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ALBANIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

1

by Ramiz Alia

(Extracts from the address of the 1st Secretary of the Central Committee of the Party of Labour of Albania, Ramiz Alia, in Korça on August 26th, 1985)

(After dealing with the economic progress of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania and the plans for future development, Alia emphasised that the fundamental policies pursued during the life of Enver Hoxha would continue. He went on:)

In recent years the international situation has become graver and more complicated. Typical is the mobilisation of the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, to establish their domination over other countries. The intensification of the arms race has naturally led to an escalation of confrontation and tension. Bilateral tension has shifted from peripheries to the zones where the borders of the military blocs meet. Medium-range missiles have been deployed on both sides of Europe, the events in Poland have erupted, interference in the Balkans has been stepped up, Lebanon has been put to the torch, and so on.

But there has also been an obvious mounting of the resistance of the peoples and their progressive forces, and efforts by many medium-sized and small states to defend their independence and sovereignty.

Not only the arms race, but also the aggressive economic policy of the great capitalist powers exacerbates the international situation today, and charges it with new dangers. They have rushed like ravening wolves to rob the poor and economically weak countries of their assets. By means of loans and credits they have created a monstrous financial machine for the enslavement of peoples. Many

states are on the verge of bankruptcy. Brazil, Argentina, Mexico and other countries in Latin America, Poland and Yugoslavia in Europe, most of the Asian countries and almost the whole of Africa are examples of this. Europe has become an arena of brutal interference by the two superpowers, which behave like overlords in their respective spheres of influence and are tightening the screws on their allies more and more.

Our country has been and is a resolute opponent of the aggressive and expansionist policies of American imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism, an irreconcilable opponent of reactionary bourgeois and revisionist ideologies. Albania will not have relations of any sort with the United States and the Soviet Union. This stand is a consequence of our complete incompatibility with the aggressive policies they pursue, with their savage plunder of the peoples, with the degeneration of their culture and way of life which they try to spread to every corner of the globe.

Our solidarity and sympathy are with the peoples, with those who fight for national freedom and independence, with those who struggle for social progress and the universal emancipation of mankind. Proletarian internationalism and solidarity will always characterise our foreign policy.

Our country has been and is for good relations with other states, based on equality, respect for sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs and mutual benefit. Evidence of this can be seen in the diplomatic relations we have established with the overwhelming majority of states in the world, in the trade relations we are extending ever wider, and in our increasing cultural contacts with other countries.

There are a few countries - only two or three in Europe - with which Albania still does not have diplomatic relations. With certain of these states we have some

problems to resolve.

With Britain, for example, we have the question of the Albanian gold stolen by the German nazis, which fell into the hands of the British at the end of the war. This gold must be returned to Albania because it is the property of the Albanian people. Our government has made continual efforts to this end. Indeed, recently it has opened discussions with Britain. The British government has claims connected with the so-called Corfu Channel incident, for which Albania does not accept any responsibility.

The return to Albania of the gold which has been held unjustly in the banks of London for more than forty years, an act which has harmed our economy, will open the way to the settlement of problems in dispute between the two parties, in conformity with their interests and mutual respect, and to the normalisation of relations between the two countries.

Relations between Albania and Greece are now proceeding on a good course. Obvious progress has been made in the field of trade and cultural exchanges, communications and tourism. Comrade Enver Hocha's book "Two Friendly Peoples" reflects the consistent well-intentioned policy of socialist Albania towards neighbouring Greece, and presents vivid evidence of the correct, principled, Marxist-Leninist policy which has been pursued towards the Greek minority and which has guaranteed it a life of dignity and complete equality with its Albanian brothers in all fields, which has given it the possibility to use and cultivate its mother tongue, to develop its traditions and preserve its national identity. Our Party and state will continue to pursue this policy consistently.

Our relations with Turkey have developed harmoniously, in a friendly atmosphere. Relations of good neighbourliness are developing in a similarly promising way with Italy also.

We would like to have normal friendly relations based on the principles of good neighbourliness with Yugoslavia. Regrettably, this has not been achieved - and not through the fault of Albania. Those who have ruled in Yugoslavia, both before and after the war, have refused to reconcile themselves to the existence of the Albanian nation and its independent state. This stand has been expressed in practice in Belgrade's efforts to turn the independent Albanian state into a Yugoslav colonial province and to denationalise the Albanians of Yugoslavia.

From this ideology and policy stems all that chauvinist violence which has erupted in Kosova and other areas inhabited by Albanians. The establishment of good neighbourly relations with socialist Albania and the guaranteeing of national and democratic rights to the Albanians of Yugoslavia will contribute greatly to the stability of Yugoslavia.

We have not interfered and do not interfere in the internal affairs of Yugoslavia. But just as no one can prevent us from defending our Homeland and our socialist system when they attack us from Belgrade or anywhere else, neither can anyone stop us protesting when our Albanian brothers in Yugoslavia are persecuted, humiliated or insulted simply because they are Albanian.

Our policy towards all states is a consistent, principled policy. Those who dream about and expect changes in our line, who interpret the normal political and diplomatic activity of our independent and sovereign state as the "opening up" of Albania, as a "tendency" to rapprochement with one side or the other, do so in vain. Albania neither "opens up" nor "closes up". It will proceed along the course it has followed hitherto, a course which has secured its freedom and independence, the defence of socialism, and its good name in the world.

The foreign policy of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania is the policy which Comrade Enver Hoxha worked

out and applied and which has been proclaimed and endorsed in the Congresses of the Party. This policy responds to the interests of our people and of socialism.



RAMIZ ALIA

"ALBANIA: GENERAL INFORMATION" (1984) is available from

The Albanian Society, 26, Cambridge Road, Ilford
Essex,

at £2.50 (including postage).

ALBANIA AFTER ENVER HOXHA

by Martin Smith

Between 14th and 28th September 1985 Ron Gregory, Secretary of the South Wales Branch of the Albanian Society, and I visited the People's Socialist Republic of Albania as guests of the Committee for Cultural and Friendly Relations with Foreign Countries.

On our arrival at Rinas Airport we were warmly welcomed, on behalf of the Committee, by Athanas Bakalli. We were introduced to Zef Mazi, who was to accompany us and interpret for us throughout our stay. Mr. Mazi, who works as a translator for the "8 Nëntori" Publishing House and is responsible for, among many other things, the recently published Guide-Book to Albanian, has a remarkable command of English. We are much indebted to him not only for his skilful interpreting, but also for his kindness, attentiveness and expert guidance.

Our visit was the first by an Albanian Society delegation since the death of Enver Hoxha on 11th April this year. The first engagement that we fulfilled was, at our own request, a visit to the Martyrs' Cemetery overlooking Tirana to pay our respects to the great leader of the Albanian people and to lay flowers and a written message, in the name of the Society, on his simple grave. The message paid tribute to him as a great patriot and nationalist, as a great socialist and internationalist, as the founder of the Party, as the leader of the national liberation struggle, and as the architect of the new Albania. To stand at his graveside was a deeply moving experience.

