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ALBANIAN PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC MAKES FIRM STEPS  
ON PATH TOWARD SOCIALISM

Following is a translation of an article by Song Nguyen in the Vietnamese-language periodical, Hoc Tap (Studies), Hanoi, November 1964.

Twenty years ago, on 29 November 1944, after the last city in Albania was liberated from the Fascist German yoke, the Albanian People's Republic was born. With an area of 28,700 kilometers, and a population of 1.8 million, Albania lies on the Adriatic Sea, an arm of the Mediterranean Sea. It is bounded on the northeast by Yugoslavia and on the southeast by Greece, and is situated across from Italy.

Considered the gate way to the Balkan area and very rich in agricultural, forestry, and mineral resources, Albania was dominated for several centuries by the Roman and Turkish imperialists, and, between the start of the 20th century and the end of World War II, was first dependent on the Austrian, Hungarian, British, and French imperialists, and then occupied by the Italian and German fascists.

The ruthless imperialist and feudalism domination and exploitation hindered the development of the Albanian society. Although endowed with rich resources and although its soil and climate were very favorable for cultivation and animal husbandry, Albania was still an agriculturally backward country on the day of its liberation. In many regions, primitive tribes still existed. Ninety percent of the population, who were peasants, were bitterly oppressed and exploited by feudal lords. Aside from some small workshops, the country's industry seemed almost nonexistent. Everything -- from a water cup to kerosene for lamps -- had to be bought abroad. Railroads were nonexistent while automobile roads were very few. Although an agricultural country, Albania could produce only a small quantity of wheat, enough to feed half its population. The Albanian face looked all the more grievous after World War II. Almost all cities were heavily damaged; the majority of villages were destroyed. Its industrial production dropped to 69 percent of the prewar period while its agriculture was almost completely destroyed.

With such a lamentable heritage, in only 15 or 20 years, the Albanian people, under a government set up by themselves, made their country quickly into a nation with developed modern industry and developed collective agriculture, meeting ever more fully the demands for home consumption and exports. From a country having more than 80 percent of its people illiterate, Albania today has become a country with a developed culture, one out of four citizens going to school. From an age-old dependent country, Albania has become an independent and sovereign country and has established diplomatic and commercial relations with a great number of countries in the world on the basis of complete equality and mutual respect.

All these profound changes in the Albanian People's Republic are the result of the Albanian Workers Party's Marxist-Leninist line, of the thorough class struggle line in the field of domestic and foreign affairs, and of the serious implementation of the principles of socialist construction and the creative application of these principles in Albania's own situation.

Immediately after the People's Government was set up throughout the country, the Albanian Workers Party began abolishing unequal treaties signed between the previous old reactionary governments and the imperialist countries. It nationalized the wealth and commercial firms of the Italian and German fascists. It also nationalized banks, confiscated the wealth of the traitors and war criminals and laid a basis for the state economic zone, a zone of ownership for all Albanian people.

In August 1945, a land reform law was promulgated and the land reform was successfully carried out during the next year's fall. The People's Government confiscated 330,000 hectares of land and distributed them to the peasants, who did not have land or who had insufficient land for cultivation. The secular ruling landlord class in Albania was eliminated and the economic position of the middle-class peasants was initially criticized. Measures aimed at restricting and reforming the capitalist economy were initially implemented. These measures involved establishing state control over industrial enterprises and joint stock corporations; requisitioning necessary goods and means for the needs of the army and the people and for the needs of national restoration; setting forth state regulations fixing the prices of a number of goods and prohibiting trade unless authorized by responsible authorities; establishing state control over foreign trade; levying special taxes on the income of the national bourgeoisie as well as on foreign bourgeoisie; and so forth.

Not only did these measures help Albania eliminate thoroughly imperialistic and feudalistic vestiges, but they initially struck at the economic position of the urban bourgeoisie and the middle-class peasants,

thereby creating conditions for a switch to the socialist revolutionary phase and for the implementation of the tasks arising from the period of transition to socialism.

The First Albanian Workers Party Congress held in November 1948 asserted the platform for socialist construction in Albania: achieving socialist industrialization, reforming socialism with regard to agriculture, achieving the socialist revolution in the cultural and ideological domains, and increasing the material welfare of the people.

This platform was materialized step by step by the subsequent party congresses in the First Five-Year Plan (1951-1955), the Second Five-Year Plan (1956-1960), and the Third Five-Year Plan (1961-1965). The successful implementation of these plans by the entire party and all Albanian people brought about profound changes in the present Albanian society.

