp, were blandly and openly supported by Moscow. In a general review of bloc relations on 23 November Pravda scored Tito's Pula speech, in particular his attacks on Comrade Enver Hoxha. Pravda asked "why may Comrade Hoxha

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not have his own opinion, the right to criticize, that the Yugoslav comrades claim?" Tito had not only interfered in the affairs of the Albanian Workers Party, Pravda noted, but had used rude and insulting expressions. "At the same time, it is known that the Yugoslav leaders often speak in defense of the thesis of the equality between large and small peoples and the right of each to have their opinion and to support it."

The Albanian leaders must have found this open Soviet support for their attitude towards Yugoslavia most invigorating. At the beginning of 1957 Hoxha again visited Moscow. Upon his return at a Central Committee meeting in mid-February Hoxha cited developments in Hungary and Poland as justification for the correctness of the Albanian party line. Communism in Albania had not been threatened because the party had hit in time all evidence of opportunism, and various types of "opportunists, Trotskyites, revisionists and traitors, who had attempted to turn the party from its Marxist-Leninist road." Referring to party elements who claimed that the proletarian dictatorship must be liberalized, he said that Jakova and Spahiu's views were "as identical with these pretensions as two drops of water."

Throughout these months the roundup and arrests of dis-sident elements, involving large numbers of officers, continued. In May Panajot Plaku, a Minister without Portfolio and a central committee member, fled to Yugoslavia. Hoxha was to claim later (7 November 1961) that Plaku had played the main role in the Tirana municipal conference plot of April 1956 and that Khrushchev had offered him asylum in the USSR after his defection to Yugoslavia. If there is any truth in this allegation, it would tend to substantiate the view that the dis-sident plotters in 1956 were more pro-Soviet than pro-Yugoslav.

Soviet-Albanian Relations Improve

Perhaps in part to remove the suspicions and differences which had developed in Albanian-Soviet relations in 1955-1956, the USSR on 7 April 1957 named a new ambassador, V.I. Ivanov, to replace L.I. Krylov. A few days later Hoxha and Shehu, accompanied by Politburo members Gogo Nushi, Spiro Koleka, Rita Marko, Ramiz Alija and Foreign minister Shtylla departed for a party and state visit to the USSR. It was the first occasion that such a large high-level delegation had been invited to the USSR, and was a part of the Soviet leaders' program at that time to strengthen their authority in the bloc through bilateral contacts. During this visit Moscow took another significant step to improve relations with Albania. In line

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with its bloc-wide program of increased economic assistance, the USSR announced on 17 April the cancellation of the 422 million ruble debt owed by Albania, extended a credit of 31 million rubles for the purchase of agricultural commodities, and promised to make grants to specific sectors of the economy. In cancelling the debt, the USSR made in effect a "free gift" of almost all industry constructed in Albania since 1948.

The Albanian leaders returned from Moscow manifesting great pleasure at their reception in Moscow and expressing maximum appreciation for the Soviet gifts and aid. But the joint declaration of the two parties, as well as the Albanian central committee resolution affirming the agreements, made clear that the Soviet leaders had not abandoned their hopes for a reconciliation with Tito, and that Albanian leaders were required to maintain a more conciliatory attitude towards the Yugoslavs. The central committee resolution in late April pledged "continued efforts to improve relations with Yugoslavia and the League of Yugoslav Communists on the basis of the principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, equality of rights and non-interference in internal affairs."

In an interview with Harrison Salisbury on 28 August Shehu reaffirmed this policy: "In our policy with the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia," he said, "we start from the fact that Albania and Yugoslavia are building socialism. Therefore relations between our two countries can only have a socialist development based on the principles of equality, friendly cooperation, mutual respect and non-interference."

When the anti-party group was expelled from the Soviet party at the end of June, the Albanian party quickly endorsed the action of Khrushchev and his supporters. On 4 July an Albanian central committee resolution was adopted unanimously condemning the factional activity of the Malenkov-Kaganovich-Molotov group and expressed complete solidarity with the CPSU decision. An Albanian commentary in July stated "life itself has undoubtedly confirmed the genuineness and prudence of the Marxist-Leninist policy defined by the 20th CPSU Congress, whether it concerned the further development of the creative forces of the USSR or the international situation."

[redacted] received reports at the time that Hoxha and Shehu at the central committee meeting had joined hands in stating that the changes in the Soviet leadership were all to the good and that they had been hoping something like this would happen. [redacted] noted, however, his opinion that the personal views of Hoxha and Shehu

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were somewhat different. Both were somewhat suspicious of Khrushchev and wary about the future. Hoxha especially was a Molotov Stalinist, and Shehu was also concerned about what the future might bring.

In light of their experience with Khrushchev and his apparent continued interest in pushing forward with his rapprochement policy with Yugoslavia, the Albanian leaders were probably less than enthusiastic about the defeat of the anti-party group. Hoxha and Shehu may have hoped, however, that now that Khrushchev's opposition had been eliminated from the Politburo, he might be ready and able, without difficulty or embarrassment, to reverse his policy of Yugoslav rapprochement and resume the Stalinist anti-Yugoslav policy.

Around 8 or 9 July Hoxha disappeared from Tirana and did not return for two months. During most of this time he was in the USSR. In addition to Hoxha, all other satellite leaders visited the USSR in July and August and probably participated in consultations with the Soviet leaders regarding a new approach to Yugoslavia. Following the ouster of the anti-party group, Khrushchev had determined once again to engage in personal bilateral conversations with Tito in his program to bring about a rapprochement. This time, however, in contrast to May 1955, he probably considered it desirable to obtain the personal concurrence of the satellite leaders and to brief them personally on the conversations both prior to and following the meeting.

On 18 July Khrushchev was host to a meeting in Moscow of Soviet, Albanian, and Bulgarian leaders. Also participating were Tito's two key subordinates, Foreign Minister Kardelj and Interior Minister Rankovic. Tito himself refused to attend, but on the basis of the "comradely" discussions at the meeting, Tito subsequently agreed to meet with Khrushchev in Rumania at the end of the month. The full results of the meeting are not known, but it was clear that the two parties had reached agreement to discontinue the polemics and to continue to work for improved party relations. Tito also agreed to recognize East Germany, and according to Khrushchev, to attend the international Communist meeting in Moscow in November.

While Hoxha and the Albanian leadership may have been partially reassured that the USSR did not intend to permit Yugoslavia to interfere in the internal affairs of the other satellite states and apparently intended to pursue a more cautious policy towards Tito, nevertheless this resumption of

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bilateral party contacts between Tito and Khrushchev must have been disheartening. For it indicated that Khrushchev had not been dissuaded from his ambition to reconcile Tito to the bloc--merely that he intended to pursue his policy more cautiously. There could be no assurance for the Albanian leaders that at some convenient time the USSR might again accede to Yugoslav pressure for the removal of the Albanian leadership. However, the threat was not imminent and in any event the Albanian leaders had no recourse but to concur in Soviet policy.

In concert with the rest of the bloc, Albania continued to maintain and expand its state relations with Yugoslavia during 1957. At the end of July a new trade agreement was signed, providing for an increase of 20 percent in the trade anticipated in the January 1957 protocol. In September the Albanian leadership announced its strong endorsement of the Stoica proposal for a Balkan conference (Rumania, Bulgaria, Albania, Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey) to discuss collective cooperation. During Marshal Zhukov's visit to Albania in October, Hoxha called specific attention to the marked progress in relations with Yugoslavia. A few days earlier, in an article for Zeri i Popullit, he had better reflected the Albanian position. Commenting on the Albanian goal of improved relations with Yugoslavia, he noted that "much depends upon the Yugoslav leaders, who should exert equal efforts."

The expulsion of Marshal Zhukov from the Soviet politburo and government on the heels of his triumphant 10-day tour of Albania in late October must have provided a further irritant to the Albanian leaders. Zhukov's visit marked the first occasion that a full Soviet politburo member had visited Albania and was presumably intended to reflect increased Soviet support. He was lauded throughout his tour in Albania, and, on his departure on 26 October, Hoxha, Shehu and the whole Politburo bid him farewell at the airport. Thus his summary dismissal from his post of Minister of Defense on the very same day, followed by his ouster from the politburo on 2 November, must have appeared to Albanian leaders as another reflection of Moscow's low regard for them.

Nevertheless the Albanian central committee endorsed the ouster of Zhukov, and Albanian Minister of Defense Balluku promptly wired congratulations to his successor, Marshal Malinovsky. On 5 November, Hoxha, Shehu, and defense minister Balluku departed by plane for Moscow to attend the 40th anniversary of the October Revolution and the meeting of international Communist parties.

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Albanian leaders were considerably heartened by this visit. The refusal of Tito to attend or to sign the 12-party declaration was an affirmation that the USSR was no longer willing to make concessions to Belgrade to obtain its concurrence. Similarly the branding of revisionism as the greater danger to Communist parties (though dogmatism and sectarianism were also singled out as dangers) coincided with the Albanian view. During the visit too, the USSR extended an additional credit of 160 million rubles to Albania. In December the GDR also cancelled all credits and interests owed by Albania through 1955; these amounted to 61.5 million rubles.

Upon their return to Albania at the end of November, Hoxha and Shehu sent cables to Khrushchev and Bulganin expressing gratitude to them personally, as well as the CPSU and government, for the warm and cordial reception accorded them. The central committee met on 2 December and issued a resolution specifically praising Comrade Khrushchev's report, as well as the multiparty declarations.

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IV.

AN ERA OF IMPROVED RELATIONS, 1958-1959

The worsening of Soviet-Yugoslav relations at the close of 1957 cleared the way for a renewed period of firm and cordial relations between the USSR and its smallest satellite. During 1958 and 1959 the USSR strengthened its physical presence and posture in Albania and resumed its attacks on Yugoslavia. The Albanian leaders for their part continually proclaimed their fealty to the USSR, and on a number of occasions appeared to go out of their way to reassure Moscow that their loyalty and subservience had never been in question.

