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1982



BULETINI KATHOLIK SHQIPTAR

My dear People -
Be our heart full of
love, and we know
and Peace will always
be with you. This is my
prayer for each one of
you.
Eftë fjalë me ju
eë Teresam.

Mother Teresa's message to all Albanians
San Francisco, June 4, 1982

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETT"
SHKODER (2018)

ALBANIAN CATHOLIC BULLETIN

Volume III

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In the past our Bulletin (and other material of information, including the book "The Fulfilled Promise" about religious persecution in Albania) has been sent free to a considerable number of people, institutions and organizations in the U.S. and abroad. Not affiliated with any Church or other religious or political organization, we depend entirely on your donations and gifts. Please help us to continue this apostolate on behalf of the oppressed Albanians.

News, articles and photos of general interest, 100-1200 words of length, on religious, cultural, historical and political topics about Albania and its people, may be submitted for consideration. No payments are made for the published material. Please enclose self-addressed envelope for return.

Letters and inquiries should be directed to:

ALBANIAN CATHOLIC INFORMATION CENTER
P.O. BOX 1217
SANTA CLARA, CA. 95053 (U.S.A.)

BULETINI KATHOLIK SHQIPTAR

Vjete III

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STRANGERS ARE FRIENDS WE HAVEN'T MET

God knows
No Strangers,
He loves us all,
The poor, the rich
The great, the small...
He is a friend
Who is always there
To share our troubles
And lessen our care...
No one is a stranger
In God's sight,
For God is Love
And in His light
May we, too, try
In our small way
To make New Friends
From day to day...
So pass no stranger
With an unseeing eye,
For God may be sending
A New Friend By,

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
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HOW YOU CAN HELP RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN ALBANIA

There are many things one person can do for those whose rights of worship are denied by force and legislation. Below we are listing some:

1. BECOME INFORMED YOURSELF.
2. SHARE WITH OTHERS YOUR KNOWLEDGE.
3. PRAY EVERY DAY, ALONE OR IN A GROUP, FOR THE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN ALBANIA.
4. WRITE LETTERS TO EDITORS OF NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS.
5. CALL IN ON RADIO TALK SHOWS.
6. URGE CHURCH AND POLITICAL LEADERS TO TAKE ACTION ON BEHALF OF THE OPPRESSED ALBANIANS.
7. FORM A GROUP TO PRAY AND TO WORK TOGETHER TO HELP SPREAD KNOWLEDGE OF THE RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION NOW OCCURRING IN ALBANIA.
8. WRITE COURTEOUS LETTERS TO ALBANIAN LEADERS (ENVER HODJA, GENERAL SECRETARY PLA, TIRANA, ALBANIA; AND ADIL CARCANI CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF THE PSRA, TIRANA, ALBANIA), PROTESTING ANTIRELIGIOUS LAWS OF THE ALBANIAN GOVERNMENT.

EDITORIAL

This year our Center celebrates its tenth anniversary. During this short but eventful period when the faithful in Albania have been striving to persevere, we have brought to our friends and to the public at large news about their plight.

Our group of volunteers, dedicated to religious freedom everywhere, but particularly in Albania, have carried on our work with great zeal and sacrifice. And our readers, by their letters and their financial support, have enabled us to continue what we truly consider an apostolate for the persecuted Church in Albania.

On this special occasion, then, we deem it appropriate to express our sincere thanks to all of you who have supported us by prayers and by words of encouragement. We look forward to continuing, with your help, this important task. May Our Lord and the present day Martyrs of Albania be the guiding light in our lives.

GUEST EDITORIAL

RAYMOND FROST

UNITE WITH THE SUFFERING CHURCH

"Let us remain in communion with the martyrs. They dig the deepest bed of the divine river in history. They construct the strongest foundations of the city which rises to eternity."

—Pope John Paul II, Otranto, Italy, October 5, 1980

When the history of the twentieth century is finally known, countless Christian martyrs will appear in bold relief against the background of terrible oppression and equally terrible apathy. But if their witness echoes in our hearts and finds its expression in the works of our hands, we will discover inexpressible joy even in the terrors of these times. This is the paradox of martyrdom—to find joy and fulfillment through the very suffering which tears us away from the things we cherish—our homes, our loved ones, our very lives. Precisely because we are willing to give up these things do we possess an everlasting reward.

What one member of the Body of Christ suffers benefits those who are fellow members, especially those who have committed themselves to the same tasks. We must look at our own lives and question ourselves—am I committed to sharing in the sufferings of Christ's weakest members, in whatever circumstances they are to be found? Christ categorically proclaims in Matthew, Chapter 25, the relief of our neighbor's burden as the final criterion of our condemnation or reward.

Beginning with Calvary and continuing through twenty centuries of Christian witness, we are called to participate in the work of uniting to the Body of Christ those parts which are separated from Him.

Only in this way can we see the unacceptable atrocities of Auschwitz, of Central America, of Albania and all the communist world having the profound purpose of uniting souls to Christ. Our sacrificial suffering, in and with our burdened neighbors, in a spirit of penance and reparation for sin, is our pledge of commitment to Christ which seals our belief in Him.