How have the Albanian people reacted to Enver Hoxha's death? Immediately after the announcement of it they were overcome with grief. (The scenes of grief at the funeral, shown on British television and, with more extensive coverage, in a video film which the Albanian Society will soon be showing, prove that the usual picture painted by the British press and broadcasting media of Enver Hoxha as

a "hated tyrant" is completely distorted). However, although they continue to feel a deep sense of loss, they immediately determined to "turn their grief into strength" (as they put it) by energetically following the path which Enver Hoxha so successfully marked out. In fact, the title of the present report is appropriate not only in the obvious sense "Albania after the death of Enver Hoxha", but also in the sense "Albania following the teachings and policies of Enver Hoxha". Enver Hoxha is dead, but his work lives on in socialist Albania - a point made succinctly in a roadside sign which I observed near Saranda: "Rron populli, rron Enver" (the people lives, Enver lives). The people remain as united as before around their Party, under the leadership of Ramiz Alia, and any hopes that may have been entertained in certain quarters - in government circles in Washington, London, Moscow and Belgrade, for example - that Albania will change the direction of its domestic and foreign policies are completely without foundation.

So far as British-Albanian relations are concerned, the Albanian position remains, as Ramiz Alia made clear in an important speech in Korça on 26th August, that Britain must return the Albanian gold with the accumulated interest before diplomatic relations can be established. In the absence of diplomatic relations, there can be no significant cultural and scientific exchanges, and the volume of trade is certain to remain small (at present about £3 million per year). Even if the British Government cannot be made to see that it is wrong to withhold stolen gold from its lawful owner, it ought to be able to see that it is in Britain's interest to promote trade with Albania. One cannot help contrasting the poor state of relations between Britain and Albania with the much healthier state of relations between France and Albania. Just before our arrival in Tirana, a high-ranking French Government delegation, led by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Jean-Michel Baylet, had visited Albania; and when we visited the "Enver Hoxha" hydroelectric power station under construction at Koman, we learned that, while there were several British Leyland trucks on the

site, France had gained the contract for the supply of the turbines and other sophisticated equipment - a contract worth \$80 million, paid in cash, of course, since Albania does not accept foreign loans or credits.

The visit to Koman was one of the high points of our extensive tour - a high point literally as well as metaphorically, since the dam, which contains 4.5 million cubic metres of rock, is 115 metres high. The power station, the third to have been constructed on the river Drin, will have a capacity of 600,000 kilowatts. The first of its four turbines is expected to be operational in October 1985, and the second soon afterwards. The massive scheme is a compelling testimony to the remarkable progress which Albania, once the most backward country in Europe, has made during the past forty years.

Koman is in the north of the country, which was hit during the winter by exceptionally heavy snowstorms. The snow wrought considerable havoc, but, as during earthquake emergencies in recent years (especially in 1979), the whole people united, under the guidance of the Party and Government, to eliminate the consequences of the disaster.



Ron Gregory and Martin Smith paying respects on behalf of the Albanian Society at the grave of Enver Hoxha,

If snow was the main problem in the winter, the main problem this summer has been an exceptionally long dry spell. However, thanks to the extensive irrigation schemes, the drought has been only a problem, not a disaster, and, despite the adverse weather, overall agricultural production targets have been met.

A highlight of our stay in the south was a visit to the Greek minority village of Dervican, south of Gjirokastra. Publicity has been given in the British press, from time to time, to allegations that the Greek minority is very badly treated, and that about 28,000 of its members are detained in prison camps. Like the Secretary of the Albanian Society, Bill Bland, who visited Dervican and another Greek minority village, Goranxi, in 1984 (see Albanian Life 29, no. 2, 1984, pp. 2-4), we discovered that these allegations are complete fabrications. When I mentioned then to people in Dervican and to other members of the Greek minority whom we encountered in our travels, their usual reaction was to roar with laughter. The first point to make is that the Greek minority consists of only about 50,000 persons, and it is not true that more than half of them are in prison! In November 1982, Enver Hoxha pointed out that there were "only 33 members of the Greek minority serving short sentences of imprisonment for various offences, and only four of them for political offences" (Address to the Electors of the Electoral Zone no. 210 of Tirana; Tirana; 1982; p., 37), and the figure today is not likely to be much different. The Greek Albanians whom we met asserted that, if there was any discrimination affecting them, it is discrimination in favour of them, not against them. The minority areas were among the first in Albania to obtain electricity (1957 in Dervican), running water, and irrigation schemes. Their language, culture, and traditions are not merely tolerated, but strongly encouraged. Schoolchildren are educated entirely in Greek until the age of 10 or 11, and, when we were passing a primary school in Dervican and I asked if I might meet and photograph some of the pupils, I found that most of the younger ones were unable to speak Albanian. There is a training college for Greek teachers

in Gjirokastra, where there is also a Greek-language printing press. The minority has its own newspaper, Laiko Vima (The People's Voice), and Radio Gjirokastra broadcasts some programmes in the Greek language. The cultural scene in the Greek minority areas is very lively, and the cultural facilities are excellent: for example, the Palace of Culture in Dervican, which has a population of about 2,000, contains a library, an art gallery, and a 470-seat theatre with a revolving stage. As elsewhere in Albania, the medical service is first-rate. Members of the Greek minority hold positions of responsibility not only in their own areas, but also in all kinds of institutions throughout Albania, including the Party and Government: when we visited the newly excavated sixth-century A.D. church of St. Michael at Arapaj near Durrës, we met a conservation worker named Odhise Çurri, a member of the Greek minority, whose mother is Vice-President of the People's Assembly.

During our visit to Dervican we were invited to the comfortable home of Vasil and Athina Çeka, who most kindly and hospitably entertained us in traditional style with superb home-made raki, coffee and delicious food. Our long conversation with them and their delightful family abundantly confirmed what we had heard from other reliable sources and seen for ourselves - that the Greek minority people, so far from being persecuted or oppressed, enjoy the same rights and benefits as other citizens of Albania.

Anyone interested in the recent history of Albanian-Greek relations and in the position of the Greek minority in Albania should certainly read Enver Hoxha's recently published Two Friendly Peoples (Tirana, 1985), copies of the Greek version of which were presented to us by our friends in Dervican.

In this report I am able to pick out only a few highlights of a visit which took us to many parts of the country, as I have indicated, and to many kinds of establishment, including a factory, museums, exhibitions, archaeological sites, historic monuments, the National Library, the "Enver Hoxha" University of Tirana, the Book

Distribution Enterprise, a theatre, and the "Qemal Stafa" National Stadium (to see a UEFA cup match), and which brought us into contact with many interesting and friendly people, not all of them citizens of Albania: for example, we met the Secretary-General of the Belgian organisation "Amis de l'Albanie Nouvelle" (Friends of New Albania) and two American ladies of Albanian descent, who were full of admiration for socialist Albania.

There were representatives of several foreign countries, as well as many Albanian participants, at the Second Colloquium of Illyrian Studies which was held in Tirana on 20th, 21st and 23rd September. This well-organised event, which brought together archaeologists, historians, linguistic experts, anthropologists, and other specialists was an outstanding success. In my address to the closing session of the colloquium I congratulated our hosts not only on the organisation and work of the colloquium, but also on all the important contributions which Albanian specialists have made to Illyrian studies during the last forty years. I went on to say:

"I need hardly remind you that in 1944 Albania was a backward, impoverished, war-battered country, without a university, without an archaeological institute, without museums; the country possessed few specialists of its own, and the foreign archaeologists who worked in Albania before liberation had little or no interest in Illyrian civilisation. Today of course the situation is completely different, and it must be said that the credit for this is due not only to the dedication and skill of Albanian scholars, but also to the Party of Labour of Albania headed by Enver Hoxha and to the Government of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania. The Party and Government - and not least Enver Hoxha himself - have given very strong support and encouragement to Illyrian studies (not only to Illyrian studies of course), and the continuation of that support and encouragement is indicated by the

attendance, at this colloquium, of Party and State leaders".

