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VIA: AIR

NR1A-1065

TO: Chief, SE

17 July 1953

FROM: []

INFO: []

SUBJECT: General - Intelligence/Operational/SOFIEND
Specific- Discussion of Albanian Emigre Affairs
with RUCASTING

1. During talks with RUCASTING in Alexandria, Egypt on 24 and 25 June, 1953, the following points of interest came up in connection with Albanian emigre affairs:
 - a. In reply to a query as to whether he had heard anything of a rumored meeting to be held in Zurich, Switzerland, under the auspices of the Yugoslav-sponsored Prigren refugee committee, RUCASTING said that such a report had reached him. The meeting was said to have been planned by the Yugoslavs. Lutfi SPAHIU and two other members of the Prigren group together with a Yugoslav "newspaper correspondent," to direct their actions, were slated to attend. However, nothing materialized and RUCASTING doubts whether any gathering of this type in Zurich is likely in view of the strict ban on political activity in Switzerland.
 - b. RUCASTING said that as far as he had recently been able to determine, the Yugoslav-sponsored refugee organization in Prigren has not been very active of late. They have been sending a "few" agents into Albania, but have not tried to undertake any large-scale political action inside. He maintains that the bulk of the leading members of the Yugoslav committee are people who are basically loyal to him, although under Communist control at the moment.
 - c. According to RUCASTING, the BKI have made an alliance with Ali KLISURA recently. Said KRIEZIU has made a secret agreement with the BKI and the KLISURA faction of the Balli Kombeter to ally himself and his following with these two groups if and when RUCASTING designated a head for a new royalist party which would also join the alliance. KRIEZIU committed himself to this in spite of the fact that he has declared himself to be a republican. This whole group would like to set up a new organization in Italy with a view to replacing the National Committee for Free Albania, which is torn by inter-party strife and has shown no sign of achieving internal unity. It is probable that the Italians are supporting the idea, since Xhafer BEVA is also working in the interests of such a new organization, although he has probably been instructed by the Italians not to align himself with it openly. In any case, all the elements interested in the creation of the new Albanian committee are trying to

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urge RENGASTING to express his approval of the creation of a new royalist party, as opposed to the Legalitet party which is included in the National Committee For Free Albania; this new royalist party would thus be in a position to join the BKI-BK (Kliesura) group, leaving the Legalitet where it is, in the National Committee for Free Albania. RENGASTING added that he would like to have [] advice on this matter. [] replied that although the defects of the NCFA are known, there is no interest in setting up any more committees insofar as his organization is concerned, and that it is still desired to make the NCFA as effective as possible. Pointing out that the establishment of a new committee would be unfortunate and only complicate things further, [] promised to secure his Headquarters' comments on the matter.

- d. RENGASTING stated that he was very disappointed and discouraged over the bickering going on in the NCFA. He feels that all the leading members are now working for their own personal selfish interests, and are primarily interested in prolonging as much as possible their relatively comfortable lives in Rome, and in getting as much money as possible from the backers of the National Committee. Few, if any, of these people would be willing to go back to Albania as agents or to fight, and very few would now be accepted by the Albanian people, he said.
- e. RENGASTING brought up the subject of George GOGO, saying that he understood that there was some talk of discharging him from the National Committee. He emphatically recommended that everything be done to retain GOGO, saying that the latter is completely loyal to the Americans and is a valuable man for that reason.
- f. Referring to his own financial situation, RENGASTING said that there are many people who believe erroneously that he is a rich man. At the present moment his financial resources are meager, but he does have some blocked funds in Italy, amounting to something like 20,000 or 25,000 gold pounds. This money is being held by the Italians because he has consistently refused to sign a declaration stating that some sixty million gold pounds belonging to the Albanian National Bank, and presently in Italy, properly belong to the Italian Government. More than once the Italians have offered to release his personal funds if he would only agree to sign a statement supporting the illegal Italian claims to this money. In addition, RENGASTING said, he has some three million dollars' worth of personal property such as furniture, china, rugs, silver, and paintings, which was stolen from his residences in Albania, and which is now scattered among various Italian households.

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- 2. It would be appreciated if Headquarters would furnish the undersigned with the comments to be passed on to RNCASTING in connection with paragraph 1, c, above. The creation of a new committee of any kind would seem to be most undesirable, and it would be well to confirm to RNCASTING this view, which has already been conveyed to him by []

[]

16 July 1953

Distributions:

- 1 - Headquarters
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