The year 1958 opened with the assignment of a new Albanian ambassador, Nesti Nase,* to Moscow to replace Mihal Prifti, who had been in Moscow since September 1953. In April a Soviet-Albanian Friendship Society was founded in Moscow. (Albania had founded its counter part in Tirana in November 1945).

In mid-April, a party group headed by politburo member Hysni Kapo, visited the USSR and Bulgaria to study the experience of Communist party organs in those countries. In the same month an agreement was signed establishing a regular Moscow-Tirana air service by TU-104 aircraft. In the summer of 1958, four "W" class Soviet submarines and a submarine tender arrived at Valona, thereby confirming rumors that a Soviet naval base was being constructed there. Four additional submarines and a tender were added in December 1959.**

These measures, which strengthened Soviet ties and capabilities in Albania, were accompanied by the reinstitution of the Soviet-Yugoslav conflict on a major scale in the spring and summer of 1958.

Yugoslav-Bloc Polemics Resumed

Angered by the Yugoslav refusal to sign the 12-party declaration in Moscow in November 1957, and by other signs that the Yugoslavs had no intention to modify their position on intrabloc relations, the Soviet leaders resumed their polemics with the Yugoslav party in April. On 5 April, the Soviet party declined the Yugoslav invitation to attend the 7th Yugoslav party congress. Two weeks later, on 18 April

*Nase had been ambassador to China from September 1954-May 1956. Prifti was named ambassador to China in September 1959.

**Four more submarines arrived in September 1960, bringing the total number of Soviet vessels at Valona Bay to 12 submarines and 2 tenders. Of these 8 submarines and one tender were withdrawn in May 1961.

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Kommunist attacked as anti-Marxist and revisionist the Yugoslav draft program to be presented to the Yugoslav party congress later that month. The Kommunist article, however, did not attack Tito personally and ended with a pious hope that the Yugoslavs would issue a new draft. The Yugoslavs proceeded nevertheless with their congress (22-26 April) and the adoption of the party program with only minor modifications.

One week later, a vitriolic new campaign against the Yugoslav party and its leaders was launched by the bloc, led not by the Soviets but by the Chinese and Albanians. On 4 May, both Zeri i Popullit and the Chinese People's Daily appeared with long editorials castigating both the Yugoslav program and the Yugoslav party leaders. The People's Daily charged that the 1948 Cominform charges against the Yugoslav party had never been revoked and were basically correct. (Hoxha had made the same claim as early as February 1957.) On 5 May Pravda reprinted in full the Chinese article and, after a central committee meeting on 6-7 May, printed another article of its own, milder in tone than the Chinese and Albanian articles but threatening a deterioration in state relations. During May also, the USSR announced the cancellation of a scheduled visit by President Voroshilov to Yugoslavia and the suspension for five years of the remainder (\$244 million) of a \$285 million credit agreed to in 1956.

It was not until 3 June, at the Bulgarian party congress that Khrushchev personally spoke out against Yugoslavia. In his address to the Congress, Khrushchev labeled the Yugoslav leaders as the "Trojan horse of the imperialists" and accused them of attempting to wreck the unity of the socialist countries and Communist parties. On this occasion too he announced, as the Chinese and Albanians had done earlier, that the 1948 Cominform charges against Yugoslavia had never been revoked.

A month later, on 11 July at the SED Congress in East Berlin, Khrushchev restated this line and claimed he had told Tito this at the Belgrade meeting in 1955. After scoring the effort of the Yugoslav leaders to wreck the unity of the bloc, he then made a statement which the Albanians may well have considered a long-delayed bit of self-criticism. Khrushchev said: "If individual comrades were previously able to think that not everything was done to improve relations between the socialist countries and Yugoslavia to enable Yugoslavia to tread the path of all socialist countries, the Seventh Congress of the League of Yugoslav Communists has shown that it is not a matter of improving relations but of the league's leadership having adopted an artificial, false and anti-Marxist-Leninist line."

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Khrushchev then proceeded to set forth the line the Communist bloc should pursue towards Yugoslavia henceforth--a line to which the USSR and most of the bloc, but not Albania and China, have generally adhered since 1958. "In the pursuit of our common Communist cause," he said, "we must not devote more attention to Yugoslav revisionists than they are worth. The more attention we pay them, the greater will be their belief that they are playing a great part.... We, the leadership of the CPSU, hold the opinion that we should not meet halfway the intentions of the Yugoslav leaders who want to extend our present conflict. We shall not contribute to an exacerbation of passions and relations. In the present situation, as regards relations with the League of Yugoslav Communists, it will be useful to preserve some spark of hope, and to search for acceptable forms to gain contact on certain questions. They and we have a common enemy and we believe that, in spite of the circumstances which have arisen, we shall in the future wage a joint struggle against that enemy, and that we shall jointly defend freedom and the cause of socialism."

Khrushchev's continuing ambivalence towards Yugoslavia probably made a deep impression on the Albanian leaders. On the one hand, his assurance that the 1948 Cominform resolutions against Yugoslavia had never been revoked appeared to vindicate the Albanian reluctance to admit errors and modify their policies in accordance with Yugoslav and Soviet pressure in 1956. His indirect admission that he had been mistaken in believing that concessions to Tito would bring Yugoslavia back into the bloc must also have been reassuring to Hoxha and Shehu. On the other hand, his call for a limitation on polemics and expression of intent to continue to seek contact with the Yugoslavs suggested that he had learned nothing from the events of the past three years and still held to his basic ambition to return Tito to the fold. More than three years later, Zeri i Popullit (on 11 January 1962) was to refer to Khrushchev's remarks in this speech as evidence that the fundamental line in Khrushchev's attitude "which stems from revisionist viewpoints, has always been the line of the rehabilitation of the clique of Tito, the line of rapprochement and of close collaboration with him."

In the spring and summer of 1958, however, the Albanian leaders were displaying no reservations about Moscow, but were basking in the warmth of the renewed bloc campaign against Yugoslavia and their own enhanced status in intrabloc affairs. Hoxha and Shehu attended the CEMA and Warsaw Pact meetings in Moscow in May, at which major decisions were taken regarding

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the coordination of bloc economic planning, agricultural collectivization, and a reduction in size of the Warsaw Pact military forces. During June, Hoxha attended the Bulgarian Party Congress in Sofia, and Kapo attended the Czechoslovak Party Congress in Prague. At the end of the month, Czech Premier Siroky led a high-level government delegation to Albania. In July, Gogo Nushi headed the Albanian delegation to the East German party congress. Albanian leaders in these meetings vented their strong emotions against Yugoslavia and reaffirmed their solidarity with Moscow. Albanian parliamentary elections in May provided a similar opportunity, and in his election speech on 29 May Hoxha sought to reassure Moscow and his listeners that the Albanian behavior of 1955 and 1956 had never existed. "The Albanian party," he said "noted the events which took place after the breaking of relations with Yugoslavia, and fully approved the initiative of the Soviet Communist party and the Belgrade declaration in 1955. We are convinced that the efforts of the Soviet Union and of its party to eliminate differences with Yugoslavia were admirable, correct, Marxist-Leninist, and in the interest of the international workers movement." (For the accuracy of this assertion, compare Hoxha's remarks to the Communist Conference in Moscow in November 1960).

It was clear that Hoxha and his party in 1958 were seeking in every possible way to assure Moscow that the past could be forgotten and that their loyalty to the Soviet leadership was complete. During these months, the Albanian leaders loudly supported all Soviet initiatives in foreign policy, including the Soviet decision to suspend nuclear tests, the Soviet proposals for a summit meeting, and the Warsaw Pact decision to reduce military forces.

After Khrushchev's speech in Berlin in mid-July calling for a limitation on polemics with Yugoslavia, the Albanian press for a short period remained relatively quiescent. But the "assassination" of an Albanian citizen in Yugoslavia at the beginning of August fortuitously removed any need for continued restraint, and Albanian recriminations against Yugoslavia were resumed.

On his 50th birthday on 16 October, Hoxha received personal greetings from the CPSU central committee lauding him as "a gallant militant for the great cause of socialism and distinguished leader of the Albanian Workers party." On the same occasion, Shehu paid personal tribute to Hoxha as well as to the Soviet Union's assistance which had saved Albania twice--in 1944 and again in 1948. Other speakers in late

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1958 referred to the Soviet [redacted] twice-performed rescue of the Albanian party. Albanian praise of the USSR was almost exclusively expressed, however, in impersonal terms of the party and state. There were only infrequent references to Khrushchev personally.

Privately, the Albanian leaders probably retained some reservations about their alignment and their faith in Moscow's support. On 29 August [redacted] held a long conversation with Premier Shehu, who devoted most of his conversation to the Middle East but engaged in an attack on Yugoslav revisionism and spoke of a desire for better relations with the West. Throughout his conversation Shehu made virtually no reference to the USSR, and it was the [redacted] impression that Shehu was trying to claim for Albania a foreign policy somewhat more independent of the USSR than heretofore. [redacted], while believing that [redacted] was reading too much into Shehu's manner, observed at the time that, despite the Stalinist leanings of the Albanian leaders, the dominant factor in the Albanian mentality was nationalism rather than ideology. Albania should not, it concluded, be written off as impervious to change.

In December Hoxha and Shehu were once again in Moscow participating in negotiations for additional Soviet long-term credits for Albania's 3rd five-year plan (1961-1965). On 15 December, the day before their departure for home, they attended the first day session of a Soviet central committee plenum. Zeri i Popullit noted that it was a "great honor."