(This address was reported on Albanian TV and in the newspaper Zëri i popullit (The People's Voice). During the colloquium I was interviewed by Radio Tirana).

The visit to the National Stadium, to watch Dinamo of Tirana v. Hamrun Spartans of Malta, was an interesting experience - quite an eye-opener for anyone used to the scenes all too common during and after football matches in this country. The crowd, though of course enthusiastic and partisan, was perfectly behaved. Police were present in the stadium, but all were watching the game, and there was no disturbance of any kind. The scene was a colourful one, with the crowd in shirt-sleeves enjoying the warm afternoon sunshine, with red flags flying all round the stadium, and with the front of the terracing bearing not advertisements, but slogans such as "Physical training for work and defence is a patriotic task", "physical education a component part of communist education", "physical culture and sports a source of good health, strength and energy", "keep the moral character of the sportsman pure". The players emerged with bunches of flowers which they tossed into the crowd. The match itself, which resulted in a 1:0 win for Dinamo, was of course keenly contested, but although there were some "fouls" and a Maltese player was shown the "yellow card", the atmosphere was predominantly sporting, and the whole occasion was a satisfying and perfectly suitable entertainment for fans of all ages.

Another occasion on which the contrast between the healthy state of Albanian society and the sick state of British society was brought home to me when I entered a bank in Gjirokastra to change some travellers' cheques. There was no bullet-proof glass or any other barrier separating the staff, including the cashier, from the customers and, when I remarked on this to the cashier, she simply commented: "This is Comrade Enver Hoxha's Albania". It is a fact that Albania is virtually free of serious crime, as well as of other curses which afflict our

society, such as unemployment, inflation, vast inequalities of wealth and opportunity, and drug abuse.

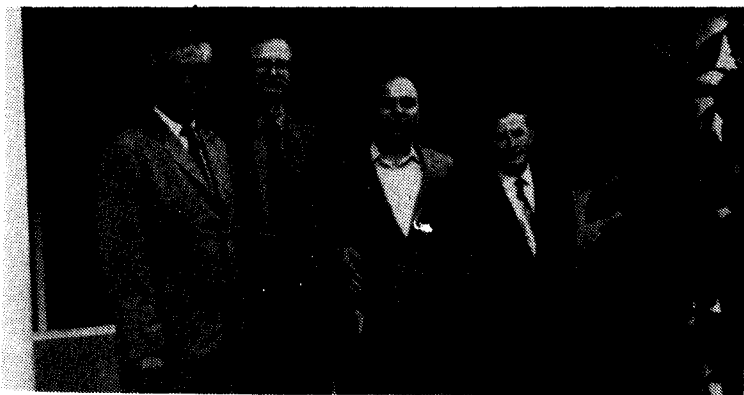
Needless to say, Enver Hoxha's Albania is very different not only from Margaret Thatcher's Britain, but also from the Albania of Zog, the character of whose regime is well illustrated by a double blow which it dealt the people of Gjirokastra in 1928, when it closed the secondary school and opened the prison.

The most important meeting during our visit was with Jorgo Melica, President of the Committee for Cultural and Friendly Relations with Foreign Countries, and with Theofan Nishku, whose special responsibility is relations with friendship societies abroad. Both the meeting on 16th September and the dinner which Mr. Melica gave for us in the Hotel Dajti on 27th September were held in the most friendly and constructive atmosphere. We conveyed to the Committee and, through it, to the Albanian people, the best wishes of the Albanian Society, and we expressed the Society's gratitude for the Committee's assistance in providing information, films and other materials. Mr. Melica asked us to communicate to the Society the Committee's best wishes and its sincere appreciation of the valuable contribution which the Society makes to friendship and understanding between the British and Albanian peoples. He expressed great appreciation also of the message of condolence which the Society had sent after the death of Enver Hoxha. He emphasised that, despite the severe loss of Enver Hoxha and despite adverse weather conditions in both winter and summer, 1985 was proving to be a very successful year for Albania, with advances in every field - economic, socio-political, educational, and cultural. We went on to have a very cordial and satisfactory discussion of matters of mutual interest, although it must be pointed out that, whilst the Committee is always as cooperative and helpful as it can be in the circumstances, the continuing absence of normal relations between Britain and Albania - a state of affairs for which Britain is entirely to blame - means that there are, as I

have already indicated, limits to what can be achieved.

Mr. Melica made clear that there is a great deal of favourable interest in Albania in the Society's work, and we found abundant confirmation of this as we travelled round the country. Reports of the Society's activities are published in Albanian newspapers. Our recent visit received press publicity; and when Mr. Gregory and I were interviewed by Albanian television, I took the opportunity to give some account of the Society's work.

During our visit we experienced nothing but friendliness and goodwill, not only towards ourselves and the Albanian Society, but also towards the British people. We are profoundly grateful for the warm reception we were accorded both by the Committee and by all whom we met. We believe that we in our turn acted as good ambassadors for the Society and for the British people, and that the visit will have been of benefit not only to us personally, but also to the Society and to the cause of British-Albanian friendship and understanding.



Left to right: Theofan Nishku, Head of the Department dealing with Friendship Associations; Martin Smith, President of the Albanian Society; Jorgo Melica, President of the Albanian Committee for Cultural and Friendly Relations with Foreign Countries; Ron Gregory, Secretary of the South Wales Branch of the Albanian Society.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

by Ronald Gregory:

My impressions from this, my first visit to Albania, are many. I shall long remember my walks through peaceful Tirana at night. During my travels throughout the country, however, I was particularly struck by the way the previously barren mountains have been cultivated with all kinds of fruit trees. It became very clear to me how the Albanian people do not allow themselves to be held back by difficulties, but strive to overcome them by every means.

I have travelled to quite a few parts of the world, but never in my life have I met such hospitality and kindness as I found from people all over Albania. I was thrilled to be in a very beautiful country with an ancient civilisation dating back to the Illyrians, and the most tranquil country in the world from a social viewpoint.

I would like to thank Martin Smith, my companion on the delegation, for his help on my visit.

I had, of course, read much about Albania from books, but this is not the same as seeing with my own eyes the building of socialism. Now I shall be able to talk to meetings in South Wales from first-hand experience.

I shall never forget my happy and exciting two weeks with my new Albanian friends.

RADIO TIRANA

Evening English-language transmissions are as follows:
(GMT)

19.30-20.00	42, 32 metres
20.30-21.00	42, 215 metres
22.00-22.30	31, 42, 215 metres
00.00-00.30	31, 42 metres

SHORT STORY

THE UNWRITTEN STORY

by Nonda Bulka

(Nonda Bulka was born near Përmet in 1906. After education in Korça and France, he became a teacher and a writer, especially of social satire. He also translated into Albanian works by Balzac, Gorky, Twain, and Zola. A firm supporter of the new post-war regime in Albania, he died there in 1972. This is one of his pre-war short stories).

The editor said to me: "We need a story for tomorrow's issue. Would you get on to it right away?"

I did not refuse. Editors of newspapers are like managers of factories. If you don't do what they tell you, they sack you. And it was not the right time to be wandering about the streets without a job.

