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November 1951

PROJECT BGFIEND REPORT

I. HISTORICAL REVIEW

1. Project FIEND came into being officially with its approval on 22 June 1949. It was established as a coordinated enterprise with the British, whose counterpart is called Project VALUABLE, and was set up originally with four principal objectives:

a. The maximum ultimate objective was the overthrow of the Soviet dominated Albanian Government, thereby facilitating the establishment of a Government which is responsive to and supported by the people of Albania, and one whose aims and objectives are not inimical to those of the United States in that area.

b. Lesser and more immediate objectives were:

(1) The elimination of a base for support of the Greek Communist guerrillas.

(2) Denial to the Soviets of a base for air, land, and naval forces in the Mediterranean.

(3) Provision of a psychological stimulus to the Iron Curtain countries by demonstrating the possibility of overthrowing a securely entrenched Communist dictatorship.

2. The action through which these objectives were to be achieved was specified to include four major elements:

a. Covert establishment and support of an Albanian National Committee composed of representatives of the various emigre groups.

b. Organization and

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b. Organization and training of refugee Albanian patriots outside Albania to be accomplished by the Committee with covert supervision and support.

c. Organization and training of patriots and sympathizers within Albania to be accomplished by Committee trained agents with covert guidance, supervision and support.

d. Creation of a provisional government group by the Committee with covert guidance, which would function after the coup d'etat until elections are held.

3. This Project was developed as a result of discussion and close coordination with the Department of State, the JCS, the Foreign Office, and the British Service in the spring and early summer of 1949.

4. Political developments with respect to the Balkans during this period brought about an entirely new state of affairs which resulted in a general reconsideration of objectives in Albania. The major new factors were the full impact of Tito's defection from the Cominform Bloc and the successful suppression of Communist guerrilla activities in Greece. Five specific points were brought up at the time as fundamental reasons for a review of proposed plans. There were:

- a. The new attitude towards the West on the part of Yugoslavia.
- b. The cessation of Greek guerrilla activity.
- c. Fear of Soviet action against Tito on the pretext of aid to Albania.
- d. Yugoslav expressions of concern that the Soviets may intervene in Yugoslav affairs using Albania as an excuse.

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e. The possibility of a Greek move into Albania in the event a state of anarchy were to develop, with resulting complications and clashes with Yugoslavia.

5. Consequently a new set of Project objectives was drawn up on 6 December 1949 in conjunction with the British, and submitted for consideration to the Departments of State and Defense (General Magruder). Indication of State Department approval was received about 12 December (Llewellyn Thompson) and the new objectives became official as defined in these three sentences:

a. To reduce the value of Albania to the Soviets by persistently and constantly undermining Communist authority and by harassing the Hoxha regime with domestic difficulties.

b. To encourage and assist the Albanian people in their resistance to the Hoxha regime; to maintain hope of eventual liberation; and to prepare the people psychologically for eventual action to free them from Communist tyranny.

c. To create, foster and support a skeleton resistance organization which could be used as the foundation of a liberation movement if and when such an active operation should seem politically and strategically desirable.

6. This last mentioned set of objectives has governed the activities under this Project to date. The lack of a clearly defined long-term national policy towards Albania has seriously hampered our planning, but every effort has been made through frequent meetings with the Department of State to push the clarification of policy and to impress upon the Department the need for

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some definite indication of what our real end objectives are. The last discussion with State took place on 8 August 1951, when it was made clear that the question of long range policy regarding Albania is still under discussion between the Department of State and the Foreign Office, and when it was agreed to carry on our OPC activities at substantially the present level pending a further clarification of the end objective. At this meeting it was also confirmed once more that the Department does desire the development of a controlled underground as well as certain outside resources including a pool of approximately 500 trained men, which could be used to further and maintain American influence in the event it should become United States policy to encourage and bring about a revolution or to engage in relatively large-scale operations for any other purpose.