During the first six months of 1959, Soviet-Albanian relations reached their zenith and Albania assumed extraordinary prominence in bloc affairs. Hoxha and Shehu headed a party and state delegation to East Germany and Czechoslovakia between 5 and 17 January, providing the Albanians a more prominent platform for demonstrating their support of Moscow's free-city proposals for Berlin. On 16 January Khrushchev addressed a letter to Hoxha announcing a Soviet central committee decision to build a cultural palace and a radio broadcasting center in Tirana as a gift to the Albanian people and party. Two weeks later, Hoxha, Shehu and Kapo were in Moscow attending the Soviet 21st party congress. In his speech to the congress, Hoxha referred to Khrushchev "as our dear friend Nikita S. Khrushchev" and described his report to the congress as "a valuable contribution to the Marxist-Leninist treasury." In his report to his own people after

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his return, Hoxha praised the 21st congress for establishing a new basis for building socialism in the Soviet Union. "This basis," Hoxha said, "opens prospects for a rapid building of socialism in our country--meaning the transformation of Albania into 'a beautiful garden' as Comrade Khrushchev told us."

In early spring of 1959 there were also signs that the Albanian leaders, who had regarded Gomulka's Poland unfavorably since October 1956, were willing to make the necessary accommodations. Although Hoxha and Shehu had conspicuously failed to visit Poland during their northern tour in January, a party and state delegation headed by politburo member Koleka visited Warsaw and Prague in March.

On 4 April, the Albanian Council of Ministers issued a decree fully supporting all Soviet foreign policy initiatives, including a summit meeting on Berlin and Germany, or if the West was not ready, a foreign ministers' meeting. Shehu reiterated this support at the CEMA meeting in May, expressing strong hopes that the "foreign ministers' conference and later the summit meeting will be crowned with success and lead to an agreement which corresponds to the profound desire of the peoples and the need for preserving peace." On 4 May Hoxha sent Khrushchev a telegram personally congratulating him on his Lenin Peace Prize award. In mid-May Albania was signally honored by having the tenth anniversary meeting of CEMA held in Tirana, and the stage was set for the personal visit of Khrushchev to Albania 10 days later.

Khrushchev's Visit to Albania

On the eve of Khrushchev's arrival, Zeri i Popullit described Khrushchev as "the faithful pupil of V.I. Lenin, militant and distinguished leader of the CPSU and the Soviet state, who has devoted all his activity and all his energies to the immortal cause of Marxism-Leninism, to the strengthening of the glorious CPSU and the Soviet state, to the strengthening of the unity and cohesion of the countries of the powerful camp of socialism, indomitable fighter in defense of the peace of the world." The paper then added: "Nikita S. Khrushchev is the greatest and dearest friend of the Albanian people who has always given proof of a particular solicitude in generously helping the Albanian people to build successfully their happy life--socialism."

Khrushchev's visit to Albania (25 May- 4 June) exceeded in length any of his numerous visits to other bloc countries with the exception of that to China in October 1954. Since it was the first visit by a Soviet leader since Zhukov's in 1957, its length was probably intended in part to compensate for any feeling of neglect on the part of the Albanian leaders.

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But more importantly it was probably intended to provide Khrushchev the time and opportunity to obtain a better view and understanding of Albania, its problems and its leaders, and to wipe away any residue of friction between the two countries. The delegation--consisting of nine members, including Khrushchev, Defense Minister Malinovsky, and presidium member Mukhidinov--divided into three groups to tour the country during the first five days of the visit. On 30 May, the three groups returned to Tirana where a joint communique was issued in which it was announced that the USSR had extended to Albania since 1957 long-term credits amounting to 526 million rubles (\$131.6 million). On 31 May, all members of the delegation except Khrushchev and Malinovsky returned to the USSR. These two spent the remainder of their visit in southern Albania, visiting Valona, Sarande and Gjirokaster, and naval and military installations in these areas.

Khrushchev's public remarks during the visit were devoted to three themes: 1) praise for the Albanian leaders and people; 2) concern for the security of Albanian against its neighbors, and 3) concern for the country's economic development.

He praised Hoxha as "the glorious son of the Albanian people, unswerving Marxist-Leninist and our dear friend" and Shehu as "remarkable organizer who is devoted to the socialist cause and is a friend of the USSR". He warned Albania's neighbors and assured the Albanian leaders that Albania had "all the forces of the socialist camp on her side." Threatening to establish missile bases in Albania if Greece carried through with plans to establish missile bases there as Italy had done, he proposed a nuclear-missile free zone in the Balkans and Adriatic.

While promising continuing economic assistance, he evidenced some disappointment with the results of the aid to date. He sought to encourage the Albanians to exert greater efforts in exploiting their own resources and to convert their country into a "blossoming orchard" by concentrating on growing various kinds of fruits and less grain.

The visit provided Khrushchev many hours to size up the Albanian leaders in their own environment and to endeavor to remove any remaining differences. In a speech on 6 June after his return to Moscow, Khrushchev, referring specifically to Albania, dwelt at some length on the usefulness of personal contacts among party and government leaders--not only to iron out differences and frictions but also as a means to forestall them.

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And appearances at the [redacted] suggested that relations between the two countries had been further solidified. The Albanian leadership was elated with the Khrushchev visit, which enhanced both the prestige of the country and its leadership personally. In his welcoming address on 25 May, Hoxha referred to Khrushchev as a dear friend and assured him that "the Albanian people welcome you with open heart and arms." Shehu was equally profuse in his praise of Khrushchev and his contributions to Marxism-Leninism and Albania. During his visit Khrushchev was made an honorary citizen of Albania. One month after his departure, the USSR announced the extending of a new long-term credit to Albania of 300 million rubles.

Nevertheless, the visit was probably not as successful as it appeared on the surface to be. Khrushchev was disappointed with the backwardness of the Albanian economy. Hoxha's tour of the countryside in June after Khrushchev's departure, in an effort to sell the Albanian peasants on a fruit growing program, indicates that Khrushchev used all his persuasion to get this program underway. Khrushchev also probably became more acutely aware of the dogmatic approach that Hoxha and Shehu took toward their problems, and was probably not impressed by their ability to lead a program to convert Albania into a "lovely garden." The Albanian leaders, similarly, were probably disturbed by Khrushchev's insistence that they subordinate their fears of Yugoslavia and direct their attention to their own internal problems. Evidence that Khrushchev had demanded a halt to anti-Yugoslav polemics could be noted in the failure of both the Soviet and Albanian leaders to criticize Yugoslavia in their public speeches. Moreover, in the weeks preceding and throughout the visit, bloc and Albanian propaganda against Yugoslavia ceased and [redacted]

[redacted] noted that the Albanian leaders were behaving in a most friendly manner toward Yugoslav diplomats--a most unusual phenomenon. In August, the Albanian minister to Yugoslavia, who had been recalled a year earlier, returned to Belgrade.

It was not until September that new and residual differences began to emerge. Both Hoxha and Shehu were on vacation for several weeks during the summer. Hoxha began an extensive vacation in Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia on 10 July and did not return to Tirana until 11 September. Shehu likewise spent a month in the USSR beginning in mid-August.

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Sino-Soviet Differences Emerge

During these months Sino-Soviet differences, especially over Communist international strategy, were becoming more pronounced and more evident. On 9 September, TASS issued its unprecedented statement of neutrality in the Sino-Indian border dispute and called on both sides to arbitrate the matter. On the same day Zeri i Popullit published an editorial violently attacking Yugoslavia for supporting India in the Sino-Indian border dispute, and terming the Yugoslav position a "slanderous campaign against China." On 20 September, Hoxha, having returned from vacation, resumed the polemics against Yugoslavia in earnest. While expressing readiness to develop normal state relations and promote trade, he said that on ideological grounds, "we will never agree" with Yugoslav revisionists who serve capitalism by such disgraceful deeds" as "continuing to engineer intrigues and to send diversionists" into Albania.

During the latter part of September there was a sudden spurt of Albanian interest in China. On 16 September Mihal Prifti, the former Ambassador to the USSR, was named Ambassador to China and on 1 October an Albanian-Chinese Friendship Society was founded in Tirana. Its counterpart had been founded in Peiping a year earlier. During this same period (23 September-12 October), Shehu headed an Albanian party and government delegation to attend Communist China's 10th anniversary celebration. Upon his return, an Albanian tendency to support the Chinese position on controversial issues became increasingly evident, and in retrospect it would appear it was at this juncture that the Albanian leadership embarked on the policy which has led to the present poor state of Soviet-Albanian relations.

Before examining the affinity of views emerging between Peiping and Tirana, it will probably be useful to first examine the course of Sino-Albanian relations since the establishment of the two regimes.

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V.

SINO-ALBANIAN RELATIONS: 1949-1959

Albania, along with other Communist governments, recognized the Chinese People's Republic shortly after its establishment in October 1949, but for the next four years the CPR appeared only barely aware of the existence of Albania. Diplomatic representatives were not exchanged until the summer of 1954.* By that date the CPR had long since established diplomatic and trade relations with all the other Eastern European Satellites and by 1954 was carrying on an estimated 20 percent of its foreign trade with them.

Immediately after the death of Stalin, both Communist China and the USSR took steps to enhance Peiping's prestige and to increase its actual strength, and it was apparently in this context that China and Albania agreed to exchange Ambassadors. By this date too the Soviet bloc countries were normalizing state relations with Yugoslavia again, and both Moscow and Peiping may have considered it expedient that China exchange ambassadors with Albania prior to establishing diplomatic representation in Belgrade. (China and Yugoslavia established diplomatic relations one year later, in May 1955).