Most of the innocent victims of this century are known only by the little and the lost, among whom shine the recently martyred Albanians Bishop Ernest Coda and Fr. Ndoc Luli, S.J. Now God has granted them a representative from their own time and experience, Maximillian Kolbe, to show forth what God has done through His priests. Their sharing in the sacrifice of Christ on the altar has borne fruits of redemption in the lives of their countrymen, their oppressors and even in the apathetic, who are destined to see in them a shining example of truth and goodness. May the future St. Maximillian Kolbe lead us into battle for the souls of men, under the banner of Mary Our Mother.

LETTERS

Since I am Albanian (Arberesh) on both my mother and father's side and over 80 years of age I am making a greater effort to learn more about my people. Your book has been very helpful in that direction. God bless you....

Rosie R. Bellas
San Leandro, California

Many thanks for the Bulletin. It is an excellent periodical packed with interesting information. As a member of Amnesty International, I absolutely condemn the widespread killings which have occurred in Albania and the detention of thousands of political and religious prisoners.

B.J.L.
Orkey, Scotland

Being a Campus Minister, I should like to stimulate awareness among students as well as work with them and others to promote religious freedom. Your publications are a great help.

Jim Stiff
Holly, Michigan

I am most grateful for your sending me the material on religious persecution. You are performing a significant, if undoubtedly painful, task in bringing these facts to the attention of people outside Albania. We are under a great obligation to do what we can to pressure the authorities in Albania to respect the basic rights of the people.

Karl G. Schmude
Armidale, Australia

I read about the suffering in Albania and am praying very fervently for peace there and the safety of all believers.

Sr. Mary Alacoque, FMDG
Williamsville, N.Y.

Very pleased with your information about religion in Albania. We would like also to subscribe to the Albanian Catholic Bulletin.

Mission Outreach
Greerton, Tauranga
New Zealand

I am a convert to the Catholic faith and your publication has been a tremendous inspiration to me. I am praying every day for our martyred brothers and sisters in Albania, whose unshakable faith has been an influence on my vocation.

John Weimar
Encino, California

I have read a copy of your Bulletin, kindly given to me by the Free Albania Committee in New York. I too am Albanian and am pleased that someone is taking the time to educate people about persecution in Albania. My children have begun to take a greater interest in Albania.

Peter Smailaj
Bronx, New York

Thank you for letting me have several copies of *Bulletini Katholik Shqiptar*.

Hideo Kobayashi
Ageoshi Saitama
Japan

I have read both issues of the Bulletin and am very proud of you and the work you are doing to keep alive the past memory and the present plight of Albanian Catholics.

William B. Perkins, S.J.
Los Angeles, California

Your Bulletin is proof of the vitality of the Albanian Catholic community in exile. In spite of many difficulties you are successful in keeping alive the sacred treasure of Christian faith, an inheritance from our forefathers which has helped maintain our national identity.

Francesco Altimari
Cosenza, Italy

Many of my friends were not aware of the plight of Albanian Catholics. Thanks to the Bulletin, as well as through other literature and contacts your Center has provided, we have been better informed about their plight and learned more about our Arberesh roots. The Bulletin has been passed on to Arberesh friends who live in Jersey.

A. Epifanio
So. Glens Falls, New York

Wow! Did I learn something! Last night, and this morning, I made a special announcement at the Mass to pray for the oppressed, persecuted, tortured poor Albanians in Albania and Yugoslavia.

Fr. Renee A. Constant
Newport, New Hampshire

The articles in your Bulletin are very timely and the information should be known by anyone who wishes to be well informed about the oppression of the Albanian people in Albania and Yugoslavia. Congratulations on this fine presentation and may God bless you abundantly.

Fr. Peter Nicholas Kurguz, O.P.
Mexico City, Mexico

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I hope that many more people will be reached and moved to take an active interest in the Albanian "apostolate" through the reading of the Bulletin.

Don Banas
Fairbanks, Alaska

Your work is a torch of hope not only for our Albanian Catholic brothers, but for the rest of us Albanians of Muslim and Orthodox faith. Yours is a work which one day will help bring freedom and peace to our suffering people in Albania and martyred Kosova.

Nijazi Sulca
Ankara, Turkey

I am a member of the Maronite Rite, which has its origins in strife-torn Lebanon. I sympathise with you over the plight of Catholicism and religion in general in Albania. I remember Albania daily in my prayers.

Anthony J. John
N. Dartmouth, Massachusetts

Heartfelt thanks and congratulations for the Bulletini Katholic Shqiptar. Extra copies are being passed to many Belgian friends.

Ramiz Basha
Flereffe, Belgium

I am going to take the Bulletin and show it to our pastor. May God bless your work and may our Blessed Mother, good St. Joseph and St. Michael obtain freedom for the persecuted Church all over the world, especially in Albania, where the persecution is the worst.

