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THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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No. 937

AMERICAN EMBASSY
Cairo, Egypt October 21, 1949

SUBJECT: Former King Zog's Interview with United Press

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The Ambassador has the honor to report as of possible interest and for ready reference remarks on the present and future status of Albania made by former King ZOG and released by the United Press on October 18, 1949 in the form of answers to eight written questions. The news agency stated that this was the first public statement made by King Zog to a foreign newsman in his three year stay in Egypt. He has, however, issued statements in the local press, as noted in the Embassy's A-692 of October 8, 1948. In his remarks the former ruler pledged himself to exert every effort "to give my people the regime that fits their national and historic traditions". He added that help from the Western powers could re-establish the "legal regime" at a fairly early date.

Commenting on reported plans to form a Free Albanian Government abroad, the King said that such a move would be subordinate to certain international conditions -- the approval and support of the Western powers -- and be in legal accord with the Albanian constitution of the pre-Italian occupation period.

After replying to questions on the internal and external situations in Yugoslavia, Greece and Albania today, King Zog said that he had always wanted to take a trip to the United States, whose people and spirit of justice he had always admired, and would "be glad to have the opportunity of making that visit as soon as it will be possible".

In an apparent bid for American aid he added, "my country looks forward with gratitude to the support which the United States will want to give to the cause of Albania, whose aspiration is only to regain its place in the concert of free nations and to live in harmony with all its neighbors". King Zog closed his remarks with a highly laudatory statement about King FAROUK of Egypt and the hospitable reception he had received in this country.

Copies to: Division of Near Eastern Affairs
London; Athens; Belgrade; Sofia

To the Department on Parchment Mat

Enclosures: *att*
United Press Interview with King Zog

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Encl to Desp No. 937, October 21, 1949, AmEmbassy, Cairo

Text of King Zog's Interview with the United Press

QUESTION ONE:

I understand that Your Majesty consider yourself the lawful head of the Albanian Kingdom. In view of this, does Your Majesty propose to return to Albania if and when circumstances permit?

ANSWER ONE:

In a communique issued to the press by our Legation in Egypt last August 30th, I clearly indicated my decision on this subject, and declared that after the liberation of Albania, an impartial plebiscite under the supervision of the United Nations Organization would solve the question of the form of government through the free expression of the will of the people.

QUESTION TWO:

Has Your Majesty any indication that the present political situation in Albania may permit you to return at a fairly early date?

ANSWER TWO:

I consider that the evolution of the world political situation will lead us in the near future to envisage the re-establishment of the legal regime which conforms with the national interests of Albania.

QUESTION THREE:

Reports from Abroad state that a free Albanian government -- entirely separate from the present administration in Tirana -- is in process of formation. What would be Your Majesty's attitude toward such a government?

ANSWER THREE:

The formation of a free Albanian government abroad is naturally subordinate to certain conditions of an international nature, and particularly to not harming the higher interests of the country as well as strict observance of the Albanian constitutional law.

This government should, first of all, have the possibility of being helped by the Western powers, and have the confidence of the democratic states adhering to the principles of the Atlantic Charter.

And then, to be legal, this government should be founded on the national constitution voted by the Constituent Assembly, which is juridically still in force in spite of the changes in form that have taken place from the Italian occupation in 1939 until our days.

Such a government will naturally have my fullest support.

Question Four

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QUESTION FOUR:

It would be interesting if Your Majesty could discuss the tension actually prevailing between Yugoslavia and Russia. A very large force of Yugoslav troops is reported to be stationed along the Yugoslav-Albanian border, in the Kossowo area. Is Your Majesty of the opinion that this troop concentration is designed to ward off a possible attack on Yugoslavia by Soviet-sponsored forces from Albania?

ANSWER FOUR:

Yugoslavia finds itself at present encircled by the member states of the Cominform. A cold war is declared against her, but, in my opinion, it is so far a family quarrel.

As for the Yugoslav troops stationed, according to your information, near the Albanian-Yugoslav frontier in the region of Kossowo, I am not in a position to give you my opinion on the true aim of this concentration (if it really exists). But I can assure you that the supposition of a possible attack by the Communist forces of Albania against its neighbors seems to me to be incompatible with the real facts.

QUESTION FIVE:

Albania is at present aiding the Greek guerillas against the Athens government. Would Your Majesty give your views as to the wisdom or otherwise of this policy?

ANSWER FIVE:

The fratricidal war which has made so many ravages in Greece is regrettable, and I disapprove of the help given to the rebels from abroad. Besides, the Conciliation Commission formed by the United Nations Organization is busying itself at present to find a final solution to this question, inspired by the principles of safeguarding the territorial integrity and the independence of the four Balkan states: Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Yugoslavia.

QUESTION SIX:

Has Your Majesty any information regarding the actual political and economic conditions existing in Albania?

ANSWER SIX:

Albania is a small state, but might be called the most badly mutilated state in the Balkans. Since the last war, Albania is under a regime that has not been willingly chosen by the people. Living conditions are very hard and the country is completely impoverished.

A deadly struggle has been going on for four years in Albania between the free man attached to his ancestral traditions and the robot man subjugated to the power imposed by a minority. The whole nation is being led to its last days by this struggle.

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It must be emphasized, however, that the resistance movement in the land would certainly have been more decisive if the danger which threatens our national frontiers from abroad did not exist. Nevertheless, the overwhelming majority keeps its eyes fixed on the help which the free and democratic peoples will decide to give her to put an end to the moral and physical sufferings which threaten her very existence.

Besides, in the recent appeal I addressed to all Albanian political parties without distinction of their political convictions, I asked that they seek, in common accord, the realization of national unity, which is so indispensable in the grave moments we are going through.

The Albanians must have faith in the future of their own country and be sure that, whatever may happen, I will not cease to exert my efforts to give back to my people the regime that fits their national and historic traditions.

QUESTION SEVEN:

Has Your Majesty any intention of visiting the United States?

ANSWER SEVEN:

One of my most cherished desires is to visit the United States, this great democracy that has so generously consecrated itself to reconstruct the social and material ruins in the countries which were victims of the last war.

I shall be glad to have the opportunity of making that visit as soon as it will be possible. I have great admiration for the American people. My country has unshakable faith in the spirit of justice of the United States. My country looks forward with gratitude to the support which the United States will want to give to the cause of Albania, whose aspiration is only to regain its place in the concert of free nations and to live in harmony with all its neighbors.

QUESTION EIGHT:

As Your Majesty has now spent three and a half years in Egypt, you may care to make a statement regarding His Majesty King Farouk and the treatment you have had in Egypt?

ANSWER EIGHT:

The very noble and cordial welcome that was reserved to us by His Majesty King Farouk 1st since I am in Egypt is very precious to me.

Under the protection of her young and active Sovereign, Egypt is making very great progress in all fields of social and political life. I do not doubt that the political world and the whole nation, gathering closely around the Throne, will respond loyally to the call for union made by the King, whose main concern is the welfare of his people.

The Egyptian people, symbolizing the traditional Moslem hospitality