Once having established diplomatic relations, Peiping moved rapidly in the next two years to expand its ties with Albania, although there was little evidence of any response or appreciation from Albania. In October 1954, cultural and technical cooperation agreements were signed in Peiping. In early December the Chinese gave Albania a gift of \$2,000,000 in the form of 20,000 tons of wheat, 2,000 tons of sugar and rice each and other items. Despite the unprecedented nature of the gift** and the obvious display of Chinese interest in assisting Albania, the Albanian leadership did not appear to attach particular significance to it. When the first shipment of the free grain arrived at Durres in March 1955, Vice Premier Tuk Jakova, who was soon to be ousted from his central committee and government posts, was the ranking Albanian representative on the welcoming committee.

*Hsu I-hsin was named Chinese ambassador to Tirana, and Nesti Nasse was Albania's first ambassador to the CPR.

**Communist China has never made gifts to any other satellite, except one to Hungary following the 1956 revolution.

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During 1955 relations continued to expand, with the signing of a yearly trade agreement in March and a radio broadcasting agreement in September. In July an Albanian cultural delegation visited China, and in December the first Chinese cultural delegation visited Albania, which was received during its stay by Foreign Minister Shtylla and Manush Myftiu, a politburo alternate member. By the beginning of 1956 the presence of Chinese personnel in Albania was becoming evident. In February

[redacted] while noting that the Soviets were still much in evidence, reported that the more recent development was a large Chinese mission there, which he estimated at about 150-200 including students, technicians, and embassy personnel.

On 29 March 1956, the Chinese Red Cross granted the Albanian Red Cross 20,000 yens (20,000 rubles) to care for Albanians who had suffered during a severe winter. One day later, Tirana Radio announced that the USSR Red Cross had offered 40,000 rubles in relief. The timing of the Soviet offer suggests that the USSR may have been more concerned about the increasing Chinese attention to Albania than the Albanians appear to have been.

The routine recall of Albania's first ambassador to Peiping in May 1956 after a two-year tour was symbolic of the Albanian attitude towards the CPR during these years. There were no signs in early 1956 that the Albanian leaders held China in any special regard within the bloc, or foresaw any possibility that Chinese support at some future date could become an alternative to Soviet support. Though China had extended to Albania special economic assistance and some extraordinary attention, this aid was unimportant in comparison to Soviet assistance. Furthermore, on the fundamental issue of rapprochement with Tito's Yugoslavia, the CPR had evidenced at this stage no resistance to the Soviet program.

Albanian Leaders visit Peiping

On 29 August 1956 Hoxha and Shehu departed for Peiping to attend the 8th congress of the Chinese party. It was their first visit to the Far East and first extensive contact with the Chinese leaders. It also marked the beginning of significant Albanian interest in China.

The Albanian leaders' extended visit (they did not return to Albania until 7 October) coincided with the growing concern

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among Communist bloc leaders over the effects of the de-Stalinization campaign and the rapprochement with Yugoslavia. Thus the Chinese Congress provided a face-to-face opportunity for bloc leaders, including the Albanians, to learn the Chinese view on these problems especially as they concerned intra-bloc relations and bloc unity. Polish officials subsequently reported that the Chinese in private conversations had supported Polish aspirations for greater independence from Moscow. Although the dogmatic orthodox views of the Albanian leaders represented the opposite extreme of the political spectrum from the views of the Polish liberals, it is possible that Hoxha and Shehu may also have found some sympathy for their views among the Chinese.

In the fall of 1956 the Chinese were primarily concerned with the maintenance of the solidarity of the bloc which was being weakened and threatened by Soviet policy. The Chinese had reacted with caution and reserve to the Soviet downgrading of Stalin in February 1956 and had become increasingly alarmed by developments in Eastern Europe during the summer. At the September Congress Liu Shao-chi set forth the line that China was to pursue in intra-bloc relations during the remainder of 1956 and in the first half of 1957. On the one hand, he said, "the Chinese Communist party hopes and works for the great international solidarity of the proletariat" and will "continue to strengthen our solidarity" with all other Communist parties. But he added "in our relations with all fraternal parties we must show warmth and take a modest attitude toward them. We must resolutely oppose any dangerous inclination toward great-nation chauvinism or bourgeois nationalism."

Thus the two-sided Chinese line--stress on bloc solidarity, on the one hand, and condemnation of great-nation chauvinism on the other--was equally appropriate for Polish and Albanian leaders. For while the leaderships of these parties had no intention to withdraw from the bloc, each strongly objected to the Soviet practice of great-nation chauvinism--particularly interference in their internal affairs. The Polish leaders were objecting to the limitations Moscow was endeavoring to place on deStalinization; Albanian leaders were objecting to Soviet efforts to push them further in liberalization than they wished to go.

Thus it seems quite possible that the Albanian leaders, like the Poles, found a sympathetic ear at the Chinese congress in Peiping for their resistance to Soviet pressure in 1955-1956. This may partly explain the perceptible increase in Albanian attention to China after October 1956, although in the wake of the Hungarian revolution the Chinese assumed, largely in support

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of Moscow and the preservation of bloc unity, an increased role generally in Eastern European affairs. Thus the growth of Albanian-Chinese relations after 1956 paralleled similar developments in other Eastern European countries, and only assumed real significance with the emergence of Sino-Soviet differences, and with the identification by Albanian leaders of their national interests with the Chinese view on Communist international strategy.

When a Chinese cultural delegation arrived in Tirana in late December 1956, in contrast to the perfunctory reception of a similar delegation a year earlier, it was received by Shehu and other Politburo leaders. (Hoxha was absent, being in the USSR in December and January.) An even more cordial reception was given a Chinese parliamentary delegation, headed by politburo member Peng Chen, which toured Albania from 11-17 January 1957. It was greeted everywhere by exceptionally large crowds and the delegation was met on arrival and seen off on departure by the whole Albanian Politburo (except Hoxha who was still in Moscow). In February an Albanian trade delegation, led by Trade Minister Ngjela, traveled to Peiping to sign an agreement concerning the use by Albania of a long-term Chinese credit.

By the spring of 1957 the influence which China was acquiring in Albania and throughout Eastern Europe was becoming increasingly apparent. Commenting on this phenomenon, [redacted] expressed the view that the Albanians, partly motivated by national traditions of struggle against Turks and Slavs, found this increasing Chinese influence comforting to them, even though they in no way considered the Chinese as a possible alternative attraction to the USSR.

For the next twelve months--until the resumption of the bloc-wide anti-Yugoslav campaign in April and May 1958--Albanian-Chinese relations continued to expand. An Albanian trade union delegation attended the May Day celebration in Peiping, and ten days later a youth delegation, headed by the secretary of the Albanian youth union, left for China to attend the third Congress of Chinese youth. From 8 May-15 June, 1957, an Albanian parliamentary delegation, headed by Politburo member Rita Marko and including Mrs. Hoxha, toured China. During its stay it was given a banquet by Liu Shao-chi. On 31 May a mail and telecommunications agreement was signed, and on 9 July a direct radio-telegraphic service was officially opened between Peiping and Tirana.

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In March 1958, the CPR, as the USSR had done a year earlier, announced the cancellation of all debts owed by Albania. This amounted to an estimated \$17 million. Chinese influence was becoming so pronounced that [redacted] was led to speculate on Chinese intentions. [redacted] noted that the number of Chinese and other Asians in Albania on all kinds of missions was surprisingly large and increasing, creating the impression that the Chinese were particularly interested in Albania. In the [redacted] opinion, there appeared to be a desire by the Chinese not only to assert their presence by the side of the Soviets, but also to undertake a specific penetration of Albania, perhaps in competition with the USSR.

If this indeed was the Chinese intent by the spring of 1958, the leadership Peiping assumed in the resumption of the anti-Yugoslav campaign in early May was well calculated to enhance its capabilities. From this date onward the Chinese stood squarely alongside the Albanians in their continued vitriolic attacks on the Yugoslav revisionists. China's unwavering support on this issue provided a solid basis for increasing Albanian interest in all things Chinese.

In an election speech on 27 May, Shehu, though not departing from accepted Soviet standards at that stage, paid specific tribute to the Chinese Communists and the example they were establishing for other Asian people. "With its more than 600 million people," he said, "the Great People's Republic of China is marching at an unprecedented pace on the road toward building socialism. People's China, faithfully guided by its glorious Communist party has, in fact, become a driving force for all Asian people on the road of liberation and prosperity." Hoxha also praised the "gigantic steps" which the Chinese, who had introduced their "great leap forward," were taking towards Communism.

Though indicating in May that the Chinese example was useful only to other Asians, by the winter of 1958-1959 the Albanian leaders, as well as some other satellite leaders, were beginning to find merit in Chinese innovations for their own countries. On 7 November the Albanian central committee issued a decree requiring all officials including party and state cadres, members of the central committee, and all state and party employees, to engage in physical labor for at least one month each year. The Albanian press was also taking note of the Chinese communes in favorable terms. When Moscow's strong disapproval of these Chinese innovations became apparent, however, Albanian and other satellite officials soon fell silent on the controversial subject.

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Meanwhile, however, state and party relations continued to expand. From 17 September to 29 October 1958 a military delegation, headed by Defense Minister Balluku, toured China at the invitation of Defense Minister Peng Te-huai. The visit coincided with the Chinese offensive against the offshore islands, and Albanian and Chinese leaders were profuse in their exchanges of mutual support. The Chinese Defense Minister characterized the Albanian armed forces as the "guardian of the forefront of the socialist camp along the Adriatic Sea."

In December 1958 a trade delegation headed by Vice Premier Kellezi arrived in Peiping to confer on strengthening economic cooperation, and on 16 January a new long term trade agreement was signed. To accentuate its significance Chou En-lai attended the ceremonial signing. This agreement, providing for a loan of 55 million rubles (\$13.8 million) between 1961-1965 was the largest yet advanced by China.