Arthur Carter
Memphis, Tennessee

Grateful to receive two editions of the Albanian Catholic Bulletin as well as other important literature. We do wonder very much as to why none of the members of the United Nations have protested Albania's anti-religious laws and policies. We believe it is high time to get it done now.

A. Jensen
Bagsvaerd, Denmark

God has His own way of rewarding those who die or suffer for the Faith and of punishing those who crucify His faithful ones. Our Lord and His Mother will surely reward your apostolate for Albania.



Fr. J. Haller, S.J.
Leavenworth, Kansas

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Bishop Nikë Prela and Rev. Lush Gjergji in a cordial moment with our Holy Father.

JOHN PAUL II RECEIVES ALBANIAN BISHOP NIKË PRELA

In a special audience, on Friday, February 5 of this year, Pope John Paul II met Albanian Bishop Nikë Prela, who presented the Holy Father with an Albanian translation of the New Testament and the biography of Mother Teresa, also in the Albanian language. In addition the Bishop gave the Pope a complete collection of his Albanian diocesan monthly DRITA (The Light) on the occasion of the publication's tenth anniversary.

The Bishop was accompanied by Rev. Lush Gjergji, an author of several literary works besides the Biography of Mother Teresa.

John Paul showed great interest and fatherly concern for the Albanians and their suffering church, assuring them of His daily prayers.

Bishop Prela, while in Rome, paid a visit to the tomb of Pope Clement XI, who was of Albanian origin. The Bishop also visited and prayed at the sanctuary of the Madonna of Shkodra in Genazzano near Rome.

At the end of his visit in Rome, the Bishop was interviewed by the editor of the Albanian Program at Radio Vatican about his audience with the Holy Father and his apostolic work among Albanian Catholics in the region of Kosova.

Nikë Prela was named Bishop of the diocese of Prizren (Kosova) in 1969 by Pope Paul VI.

Dear Mr. Sinishta,

His Holiness Pope John Paul II duly received your message of good wishes for his recovery. He appreciates the prayers offered for him. He thanks you also for your kind presentation of the booklet.

His Holiness prays that you will experience in abundance the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with these sentiments he sends his Apostolic Blessing.

Sincerely yours,



SECRETARIAT OF STATE

FROM THE VATICAN, December 19, 1981

Msgr. G. B. Re
Assessor

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SHKODER (2018)

MAXIMILLIAN KOLBE: MARTYR SAINT OF OUR CENTURY

An event of far-reaching importance for the future of the Catholic Church in Central and Eastern Europe, the canonization of the Polish martyr Maximillian Kolbe, will take place on October 10 in St. Peter's Basilica. Fr. Kolbe's life and death manifested a Christian moral integrity so striking that one can be justified in seeing Fr. Kolbe as a classic representative of all the countless martyrs of this most martyred century.

Fr. Kolbe was born in 1894, in Zdunska-Wola, Poland and entered the Conventual Franciscan Seminary at the age of 13. Being a brilliant student he was sent to study theology in Rome. Early in his seminary life he made a special act of consecration his whole life to the Blessed Virgin Mary whom he honored as the Immaculata. As a direct result of this consecration he founded, in 1917, in Rome, the "Militia Immaculatae" (Knights of the Immaculata). This soon became an international spiritual organization of laymen aimed at transforming human society by virtuous Christian living in union with Mary the Immaculata "to whom it is given to conquer the world." This Marian organization's main task, in Kolbe's plan, was to combat the anti-religious forces of the modern world: freemasonry, nazism and communism—by overcoming their hatred with the power of love. In this simple program Kolbe saw a powerful force for the re-establishment of justice and religious belief in a society racked by unheard of social evils.

Kolbe dedicated himself to the propagation of Catholic doctrine through the mass media, especially through a daily newspaper which he founded. He built a "City of the Immaculata" near Warsaw and gathered a group of eight hundred Franciscans to live his Marian consecration and work to place popular editions of Catholic social and religious teachings in the hands of every person. During the 1930s, he founded a Japanese "City of the Immaculata" in Nagasaki where he remained until being summoned by his superiors to return to Poland just prior to the outbreak of World War Two.

Fr. Kolbe was among the first to be arrested after the occupation of Poland by the Nazis. He was released for a short time, rearrested and then sent to the death camp of Auschwitz. During his eighteen months in Auschwitz Fr. Kolbe ministered to all and encouraged them to offer their sufferings in union with Christ's suffering on the cross for the future good of Poland and the whole world.

The crowning glory of Kolbe's life was his heroic decision to offer his life in place of an innocent man who had been chosen, at random, to die by starvation. Kolbe

spent 60 days in the starvation bunker along with nine other men similarly sentenced to die. During this time he ministered to each until he alone survived. The Nazis, tiring of Kolbe's display of courageous love, and in need of his cell for another prisoner, killed him by injecting carbolic acid into his veins on Aug. 14, 1941.

