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GIVES BIOGRAPHIC DATA ON 5 ALBANIAN GENERALS

Gjeneral-Leitnan Mehmet Shehu

Gjeneral-Leitnan Mehmet Shehu was born in 1913 in the village of Corush in Mallakaster. After completing an elementary education in his native village, he went to the technical school in Tirana, graduating in 1932. Even then, Shehu was making a name for himself through his revolutionary and anti-Zogist activity. In 1935 he received a scholarship to continue military training, for which he showed great aptitude, in the college in Naples, Italy. Zogist and Fascist spies who were striving with him followed his revolutionary activities and reported them to the Zogist regime, which called him back to Tirana, cut off his scholarship, and arrested him.

In Italy, Shehu became still better acquainted with the corruption of Fascism and developed still greater distaste for Fascism and the Zogist regime. He volunteered for the war in Spain, and in November 1937 crossed the border between France and Spain illegally. Once in Spain, he joined the 13th International (the Garibaldi) Brigade. After a short time he became Deputy Commander of the 4th Battalion of the Garibaldi Brigade. He was made a member of the Spanish Communist Party in December 1937.

After the war in Spain, when the International Brigades and the Spanish Republican Army withdrew to France, Shehu was interned on 9 February 1939 in a French concentration camp by the regime of Daladier, Paul Reynaud, and Petain. He remained there for 40 months. While there he was made a member of the Party Committee of the camp.

On 10 August 1942 Shehu returned to Albania to take part in the struggle against the Fascist occupation. He was brought from France in custody, going from prison to prison, until he reached the jail in Tirana, in which he served 24 days. Once free, he joined the underground, made contact with the Party leaders of the Vlone district, and at once began to organize and mobilize the people for combat. He was made a member of the Vlone District Committee and later Organizational Secretary of the same committee. He helped considerably

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in the organization and expansion of the Party membership. When the first Partisan company in Mallakaster was organized, Shehu was made its commander on 4 February 1943. Shehu was one of the leaders in the battles of Gjorm, Patos, and Selenice, and others. He also played an important part in destroying the anti-Communist faction organized in the Vlone district in the summer of 1943 by Saik Prentja (Xhepi).

In the first national conference of the Albanian Communist Party, Mehmet Shehu was made a kandidat (alternate member) of the Central Committee of the Party.

Shehu successfully led the forces of the people of Mallakaster in the campaign of June and July 1943. On 15 August 1943, by order of the General Staff, he was made commander of the 1st Assault Brigade of the Army of National Liberation. Under the leadership of Tuk Jakova as Political Commissar and Mehmet Shehu as commander, the brigade won great distinction.

Shehu was made a member of the General Anti-Fascist Council and promoted to colonel by the Congress. Upon the formation of the 1st Division he was made Deputy Commander and in August 1944, Commander. Shehu directed the liberation of Tirana. In 1944 he was promoted to GJeneral Major and Second Assistant to the Chief of Staff.

Shehu continued his military studies in the Voroshilov High Academy of the General Staff of the Soviet Army. He was recalled by the Central Committee before he had finished his course at the academy, and made Chief of Staff in August 1946. The Democratic Front made him a member of its General Council and of its Executive Committee. In 1947 the people of Tropoje elected him as their deputy to the Popular Assembly.

As Chief of Staff, Shehu has made every effort to apply the progressive military science of the Soviets to the Albanian Army.

In October 1948 Shehu was appointed Minister of Internal Affairs, and in November was made Prime Minister, retaining his post as Minister of the Interior.

The First Congress of the Albanian Communist Party, in recognition of his services in the struggle for national liberation and in modernizing the army, and in recognition of his loyalty to the USSR and his campaign against Yugoslavia and Yugoslav collaborators in the Albanian Communist Party, made Shehu a member of its Central Committee, a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee, and Secretary of the PPSH [the Albanian Workers' Party, i.e., the new name of the Communist Party]. On 8 July 1949 GJeneral-Major Shehu was promoted to GJeneral-Leitnant.