During 1959 there was an increasing number of high-level exchanges between the two countries. In March a ceremonial party and state delegation, headed by politburo member Spiro Koleka, visited China. In May a party delegation headed by Hysni Kapo, the third-ranking man in the Albanian hierarchy, was received by Chou En-lai, Teng Hsiao-ping and other Chinese leaders. Between 28 May and 2 June, coinciding in part with Khrushchev's visit, Defense Minister Peng Te-huai toured Albania. Finally, near the end of September, an Albanian state and party delegation, headed by Premier Shehu and alternate politburo members Haki Toska and Adil Carcani, set out for the 10th anniversary celebration of the CPR in Peiping. At the same time another delegation, led by chairman of the Central Auditing Commission Koco Tashko, visited China. From this date Albania's relations with China blossomed, while relations with the USSR withered away.

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VI.

MOSCOW LOSES A SATELLITE

It was perhaps at the 10th anniversary celebration of the CPR in Peiping in October 1959 that the Albanian leaders became fully aware of the significance for themselves of the growing estrangement between Moscow and Peiping. Up to this point the Albanians had been out of step with Moscow over Yugoslavia and the means of handling Yugoslav revisionism, but they had never deviated in any other respect from complete support of Soviet foreign policy. Like a few other satellites, they had also been enamored in 1958 with China's "great leap forward" and the methods introduced by the Chinese to push it forward, but the Albanian leaders had quickly fallen silent when Moscow's displeasure became apparent.

Prior to September 1959 the Albanians had given every evidence of viewing Khrushchev's coexistence policy strictly within the context of its impact on Yugoslavia's role within the bloc. Its wider ramifications for international Communist strategy or relations with the Western powers had not appeared to concern Albanian leaders. But following the Peiping celebration, they began to adopt positions in support of the Chinese on both ideological and international issues which were in dispute between Moscow and Peiping.

Sino-Soviet differences, which had been growing for two years, were expressed sharply at Peiping's October celebration, which followed Khrushchev's visit to the United States in September 1959. Khrushchev arrived at the celebration apparently intent upon convincing the Chinese leaders of the practicability and correctness of his coexistence policy and summit negotiations. The Chinese not only refused to agree with Khrushchev but in their talks with foreign delegations endeavored to gain their support for the Chinese view that the Communist camp should pursue more militant and revolutionary tactics under the protection of Soviet military power. The Polish delegation returned to Warsaw convinced that important differences in approach and policy existed between Moscow and Peiping, but firmly aligned behind Khrushchev. There is evidence, however, that at least the Czech, East German, and Albanian Satellite delegations were sympathetic to the Chinese argument. Soviet-Czech relations, for example, were strained during the fall and winter of 1959-1960, and at the Warsaw Pact meeting in Moscow in February 1960 Novotny was the only satellite leader not given a private audience by Khrushchev.

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In addition to their conversations with Chinese and other bloc officials in Peiping in October, the Albanian leaders had the opportunity during August, September and October to learn the views of several other bloc leaders. Hoxha had vacationed in Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria during this time and Shehu had spent a month in the USSR prior to his departure for Peiping in late September. In addition Bulgarian First Secretary Zhivkov vacationed in Albania between 7 and 17 October.

It seems quite likely that Sino-Soviet difference were a major subject of discussion among bloc leaders at this time and Hoxha probably found some sympathy among both the Bulgarian and Czech leaderships for the Chinese position. Shehu probably carried away from Peiping also the impression that the Chinese views were highly regarded among other bloc officials, and that the USSR would be required to adapt itself to the Chinese line.

Albanians Reflect Chinese Views

Hoxha's 20 September speech (his first in almost three months) gave the first inkling that not all problems had been permanently resolved between Albania and the USSR during the Khrushchev visit in May. Moreover it appeared to reflect more clearly Chinese thinking on international relations than the "Camp David spirit" which Hoxha then professed to support. Although Hoxha heralded Khrushchev's disarmament proposals in this speech and dutifully observed that the Eisenhower-Khrushchev meeting would result in a "thawing" of the cold war, he warned that despite "the improved international situation," it was necessary to "increase hatred against the main enemies--the imperialists and their servants, the Yugoslav revisionists." He also said Albania could not relax until all countries disarm, because the imperialists were waiting for the opportunity "to stab us in the back."

By mid-October, the Albanians were clearly aligning themselves with China on controversial issues. On 15 October Radio Tirana for the first time in almost a year referred to the Chinese communes, praising them for transforming "a poorly developed district into a rich one in a short time." On 22 November the Albanian radio again praised the communes, describing them--in a formulation very offensive to Moscow--as the "best organizational form for building socialism and passing to Communism." The same broadcast also praised China's aid to Albania which it said had included a 50 million ruble grant in 1954 and a 30 million grant in 1956.

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A letter by Hoxha to border guard representatives of the Union of Working Youth, broadcast by the Tirana Home Service on 23 October, appeared to be even more clearly inconsistent with Moscow's efforts to improve international relations and to reflect Tirana's fear of the consequences of a genuine East-West detente. The letter called for greater vigilance on the border areas "because the warmongering imperialists and their lackeys of all types have tried and still continue to try to throw the world into an inferno." Atomic rocket bases being established in Italy and Greece "are directed against us," Hoxha explained, "and the Yugoslav revisionists--the sworn enemies of Marxism-Leninism--are buying planes from the Americans and are training spies and diversionists against our country."

Events surrounding the fifteenth anniversary of Albanian liberation on 28 November again pointed up the growing cleavage in Soviet-Albanian relations and the increasing warmth in Sino-Albanian relations. In his major address Hoxha again delivered a lengthy outburst against Yugoslavia, characterizing Titoist friendship as merely "the mask that conceals the wolf." Moscow reduced his speech to five lines in Pravda, and instead published a special article by Hoxha which dealt almost exclusively with Albanian economic achievements. The article mentioned the danger of "contemporary revisionism" but without specific reference to Yugoslavia. Similarly, the Soviet greetings to Tirana made no reference to revisionism but simply asserted that the government of Albania was conducting a peaceful foreign policy and "actively fighting for the liquidation of the cold war."

In contrast, the Chinese greetings expressed special gratitude to the Albanians for defending the "purity of Marxism-Leninism against modern revisionism." On the same day of the Pravda article, People's Daily published an article by Shehu in which he spoke persistently of "Trotskyite Yugoslavia" and its "Trotskyite leaders" and declared that the Albanian party would never compromise with the Yugoslav revisionists until they were crushed.

At the same time, however, the Albanian leaders continued to pay homage to Moscow, and the Soviet leaders continued in their efforts to obtain Albanian conformity with bloc policy. Presidium member Spiridonov, who was dispatched by Moscow to attend the Tirana celebration, was met by Hoxha, Shehu, Kapo and other politburo members, and the exchange of speeches rebounded in mutual admiration. On his departure Spiridonov praised the progress Albania had made and the care and attention he and his delegation had received. In turn Hoxha and others praised the beneficial effects of Khrushchev's earlier

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visits to Albania and the United States, as well as Soviet foreign policy initiatives in general. Again in December in his foreign policy review, Foreign Minister Shtylla praised Soviet initiatives and efforts towards easing international tensions.

The year 1960 opened ominously for the Albanian leaders, and relations with the Soviet Union were to deteriorate precipitately throughout the year. On 6 January, Vukmanovic-Tempo, the head of the Yugoslav trade unions and a member of the Politburo, left Belgrade for a three weeks vacation in the USSR at the invitation of the Soviet trade union. This was the first visit by a high Yugoslav official to the Soviet Union since November 1957, and it was preceded by talks between Khrushchev and the Yugoslav Ambassador in Moscow and Tito and the Soviet Ambassador in Belgrade. Although Vukmanovic's talks with Khrushchev and other Soviet leaders during his stay were unproductive, they seemed to demonstrate Khrushchev's continuing interest in rapprochement. It seems quite possible, in light of their remonstrance in 1955, and the detente policy being pursued by Moscow in the fall and winter of 1959 and 1960, that the Albanians were alarmed over the purpose of the talks and expressed their reservations to Moscow.

Warsaw Pact Conference in Moscow, February-1960

There are no reports available on any exchanges between the Soviet and Albanian leaders at this time, but it is evident that relations had significantly degenerated below the level indicated in their public statements when bloc leaders assembled in Moscow 2-4 February for an agricultural conference and meeting of the Warsaw Pact. At the agricultural meeting Hoxha attacked Polish agricultural practices, complaining that the Poles were still maintaining a system of private capitalism which was both an affront and a danger to the entire socialist camp. Khrushchev angrily replied that the Albanian comrades should tend to their own affairs, which were none too good. The Poles knew best, Khrushchev said, what was needed in their country, and the imitation of models and the practicing of theoretical generalities would have to cease, since social conditions in every country were different. Khrushchev then noted that what counted at present were not didactic texts and their application, but production figures and correct ones.

Since Khrushchev had strongly endorsed Gomulka's policies at the Polish party congress in March 1959, and had expressed disappointment with Albanian agriculture in the summer of 1959, one can only surmise that the Albanian attacks on Polish agricultural methods stemmed more from irritation and frustration.

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than any belief that the ~~criticism~~ would produce constructive results.

At the Warsaw Pact meeting on the following day the Albanian leaders found themselves again under indirect attack from Khrushchev. At this session, Sino-Soviet differences over foreign policy were brought for the first time before an assembly of the bloc leaders. The Chinese observer, Kang Sheng, an alternate member of the CCP politburo, delivered a speech which differed so markedly from the Soviet line that it was never published by the bloc press outside China. Contrary to the Soviet position that the situation was favorable for East-West negotiations, Kang charged that American talk of peace was merely a tactic to lull the bloc and "dismember the socialist camp." Khrushchev is reported to have criticized the Chinese for refusing to support Soviet efforts to reduce world tension and to have attacked certain Chinese actions, including the border dispute with India. He also criticized the Chinese attitude towards Yugoslavia, charging that this created disunity among bloc countries.