In relation to Fr. Kolbe's spirit of self-sacrifice it is appropriate to mention the example of an Albanian Jesuit, Fr. Jak Gardin. His life witnesses to the same spirit, even if to a somewhat lesser degree, in the prison experiences of the Albanian prisoner-priests. Fr. Gardin spent ten years in Albanian prisons and labor camps. In his diary he records the sacrifices made by priests and religious for the well-being of their fellow prisoners, many of whom were non-Catholics. When their fellow prisoners had their rations of bread and soup withheld for being unable to meet the heavy work quotas, he and other priests would happily share and even give all their daily rations to those being punished. "It was a sacrifice which nourished our strength and filled our heart with contentment" writes Fr. Gardin.

The witness of love for the flock by the Albanian prisoner-priests and priests from all over the world continues to bring forth fruits of faith and justice, in spite of the continuing anti-religious tyranny in many parts of the world. We pray that the lives of all the twentieth-century martyrs, with Fr. Kolbe at their head, may cause us to value even more deeply our Christian faith.

LEADERS OF OPEN DOORS MEET WITH OUR CENTER'S REPRESENTATIVE

On November 27 of this past year, two prominent leaders of the Christian organization, OPEN DOORS WITH BROTHER ANDREW, met with our representative in San Francisco to exchange views and experiences of their work, particularly regarding the religious situation in Albania. The meeting was the beginning of a new relationship of mutual cooperation in an endeavor we share. As a result of this meeting our representative participated, along with others from Eastern Europe, in the filming of a television documentary dedicated to the persecuted church. This documentary will be broadcast at the end of the year.

Also, the May 1982 edition of the publication OPEN DOORS WITH BROTHER ANDREW printed a feature story on Albania and the religious situation there with many documentary photos. Our Center looks forward to closer ties with OPEN DOORS in an attempt to secure relief for our persecuted brothers and sisters.

FR. NDOC (ANTON) LULI, S.J., LATEST VICTIM OF RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION IN ALBANIA

Although Albania is the most isolated and controlled country in the world, occasionally through refugee sources, smuggled letters or diplomatic channels, we hear about inhuman and illegal acts the government commits against its people, particularly those who want to practice their religion. The latest victim of this cruel policy, is Jesuit Father Ndoc Luli, who disappeared in May 1980, after secretly baptizing two of his nephews.

Father Luli was Director of Xavier College in Shkodra at the time of the Communist takeover (1944). In 1946, when the Jesuit Vice-Provincial (Fr. Gjon Fausti) and the Rector of the Pontifical Seminary (Fr. Daniel Dajani) were tried and executed (March 1946), and the Jesuit Order subsequently outlawed, Luli, along with other clergy, was arrested and sentenced to fifteen years in prison at hard labor. Having served the full term, he was released and confined to his native village, Rec (Rech), near Shkodra. A year later, due to frail health, Father was allowed to join his family in Mali Jushit, a village also near Shkodra. He was forced to work in the State-owned Agricultural Cooperative as a laborer in the stockyards, even though he was well qualified for better duties. Luli was also prohibited from performing his priestly duties.

When asked to baptize his sister-in-law's newborn twins in May, 1980, Father Luli hesitated for some time. He recalled the fate of his fellow priest, Shtiefen Kurti, executed in 1972 for baptizing a baby boy in a labor camp. Kurti had likewise been requested to administer the sacrament by the child's parents. As a priest, Luli could not refuse this plea, and so agreed to perform the rite. The parents and a few relatives were present at the secret ceremony. Unfortunately, the news leaked out reaching first the authorities of the Cooperative, and then the *Sigurimi* (Albanian Security Police). Father Luli was immediately arrested and interrogated along with his sister-in-law, and brought to a public trial at the Agricultural Cooperative. After much humiliation, his sister-in-law was sentenced to eight years in prison at hard labor, while the priest's ambiguous sentence was "Life until death." His family have been unable to locate him ever since. His fate is unknown, although many believe his life came to an end at the bottom of a mine pit, victim of the dreaded *Sigurimi*.



A rare 1942 photo. Father Ndoc Luli, S.J., far right. Others from right to left: Fr. Tom Laca, Bishop Gjergj Volaj, Bishop (then Father) Ernest Ceba, Archbishop Gasper Thaci, Fr. Mikel (Michael) Koliqi, Fr. Zef (Joseph) Bici and Fr. Mark Harapi, S.J. With the exception of Fr. Koliqi, who is still alive after 30 years of imprisonment, all others died by execution and torture or in labor camps.

At the news of Father's tragic death we contacted his fellow Jesuit priest, Jak Gardin, now living in Italy, who spent time with Luli in various Albanian prisons and labor camps. Gardin confirmed Father's tragic end and recalled the dark days of their suffering and degradation, especially at the swamps of Lake Maliq, where they worked with other prisoner-priests and seminarians on the irrigation system.