So I sat down and thought about this story, what it should be about, and so on. I said to myself: "Why not do as everyone else does - start with a boy and a girl! The boy loves the girl, and the girl loves the boy. What could be simpler - yet more true to life! Now, what shall we call them? . . ."

I decided to call the boy Bylbyl, the girl Violet. The boy was twenty, the girl eighteen. The age of love!

So far everything was going fine. I had my hero and my heroine, but I knew that what the editor wanted was a "psychological" story, complete with passion, longing, sighs, tears, intrigue and treachery. So I decided that the boy should be unfaithful to the girl.

But what do with the girl? She could take poison. But

so many heroines have taken poison, the pharmacies of Europe must be completely sold out.

Perhaps she could snoot herself? But where would she get hold of a pistol?

And so I found myself in a mess. I didn't know what to do with Violet. There the poor girl stood in front of me, her blue eyes brimming with tears, waiting for me to find a way to eliminate her. I rested my head in my hands, pressed it, closed my eyes, and racked my brains about the fate of the hapless girl. . . Then, suddenly, I had it!

"I will send her to a convent", I said; "to become a nun. Faith will be her salvation".

So my story was complete - in my mind. I had only to write it. I took paper, pen and ink and was about to start when I realised I had no title. It took me over an hour to find a suitable title and then I found that I had forgotten the plot of the story.

I cursed and thought, and thought and cursed, but it was no use: I broke the pen and poured the ink down the sink. Then I wrote to the editor: "You should thank God for not having to read my story, and the girl should light a candle for not being locked up in a convent".

And so I let my Bylbyl and Violet free to walk hand in hand through the meadows and hills. Both they and the reading public should be grateful to me!

FOOTBALL-ALBANIAN STYLE

by Stephen Birch

Considerable mystique has tended to surround Albanian football, probably as a result of the Albanian authorities restricting the issue of visas to players and officials of visiting British clubs.

During a tour of Albania last September, however, a number of friends and I were fortunate enough to attend two games in the Albanian national championship. During a free Sunday afternoon five of us decided to seek out the location of the game between Lokomotiv of Durrës and the visiting Luftëtari (Warrior) from Gjirokastra. Taking the local bus into the centre of Durrës, it soon began to seem that the entire male population of the city was going to the game. Hence we located the stadium by following the crowd. Tickets were purchased from the official sellers on the street corner (the equivalent of 20 pence each). As soon as the people attempting to purchase tickets saw that we were foreigners, they pushed us to the front of the queue. I would have found this embarrassing if it had been due to official action, but on this occasion we were not accompanied by our guide; it was simply a genuine act of courtesy by our "hosts".

The ground in Durrës is small, with a capacity of about 15,000 - all seated in the continental style. The pitch is poor by British standards and is surrounded by an athletics track. A small covered stand borders one side of the pitch, but otherwise spectators can sit where they choose.

The game was of a higher standard than I had expected: neither team would have been out of place in the English Third Division. A small group of Gjirokastra supporters were present and cheered their team, without harassment, to a 1-0 victory (a goalkeeping error!). There were few empty places in the stadium and the discipline, both on and off the field, was excellent. One spectator,

apparently under the influence of a little too much alcohol on a hot day, was causing annoyance to some supporters and was led away, without protest, by one of the handful of policemen present.

At half-time we were entertained by a relay race between teams of army cadets of both sexes in full uniform, followed by a cycle race.

Given the large crowd and the narrow exits, leaving the ground was clearly going to be a problem. However, one young man, spotting the female member of our group (who appeared to be the only woman present!) pushed his way to the front of the crowd and held the spectators back while we left the ground.

By the following Sunday we had arrived in Tirana, and a larger group of the tour party wanted to experience football Albanian-style. The game was between local rivals 17 Nëntori and Partizani - the Liverpool and Manchester United of Albanian football, at least in terms of popularity. The game was played at the National Stadium named after Qemal Stafa, situated by the University in the Government quarter of the city. Our guide, a 17 Nëntori supporter, was delighted to arrange a visit to the game and obtained tickets for the covered stand at the equivalent of 30 pence each. This stadium is much larger than that in Durrës, with a capacity of around 40,000, an electric scoreboard and an excellent pitch.

The rival supporters mingled freely in the stadium without the segregation, fences or moats that are now commonplace throughout the rest of Europe.

The game was won 2-1 by 17 Nëntori. The only incident was the dissent shown by a Partizani forward when a penalty appeal was turned down by the referee only minutes from the end. The flare-up that followed between opposing players was immediately halted by club officials, and the referee showed no hesitation in sending off the offending

player.

Perhaps the most amazing sight of all during our fortnight in Albania was the "invasion" of the main square in Tirana by the crowds of supporters on their way home. From being deserted one minute, the square suddenly became a mass of over 20,000 moving bodies.

Tuesday is the day the sports paper is published, giving full reports and statistics on each of the previous Sunday's games. It is difficult to spot an Albanian man without a copy on Tuesday morning. Clearly the Albanians are as fanatical about their football as the rest of Europe, but fortunately they are able to temper their fanaticism with the discipline and concern for others shown in all aspects of Albanian life.

Although Albanian football has not reached any great heights at international level, this could be due to the fact that they participated little at this level until the last few years. Nevertheless, they have been able to maintain the sporting values which so many other European countries have lost.

Recent international results, however, suggest that greater achievements may not be too far away. For example, Albania won the Balkans Under 21 championship in 1978 and again in 1981, while on a broader front the Under 21 team eliminated Austria, West Germany and Turkey from the 1984 European championship before losing to Italy at the quarter-final stage.

Soon after we had returned home, the Albanian national team were unlucky to lose to a late penalty goal to Belgium in Brussels in a World Cup qualifying tie. This was followed by a 2:2 draw in Poland and then on 22nd December the high point in achievement was reached when Belgium was defeated 2:0 in Tirana in the return World Cup tie.

In conclusion, may I say in more general terms that

never have I met such friendly people with such genuine concern for others as in Albania. A totally different picture from that presented in the so-called free press of the "West" was clear. Moreover, this impression was the result of our exploring the towns and cities on our own, and not as part of a large group of tourists accompanied by officials of the tourist board!



"17 Nëntori" playing in the Qemal Stafa Stadium, Tirana

RECORD REVIEW

"ALBANIAN SUMMER" by Dave Smith, played by

Jan Steele (alto saxophone)

Janet Sherbourne (piano)

Reviewed by Moira Brillo

Having spent several summers in Albania, Dave Smith is undoubtedly the British composer with the most profound knowledge of Albanian folk music. This forty-five minute continuous "entertainment" (as the composer calls it) is in no way a medley. It is an "Albanian study", a recreation for British ears of the essence of this vivid folk music for two instruments, with the occasional touch of nostalgia and anger here and there. The piano does as percussion, plucked strings and even at times the human voice. The alto saxophone recalls the violin, clarinet and surle, but represents something of a compromise. Nevertheless, it is hard to imagine any other composer capturing his subject with greater realism, using only these two instruments.

Dave Smith provides a few clues on the sleeve of the record, but for me the value of the work would be greatly enhanced if he were to issue a "Short Guide", perhaps including extracts from the score, which could make clear the intricacies of construction. But, as someone said: "Why understand, just listen!"

("Albanian Summer" is recorded on a long-playing (33 rpm) disc obtainable from:

Practical Music,
502, Chester Road,
Sutton Coldfield,
West Midlands,
B73 5HL

at the special price of £4.70, including postage, for members of the Albanian Society).