These charges, delivered before the leaders of the entire Soviet bloc, not only illustrated the gravity of the Sino-Soviet dispute, but must have made clear to the Albanians their tenuous position. For Khrushchev's accusations against China, specifically those with regard to Yugoslavia, were equally applicable to Albania.

Hoxha and Shehu returned to Albania on 9 February angry, humiliated, and apparently determined to support China to the best of their ability. For the next two months, however, the regime continued its ambivalent policy of avowing support for the USSR's peaceful coexistence policy on the one hand, while stressing on the other the threat of imperialism and Yugoslav revisionism and the need to increase popular vigilance against attempts to overthrow the present system. Hoxha did not speak publicly until 6 March, and then spoke only briefly on the early February meetings in Moscow. He pointed to the agricultural conference's decision that, while priority should be given to the future development of those crops most economically advantageous to it, "each socialist country should insure the necessary bread grain from its own domestic production." This amounted to a reversal of Khrushchev's admonition in May 1959 to the Albanian leaders that they should grow more fruit and not worry about grain production since the Soviet Union was a great grain producer and could supply it. It was the first suggestion that Moscow had begun to apply economic pressure in its efforts to force the Albanian leaders to support wholeheartedly the Soviet position in the dispute with China.

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Clear divergencies in the bloc attitude toward Yugoslavia reappeared in mid-April. In a major foreign policy speech on 18 April, Tito warmly supported Soviet foreign policy, and blamed the West for international problems. He accused the bloc, however, of slandering Yugoslavia's internal program. On 19 April Moscow favorably reported Tito's support of bloc foreign policy and avoided any comment on Yugoslav internal policies. In contrast, the Albanian radio on the same day broadcast a lengthy indictment of Yugoslav revisionism, especially its agricultural policy, and the Chinese party journal Red Flag, in perhaps its most violent attack on Yugoslavia since 1958, categorically condemned Belgrade's foreign policy.

On 27 April Pravda printed an article by Hoxha in which he once again assured the USSR that Albania would always remain "not in word alone but in deeds" a staunch supporter of Leninism and Soviet policy including peaceful coexistence. In the same article, he promised a tireless struggle against Yugoslav revisionism, the main danger to the international Communist movement. On May Day, a Zeri i Popullit editorial accused Belgrade and Athens of planning to dismember Albania. The rest of the bloc did not repeat this charge, but on 22 May the Soviet Kommunist issued a condemnation of Yugoslav foreign as well as internal policies. The article may have been calculated in part to gain Albania's support in the showdown Moscow was preparing with China at the Rumanian party congress in June.

On 26 May a delegation headed by politburo member Gogo Nushi departed for Peiping to attend the WFTU meeting, and on 3 June a second delegation, including Haxhi Lleshi and Liri Belishova, both politburo members, departed for a month's tour of China and Asian bloc countries. Thus two high-level delegations were in China during the first three weeks of June, at a stage when Peiping was actively lobbying among Communist parties for support in the dispute with Moscow.

According to Hoxha, the Soviet party sent a letter to the Albanians in early June inviting them to discuss some of the problems about the Chinese Communist party, but Albania refused because it wanted a third party present. With this letter in hand, Hoxha and Shehu were well aware that if they attended the Rumanian party congress, which Khrushcev and all other satellite leaders were attending, they would be under extreme pressure to take a pro-Soviet position on the charges Moscow was preparing to bring against Peiping. Hoxha and Shehu apparently hoped to avoid any outright commitment, either against Moscow or for Peiping, by failing to

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attend the congress. In their place the number three Albanian, Hysni Kapo, headed the Albanian delegation.

Bucharest Meeting: June 1960

At the Rumanian party congress, *(18-27 June) Khrushchev spoke first, setting forth his coexistence policy as an indispensable condition for further progress towards Communism. Following the Chinese counterattacks in which the Chinese delegation attacked Khrushchev personally on both ideological and personal grounds, Khrushchev first made a heated response and then called upon each delegate to state his position. Albania, leading the alphabet, was called on first, but Kapo asked to delay his response till later.

Whether he spoke later is unclear. He did make at least one speech at the congress, which was published. It followed the line generally adhered to by the Albanians since the fall of 1959, and was generally pro-Chinese in purport though not avowedly so. While recognizing and praising the leadership of the USSR, Kapo was less than enthusiastic on the tenets of peaceful coexistence and non-inevitability of war. He did not mention the dangers of dogmatism and sectarianism, but abusively attacked revisionism in the typical Albanian manner.

Other reports at the time indicated that he spoke more positively in support of China, in what would have been the speech he made at Khrushchev's request. Hoxha told the international conference in Moscow in November 1960, however, that the Albanians had not spoken at Bucharest, reserving the right to do so in November. He said the cards were obviously stacked in Bucharest, since neither the Chinese nor other Communist parties had had sufficient notification of Soviet intentions to consider properly the charges.

The implication in Hoxha's remarks that the Albanian leaders had not firmly decided on their future course of action in June is supported by other evidence. Kapo returned from the congress on 27 June, but a central committee meeting to hear and approve his report was not held until 11-12 July. He was met upon arrival by several politburo members, but both Hoxha and Shehu were conspicuously absent. Indeed, Hoxha

*For a complete discussion of the Sino-Soviet dispute as it developed at the Congress, see ESAU XII-61, 20 February, 1961.

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made no appearances or speeches between 4 June and the opening of the central committee meeting on 11 July. In early July, an Albanian delegation led by Lleshi and Belishova returned from their Far Eastern tour. En route home, they spent one day--2 July--in Moscow, where they were honored by a dinner given by the Chairman of the USSR Supreme Presidium Brezhnev and attended by Frol Kozlov. According to Tass, "the conversation held during the dinner...took place in a cordial atmosphere," but subsequent charges by Hoxha suggest that the main effort of the Soviet leaders was directed at endeavoring to win the support of the Albanians in the dispute with China. They apparently scored considerable success with Madame Belishova, but with other members of the delegation they were less successful. Kapo's report on the congress, combined with the report of the delegation returning from China, probably only strengthened the Albanian leaders in their desire to resist Moscow. On 11 July the Albanian central committee finally assembled with Hoxha presiding. The communique issued following the meeting made amply clear that the Albanian leaders had adopted a stance of all-out support for the Chinese. It stated: "The plenum completely and unanimously approved the attitude maintained by the Albanian Workers Party delegation at the meeting of the representatives of Communist and Workers parties, as well as the communique released by the... meeting, held in Bucharest in June 1960."

The Albanian leaders had thrown down the gauntlet and it was now the Soviets turn to respond to the challenge. The USSR appears to have done this through two channels. First, Maurice Thorez, the leader of the French Communist Party and a long time acquaintance of many Albanian Communists, was dispatched to Albania at the end of July in an effort to convince the Albanian leaders of their folly. Though Hoxha at the conclusion of Thorez's visit made an appropriate speech endorsing Soviet leadership, he continued to give only ambiguous support to Soviet foreign policy and avoided any reference to the dangers of dogmatism.

The Abortive Coup Attempt

Shortly thereafter, the USSR apparently marshaled its strength within Albania to overthrow the Hoxha-Shehu leadership. According to Hoxha, the CPSU sent a letter in August asking the Albanian party to join forces in condemning China. When the Albanians refused, the USSR launched a "surprise attack" on Albania, pressuring certain leaders to turn against the Albanian leadership, and inciting the army to overthrow the party leadership. There is considerable evidence to support Hoxha's charges.

By September the French, Italian and Turkish missions in Tirana had all received stories of an abortive army plot in early August to overthrow the Albanian leaders. Defectors to Greece also provided some information. According to these stories, the plot involved the ~~commander~~ of Albanian naval

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forces, Vice Admiral Sejko, three army generals and numerous other officers of medium rank, as well as several provincial party and government leaders. The plot was suppressed in its early stages, and about 200 persons were arrested. Western representatives in Tirana at the time noted signs of nervousness among Albanian leaders and a change in behavior of bloc diplomats, who began telling stories confidentially to their Western colleagues about vast discontent spreading among the Albanian masses and the difficulties faced by the regime. It was also noted that Soviet Ambassador Ivanov was recalled to Moscow during August, not to return. He was finally replaced in January 1961 by Shikin.

The existence of a plot to overthrow the regime was publicly stated by Hoxha at the Albanian party congress in February 1961. He carefully labelled it, however, an "imperialist" plot. Three months later, a trial of the plotters including Sejko, an Elbasan district government official, and eight others, was held in Tirana, and heavy sentences were meted out. The Soviet press never mentioned either Hoxha's revelations of the "imperialist" plot or the trial itself. One day prior to the conclusion of the trial on 27 May, however, the USSR withdrew its eight W-class submarines based at Vlone. Subsequently it evacuated the naval base entirely and began the wholesale withdrawal of its military, diplomatic, and technical personnel from Albania.

With the uncovering and quashing of the August plot, neither Moscow nor Tirana made any further serious effort to disguise the chasm which had developed between them. Moscow began applying all the levers in its possession short of direct military intervention, to force the Albanians into line, and the Tirana leaders moved boldly to eliminate any suspected pro-Soviet party elements.