"In the spring of 1949, we were brought again to work on the irrigation of Lake Maliq in southern Albania. We were worked at a lethal rate, continually pushed and beaten by the prison guards. We ate only a small cup of soup and a slice of corn bread from early morning to late evening. We were an interminable army of men in rags sinking in mud up to our knees. I never heard a word of complaint from this brother of mine. His good humor, even under so painful an experience, was like a relieving ray of hope. I will remember forever Father's smile and courage, his faith in God which were at the time, and more so now, an inspiration and great support. The best thing I can say about Father Luli is that I feel privileged to have carried with him, the chains of pain and persecution for our Faith. I didn't realize that the crown of martyrdom would rest over his head thirty years later. Today, at this time, he is a Martyr of Christ and with this, all is said."

Father Ndoc Luli courageously fulfilled his priestly duties to the end. His tragic fate adds another shining star to the constellation of the long list of Albanian martyrs, who, sadly, remain anonymous outside Albania. However, in their homeland they are living symbols for all believers, encouraging them not to yield.

We appeal to all people around the world, who hold dearly in their hearts universal rights of human dignity, to protest and denounce Albania's antireligious laws.

BRIEF OUTLINE OF SUPPRESSION OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN ALBANIA

In October, 1980, when our Holy Father was speaking of "the heroic Church in Albania, upset by harsh and prolonged persecution, but enriched with the testimony of its martyrs; bishops, priests, men and women religious, and the simple faithful," at that very same time, Father Ndoc Luli was dying, a victim of this ruthless persecution. Since its inception in 1944, the Albanian Communist Party and Government has pursued a vicious campaign aiming to exterminate all vestige of religion, in particular, every trace of the Catholic Faith. We hereby present a brief chronology of the government's actions to wipe out the Catholic Church.

- 1944 DECEMBER: *Franciscan Father Lek (Alexander) Luli, murdered by Yugoslav-Albanian Communist Guerrilla Forces. According to a British war commander, his captors cut Luli's throat and dumped him in an unmarked grave in Kosova.*
- 1945 MARCH: *Distinguished poet and humanist, Father Lazer Shantoja, mercilessly tortured and shot. Bishop of Lezha, 80-year-old venerable Luis Bumci, who headed the Albanian Delegation at the Paris Peace Talks in 1918, dies under house arrest after uninterrupted harassment.*
- 1945 MAY: *Apostolic Delegate to Albania, Leone G. B. Nigris, expelled after harsh treatment and humiliation.*
- 1945 JUNE: *Jesuit educators, Frs. Jak Gardin and Gjergj Vata arrested, tortured and sentenced to many years in prison.*
- 1945 DECEMBER: *Father Ndre (Andrew) Zadeja, poet and writer, tortured and shot without trial.*
- 1946 JANUARY: *Expulsion of all non-Albanian members of religious orders. Some of them spent decades in religious, cultural and social fields.*
- 1946 FEBRUARY: *Franciscan Father Anton Harapi, towering religious and cultural figure, executed after mock trial.*
- 1946 MARCH: *Jesuit Vice Provincial, Gjon Fausti, Rector of the Pontifical Seminary, Daniel Dajani, Franciscan Father Gjon Shllaku, and Seminarian Mark Cuni, are executed after mock trial.*
- 1946 APRIL: *The Jesuit order is outlawed. All schools closed and properties confiscated.*
- 1946 MAY: *Metropolitan Archbishop of Shkodra, and Head of the Catholic Church in Albania, Gasper Thaci, dies under house arrest after continued harassment and humiliation for not accepting government pressure to cut ties with the Vatican.*
- 1947 JANUARY: *Sigurimi (The Albanian Security Police), plants cache of arms and ammunition in main Franciscan Church in Shkodra. When "discovered," many Franciscan priests and brothers are arrested, tortured, and executed. Among them, their Provincial, Father Cyprian Nika. All their schools and monasteries are closed; properties confiscated; the order disbanded.*
- 1948 FEBRUARY: *Forty-four-year-old Bishop of Sappa, Gjergj (George) Volaj is executed after horrible torture.*
- 1948 MARCH: *Abbot Frano Gjini Substitute Apostolic Delegate in Albania, is executed after torture and mock trial, along with 17 other clerics and lay people.*
- 1949 FEBRUARY: *Metropolitan Archbishop of Durres, author and poet Vincent Prendushi, dies in prison after much torture and suffering.*
- 1949 JUNE: *Government, threatened by internal and external perils, tries temporarily to secure domestic support of all non-communist elements, and initiates dialogue with religious sects of the country. While the charter governing Orthodox, Sunni-Muslims and the Shiite Muslims religious sects is easily accepted, the Catholic Church refuses the imposed charter which would force her to cut ties with the Vatican, and be subject to total control by the government.*
- 1951 JUNE: *After continued harassment and pressure by government, tentative agreement is reached, a charter is signed, keeping spiritual ties with the Holy See.*