THE RAILWAYS OF ALBANIA

by M. F. Munsey

The first railway line in Albania, between Durrës and Peqin, was inaugurated in November 1947. Today lines run from Durrës eastwards to Tirana, northwards through Laç and Shkodra to the Yugoslav border at Han i Hotit, south-eastwards through Elbasan to Pogradec, and southwards through Fier to Balsh and Vlora.

The line to Han i Hotit, opened in January 1985, is of international importance since, when the delayed Yugoslav link from Titograd is completed at the end of this year, Albania will be connected for the first time with the European rail network. In January 1985 Albania joined the International Union of Railways (UIC).

Lines are of standard gauge (1,435 mm. - 4ft. 8.5 ins.), using track sections imported from Czechoslovakia and are all single lines controlled by modern coloured light signalling. Locomotives are mostly of Czechoslovak origin, and coaches and wagons mainly Hungarian. However, Albanian State Railways now produce their own coaches at Shkodra and wagons at Durrës.

The entire railway system in Albania has been constructed by youth volunteers, under technical supervision.

Plans are now being prepared for extensions from Pogradec to Korça, from Lezha to the small port of Shengjin, and from Tirana to Klos, as well as for the conversion of the whole system from diesel to electric traction.

In contrast to the picture in most European countries, there has been in Albania a planned transfer of traffic from road to rail: the proportion of freight traffic transported by rail has increased from 13.6% in 1960 to 31.8% in 1983. This reflects not only the opening of new lines, but also an increase in the number and weight of trains and a speedier wagon turn-around.



ALBANIAN STATE RAILWAY NETWORK



Stages of Construction

Nov 1947	Durrës - Peqin	76 Km
Dec 1950	Peqin - Elbasan	
Mar 1949	Durrës - Tiranë	38 Km
1962	Vorë - Las	60 Km
1969	Rogozhinë - Fier	48 Km
Mar 1974	Elbasan - Pogradec	?
May 1975	Fier - Ballsh	29 Km
1980	Pogradec - Korçë	?
May 1981	Las - Lezhë	27 Km
Dec 1981	Lezhë - Shkoder	?
Jan 1985	Shkoder - Han-i-Nokte	50 Km
	Fier - Vlorë	24 Km

Albanian State Railways Standard Gauge (1435mm) All Lines Single track

- In Operation
- - - Under Construction
- Projected

Iron Ore Lines (Mavrovë District) (950mm)

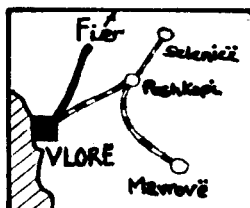
- In Operation

Yugoslav State Railways

- In Operation
- o o o Under Construction

Passenger Coach Construction

Wagon Construction



CORRESPONDENCE

I shall never forget July 7th, 1985, when Mr. Bland presented the very impressive memorial tribute to the Albanian leader Enver Hoxha. The video and the music by the Progressive Cultural Association gave a final touch to the memorable day.

I'm very happy to have attended your gathering, for I learned a great deal.

There are many Albanians in London, and I wish they could have been present - especially those who never accepted the present regime and refuse to believe the tremendous progress that the hard-working Albanians have made during the last forty years.

The day will come when the other nations of the world will recognise the achievements of this small ancient country which was crushed for centuries and which rose from darkness into bright light through its own efforts without the help of any "big brother".

Let us hope that justice will prevail and some day brothers and sisters from Kosova to Camëria will again be united.

Thank you for letting me say those few words to the members. I am proud to know that my native country has so many friends like you.

Viki Kotelly Spear,
Carmel, California.

Some time ago I wrote explaining that I no longer wished to remain a member of the Albanian Society because I considered it to be prejudiced - presenting a too

favourable picture of Albania.

I would like to thank Mr. Bland for his kind letter of reply. Indeed, it is because of his letter that I know you will understand my writing to ask if I may again subscribe to the Society.

This year I spent the holiday of a lifetime in the country and was entranced by the beauty of the scenery and the warmth of the people of Albania.

It is, at present, so very difficult to hear about Albanian "goings-on" in the press that any contact or information about the country, and especially reports from visitors, is extremely welcome. I have therefore enclosed a cheque for £4, which I hope is the correct yearly subscription.

I have long been interested in Albania, but I hadn't anticipated that when I arrived there it would feel almost as though I had finally arrived "at home".

Frances Lammas,
Nottingham.

 ALBANIAN LANGUAGE COURSE

It is understood that, due to difficulty in obtaining a lecturer, the London University course in the Albanian language will not be taking place for some time. The Albanian Society therefore proposes to run an elementary course in the Albanian language in North London on alternate Sundays, commencing in December if enough members are interested.

Anyone wishing to take part in this course is asked to write to the Secretary as soon as possible.

ALBANIAN NEWS

(April - August 1985)

POLITICS

In April:

11th: Enver Hoxha, 1st Secretary of the Central Committee of the Party of Labour of Albania, died (see previous issue of Albanian Life for coverage of this item).

29th: A meeting was organised in the Palace of Culture in Tirana to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the victory of the Vietnamese people over the USA.

In May:

1st: Rallies and meetings were organised throughout Albania in celebration of May Day. A rally was held in Tirana on the occasion of the naming of the pioneers' organisation "The Pioneers of Enver".

8th: A scientific conference devoted to the 40th anniversary of the victory over fascism was organised in Tirana.

16th: A meeting of the National Committee of the Albanian War Veterans was held in Tirana.

22nd: A plenum of the Central Committee of the Labour Youth Union of Albania convened in Tirana.

30th: The Council of Ministers announced the liquidation of the effects of the heavy snowfalls of January-February in the northern districts.

31st: A plenum of the General Council of the Trade Unions of Albania convened in Tirana.

In June:

The 7th Session of the 10th legislature of the People's Assembly held its proceedings.

A plenum of the General Council of the Women's Union of Albania convened in Lezha.

In August:

15th: A ceremony was organised in Vlora on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Albanian Navy.

26th: Ramiz Alia, 1st Secretary of the CC of the PLA, and other Party and State leaders visited Korça, where Alia made an important speech (see extracts in this issue).

DIPLOMACY

In April:

The Cambodian Ambassador, Phi Thao, and the Burundi Ambassador, Paul Munyembari, presented their credentials to President Ramiz Alia.

In May:

The Albanian Ambassador to Panama, Përparim Sinani, presented his credentials to President Ardito Barletta.

In June:

The French Ambassador, Philippe Legrain, and the Guinean Ambassador, Fode Cisse, presented their credentials to President Ramiz Alia.

In July:

Diplomatic relations were established with Malawi.

FOREIGN VISITORS

Among foreign visitors and delegations to Albania during the period under review were:

In May:

An Italian Government delegation headed by Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bruno Conti.

In June:

An agricultural delegation from Tanzania.

Dhimitër Trebicka, editor of the newspaper "Liria".

The Italian swimmer Paolo Pinto, who swam from Torre della Serpente to Vlora.

In July:

A Japanese trade delegation.

A delegation of the Norway-Albania Friendship Association.

A delegation of the Denmark-Albania Friendship Association.

A group of French instrumentalists.

In August:

A delegation of the Italy-Albania Friendship Association.

A delegation of the India-Albania Friendship Association.

A team of Algerian volleyball players.

Eduardo Pires, 1st Secretary of the CC of the Portuguese Communist Party (Reconstructed).