In industry, it specified the practical tasks for each Five-Year Plan, which were based on the practical conditions of Albania as a country with a small area. In view of its restricted manpower and wealth, all heavy industrial branches could not be built while the people's needs for consumer goods were urgent. The Albanian Workers Party advocated, along with the development of necessary heavy industrial branches, the development of light industrial branches and the foodstuff industry. Thanks to this correct line, in only three five-year plans the Albanian people have succeeded in building both heavy and light industrial branches exerting a positive effect on the development of the entire national economy of Albania. These heavy and light industrial branches are: mineral exploitation, the mineral-oil industry, the electrical industry, the mechanical engineering industry, the construction material industry, the weaving industry, the foodstuff industry, and so forth. Moreover, the Albanian people are also successfully building chemical industrial bases and the metallurgic industry aimed at meeting the ever increasing demands of the country.

The strong development of Albanian industry is clearly reflected in its high and continuous development pace. Compared with 1938, the year of the highest prewar development pace under the past regime, Albania's industrial production after the First Five-Year Plan had increased more than ten-fold; after the Second Five-Year Plan more than twenty-fold; and as the Third Five-Year Plan is nearing completion, by some thirty-fold. If in 1938 the value of industrial production represented only 9.8 percent of the total value of industrial and agricultural production, it represented as much as 43.5 percent after the First Five-Year Plan, transforming Albania into an agricultural-industrial country. After the Third Five-Year Plan, this value is expected to reach as much as 54

percent, transforming Albania into an industrial-agricultural country. For the present, in only 13 days Albanian industry can produce production value equal to that of the entire year of 1938.

When it stressed the main task of the transition period, which was to build an industry as a basis for the development of the entire national economy, the Albanian Workers Party never belittled the role of agriculture -- especially the role of the production of cereals -- in the national economy of Albania. The resolution of the Fourth Albanian Workers Party Congress stressed: "Facts prove that 'To struggle for bread is to struggle for socialism.' Therefore, from now on attention must still be paid to the production of cereals to be used to make bread." Because great attention has been paid to cereals, their production has increased markedly. If the old prewar Albania never dared to raise the problem of self-sufficiency in food, today the new Albania is going to settle this problem through realities despite the considerable increase in its population.

Along with the development of the cultivation of food plants, the party has paid great attention to developing the cultivation of industrial plants in order to meet home consumption demands and export demands. Many kinds of industrial plants, such as cotton, sugar, carrots, and so forth, which had not existed in Albania, were grown during the years under the people's government. Afforestation to insure the supply of raw materials for the development of some light industrial branches (lumber, paper, and so forth) has developed rapidly. At present, the afforestation performed in half a day equals that of the entire year of 1938.

Attention has also been paid to animal husbandry in Albania. Next year, Albania will insure a yearly supply of 24 kilos of meat and 191 kilos of milk to each person. Thanks to comprehensive agricultural development, the present agricultural production in Albania has increased two point-four-fold, compared with 1938.

To develop industry and agriculture in a balanced manner and in accordance with the trend of satisfying ever more fully the home consumption demands and the export demands, is precisely to build an independent economy in which self-sufficiency is considered as a main task. The present great achievements of Albania in the field of agricultural and industrial development testify to the complete correctness of this line. If, after the completion of land reform, it had not guided the peasants in following the collective path immediately, the Albanian Workers Party could not have created favorable conditions for socialist construction.

Meanwhile, thanks to the fact that the party and the Albanian government paid attention to the building of technical and material bases for the major collectivized agricultural production and to agricultural cooperativization, Albania's agriculture has a rather strong technical and material base. Prior to its liberation, Albania had only 30 tractors; it now has 7,000 tractors (of 15 horsepowers each), hundreds of harvesting machines, and many other kinds of agricultural machinery. At present, agricultural machinery is a decisive force in plowing and harrowing land, in sowing seeds, in digging earth, in harvesting and threshing wheat, and so forth. The draft powers of agricultural machines now represents more than 80 percent of the draft power in Albania's agriculture.

While carrying out agricultural collectivization, the Albanian Workers Party mobilized the peasants to participate positively in irrigation work, trying to turn barren land, swampy areas, and barren hills into fertile fields. The acreage of irrigated land before liberation was 29,000 hectares; today it is 200,000 hectares. Cultivated acreage has increased two-fold compared with 1938.

After completing two revolutions in agriculture -- land reform and agricultural cooperativization -- the Albanian people entered the third revolution, which is to transform extensive agriculture into intensive agriculture. To achieve this third revolution in agriculture, the Albanian people pay attention to carrying out satisfactorily the following tasks: mechanization, irrigation, improvement of soil, production of nitrogen and phosphoric fertilizer, choice and use of good seeds, organization of agricultural scientific study and testing, training and improvement of agricultural cadres, and so forth. To develop agriculture intensively is an essential condition enabling Albanian agriculture to satisfy, to the highest degree, domestic demands in food and raw materials for industry and export demands.