- 1951 AUGUST: Communist Daily, **Zeri Popullit** (Voice of the People) falsifies contents of charter and declares the Catholic Church in Albania has broken all ties with the Vatican. The Catholic clergy denounces from pulpits the falsehood and emphasizes strong allegiance to the Pope. A new wave of persecution washes over the Church once more. Between 1951 and 1965, dozens of priests and religious are executed, imprisoned, or sent to forced labor camps in Southern Albania. Among these, Father Ded (Dominic) Mala, Zef Bici, Nikol Mazrreku, Andrew Lufi, Tom Laca, Gjon and Engel Kovaci, Anton Suma, and Konrad Gjola.
- 1967 FEBRUARY: Enver Hoxha (Hoja), Boss of Albanian Communists, who from the beginning, masterminded anti-religious program, orders final attack to wipe out the Church and all religious activity. In his notorious speech of February 6, 1967, Hoxha urges Albanian youth to fight "religious superstitions" with all their vigor. A strong anti-religious campaign follows. Churches and Mosques everywhere are burned or converted to other uses; priests and bishops are publicly beaten, arrested and sent to prison and labor camps for "re-education." By the end of the year, 2,200 churches, mosques, chapels and other religious buildings are vandalized and closed; 327 Roman Catholic.
- 1967 NOVEMBER: Government publishes decree #4337, ordering annulment of church-state relationship. All religious rites are prohibited and great penalties imposed on violators. Despite danger, clergy and believers continue to secretly practice their religion.
- 1972 FEBRUARY: Father Shtjefen (Stephen) Kurti is executed for baptizing a child.
- 1975 SEPTEMBER: Law decree #5339 is promulgated prohibiting religious names for the newborn.
- 1976 DECEMBER: New Constitution of Albania officially outlaws religion and informs U.N. General Secretary of its action.
- 1979 APRIL: Titular Bishop of Shkodra, Ernest Coba (Choba) dies in labor camp from police beatings for holding an Easter celebration.
- 1980 MAY: Father Ndoc Luli is sentenced to die slowly for baptizing twins of his own family.



Albanian clergy on the way to execution. Reconstruction of the event by a witness.

The thirty-seven years of the Albanian Government's savage campaign against the Catholic Church have resulted in the arrest and death of two archbishops, five bishops, an abbot, sixty-four diocesan priests, thirty-three Franciscans, fourteen Jesuits, ten seminarians, and eight nuns. Now, there are about two dozen priests and religious including 66-year-old Bishop Nikoll Troshani, Titular Bishop of Cismaro, and Apostolic Administrator of Lezha and Durres, who lingers in prison. Their only crime: believing in God, and determination to profess this belief.

Albania is a member of the United Nations, yet, for years its policies and practices have mocked the sacred principles of this international body.

We no longer can remain silent about the fate of our Albanian brothers and sisters, who are potential victims of this religious genocide. The present conflict between believers and the atheistic government in Albania should not be regarded as an "internal affair," but an affront to all who cherish human rights and dignity. Albanian believers who persevere in their faith look to the rest of the world for sympathy and help.

THE RELIGIOUS GARB OF GREEK CHAUVINISM

(Editor's note: On October 7, 1981, the Church of Greece passed a Resolution requesting religious freedom for the "four hundred thousand Orthodox Greeks" presently living in Albania (sic!) The content of the Resolution was reprinted by the Vatican newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano* (November 21, 1981) in both Italian and English.

This provocative act by the Church of Greece rose great indignation among all Albanians, and especially among the Albanian clergy in the free world, since unfortunately, there is no true voice to speak for Albanian Orthodox in Albania today. Following are the copies of four letters of protests released by four Albanian religious communities in America. We sincerely hope that the unanimity of Albanian response will be taken into consideration by the Church of Greece in its future dealings with such important problems as religious freedom.

(Documentation: Courtesy of Dr. Sami Repishti)

ALBANIAN ORTHODOX ARCH DIOCESE IN AMERICA

"NORTHERN EPIRUS," AGAIN

We noted with concern the article appearing in the November 21, 1981, edition of *L'Osservatore Romano* where the Triennial Assembly of the Church of Greece, in a Resolution issued in Athens on October 16, 1981, calls for restoration of religious liberty in Albania.

People of conscience throughout the world share our conviction that the Albanian people be provided the elementary human freedom of religious expression guaranteed in the United Nations charter.

At the same time, the clergy and faithful of the Albanian Orthodox Church in America cannot permit gross inaccuracies in the aforementioned Resolution to remain unanswered, especially since circumstance silences reply from a true voice for the Albanian Orthodox Church in Albania.

The Resolution issued by members of the Greek hierarchy and published in *Ekkelesiastike Aletheia* states that it speaks on behalf of "400,000 Greek Orthodox" who reside in Southern Albania. According to all statistical sources - from the London Conference of 1913 unto the present - there are no more than 35,000 Greek-speaking nationals throughout Albania today. In fact, the vast majority of Orthodox Christians in Albania continue in considering themselves to be Albanian in national origin, language, culture, and patriotic sentiment. Observe the fact that, until all houses of worship were forcibly closed in 1967, Orthodox Christians in Albania were communicants of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Albania, which was administered by its own Archbishop, Holy Synod, and thousands of clergy, all of whom served in the language inherent to the country.