FOREIGN VISITS

Among Albanians and Albanian delegations going abroad during the period under review were:

In May:

A delegation of war veterans to Austria to commemorate the Albanians who died in the former concentration camp of Mathausen.

In July:

A delegation, headed by Minister of Light and Food-stuffs Industry Vita Kapo, to Kenya.

A trade union delegation to Zimbabwe.

In August:

A children's artistic ensemble to Greece to take part in the Children's Balkan Festival at Preveza.

FOREIGN TRADE

In April:

Albania was represented at the International Fair in Cairo

In May:

Albania was represented at the International Fairs in Milan, Paris and Lisbon.

A protocol on cultural, scientific and technical exchanges for 1985-6 was signed with France.

An agreement on railway border services was signed with Yugoslavia.

In July:

An agreement on border markings and the prevention of border incidents was signed with Greece.

In August:

Protocols on cultural and scientific exchanges for 1985-6 and 1986-7 were signed with Denmark.

CULTURE

In May:

A memorial meeting was held in Tirana to commemorate the centenary of the death of the French writer Victor Hugo.

In June:

A memorial meeting was held in Tirana to commemorate the centenary of the birth of the Albanian writer Hil Mosi.

In July:

A plenum of the Writers' and Artists' League convened in Tirana.

In August:

The children's film "Taulant asks for a Sister" was screened at the 15th International Children's Film Festival at Salerno (Italy).

The film "Love Your Name" was screened at the Balkan Film Festival at Volos (Greece).

Books

Among new books published during the period under review were:

Enver Hoxha: "On Science" (Collection)

Enver Hoxha: "Works", Volume 45 (Dec.1970-April 1971)

Enver Hoxha: "Two Friendly Peoples"

SPORT

On June 29th the Butrint team of Saranda played a friendly football match in Saranda with the team of Corfu.

**BOOK REVIEW**

Skifter Këlliçi: THE LAST DAYS OF A PRIME MINISTER
The Albanian Society; 1985.

Reviewed by Martin Smith

Very few contemporary Albanian novels are known to British readers, for the simple reason that very few have been published in Britain in English translation. The work under review is a most welcome addition to the list.

Post-war Albania is a country which, having liberated itself both from the occupying armies of external enemies (the Italian fascists and German Nazis) and from the internal forces of reaction and oppression (the exploiting classes of a feudal-bourgeois society), has been developing a genuine socialist society. It is understandable and right that its literature, including the novel, should have been much concerned with the social, political and economic transformations that have occurred and with the great national liberation struggle which made them possible; and it is to be noted that literature has not only reflected these important changes and events, but also performed an educative and inspirational role, assisting and accelerating the progress of socialist and patriotic ideas.

A frequent theme of modern Albanian novels is the national liberation war of 1939-44, and it is indicative of the momentous significance of that heroic struggle for all citizens of socialist Albania that some of those who have chosen to write about it were no more than small children at the time. For example, Ismail Kadare, one of Albania's most brilliant writers, best known to English readers for his novel The General of the Dead Army, was only three years old when the Italians invaded Albania in 1939, and Skifter Këlliçi was still in his cot.

S. Këlliçi is a man of varied abilities and attain-

ments. A journalist and sports commentator, he is the author of a history of football. He has written short stories, including An Event in the Stadium and a collection of sports tales under the title Grey Stairs. His novel for children On the Trail was made into a film which gained a silver medal at the International Film Festival at Salerno. 1978 saw the publication of his novel Assassination in Paris, concerned with the shooting of Esat Pasha Toptani by the revolutionary student Avni Rustemi in 1920.

Like Assassination in Paris, The Last Days of a Prime Minister is a patriotic novel based on real events. The setting is an unnamed foreign city (actually Salonika in northern Greece) just after the end of the national liberation war (to which frequent reference is made) and the establishment of socialist government. The former King Zog's last prime minister, "Monsieur Koço" (Koço Kota), has hopes of returning, or rather of being returned, to power in Albania with British help, while three former guerillas, acting on behalf of the government in Tirana, aim to capture the ex-premier and take him back to Albania so that he may receive a more fitting reward for his "services" to his country - a trial for treason.

The action, which occupies seven days (strictly, one evening, five full days, and one morning), is characterised by sustained excitement and suspense. The plot, though basically simple, is skilfully constructed and developed. Despite the seriousness of the story, there are elements of humour. The author displays considerable powers of vivid description and dialogue and lifelike characterisation. It is not only the "goodies" who come across as individual human beings with credible thoughts, ambitions and emotions, but also the "baddies", including Monsieur Koço, the scheming aristocrat Xhevdet Bey, and the British officers, General Humphrey and Major Hilton.

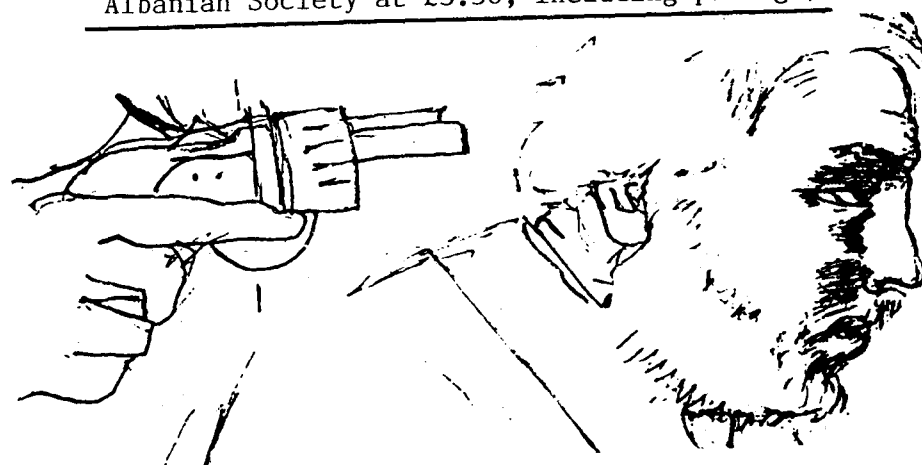
Although the novel could be read and enjoyed, by someone ignorant of Albanian history, simply on the level of an exciting well-written story full of psychological

insight, its interest and importance are enhanced by its essentially truthful portrayal of events at the stirring and triumphant and yet also unsettled and dangerous time when the hard-won socialist state was in its infancy and faced serious threats from foreign imperialists and their Albanian collaborators. S. Këlliçi, while rightly presenting the communists as principled and patriotic and their political opponents (including the British) as having far less worthy motives, characterises rather than caricatures those "on the other side" and allows us to hear their point of view and judge it for ourselves, just as the Albanian émigrés in his novel hear news, rumours, arguments and propaganda from different quarters and come to their own conclusions; and his work is the more impressive and convincing for this.

William Bland deserves the highest praise for his masterly translation, which in a skilful and yet seemingly effortless way reproduces the qualities of the original.

In conclusion, this is an excellent book - a "must" for anyone interested in Albania and indeed for anyone who likes a good novel.

(The Last Days of a Prime Minister is available from the Albanian Society at £3.50, including postage)



HOLIDAYS IN ALBANIA-1986

Regent Holidays (UK) Ltd. have arranged the following tours to Albania during 1986:

Depart London	Return London	No. of Days	Tour Type	Cost
March 29	April 7	10	B	£385
May 16	May 30	15	A	£550
Aug. 8	Aug. 22	15	A	£585
Sept. 5	Sept. 19	15	A	£585
Oct. 3	Oct. 18	15	A	£550

Tour A includes visits to Cetinje, Titograd, Shkodra, Lezha, Durrës, Apollonia, Gjirokastra, Saranda, Butrint, Korça, Berat, Elbasan, Kruja and Tirana.

