

Mr. Wisner

January 4, 1955

TO: EUR - Mr. Merchant  
FROM: EUR - Mr. Holmes  
SUBJECT: Detachment of Albania from the Soviet Bloc

In compliance with your instructions, I have had a good look at the question of the detachment of Albania from the Soviet Bloc.

I have been into the question of capabilities in some detail with CIA and it is clear that any plan of detachment with a real chance of success would require such resources in manpower and materiel as to constitute a full-scale military operation. It would not be possible to keep secret preparations for an operation of such magnitude, nor to present it as being Albanian in character. CIA has no continuing contact inside the country and there is no known military or political figure who might be developed into a rallying point for rebellion against the Hoxha regime. Efforts to establish relationships inside Albania have been unsuccessful because of efficient Soviet supervision of the local security forces. There are about 1,000 Russian officials there, divided about equally between civil and military.

I agree entirely with the conclusions in Ray Thurston's memorandum to you of November 5, 1954, and do not consider it necessary to restate the political objections to taking any action at the present time.

I recommend the following:

By the Department

- 1) That EE keep the matter under continuing observation;
- 2) That the British Foreign Office be approached with a proposal that there be developed a long-range plan to determine:
  - (a) Agreed long-range objectives with respect to Albania;
  - (b) Tentative plans to be followed in the event of hostilities, either general or localized. These should include plans for diplomatic action with regard to France, Italy, Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey. The immediate approach should be confined to the U.K.
  - (c) Tentative plans, both operational and diplomatic, to be followed in the event of a change in the internal situation of Albania, which might make detachment feasible.

DOWN GRADE PER  
CLASSIFICATION REVIEW DIVISION  
FOR DDO JAN. 1980

FOR COORDINATION WITH *State*

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By CIA

- 1) To keep the matter under continuing observation.
- 2) To try to improve the effectiveness of the National Committee for a Free Albania.
- 3) To continue the effort to develop contact with some military or political figure inside Albania, who might eventually be used as the leader of a movement to overthrow the Hoxha regime, however forlorn the chance of success may be.
- 4) To attempt to penetrate any Albanian mission sent abroad.
- 5) To develop the operational planning with the British Service following the Department's discussions with the Foreign Office suggested above.

I attach for inclusion in the file a list of the officials of the National Committee for a Free Albania.

c/c: Mr. Wisner

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