Purge of Belishova and Tashko

At a central committee plenum on 9 September, two longtime party officials, Liri Belishova and Koco Tashko were accused of "grave errors" and "hostile activities" respectively, and were ousted from the leading organs of the party. Shortly thereafter Belishova's husband, Maqo Como, was removed from his post as Minister of Agriculture. Belishova had attended a party school in the USSR between 1952 and 1954, and as recently as early July had talked with the Soviet leaders in Moscow. She apparently had endeavored to persuade her Albanian colleagues to abandon their resistance to Moscow's foreign policy. Tashko, after graduating from Harvard and spending some 16 years in the United States, had organized one of the early pre-war Communist groups in Albania. He had headed a delegation to China in October 1959, but he

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apparently had not been so impressed with Chinese methods and advances as were other Albanian visitors. As recently as May 1960, he had been designated to speak at the forthcoming Albanian party congress then scheduled for November.

The removal of these leading officers from the party was followed by a shakeup of party and government provincial leaders and many arrests. And in mid-September the regime announced that Shehu would head the Albanian delegation to the UN general assembly which Khrushchev and all other Satellite party first secretaries were attending. Hoxha's refusal to attend was another evidence of the chasm which had developed in Soviet-Albanian relations.

Having failed to overthrow the regime by an internal coup in August, the USSR began applying its economic lever more forcefully and enlisting the support of its satellite allies. The Soviet bloc refused an Albanian request to supply 75,000 tons of wheat to meet Albanian needs. Instead the USSR offered only 15,000 tons, the Bulgarian 3,000 tons and the remainder of the Eastern European satellites none. The USSR also began at this time to withdraw some of its technicians from Albania, as it had done earlier (late July) in China. To mitigate the increasing Soviet pressure on Albania, China offered to supply Albania 45,00 tons of wheat, of which 9,000 had arrived by 10 October.

At the UN session in New York, Shehu was roundly snubbed by his bloc colleagues. At a Czech reception on 27 September, Khrushchev ignored Shehu and refused to shake hands with him. For their part, the Albanians took issue with bloc disarmament proposals, and after his return to Albania Shehu publicly attacked them. In a speech to the Albanian People's Assembly on 25 October he described as absurd a proposal made by Bulgarian party leader Zhivkov that Balkan troops be reduced to the level of border guards. He said such a proposal for local and complete disarmament in the Balkans meant to "disarm before aggressive imperialism which is armed to the teeth and surrounds us." He also took to task a formal resolution of the Polish delegation at the UN General Assembly for a freeze on the number of military bases on foreign territories. Shehu said that this thesis, which "may have originated in the head of somebody," would legalize American foreign bases.

In this speech Shehu did not restrict himself to an attack on the proposal of other satellite leaders, but proceeded to denounce various statements made previously by Khrushchev. Shehu argued that a persistent struggle

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against revisionism "would not raise the authority of the revisionists, as certain people pretend" (Khrushchev in June 1958), and that revisionism should be continually fought as it was the "most effective factor" being used by imperialism in its efforts to disrupt the unity of the bloc.

In another oblique attack on Khrushchev, Shehu asserted that the Albanian party "stands resolutely on the Leninist point of view, according to which imperialism is the source of wars, and that as long as imperialism exists--even say in a small part of the world--the base for war and the danger of wars and imperialist aggression still exists." At the Rumanian party congress in June Khrushchev had said, "History will possibly witness a time when capitalism is preserved only in a small part of the world...states as small...as a button on a coat....Of course small beasts of prey can also bite...but they have different possibilities. They are not so strong and it is easier to render them harmless."

Finally, in a defiant rebuke of Moscow's repeated criticism of Chinese Communist doctrinal positions, Shehu asserted that the Chinese People's Republic is on the correct path--the Marxist-Leninist path," and referred to Mao as an "invincible Marxist-militant, the great son of the Chinese people."

With this speech, there could be no doubt of the position the Albanian leaders would take at the forthcoming conference of Communist Parties, which was assembling in Moscow in early November. Kapo, the Albanian delegate to the Bucharest Congress in June, was already in Moscow participating in the preliminary negotiations for the conference.

While Moscow and Tirana were dropping the facade of fraternal relations, relations between Peiping and Tirana were growing in ardor. Albania was the only Eastern European country to send a high-level delegation to Peiping's 11th anniversary October celebration. In his speech in Peiping on 4 October, the leader of the Albanian delegation, politburo member Kellezi, praised the Chinese party's views as being based on "correct political, ideological and economic lines" and mentioned the people's communes as an integral part of this correct line. In turn, the Chinese leaders reaffirmed their support of Albania's "completely correct" stand, and described Albanian and Chinese thinking as "based on the same ideological foundation." "We both share the same political line" a Chinese speaker said, and are "fighting shoulder to shoulder to defend the purity of Marxism-Leninism;... neither towering mountains nor deep oceans" can separate the two people. And, in a swipe at the USSR, the speaker noted

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that the Albanians had "never entertained any unrealistic illusions regarding the enemy." During the delegations stay it was received by Mao, an unusual honor.

Meanwhile in Tirana, at a function celebrating the CPR anniversary, Hoxha declared that the Communist party of China had always maintained a correct ideological position and been a determined fighter in safeguarding the purity of Marxism-Leninism against "revisionism and other harmful manifestations."

A further sign of Chinese-Albanian unity occurred at the Rumanian trade union conference in Bucharest on 28 October. Just before the Yugoslav delegate began to speak, the Chinese and Albanian representatives walked out. The other Soviet bloc representatives remained to hear the Yugoslav speaker.

Moscow Conference, November 1960

Hoxha's and Shehu's last visit to Moscow was surely an unpleasant one for them. They arrived apparently determined not merely to support fully the Chinese position, but to express without reservation all their pent-up anger with the Soviet leaders. They arrived on 3 November, accompanied by two other politburo members--Hysni Kapo, who had participated in the earlier negotiations in Moscow on the Sino-Soviet dispute, and Ramiz Alija, who had replaced Belishova on the Secretariat. Moscow almost certainly regarded his inclusion as a calculated insult. Two days after their arrival, the CPSU addressed a letter to the Chinese party stating that relations with the Albanian party were strained because of the purging of comrades whose only "crime" was their friendship towards the CPSU. The purged comrades were presumably Belishova and Tashko.

The formal conference opened on 10 November. Khrushchev spoke on the first day, outlining and arguing his case against the Chinese Communists without reference to the Albanian problem. Hoxha did not speak until 16 November. In his speech Hoxha sought not only to support fully the Chinese case, but proceeded to catalogue all of Albania's grievances against the Soviet leaders, particularly Khrushchev. He opened with a strong defense of China's position on foreign policy and ideological issues, including an accusation that Khrushchev confused and jumbled Lenin's theses. He said Albania favored the policy of peaceful coexistence, but this policy presupposed a strengthening of the class struggle, as capitalists countries would never accept peaceful coexistence willingly.

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but could only be forced to accept it. Albania, he said, did not argue that war is inevitable, but war would never disappear until imperialism disappeared, and imperialism was preparing for war. He who concealed this, Hoxha said, was a traitor.

The Albanian party, he went on, was being attacked as anti-Marxist-Leninist and anti-Soviet, but its only "crime" was to oppose the hasty condemnation of the Chinese Communist party, which had been mistakenly and dishonestly accused of dogmatism. He then proceeded to set forth Albania's grievances and in the process to bely his earlier statement by making clear that Albania's only "crime" predated the growing rift in Sino-Soviet relations.

Khrushchev and his Soviet comrades, Hoxha charged, made decisions and passed judgments unilaterally on questions which were international in character. They did not carry out regular consultations with other parties as Stalin did, he went on, but held meetings only when conditions were favorable for them. Warsaw Pact decisions, he said, were made without consultations. There had been no consultations on Khrushchev's trip to Belgrade in May 1955. The Albanian party had approved a coexistence policy toward Yugoslavia, he said, but it had wanted the international movement to decide if there should be "conciliation" with the Yugoslav party. Similarly, other parties had not been consulted on the 20th Party Congress, and consequently the CPSU had had no right to expose Stalin in the manner in which it did. Stalin belonged to the world Communist movement, not just to the CPSU, Hoxha said, and had been the greatest leader since Lenin.

On the other hand, Hoxha said, Khrushchev had consistently refused to expose Tito completely, and since the Yugoslav 7th Party Congress (April 1958) had been quiet about revisionism. The Soviet party had many documents revealing the treachery of Tito which it had refused to publish. Similarly, Albanian articles which mentioned Tito were not published in Moscow.

Finally, Hoxha said, the Soviet leaders had interfered rudely in Albanian internal affairs. They had sent Suslov to plot with Tito the destruction of the Albanian leaders in 1956. More recently, when Albanian politburo members had visited Moscow, they had been pressured and told to make a choice between the Chinese party and the CPSU. Some were flattered, while others were threatened if they did not line themselves up against the Albanian leadership. The Soviet Ambassador in Tirana, Hoxha went on, had interfered in

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Albanian foreign affairs, and other Soviet officials had tried to instigate Albanian generals against the party leadership. The USSR has even refused to provide fraternal aid to Albania's starving (as a result of the crop failure in 1960), and had offered only 10,000 tons of grain, enough for 35 days, instead of the 50,000 requested.

Other bloc and Communist leaders responded immediately to Hoxha's attacks on Khrushchev and the Soviet party, but Khrushchev himself did not respond until 23 November. He made no effort to answer Hoxha's charges in detail but explained that the party proposed to "issue a memorandum to answer some falsehoods." On the question of Stalin and the 20th Party Congress, he said that Hoxha had read the report on Stalin at the time and said nothing. Khrushchev also said he had documentary proof, in the form of a letter to the CPSU in 1954, that Hoxha had agreed that the CPSU must make some approaches to and some agreements with Yugoslavia. Records would disprove all that Hoxha had said, but then, Khrushchev concluded, "Who wants to argue with Hoxha?"

China Gains a Satellite

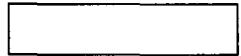
Two days later, Hoxha and Shehu abruptly left Moscow by train for home, leaving Kapo and Alija behind to sign the compromise agreement which was finally reached on 1 December and published on 4 December. Ostensibly they had departed early to participate in the 28 November liberation celebration in Tirana, but they did not reach there until 29 November.