Tour B is based on Tirana, but with excursions included to Kruja, Gjirokastra, Saranda and Butrint.

The cost includes return air fare via Belgrade, transfers, full board within Yugoslavia and Albania, entry to archaeological sites, factories and most museums, services of guide, and airport taxes. Albanian visa (£6.80), insurance and drinks are not included.

Full details available from:

Regent Holidays (UK) Ltd.,
13, Small St.,
Bristol BS1 1DE

Tel.: 0272-211711

VOYAGES JULES VERNE are organising in 1986 trips of 4, 5 and 16 days to Albania.

Further details may be obtained from:

21, Dorset Square,
London NW1

01-723-6556 or 5654

ALBANIAN SOCIETY (HOLIDAYS)

THE ALBANIAN SOCIETY is hoping to take a group to Albania for 14 days at Easter, flying direct to and from Tirana. The cost will be approximately £350 inclusive.

If you are interested, please write as soon as possible to:

Albanian Society (Holidays),
89, Edith Road,
London W14



THE ILLYRIAN MENHIR

A poem by Moikom Zeqo

The ancient Illyrians raised towards the sky
this giant menhir.
There were no chronicles, no calendars nor books;
the world was mute, impenetrable.

Arrows flew through the air
from stretched bows,
but fell to the ground.
Yet with this towering stone
they pierced the deaf horizon and the mists of time,
to reach us, their descendants.

What heroism raised you?
What superhuman force? What ritual? What sacrifice?
This menhir - stone of our ancestral land -
cuts through millennia of darkness, ignorance,
to reach the epoch of the astronaut,
and even our poems feel its weight.

MY REGARDS TO THE SEA

A poem by Xhevahir Spahiu

He told me he was off to Vlora.
"My regards to the sea!", I said

He was gone. I could not add
"My regards to the sea-gulls too!
My regards to the port, the trawlers and the stars,
to the rocks, the grains of sand!
Embrace, for me, the orange-trees which face the sea,
as you embrace your loved ones, coming home!"

But he was gone.
I had not time to speak of my nostalgia,
that he might tell the azure sea
how much I longed to see it.

Enver Hoxha:

"LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE NEW ALBANIA"

Reviewed by Y. Kojaman

Enver Hoxha's book "Laying the Foundations of the New Albania" was published for the first time in 1984, the last year in the life of Hoxha, whose body died on the 11th April but whose work, leadership, teachings and love for the people of Albania and of the world - together with the love of the Albanian people for their great leader - will live as long as this great people lives.

This book deals with one of the most glorious periods in the centuries-long heroic struggle of the Albanian people against all invaders and occupiers for the independence and freedom of the Homeland. It deals with the War of National Liberation against the Italian fascist and German nazi occupiers and their Albanian collaborators - a struggle carried out under the leadership of the Communist Party, which decided right from the beginning to continue the fight through to the end and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, the only state power which can abolish all kinds of exploitation and build a socialist society.

To try to review such a book in a few pages is as difficult as trying to select the best drop of water in an ocean. Only a few words can be said about each of the main stages of this heroic revolutionary struggle.

The Emergence of the Communist Party

During the late thirties there were several communist groups in Albania; these were not only isolated from the masses, but were even quarrelling with each other:

"Immediately (after the Italian invasion - YK) we sensed and understood better than ever that we would

not be able to organise the resistance to the occupier because we ourselves were still divided".

Preparations for the unification of the communist groups into a single party began and the Party emerged on November 8th, 1941:

"This was a decisive event . . . because for the first time . . . the party of the working class . . . had placed itself at the head of the people".

Along with the struggle to build the Party went the struggle to win the support and sympathy of the masses of the people, because

" . . . without the people, without the masses, a communist party, whether newly formed or with a long period of existence and activity can achieve nothing".

This laid the foundation of the unity of the whole people against the enslavers of their Homeland, the unity which was called by the Party "the fighting unity between the working masses of town and countryside" and which later became the Anti-fascist National Liberation Front.

Even in these preliminary stages the Party had to expose and fight against opportunist and capitulationist ideas within and outside the Party: "To wait till the Party is built and strengthened"; "to wait until a strong industrial proletariat is formed"; "a national liberation front is impossible in Albania because there are no political parties to form it". These were ideas which hindered the struggle, and Hoxha said:

"The true front is that which is created from below, through direct work with the masses. . . . Had we waited until the Party was built and strengthened, until it extended to all parts of the country, had we worked only 'within the Party' and then addressed ourselves to the people with our programme for struggle this would have been catastrophic not only

for the Party, but also for the fate of the people and the Homeland".

The unity of the working masses in town and countryside is the pivot of the national liberation front. Students and teachers are also revolutionary and linked to the people:

"Generally speaking, the intelligentsia of our country was patriotic, anti-fascist and opposed to the occupiers of the country; therefore the Party was to give great importance to this stratum of the people".

Patriots and Pseudo-Patriots

From the start, the guiding principle of the Party was that

" . . . all social classes and strata without distinction as to political, ideological, religious and other views, should be included in the war for the salvation of the country".

Proceeding from this basic principle, the Party gave great importance to work among the nationalists:

"The incorporation in the Front of tens and tens of outstanding patriots, known to the people for their progressive sentiments and democratic opinions and as anti-Zog fighters was a victory for the policy of the Party, because these people, besides their personal contribution, their personal abilities and capacities, possessed great authority among the people, which they put at the disposal and in the service of the National Liberation War".

But in addition to these real, honest patriots, who fought for the liberation of their Homeland, there were others who called themselves patriots on the basis of their previous participation in revolutionary and anti-

Zogist movements. They emigrated to other countries and lived in exile as political refugees, receiving high salaries and leading a life of luxury. They returned to Albania after the fascist occupation.

"Right from the start we decided to contact these 'patriotic politicians' and call on them to fight just as we did with other patriotic intellectuals and nationalist elements".

But many of them preferred to collaborate with the occupiers and not only to keep out of the war but to fight against the people, forming the notorious Balli Kombëtar to fight against the people on the side of the fascists and nazis. In their arguments with the communists they raised many reactionary and capitulationist ideas such as: "Bolshevism is the enemy of Albania"; "Albania is not Russia"; "take the castle from within"; "people will be killed, towns and villages burned", etc.

In this field the Party had to expose and fight against right and left ideas: the sectarian idea which called for the rejection of rank-and-file people who had been misled by these leaders, treating them all as collaborators and declaring that it was a waste of time and effort to try to persuade them to join the liberation war; and the liberal view, which wanted to grant these people concessions in order to attract them to fight - both were wrong and harmful.

Party and Front

The emergence of the CPA was right from the beginning connected with organising the people for the liberation war under the leadership of the Party. The victories achieved by the people during their heroic war necessitated a high degree of organisation. The Party decided to organise a conference for this purpose.

