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File: NCFA

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Foreign Office

20 June 1951

SUBJECT: The Independence of Albania - BRITISH POSITION PAPER

1. The Problem

- a. If the internal regime should collapse, or if Yugoslavia were attacked by the Cominform it would invade Albania and Greece would follow suit.
- b. Since the Yugoslavs have broached the subject of cooperation with the Greeks and the Greeks consulted the U.S. and the U.S. sought the advice of the British, the latter two must - (1) if wish to see Albania remain independent - extract from two former assurances that the occupation will be temporary (2) If Albanian independence no longer vital, we should restrict efforts to merely averting a clash between the two former.
- c. The British Chief of Staff would prefer an independent Albania friendly to West but not at cost of weakening Jugs or Greeks and would like to see a line of demarkation agreed upon.
- d. Politically the following argue for continued independence:
 - (1) Ethnic and historical considerations.
 - (2) Existence of NCFA.
 - (3) Difficulty of an alternate solution without conflict between interested powers.
- e. Against independence:
 - (1) Smallness and instability as state argues whether or not better as Yugoslav Federative Republic (with or without Epirus). This might be acceptable to Yugoslavia - Greece - even

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Albanians but might alienate Italy. However since Jugs are orienting towards West and in view large Albanian population this probably would not be wholly unacceptable solution.

2. Conclusion

Proceed on the assumption that Albania will continue independent.

3. Recommendations

At earliest date:

- a. Urge the Yugoslavs and the Greeks not to enter Albania if former attacked but if they do to agree on a line.
- b. Urge them to declare publicly occupation temporary in nature.
- c. Advise them if regime collapsed we should want to discuss successor regime with them and Italians.

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