Two days after the Albanians' departure, Mao and Chou En-lai attended a reception at the Albanian embassy in Peiping in honor of Albanian liberation day, and the Chinese party dispatched greetings to the Albanian party which stated, "that the Chinese Communist Party is proud to have such unyielding comrades-in-arms as the Labor Party of Albania...The Chinese people deeply appreciate the enormous support rendered to them by the Albanian people."

On 2 December, the Albanian radio broadcast that new monuments were being erected throughout Albania, "including busts of Joseph Stalin and Mao Tse-tung," and on 19-20 December a party plenum "unanimously approved" Hoxha's report to the Conference as well as "all the activites" of the Albanian delegation there. The Albanian delegation, the plenum communiqué noted, had "tried to contribute" to the success of the meetings by "presenting what the Albanian Communists think and feel about the problems which were discussed."

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Although another year was to lapse before Khrushchev publicly attacked the Albanian leaders and broke diplomatic relations, the last ties with the Soviet leaders were severed with the early departures of Hoxha and Shehu from the Moscow Conference in November. From that day onward, Tirana's only powerful friend in the Sino-Soviet bloc was Communist China. By December 1960, it was clear that Moscow, Tirana, and Peiping were in agreement on at least one of Khrushchev's assessments--namely, his statement on 6 November to Teng Hsiao-ping, one of the leaders of the Chinese delegation at the Moscow conference, that "The USSR has lost an Albania," while "China has gained an Albania."

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ANNEX A

ALBANIAN WORKERS PART

FIRST CENTRAL COMMITTEE (1941, 1942)	DISPOSITION IN PARTY
Enver Hoxha (Sec. Gen.)	Currently First Secretary of AWP.
Koci Xoxe	Expelled from politburo September 1948, executed June 1949.
Tuk Jakova	Ousted from politburo in 1951; removed from Central Committee and government in June 1955; present whereabouts unknown.
Bedri Spahiu	"Resigned" from politburo in 1946, re-elected in November 1948, ousted again in 1951; removed from central committee, party and government in June 1955; whereabouts unknown.
Nako Spiru	"Committed suicide" in November 1947.
Liri Gega	Removed from central committee in November 1944, executed in November 1956 for plotting against the state.
Kristo Themelko	Criticized in September 1948, removed from central committee in November 1948.
Ramadan Citaku	Removed from central committee in November 1948, criticized in 1949.
Ymer Dishnica	Excluded from politburo in 1943-1944; expelled from party in 1947.
Kadri Hoxha	Arrested in March 1947 and reportedly executed.
Kemel Stafa	Killed in skirmish with carabinieri in 1942.
KNOWN ADDITIONS TO CENTRAL COMMITTEE 1943 - 1948	CURRENT STATUS
Pandi Kristo	Removed from politburo and expelled from party, September-November 1948; sentenced to prison May-June 1949, subsequently released.
Sejfulla Maleshova	Removed from politburo and central committee in February 1946; expelled from party in 1947.
Hysni Kapo	Currently member of politburo.
Mustafa Gjinishi	Purged in August 1944 on Yugoslav orders; executed by Gega.
Liri Belishova	Removed as candidate member central committee, February 1948; re-elected to central committee and elected member of politburo November 1948; removed from politburo and expelled from party, 1960.
Gogo Nushi	Currently member of politburo.
Mehmet Shehu	Removed as candidate member of central committee February 1948; re-elected to central committee and politburo in September-November 1948; elected Premier 1954.
Nesti Kerenxhi	Ousted from politburo and party in November 1948; accused of supporting Xoxe.
Pullumb Dishnica	Criticized in September 1948, dropped from central committee in November 1948.
Xhoxhi Blushi	Criticized in September 1948, dropped from central committee in November 1948.
Other Prominent Party Leaders	
Koco Tashko	Minister of Agriculture and Forestry in postwar governments; named Chairman of Central Auditing Commission in 1952; ousted from post and party in September 1960 and accused of activity against the party.

ALBANIAN WORKERS PARTY

ANNEX B

POLITBURO MEMBERS (1941-1948)

Enver Hoxha	1941 - present	
Koci Xoxe	1941 - 1948	Executed, 1949.
Tuk Jakova	1941 - 1951	Ousted from Politburo, 1951, and from Party, 1955.
Bedri Spahiu	1941-1946; 1948-1951	"Resigned" in 1946; ousted in 1951; removed from Party in 1955.
Nako Spiru	1941 (?) - 1947	"Committed suicide," 1947
Liri Gega	1941 - 1944	Ousted in 1944; executed in 1956.
Kristo Themelko	1946 - 1948	Ousted in 1948.
Ymer Dishnica	1941 - 1943	Expelled from Politburo in 1943, Party in 1947.
Pandi Kristo	? - 1948	Imprisoned, 1949
Sejfulla Maleshova	1944 - Feb. 1946	Ousted from Politburo in 1946, Party in 1947.
Hysni Kapo	1946 - present	
Mustafa Gjinishi	1943 - 1944 (?)	Purged in 1944, killed.
Gogo Nushi	1947 (?) - present	
Nesti Kerenxhi	1947 - 1948	Ousted in 1948.

POLITBURO MEMBERS (NOV 1948 - PRESENT)

Enver Hoxha	1941 - present	
Tuk Jakova	1941 - 1951	Ousted from party, 1955.
Bedri Spahiu	1948 - 1951	Ousted from party, 1955.
Mehmet Shehu	1948 - present	
Hysni Kapo	1946 - present	
Liri Belshova	1948 - 1960	Ousted, 1960.
Beqir Balluku	1948 - present	
Gogo Nushi	1947 (?) - present	
Spiro Koleka	1948 - present	
Manush Myftiu	1956 - present	(alternate 1952 - 1956)
Rita Marko	1956 - present	(alternate 1952 - 1956)
Ramiz Alija	1960 - present	(alternate 1956 - 1961)
Haki Toska	1961 - present	(alternate 1956 - 1961)
Adil Carcani	1961 - present	(alternate 1956 - 1961)

ALTERNATES

Kadri Hasbiu	1961 - present
Koco Theodosi	1956 - present
Petrit Dume	1961 - present
Pilo Peristeri	1952 - present

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ALBANIAN WORKERS PARTY

CENTRAL COMMITTEE, 1948-1961

NOVEMBER 1948

EN'VER HOXA
TUK JAKOVA
MEHMET SHEHU
BEDRI SPAHIU
HYSNI KAPO
LIRI BELISHOVA
BEQIR BALLUKU
GOGO NUSHI
SPIRO KOLEKA
Ramiz Alia
Sadik Bekteshi
Petrit Dume
Mrs. Nexhmije Hoxha
Manush Myftiu
Pilo Peristeri
Mihal Prifti
Theodor Heba
Niazzi Islami
Manol Kononi
Abedin Shehu
Zemal Hamiti
Shaqiqi Keliczi
Rugjet Ndion
Sali Ormeni
Spiro Primo
Nexhi Vincani
Kohrenan Ylli
Sadik Bocaj
Hoxhi Lleshi
Shefqet Peci
Rrnmadon Xhangollli

APRIL 1952

HOXA
Jokova
SHEHU
Spahiu
KAPO
BELISHOVA
BALLUKU
NUSHI
KOLEKA
Alia
Bekteshi
Dume
Mrs. Hoxha
Myftiu
Peristeri
Prifti

JUNE 1956

HOXA
SHÉHU
KAPO
BELISHOVA
BALLUKU
NUSHI
KOLEKA
Alia
Bekteshi
Dume
Mrs. Hoxha
MYFTIU
Peristeri
Prifti

FEBRUARY 1961

HOXA
SHEHU
KAPO
BALLUKU
NUSHI
KOLEKA
ALIA
Bekteshi
Dume
Mrs. Hoxha
MYFTIU
Peristeri
Prifti

Ylli
Bocaj
Lleshi
Peci
Xhangollli
Dervishi
Hasbiu
Kondi
MARKO
Pacrami
Pashko
Ploku
Mrs. Shehu
Theodosi
Toska
Zicishti
Cako
CARCANI

Mrs. Kapo
Ngjela
Shambili
Terezi
Sulejman Baholli
Ishail Caushi
Piro Dodiba
Tonin Jakova
Abdyi Kellezi
Tedi Lubonja
Petro Magjistari
Prokop Mura
Mustafa Pajenga
Zoi Themeli
Ramiz Xhabija
Seit Bushati
Tare Celo
Jani Dako
Thoma Deljana
Petro Dode
Frok Pieter Gega
Rrapo Gjermeni
Piro Gushta
Rahman Hanku
Pjeter Kosta
Dashnor Mamagi
Tahir Minxhozi
Jorgjia Prenti
Lamec Sheme
Behar Shylla
Miko Shuli
Xhafer Spahiu
Shaban Sula

Aranit Celo
Dilaver Poci
Hajdar Aranitosi
Halim Ramchito
Joshar Menzelxhiu
Kofina Staria
Kristaq Dollaku
Kristo Sharra
Leffter Goga
Mile Qirko
Nesti Nase
Parashqevi Shehu
Petro Ollodashi
Pieter Leka
Rahman Perlakku
Rexhep Kolli
Toda Mance
Veiz Gjeboro
Xhorxhi Robo

KEY:

- | | |
|------------|---|
| ALL CAPS - | Full member of Politburo |
| Brown - | Candidate member of Politburo |
| Green - | Member of Secretariat |
| Blue - | Candidate member of Central Committee
also Candidate member of Central Committee |

~~TOP SECRET~~

[redacted]

[redacted]

~~TOP SECRET~~