During the preparation for this conference, the Party made contacts with every person known as a democrat or anti-Zogite. Many honest patriots accepted the invitation, participated in the conference and joined the war of liberation. Many others accepted the invitation and even joined the war, but for their own purposes. There were others who rejected the invitation, trying to find excuses for their rejection: "The reds go as a party, while we are to go there like pigs so that they can lead us by the nose"; "wait till we form a party and are equal"; "play politics with the Italians"; "you listen to Stalin"; "you are for the establishment of Soviets", etc. But these same people were ready to form Balli Kombëtar with arms from the fascist occupiers and under their leadership - "like pigs led by the nose" - and to fight against the Albanian people.

The Conference of Peza opened on September 16th, 1942. The report of the CC delivered by Enver Hoxha stressed the point of

" . . . the unification of the whole Albanian people and their organisation in the war against the occupiers"

It also pointed out that

" . . . the war against the fascist invaders and their collaborators is the only alternative for true patriots and that the existence and fight of the Communist Party of Albania at the head of the people who are fighting and resisting is decisive".

The report proposed the organisation of an Anti-fascist National Liberation Front which would have National Liberation Councils all over the country, and of partisan çetas:

"These will be councils with a new content and spirit because those taking part in them will be men of the people, fighters from all strata and of

all religions and political beliefs, provided only that they are anti-fascists and fight against the occupiers".

Here too the unity of all the people in the National Liberation Front had to be distinguished from dissolving the Party into the Front. The Party of the Leninist type, its selective membership, its strict adherence to Marxism-Leninism, its distinction from, and leadership of the Front - all these were the necessary conditions for the unity of the people and the carrying out of the fight through to the end.

State Power

One of the most important features of the War of National Liberation in Albania, under the leadership of the Party, was the formation of a new popular state power during the war.

"As everyone knows, the foundations of the people's state power were laid during the war, with the National Liberation Councils, which were a new form that the Party used as the most suitable for our country. . . A fundamental and very important thing in the directive of the Central Committee was that these councils were described explicitly as the embryo of the new state power".

This feature of the war was so important that Hoxha wrote about it:

"For the first time in the history of our people, the liberation war was combined with the struggle for the establishment of a new political power after victory".

The National Liberation General Council elected at the Conference of Peza actually performed the political duties of the state whenever this was possible. Then in the first meeting of the council, held in Labinot on July

10th, 1943, the General Staff of the National Liberation Army was formed:

"This day has remained and will remain as one of the most outstanding events not only of the National Liberation War but of the whole epoch of the Party, as the day of our People's Army".

The 2nd National Liberation Conference was convened at Labinot on 4-9th September 1943. The main problem which the Conference dealt with was the question of political power in Albania.

The conference rejected the efforts of Balli Kombëtar to join the new state power by pretending to be anti-fascist patriots.

"At the particular moments through which the country is passing, the chiefs of Balli Kombëtar, who up to now have not fired a shot against the occupier and who are seeing the strength of the state power we have created, pretend that they accept the role of a partner in it, but always with the intention of seizing the whole power".

During the days of the conference Italy capitulated. The conference therefore decided to study the new situation at its final session. It was decided to address the Albanian people:

". . . that now the general armed uprising against the German occupiers and the traitors, and the establishment of the state power of the National Liberation Councils all over the country was on the order of the day".

It was also decided to call on the Italian soldiers to fight against the nazis, and

" . . . some of the surrendered Italians expressed their desire to fight and did so. We incorporated them in several units of the National Liberation Army".

The party in this critical period had to fight against all kinds of opportunist and capitulationist ideas raised by some Party members having the effect of making concessions to Balli Kombëtar and later to the Zogite party Legaliteti.

In May 1944, the Congress of Përmet elected "the legislative and executive organs of the people's state power" - the Anti-fascist National Liberation Council, which acted as the People's Assembly until the first general elections in liberated Albania.

At the meeting of Berat on October 20th, to which the representatives of the Soviet Union, Britain, the USA and Yugoslavia were invited, it was decided to transform the Anti-Fascist National Liberation Committee into the Democratic Government of Albania.

December 2nd, 1945 was the day of the election of the Constituent Assembly, which unanimously proclaimed Albania a People's Republic. This People's Republic represented

" . . . the dictatorship of the proletariat, . . . an impregnable fortress against all inside and foreign conspiracies and attacks. It is the loyal instrument for building a socialist society in Albania".

This book is a Marxist-Leninist school both for the new generations of the Albanian people and for all the peoples who fight for the liberation of their countries and for socialism.

(Laying the Foundations of the New Albania is available from the Albanian Society at £3.50, including postage)

Participants in the Conference of Peza

ENVER HOXHA



MYSLIM PEZA



MUSTAFA KHANI



NEXHMIJE XHUGLINI



HAXHI LLESHI



CONCERT

A concert of Albanian music was presented at Canterbury College of Technology on Friday, October 4th as part of the Canterbury Festival. The concert suggested something of the variety of Albanian music through urban folk music, a symphonic poem and partisan and revolutionary songs.

The urban music included well-known songs (e.g., "Lule malësore", "A kan' ujë ata burime", "Artizane e Lumës") and instrumental numbers (e.g., "Valle festive" and two kabas) such as one would hear by a small band playing in an Albanian café. These were performed by Ian Mitchell (one of England's most distinguished clarinetists), Adrian Lee (guitar), Dave Smith (piano) and Wally Cardew (percussion).

Also in the programme were a piano transcription of Thoma Gaqi's symphonic poem "Borova" and a varied selection of Albanian songs presented by the Progressive Cultural Association. The evening concluded with a rendering of "Enver Hoxha, tungjatjeta".

The Albanian Society had organised in the hall the photo-exhibition "40 Years of Socialist Albania", together with a bookstall/information bureau. A number of new members joined the Society.

The meeting on November 24th will be preceded at 2.45 p.m. by a brief Members' Meeting.

Nominations for the Committee of the Society should be sent to the Secretary to reach him by November 20th.

The meeting will be followed in the evening in the same hall by a social which will include refreshments, videos and music.

ALBANIAN SOCIETY MEETINGS

On May 19th, 1985 the London and South-East England Branch of the Albanian Society held a meeting in London at which Eric Peel spoke on "A History of Albania through Stamps", with examples from his large collection, Sue Hurrell and Tamara Diakow played clarinet duets, and Bill Bland spoke on "The Albanian Economy" with slide illustrations.

On July 3rd, 1985 the Albanian Society held in London a Memorial Meeting to Enver Hoxha. Extracts from the film "Enver Hoxha, Tungjatjeta!" (Enver Hoxha, a Long Life to You!) were screened, the Progressive Cultural Association presented a programme of Albanian music and the Secretary of the Society, Bill Bland, spoke on "Enver Hoxha as World Statesman".

On September 29th the London and South-East England Branch of the Society held a meeting in London at which Norberto Steinmayr spoke on "Education in Albania" and Dr. John Puntis spoke on "Health and Social Services in Albania".

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NATIONAL MEETING

To commemorate
the 41st. anniversary of Liberation,
the 73rd anniversary of Independence,

THE ALBANIAN SOCIETY
will hold a meeting on

Sunday, November 24th, at 3 p.m.

in the Bishopsgate Institute, 230, Bishopsgate,
London EC2

Laurie Prescott will speak on

"TWO FRIENDLY PEOPLES" (The Greek Minority in
Albania)

Sketch: An interview with an Albanian émigré
for "AMNESIA INTERNATIONAL"

The Feature Film:

SKANDERBEG

(colour, English speaking)

Scenario:	M. Papova
Director:	M. Anjaparidze
Director of Photography:	A. Akhmetova

Skanderbeg:	A. Khorava
Donika:	B. Imami