7. A new and most important development in the way of policy is the preparation by the Department of State of a new paper on Albania, dated 1 November, for use in connection with further talks with the British as a basic document governing future action toward Albania. This paper states the American attitude more clearly and definitely than any document produced hitherto, and provides a very much clearer picture of U.S. desires regarding that country. Among the points of particular importance to CIA are the following five paragraphs which I am quoting verbatim:

a. The United States have as their objective that Albania should be an independent state, friendly to the West. Any policy aimed at the extinction of Albanian independence, such as by partition between Yugoslavia and Greece, would not be supported.

b. It is believed desirable to work toward the transition from a

Soviet dominated

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Soviet dominated Albania to a free Albania, not dominated by neighboring states and having general Western support.

c. The United States believe that diplomatic and other efforts should be made toward the end of bringing about an independent Albania friendly to the West.

d. The usefulness of unconventional means is, at present, limited primarily by the general explosiveness of the situation in the Balkans, since admittedly a major consideration is to avoid provocation which might upset the delicate balance between peace and war in that area. Nevertheless, there appears to the United States to be scope for carefully planned and coordinated action which would not upset the present unstable balance in the Balkans and which would lay the groundwork for more forthright action at such time as it becomes apparent that it might be undertaken without undue risk. Moreover, it is conceivable that in spite of the indicated explosive situation, culminant action may be undertaken as diversionary activity to counter Soviet militant moves elsewhere as, for example, Communist annexation of Burma. It is proposed that activities presently being carried on be continued with a view to establishing as strong a position as possible through organization and preparation both inside and outside Albania.

e. In the event of a Yugoslav effort to substitute a Titoist regime for the present pro-Soviet one, it is believed that the United States and United Kingdom should take the most forceful diplomatic and other action as soon as necessary to impress upon the Yugoslavs that the character of the new regime in Albania must be the subject of intimate consultation between the United States, United Kingdom, Yugoslavia, Greece and Italy, as the most interested parties.

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7. The foregoing represents a brief summary of the Project itself and its scope as defined by State Department policy. In addition, it is based on the policies and instructions set forth in certain NSC papers which also represent fundamental justification of the Project in terms of National policy. These papers are:

- a. NSC-10/2, which authorizes CIA activity of the type in question.
- b. NSC-10/5, on the scope and pace of covert operations.
- c. NSC-58/2, which directs action to promote the development of non-Communist states out of the Satellites; to disrupt the Soviet-Satellite relationship by means short of war; and to bring about the eventual reduction and elimination of the preponderance of Soviet power and influence in Eastern Europe.
- d. NSC-68 which recommends a program leading to the ultimate roll-back of Soviet domination.
- e. NSC-103 & 103/1, which state it to be a matter of policy, in the event of Communist attack on Greece, to use political means to localize the action and to stop the aggression; and to support anti-Communist guerrilla warfare in Greece and contiguous areas.
- f. NSC-114/2, which emphasizes the need for intensification of intelligence and related activities.
- g. JCS-1969/1, (war planning directions), which states that the task basic to the successful completion of all other tasks is that of building up the covert operations organization, including forces of resistance, to the magnitude and effectiveness desired. This is an immediate peacetime task which continues into wartime; its fulfillment will be a prime requisite to maximum accomplishment of resistance objectives.

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II - OPERATIONAL HISTORY

1. During 1949 the operational end of the American project on Albania was concerned primarily with the political problems surrounding the formation of the Albanian National Committee both as a front for activities and as a useful operational tool as envisaged in the original version of the Project. This was a complicated task in view of the political rivalry and intrigues among the various factions of the Albanian immigration, but on 26 August 1949, the creation of the Committee was announced in Paris with the participation of the three Albanian political parties which were least tainted by extreme rightist or leftist associations and which participated in the wartime resistance movement in Albania. The main elements of the Committee consisted of a General Committee, a smaller Executive Committee, and a military junta. This junta was established as a small group representing the best military leadership in the political parties involved and was intended to participate in certain covert operational matters. The Executive Committee, on the other hand, was given the responsibility for action in the overt field. I should like to say, at this point, that in general the Albanian Committee is one of the few such groups under NCFE sponsorship that can be considered functionally effective, and it has acquired considerable prestige both inside and outside Albania.

2. It was the original Anglo-American concept that the end objective of BGFIEND, namely the overthrow of the Communist government, would be brought about through an action initiated by the introduction of a "shock force" of approximately 1,000 armed Albanians who would be trained as part of the Anglo-American effort and brought to Albania through the joint FIEND/VALUABLE apparatus. Although this concept was apparently seriously

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considered in the initial stages and was greatly favored by the National Committee, it was definitely abandoned in the spring of 1950 as the type of action which should not be considered as practicable in the immediate future.

3. British operations in 1949 consisted of the infiltration of six teams of agents representing a single political party and picked and trained prior to the establishment of the coordinated American-British projects. These groups were sent in primarily as intelligence teams and did not remain long in the country because of the difficult conditions they encountered.