GJeneral-Major Shefqet Peci

GJeneral-Major Shefqet Peci was born in 1906 in the village of Picar in Kurvelesh. His family were middle peasants. He went to elementary school in Albania and in 1931 finished 3 years in artillery school. From school he joined the Army with the rank of sergeant-major of artillery, and at the same time made contact with the anti-Zogist group in the Army which was led by Bedri Spahiu. For political activity against the Zog regime, Peci was arrested in 1937 with a group of officers. Although imprisoned and tortured, Peci and his comrades continued their activities. After 4 months in prison he was freed and discharged from Zog's Army. He continued his revolutionary and anti-Zogist work, for which he was kept under constant surveillance by Zog's agents.

Because of financial difficulties, Peci was obliged to go to work as a janitor in the Normal School in Elbasan in 1938. Nevertheless he continued his revolutionary and anti-Zogist work in close cooperation with his comrades in resistance groups.

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After the arrival of the Italian Fascists, Peci became more disgusted than ever with Fascism. Together with students in the Normal School in Elbasan, he organized anti-Fascist demonstrations. For his revolutionary activity he was arrested in 1942 and spent 4 months in jail. After he was freed, he worked for a time in the underground. In the Kardhiq and Kurvelesh districts he organized Councils of National Liberation and mobilized the people. As soon as the Albanian Communist Party was formed, he was made a member. He was also made a member of the Gjinokaster District Council.

At the end of 1942 he was made Commissar of the "Cercis Topulli" Partisan company, and on 7 August was made Commissar of the "Hasim Zeneli" Battalion. He was appointed Commissar of the First Perzier Group, and in December 1943 was made Commander of the 5th Brigade. For his distinguished service against the Italians and Germans as the Commander of the 5th Brigade, in September 1944 he was made Deputy Commander of the 1st Assault Division, in October Commander of the Operational Staff of the 3d and 25th Brigades, and in November Commander of the III Army Corps.

In May 1944 he took part in the Congress of Permet, and there was made a member of the General Council. He was also promoted to the rank of major.

After the liberation Peci served as Inspector of the People's Army. In March 1946 he was made Commander of the 3d Division, in May 1946 Commander of the 5th Division, and in 1946 Director of Military Training. Later he was appointed Commander of the DMP (Division for the Defense of the People, i.e., the Security Police). In December 1945 he was elected a deputy to the Popular Assembly from Kurvelesh.

At present Peci is a Kandidat of the Central Committee of the PPSH and quartermaster of the People's Army. On 8 July he was promoted to GJeneral-Major.

GJeneral-Major Haxhi Lleshi

GJeneral-Major Haxhi Lleshi was born in 1913 in the village of Rasnan in the Diber district. He went to elementary school and completed one year of gymnasium (secondary school) there.

He took part in the resistance to the Italian occupation in the Zergan district after April 1941. In the summer of 1942 he was made Commander of the Partisan company in the Diber district. In September 1942 he went to the Peza Conference as the delegate of the Diber company.

Lleshi was wounded in one of his company's many encounters with the enemy. In July 1943 he was made Commander for the Diber district and battalion commander.

Between 1942 and 1944, Lleshi fought and worked with the Yugoslav Partisans in Macedonia and in Albania.

At the Conference of Labinot he was made a member of the General Council of National Liberation, and on 10 July was made a member of the General Staff of the Army of National Liberation. He took part in the Congress of Permet on 24 May 1944, at which he was made a member of the Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation. At this time he was promoted to colonel. At the beginning of 1943 he was made a member of the PPSH. He served as Minister of Internal Affairs from the second meeting of the Anti-Fascist Council in Berat to the beginning of 1946. At present he is Minister without Portfolio and chairman of the State Control Commission ad Interim.

At the First Congress of the Communist Party of Albania, Lleshi was elected a Kandidat of the Central Committee of the PPSH.

On 8 July 1949 he was promoted to GJeneral-Major.