Along with aid on the basis of economic development, the Albanian Workers Party has applied all measures aimed at improving, step by step, and continuously, the people's living standards. Unemployment has been eradicated. At present, the Albanian laboring people are entitled to enjoy the right to work, the right to take annual leave with pay, the right to retire on pension when they become old and weak, and the right to enjoy medical care and to study at no expense. The number of newly built houses increases with every passing year. It is estimated in the Third Five-Year Plan that the housing area will be increased by 69 percent compared with the Second Five-Year Plan. The prices of goods have dropped continually: from 1950 to 1960, prices dropped nine times, providing a yearly profit of 7.9 billion leks.

On the basis of socialist production relations and as a result of persistent education by the party, a new socialist attitude toward the laborers and society is now prevalent in Albania. The sound manifestation of this attitude is the seething enthusiasm of the laboring people for socialist construction in Albania. The emulation movement to win the title of socialist labor unit has developed widely from the cities to the rural areas. This attitude is also reflected in the deep hatred for imperialism and modern revisionism and in the determination to protect to the end the revolutionary results and to oppose all enemies of the class in and outside the country. The slogans for the entire party and all Albanian people are "pick in one hand, rifle in the other," "self-sufficiency for national construction," and "rifles in hand as long as imperialism is not eliminated."

Thus, the successful implementation of the Five-Year Plans has transformed Albania not only into a vast construction site, but into a vast school where a profound cultural and ideological revolution is taking place. The broad development of university and general education enabled Albania to eradicate illiteracy rapidly. The percentage of school attendance is high. Albania is now applying an educational program devised along the line of the eight-year general education program for all youths and teenagers.

In particular, the Albanian Workers Party attaches great importance to political and ideological education, especially the education of the rising generation, which has little or no practical experience in the class struggle and does not have a deep concept of the ruthlessness and cunningness of imperialism, feudalism, and the bourgeoisie. It therefore, may easily adopt a vague class standpoint, lose political vigilance, espouse rightist opportunism and revisionism, and fall prey to the imperialists' "peaceful evolutions" scheme.

This urgent educational problem was stressed once again by Comrade Enver Hoxha at the Albanian Workers Party Central Committee Congress in July this year: "Youths of today and in the future will know only the satisfactory development of the country's industry and agriculture. They will hardly imagine the past life of the peasants and workers. The party must constantly make youths understand that this satisfactory industrial and agricultural development is the result of the proletarian revolution, a revolution achieved through a costly, acute struggle of the workers and peasants and through a class struggle against imperialism and revisionism. In view of this, the party must see to it that our youths firmly maintain their revolutionary spirit and are loyal to the revolution, to Marxism-Leninism, to the laboring people, and to the proletarian ideology."

The Albanian Workers Party's Marxist-Leninist line is reflected not only in Albania's great achievements in making itself a socialist industrial-agricultural nation, but in the great successes the Albanian People's Republic has achieved in the field of foreign affairs during the past 20 years.

The Albanian People's Republic always pursues a peaceful diplomatic policy and respects the principle of peaceful coexistence in its relations with neighboring countries with social systems differing from the Albanian social system. However, the heroic Albanian people, who once courageously fought and triumphed over the fascist Italian and German occupation troops, today are determined not to yield to any plot of encirclement, intervention, or sabotage by the imperialists and their lackeys.

The British and U. S. imperialists failed shamefully in their plot to strangle revolutionary Albania while the latter was in the bud. Today, they continue to induce the Greek and Turkish reactionaries and the Titoist revisionists to encircle and sabotage socialist Albania. The Titoist revisionists, in particular, after their exposure (in 1948) have opposed more foolishly the Albanian People's Republic, have many times intervened in Albania's internal affairs, have plotted to overthrow the Marxist-Leninist Central Committee of the Albanian Workers Party, led by Comrade Enver Hoxha, and to lead Albania into following the revisionist path.

During the past few years, because of their persistence in protecting the purity of Marxism-Leninism, the revolutionary principles of the 1957 and 1960 Moscow declarations, and the unity of the Socialist camp and the International Communist Movement, the Albanian Workers Party and the Albanian people had to undergo hardships and met with many difficulties. But under the steady leadership of the Albanian Workers Party, the heroic Albanian people succeeded in overcoming these difficulties. The entire party and all Albanian people, now as always, unite closely behind the Central Committee led by Comrade Enver Hoxha, follow persistently the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary line, and persist in proletarian internationalism and in the unity of the Socialist camp and the International Communist Movement.