4. American operations really got started late in the spring of 1950. The military junta was directed to, and did prepare, a list of suitable refugees to be moved to an Albanian Guard Company in Germany for holding and preliminary conditioning, and in June 1950 the Guard Company came into being officially and was stationed near Munich. It served as the pool from which agents were picked for 1950 and 1951 operations upon the recommendations of the members of the military junta. The first group of teams was trained that summer at a covert site in Germany and three teams, totalling nine men, were infiltrated by air on 11 November 1950.

5. While the agent recruiting and training program was under way, work was pushed on the psychological warfare end of the operation and a propaganda sub-committee was established as part of the Albanian National Committee in order to prepare propaganda material for use in leaflets to be dropped from the air and distributed by other means, and for the Committee newspaper. The first issue of the Committee newspaper (circulation <sup>5,000</sup>~~3,500~~) appeared on 6 <sup>Sept</sup>~~November~~ 1950 and the paper has been coming out regularly ever since. The first leaflet raid

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was made on 16 October 1950, ~~using a chartered British commercial plane.~~  
~~The first wholly American leaflet raid using the~~ <sup>CIA</sup> ~~OPC~~ covert aircraft based  
in Greece, ~~was made on 7 November.~~ There have been a total of 6 American and  
3 British leaflet raids and a total of 11 additional flights during which  
leaflets were dropped in small quantities as a diversion to cover up other  
operations performed during those flights. This propaganda effort has been  
successful. Not only have the leaflets received wide distribution and great  
attention in Albania, but the Committee paper too is widely read and has con-  
siderable influence and prestige in Albanian circles everywhere. We are  
introducing miniature issues into Albania by air drop and are also sending  
regular copies in through the mails. It has been reliably confirmed that  
the psychological warfare campaign has had a very considerable impact on the  
Albanian people as reflected by agent reports and the escape of a number of  
persons who attributed their efforts to escape to the leaflet drops. Further  
confirmation is indicated by the bitter attacks of the Tirana government on  
the Committee.

MAP

6. Agent penetration into the interior began with a drop of three  
teams (nine men) late in 1950 and was continued through the summer of 1951  
using both air drops and overland infiltration. The agents were directed to  
establish themselves inside if they possibly could and to attempt to organize  
underground resistance nuclei, promote a coordinated resistance movement  
through contacting whatever resistance groups they were able to find, to  
establish safe houses, to collect operational intelligence, and to spread  
propaganda. In the initial operations in 1950 and 1951, we sought to main-  
tain communications with the teams through the use of high frequency radio-  
telephones (Motorola sets), but the apparatus proved unsuitable and this

method was abandoned in

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abandoned in favor of standard W/T communications. By the end of the operational season in 1951, we were able to send in W/T operators with standard sets, and are presently in communication with one team which has successfully established itself in the North and has received a succession of supply drops.

7. Altogether a total of 10 teams, numbering 39 men, was sent in between November 1950 and October 1951. Of these 13 men exfiltrated successfully to Greece; 6 took refuge in Yugoslavia; 4 were captured and convicted as spies by the Albanian authorities; 9 were killed in action; and 7 were presumably still operative although we are in contact with only 4 of these men by radio at the present time. Although losses have been severe, amounting to a third of the men sent in, and although it has been decided to change our operational methods as a result of this experience, it should not be concluded that these earlier operations represent a waste of effort. Not only have we secured a mass of valuable information, but we have also obtained a great deal of the most valuable experience which could not have been obtained in any other way. This has given us a very much better understanding of the problems with which we are confronted.

8. To get back to psychological warfare, another phase of this activity under Project FIEND is represented by our black propaganda broadcasts in the Albanian language. It was originally planned to conduct these broadcasts from a vessel operating in Ionian waters. This original concept was based on the fact that there was a great deal of uncertainty whether any country would permit the operation of a black radio station of the type envisaged by us and that consequently the best way to insure relatively

continuous programs

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continuous programs would be to broadcast from the high seas. As a result of certain technical difficulties which developed in connection with the radio installation on the vessel, this project was abandoned. Excellent working arrangements had been made, in the meantime, with the Greek Secret Service, and it was possible to set up a covert radio station near Athens using certain equipment which was removed from the boat as well as other equipment which was already in our possession there. A propaganda staff was installed in Athens and broadcasts in the name of the National Committee for Free Albania began on 18 September 1951.

9. Another and minor element of the psychological warfare campaign is illustrated by a program of letters and parcels which is being conducted from Rome with a view to embarrassing and to bringing suspicion upon various individuals in the Communist regime. This program involves correspondence on the letterheads of Swiss banks relating to non-existent accounts, replying to non-existent inquiries as to how accounts may be opened, etc., and includes the sending of a few small parcels containing petty luxury items in response to fictitious orders from the wives of prominent Communists.