The Resolution of October 16 is regrettable and unjust from several standpoints. These include:

*deliberate confusion of the issue of religious liberty for the Albanian Orthodox faithful with political overtones suggesting that the nation's faithful are of Greek origin, which they are not;

*repeated references to all Orthodox Albanians as being "Northern Epirots," i.e., "northwestern Greeks." Recent government administrations in Greece have wisely chosen to eschew this clearly spurious and inflammatory claim and instead have actually promoted and encouraged relations between these two peoples. In phrasing its avowal of concern and sympathy in the context of an extinct geographical reference (i.e., "Northern Epirus"), the Resolution betrays itself as an underlying assault on a people's identity as a homogeneous and indigenous nation.

Above all, the Resolution fails to mention that the Albanian people - consisting of Moslems, Roman Catholics, Bektashi, and their Albanian Orthodox brethren - have dwelt together for centuries in harmony with a mutual respect for each individual's religious conviction. A well recognized fact is that Albania's various religious groups have never engaged in persecutions among themselves; rather, the country is marked by a long history of invasions which often promoted religious differences in order to advance territorial claims. Is it any wonder then, that the present regime's lamentable policy was able to find even nominal support among some elements of a country whose neighbors exploited those differences?

The Resolution, in its final passage, selects the "third Sunday of November" as a national day of mourning throughout the churches of Greece for their "brethren in Northern Epirus," a territory once coveted by Greece in a claim refuted repeatedly by plebiscite. In choosing to select a date that happens to coincide with the national independence day of the Albanian people from the Ottoman Empire in 1912, the language of the Resolution will be read as an affront to Albanians everywhere regardless of political ilk or religious persuasion.

Additionally, the Resolution of October 16 is unfortunate as it appears without corrective commentary in the official organ of the Holy See, thereby leading the reader to possibly

conclude that the Vatican is in agreement with its content and purpose. Failure to expose and amend the numerous inaccuracies contained in the Resolution would only accomplish precisely the opposite which people of conscience wish rightfully to change; namely, the regime's strident policy toward internal religious institutions. In this respect, the Resolution's implied threat to the Albanian identity cannot hope to secure a re-evaluation and correction by the country's leadership of the tragic state of religious expression in one of the most ancient and venerable regions in Christendom.

Had the authors of the Resolution learned from past failures and not clothed their sincere appeal with a peculiar political anachronism, the Resolution would have possessed a moral authority that it now lacks, at least among the very people it purports to comfort.

It is high time that some of our brothers in the Church of Greece, and elsewhere, concentrate on the real spiritual issues which confront contemporary society and leave political maneuverings to those objectively capable of addressing them. If the church in this regard, corrects its own ways, it will undoubtedly be better able to present a credible message of hope to a world sorely in need of renewal, of holiness, of life in Christ. We have a common task to accomplish for Him, together. We will continue to invite, even our adversaries - whether misguided brothers, godless unbelievers, persecutors or our genuine critics - to share in the life-giving struggle to be "like the Lord."

To many Orthodox in America, and abroad as well, the Gospel can best be served and transmitted by men and women of faith, willing to protect their own 'national interest' by remaining cognizant of the belief that we dwell as "in the world, but not of it."

Clearly, the Resolution of October 16 was an offense which could have been avoided, especially as we celebrate the Nativity and Baptism of the Prince of Peace, Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be Glory, now and ever.
Boston, Mass.

THE BISHOPS OF GREECE DEMAND FREEDOM OF RELIGION IN ALBANIA

On October 7th of this year, the Orthodox Bishops of Greece issued a Statement denouncing the religious persecution in Albania. The Greek Church Leaders pleaded for world leaders, civic and religious, to press the Albanian Government to allow religious freedom in their country.

"Thousands of the faithful have been thrown in jail for the simple fact of being Christians," said the Bishop's appeal. "Such oppression of religious sentiment is not found in any other country with a totalitarian atheistic government."

While praising the Bishop's appeal, we would like to underscore the fact that the

400,000 "Greek Orthodox" in Albania (or North Epirus) of whom they spoke should be understood to be Albanian Orthodox. We regret this one point in the Bishop's worthy Statement, their referring to Albanian Orthodox as Greek nationals, thus perhaps unintentionally serving the lost cause of extreme Greek chauvinism from which even the Greek government has disassociated itself. The Greek minority in Albania comprises between forty or fifty thousand. They, along with fellow Albanians, suffer equally for their religious belief, and we wholeheartedly support them.

Albanian Catholic Information Center
P.O. Box 881
Santa Clara, CA 95053
U.S.A.

December 1981

STATEMENT BY THE ALBANIAN BEKTASHI TEKKE OF AMERICA CONCERNING THE RESOLUTION OF OCTOBER 16, 1981, OF THE CHURCH OF GREECE

The Triennial Assembly of the Church of Greece, during its sessions held in Athens (Greece), on October 16, 1981, adopted a Resolution calling for the restoration of religious freedom in Albania.