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Gjeneral-Major Tahir Kadareja

Gjeneral-Major Tahir Kadareja was born at Gjinokaster in 1913. He completed 5 years of lycee (secondary school) and later took a 2-year course in artillery weapons, ending in 1931. From 1931 to 1937 he served as an artillery officer in the Albanian Army. During this time he associated with a group of officers with Communist leanings. He took an actual part in the Fier Movement. Eventually he was arrested by the Zog regime and spent 8 months in prison because of his Communist activity. After serving his term, he was sent to Gjinokaster as an internee, but he was permitted to move about freely in the city.

In 1938 he went to Greece, with the intention of going on to fight in Spain. However, he was arrested in Greece and handed over to the Albanian government.

During the occupation, Kadareja continued his revolutionary activity. As a member of a Communist group, he fought against the occupation in Tepelene and Tirana.

When the struggle for national liberation began, he became an active participant in it. He was made a member of the Communist Party in 1942. He worked for and helped organize the movement in the Gjinokaster district. He worked there illegally, under orders from the Party, from the spring of 1942 on. He was condemned to death in absentia by the Fascist court in Gjinokaster.

In the spring of 1942 Kadareja was made commander of the "Zagoris" Partisan company. This company conducted large-scale propaganda work in the villages it passed through, set up councils, and built police stations in the Zagori, Pogon, Lunxheri, and other districts.

In September 1942 he was put in charge of the forces of the Gjinokaster district. His work there included recruiting volunteers for combat. As a member of the District Committee for Gjinokaster district he took part in the first national conference of the Albanian Communist Party as a delegate from that district. In August 1943 he was appointed Deputy Commander of the 1st Brigade, and he led it in various engagements with the enemy. In December 1943 he was made Commander of the 6th Brigade. In August 1944 he commanded the 2d Division in the liberation of northern Albania. In December 1944 he became Commander of the II Corps.

In the Congress of Permet in 1944 he was made a member of the General Council. He was promoted to lieutenant-colonel, and in November 1944 to colonel.

In the Front Congress of 1945 Kadareja was made a member of the General Council. After the liberation he studied in the Voroshilov Military Academy in Moscow.

At present Kadareja is Commandant of Artillery in the Ministry of National Defense.

On 8 July 1949 he was promoted to Gjeneral-Major.

Gjeneral-Major Gjin Murku

Gjeneral-Major Gjin Murku was born in 1918 in Bas te Burrelit in a poor peasant family. He received his primary education in the orphanage in Tirana. He enrolled in the Technical School in Tirana in the Agriculture Branch and spent 4 years there. He won a contest and was appointed Agricultural Technician in Korce, a position which he held until August 1941.

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His revolutionary career began in 1936, when he took part in a strike in Korce. In 1937 he joined the Korce Youth and the "Puna" (Labor) Society, and became a member of a guerrilla group. Thereafter he devoted himself to agitation and struggle against the Zog regime. After the occupation he worked against the Fascist regime. On 15 August 1941 he began undercover activities. He joined a guerrilla group in the Korce district and worked with it.

Around November 1941 he was sent to the Partisan company of Peze. He remained with it until February 1942. On orders of the Provisional Central Committee of the Albanian Communist Party he went to Berat to organize the resistance and to form the first Partisan company of Skrapar, in which he served as Commissar. In the Berat district he organized Partisan companies and battalions.

When the General Staff of the Army of National Liberation was formed, he was made Commissar of the Berat district, with the rank of major. In May 1944 he became commander of the 7th Brigade, and in May 1944 commander of the 6th Division. With this division he served in Yugoslavia, Montenegro, the Sandjak, and in southern Bosnia as far as Visegrad. On 29 November 1944 he was promoted to lieutenant colonel. On 1 May 1945 he was appointed Commander of the I Army Corps, and in July 1945 was made a colonel.

In September 1945 he was sent to the Voroshilov General Staff Academy in the USSR. He finished his course in 1948. In June 1948 he was named Director of Artillery in the Ministry of National Defense. At present he is Director of Combat Training in the Ministry of National Defense.

Marku has been a member of the Albanian Communist Party since its formation. On 8 July 1949 he was promoted to General-Major.

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