10. In round terms the cost of the Albanian Project to date has been something on the order of [ ] and we are requesting [ ] for the fiscal year of 1952. This money is being used to finance 1952 operations and will be used to cover the cost of training facilities, additional equipment required in connection with the creation of a small stock of arms and ammunition, and such things as additional aircraft.

### III. OPERATIONAL LESSONS

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III. OPERATIONAL LESSONS AND CONCLUSIONS

1. In an attempt to profit to the maximum extent from past experience and to develop a plan of action for the coming year, a joint British-American critique of the Albanian Project was held in Rome in October of this year. Representatives of Washington, London, and the field spent several days together in analyzing past activities and drawing up a set of conclusions regarding the lessons learned and preparing general plans for 1952. It was the joint view that operations into Albania had produced definite tangible results and that the venture had been also of great value in providing both the British Service and ourselves with a mass of experience and knowledge obtainable in no other way. It was agreed that certain concepts, upon which operations had been based hitherto, had proved to be unsound and should not be followed in our 1952 planning. The most important of these relate to the use of fairly large numbers of teams, composed of men recommended by the Committee, and to the participation by the military junta in operational matters. The lack of success in applying the initial concept of attempting penetration through the use of a fairly large number of teams, selected with the aid of the National Committee and operating in areas recommended by the Committee as small illegal bands, has not proved successful largely for two reasons. The lack of success appears primarily due to the inability of the relatively low-grade personnel furnished by the Committee to survive under the present rigorous conditions in the country, and also in part to the poor security resulting from Committee participation in these activities, even though the Committee at no time was in a position to have access to the dates of infiltration, the exact drop zones, and other critical data. It was therefore decided that because of the lessons learned we will follow a

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new policy in  
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new policy in our 1952 operations which includes these points:

a. More clandestine techniques will be employed for recruiting, training, and infiltrating agents who will be assigned very specific missions, as opposed to the more general missions assigned formerly, and who will be instructed to come out upon completion of such missions.

b. Efforts will be made to recruit higher level agents, than those used formerly, in order to permit us to make contacts with more important and more influential people inside the country.

c. Agents will generally be recruited independently of the National Committee and we shall avoid recruiting in such partially compromised centers as the Guard Company and the refugee camps in Greece, Italy and elsewhere.

d. The National Committee will not be allowed to participate in any operational matters connected with agent infiltrations and agent handling.

e. A greater emphasis will be given to survival training in the preparation of agents for the field.

f. The training of agents will be conducted at new locations.

g. In addition to the use of overland and air infiltration, an effort will be made to develop sea infiltration facilities with which the British have had some success in both landing and picking up teams on the Albanian shore.

2. As an illustration of the type of operational missions which we propose to try on a bigger scale, I should like to cite the arrangements I have made with King Zog for a special intelligence team. This type of mission becomes particularly important in the light of our view and the British view that any eventual revolution in Albania will have to depend to

a large extent on the successful defection of a very substantial proportion of the Albanian armed forces. King Zog is providing two specially picked officers from his staff who have connections with certain individuals in the present Albanian armed force and administration. We will infiltrate these men overland with the aid of guides to be picked from among the Albanians available in Greece, and they will attempt to effect a six-week reconnaissance of Albania and make contact with as many persons in official positions as they can in order to determine the present whereabouts and the present situation of as many as possible army officers and others who would be in a position to assist in bringing about defections and to assist in the eventual overthrow of the government. Because of their former positions in the country and the fact that they are better educated and more intelligent than most of the agents we have been able to secure up to now, it is believed that this mission stands a good chance of producing very valuable results.

3. With regard to the other types of operations for 1952, it was the joint Anglo-American view that we should continue leaflet drops and in general maintain the established level of propaganda activity in order to keep in contact with the population and furnish continuing evidence of interest and of effective and impressive capabilities. It is proposed to continue leaflet drops at intervals of approximately eight weeks, to continue clandestine radio operations, to continue the publication of the newspaper and news bulletin and to initiate a propaganda supply program which will involve occasional drops of certain scarce supplies, inexpensive to us and yet very valuable to the impoverished Albanian people.

4. It is also proposed to delve further into the possibilities for some form of economic warfare, although so far it has been impossible to do anything in this line because practically all of Albanian foreign trade is

in Soviet Hands.

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The establishment of our [ ] will undoubtedly permit us to explore this aspect of the action against Albania more effectively as a certain amount of trade does move through Trieste.