No matter what the situation may be, the Albanian Workers Party and the Albanian people continue to do their best to fulfill their fraternal duties. The Albanian Workers Party and the Albanian people always try to contribute their share to the protection and strengthening of the Socialist camp, and wholeheartedly support fraternal countries struggling against the plot of the U. S. imperialists and their lackeys to create aggressive wars. The Albanian Workers Party and the Albanian people always lend warm support to the oppressed peoples in Asia, Africa, and Latin America in their struggle under all forms against imperialism

and colonialism. The voice of the Albanian delegate at the UN forum is always the voice on the just cause, a voice revealing the nature and schemes of imperialism, especially U. S. imperialism, and defending the interests of the oppressed peoples.

Because of this foreign policy of Albania, the imperialists and their lackeys nurture a deep hatred for the Albanian Workers Party and the Albanian People's Republic. But in spite of their shrewd activities, they cannot keep Albania's international prestige from becoming ever higher, nor can they destroy the unbreakable solidarity between socialist Albania and the people of fraternal socialist countries and all Marxist-Leninist and revolutionary people throughout the world or overshadow the role of the Albanian People's Republic in the struggle of the people of the world for peace, national independence, democracy, and socialism.

The great successes the Albanian people, under the leadership of the Albanian Workers Party, have achieved during the past 20 years are not only of significance to Albania, but are of great international significance. As Comrade Haxhi Lleshi, Chairman of the National Assembly Presidium of the Albanian People's Republic, said last may on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the congress against fascism and for the liberation of the Albanian people: "The experience of Albania shows that a people, when they are fully mobilized and led by a just Marxist-Leninist Party under favorable international conditions and especially when they know how to rely on their own strength, will be able not only to liberate their country from imperialist oppression, but to obliterate all pressure, intervention, sabotage, and encirclement." This experience has greatly encouraged and helped the oppressed peoples and the emerging people now struggling to win freedom and achieve social progress.

Standing together on the frontline of the Socialist camp and struggling to achieve the same goal, which is to eliminate imperialism in its entirety and win the complete victory for socialism on a world scale, Vietnam and Albania, though located many thousands of miles apart, have long been closely united by a fraternal international proletarian love.

The resolute attitude of the Albanian Workers Party as well as that of the Vietnamese Workers Party and other persistent Marxist-Leninist parties in the struggle to protect the purity of Marxism-Leninism, the solidarity of the Socialist camp, and the International Communist Movement has made this love ever dearer.

After the U. S. imperialists started the undeclared war in South Vietnam, forcing our southern compatriots to rise up to engage in a second holy war of liberation, the party, the government, and the people in Albania, through the voice of their delegate to the United Nations and

through other concrete acts, always display their sympathy and unconditional support for the patriotic struggle of our people in South Vietnam against the U. S. aggressors and their lackeys.

In early August this year, informed that the U. S. imperialists' planes and warships had strafed and bombed North Vietnam, the Albanian government immediately issued a statement severely condemning and warning the U. S. imperialist aggressors. Meanwhile, the fraternal Albanian people, from the cities to the countryside, enthusiastically participated in meetings and demonstrations, and the Albanian press repeatedly reported on an heartily supported the just struggle of the people throughout our country against the U. S. imperialist aggressors.

Commemorating the 20th Anniversary of the Albanian People's Republic, our people are profoundly enthusiastic about and proud of having a close, heroic comrade-in-arms like the fraternal Albanian people. Our people are profoundly enthusiastic over the brilliant achievements the courageous and industrious Albanian people have scored over the past 20 years. Our people consider these achievements as their own. Our people have every reason to be firmly convinced that under the resolute and energetic leadership of the Albanian Workers Party, the Albanian people will certainly be able to score more brilliant achievements and implement successfully the Five-Year Plan in the coming year so as to transform Albania into a strong, socialist industrial-agricultural country in the Balkan area, to raise higher the anti-imperialist and anti-revisionist banner, to make contributions to the consolidation of the Socialist camp, to support the national liberation movement, and to protect world peace.

Commemorating the 20th anniversary of the fraternal Albanian People's Republic, we sincerely thank the Albanian Workers Party and the Albanian government and people for their unconditional support to Socialist construction in North Vietnam, and to the struggle for the liberation of South Vietnam. We will struggle unceasingly to tighten further the solidarity between the parties and peoples of the two countries. We pledge to stand by the fraternal Albanian people in the common struggle against imperialism, to protect the Socialist camp, and win victories for the struggle for peace, democracy, national liberation, and socialism throughout the world.

- END -

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