4. With regard to the Committee, it was jointly agreed that it would be desirable to attempt to reorganize it in such a manner as to make it a functionally more flexible group that could attract a wider following, should we wish to broaden it. Not all the anti-Communist Albanians are presently represented and we may wish to give certain formerly pro-Facist groups a chance to join, if the Committee can be reorganized in such a manner as to accept them. The reason for desiring this greater flexibility is the fact that it is believed that these groups control certain definite assets which could be useful to us within the country.

5. I should like to state at this point that as a result of our discussions in Rome, both the British and we are of the opinion that it will take very much more than the use of a shock force of 1,000 men to effect a successful revolution. Consequently, we are now working on the details of a plan for such an action in order to determine just what would really be involved, and to be in a position to present the Department of State and the Department of Defense with a properly thought out scheme. A similar plan is being worked on by our British opposites, and we propose to combine the two before presenting the matter for consideration by any higher authorities. The success of this whole scheme is based on the principle that it will be possible to defect a large proportion of the armed forces whose loyalty is considered doubtful on the grounds of reliable information and indications.

IV. FINAL CONCLUSIONS

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IV. FINAL CONCLUSIONS

1. In conclusion I would like to emphasize the following points:

a. Because of its isolation from the Soviet Bloc, its military and political weakness, and the hostility of its people to the Communist regime, Albania is the Communist state which would be easiest to defect from the Communist Bloc, and is the one in which a rollback of the Iron Curtain could be undertaken at the lowest cost and with the best chance of success. In view of its geographic location and internal situation, Albania also presents an ideal proving and training ground for OPC type activities. It can serve as a sort of Aberdeen proving ground for CIA.

b. United States policy toward Albania includes the following specific points:

(1) The United States has as its objective an independent Albania state friendly toward the West.

(2) The United States believes that diplomatic and other efforts should be made toward the end of bringing about an independent Albania friendly to the West. The term "other efforts" refers to efforts through means at the disposal of our Agency.

(3) The United States considers that there is scope for carefully planned and coordinated action through unconventional means for laying the groundwork for more forthright action at such time as it becomes apparent that it might be undertaken without undue risk. The Department of State therefore desires that the activities presently being carried on by CIA be continued with a view to establishing as strong a position as

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organization and preparation both inside and outside Albania.

(4) It is United States policy to promote the development of a non-Communist Albania; to disrupt the Soviet-Albanian relationship by means short of war; and to bring about eventual reduction and elimination of Soviet influence and power in Albania.

(5) As part of U.S. policy toward Greece, in the event of a Communist attack on that country, it is desired to support anti-Communist warfare in contiguous areas. This requires the advance preparation of internal and external assets for the successful conduct of anti-Communist guerrilla activities in Albania.

(6) In compliance with the general war planning instructions issued by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, it is necessary to build up, as part of the peacetime task, an effective covert operations organization which includes assets for the conduct of resistance activities. The development of a resistance potential that can be used in Albania represents compliance with these instructions insofar as they apply to that part of the Balkan area.

2. In view of these considerations, it is recommended that you concur in the continuation of operations against Albania under the Albanian Project in its present form and with the application of the conclusions and plans drawn up jointly with the British during the recent Rome meeting. These operations will include the following major activities in 1952:

a. Agent operations designed to provide us with contacts and with up-to-date information which would permit us to penetrate the Albanian Government and armed forces apparatus with a view to arranging for

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eventual large scale defection of army units, when and if it becomes United States policy to overthrow the Albanian regime. These operations will involve the use of carefully selected personnel of the highest caliber obtainable and will be conducted in such a manner as to create a resistance network and at the same time to maintain the best security and to conserve personnel for long term use. Furthermore, these operations will produce an intelligence yield which is greatly needed in view of the reduction in OSO operations.

b. The conduct of certain special operations designed to have a harassing and propaganda value both inside and outside the country, and to maintain the courage and spirits of the Albanian people.

c. To continue the psychological warfare program along the lines indicated previously; namely, black radio broadcasts, propaganda leaflet drops, propaganda supply drops, and overt propaganda activities conducted by the National Committee.

d. The development of whatever economic warfare campaign that may seem practicable after the field has been thoroughly explored by our new Trieste station.

e. The development of external assets for use in the eventual major operation intended to overthrow the present Communist regime. By this I mean specifically the creation of a trained pool of 500 selected men who will be held in Guard Companies in Germany and who can be used to provide leadership for the resistance movement in Albania and to direct its course when the time comes. This category

of assets also

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of assets also includes the stockpiling of a limited amount of arms,  
a part of which is already in storage in Greece.

[ Chief, EE-1 ]

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