The religious spirit that motivated the leadership of the Church of Greece in taking the initiative for the Resolution is commendable. We, Albanian Moslem of the Bektashi Tekke, share the pain and the anguish of our brothers and sisters in Albania whose right to worship has been denied.

And yet, we cannot allow that historical inaccuracies and political insinuations be used under the robe of religious piety. Members of Bektashi Tekke are predominantly from Southern Albania where most of the Albanian Orthodox faithful brothers and sisters live. For centuries, we have shared with them a common destiny, as members of a common nation. We speak the same language; we have the same customs and habits, we share the same interests and aspirations. Although we worship God, the only God, in two different ways, we love each other as two brothers of one and same family. Therefore, the insinuations of the Church of Greece claiming to protect "400,000 Greek Orthodox" presently living in Albania - which they are not - is a direct offense to the entire Albanian nation.

It is for this reason, that we regret the decision of the Church of Greece to use propaganda in its effort to assist the restoration of

religious freedom in Communist Albania. For the sake of truth itself, and of the Albanian Orthodox faithful who are rightfully offended by the Resolution of October 16, 1981 we solemnly declare that we reject without reservation the Greek claims as being false, and deceitfully ornamental.

Let us hope, that the leadership of the Church of Greece will take note of the pain that it has caused to the entire Albanian nation, and will, now and in the future, find the courage and the wisdom to heal the wounds that has opened by its October 16, 1981, Resolution.

May we also add that our support will go to anyone who sincerely directs him/herself to the high goals of the restoration of religious freedom, today absent, in Communist Albania.

January 27, 1982

Detroit, Mich. The Albanian Bektashi Tekke
Maba Rexhep

STATEMENT BY THE ALBANIAN ISLAMIC CENTER - DETROIT, MICHIGAN CONCERNING THE OCTOBER 7, 1981 RESOLUTION OF THE CHURCH OF GREECE

On November 21, 1981, the Vatican newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano* published the Resolution of the Triennial Assembly of the Church of Greece, adopted in Athens (Greece) on October 16, 1981.

While the intention of the Resolution calling for the restoration of religious freedom in Albania is commendable, we regret to see the same Resolution containing major errors of facts, as well as dangerous political insinuations.

In stating that there are more than 400,000 Greek Orthodox in Albania, the Resolution has committed an unforgivable offense against the entire Albanian nation, and especially against the Albanian Orthodox faithful, who are overwhelmingly Albanian by both nationality and sentiment.

We, Albanian Moslems, are pleased to point out the enormous contribution that our brothers and sisters of the Albanian Orthodox faith have given in keeping Albanianism alive before the establishment of the State of Albania, in 1912, as well as of their wisdom, effort, and sacrifices in keeping and strengthening her to be a free and independent country among other European states.

Had the purpose of the Resolution been to advance the cause of religious freedom in Albania, it would have deserved our approval and support. However, the purpose of the Res-

olution has been to advance the cause of a demoted Greek chauvinism. Consequently, we feel morally obligated to state publicly that we reject the harmful insinuations contained in the Resolution, as being false and forbidding.

We sincerely hope that the Church of Greece will see it proper to revoke those sections of the Resolution that offend our Albanian nation, and devote itself to the noble cause of restoring religious freedom in Albania. In fulfilling that task, we will lend our full support, and our blessings.

Detroit, Mich.
January 11, 1982

The Albanian Islamic Center
Imam Vehbi Ismail

Dilelli

February 10, 1982

CHURCH LEADERS DEMAND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN ALBANIA

In their Joint Declaration for Religious Freedom in Albania, Cardinal Humberto Medeiros of Boston and Bishop Mark Lipa, spiritual leader of the Albanian Orthodox Church in America, strongly denounced the continuing religious persecution in that country. The Declaration was issued following an ecumenical service on the occasion of the 69th anniversary of Albanian Independence. In a direct plea to the leaders of the Albanian government, the two Churchmen voiced their demand for the reopening of churches, mosques and religious institutions to satisfy the spiritual thirst of the faithful.

In the past, Cardinal Medeiros and Bishop Lipa have condemned the anti-religious laws of Albania. Their first Joint Appeal for Religious Freedom in 1977 had a great impact on public opinion and was echoed by Pope Paul VI in His message to the College of Cardinals the same year.

Mark Lipa is the sole surviving Albanian Orthodox Bishop in the world and a strong proponent for the re-establishment of religious rights in his homeland. The independence of the Albanian Orthodox Church from Constantinople was proclaimed in 1922 by the Bishop Fan S. Noli. The Patriarch of Constantinople however delayed the decision on the autonomy of the Albanian Church under pressure from the Greek Orthodox Church as well as the Greek government, who were claiming Albanian Orthodox as Greek nationals. Finally, self-governing rule was granted to the Albanian Orthodox Church in 1937 under the leadership of Archbishop Kristofor Kissi. With the advent of Communist government in Albania after WWII, Kristofor Kissi was first deposed, then put in prison, where he died in 1949.

Below, we print the full text of the Joint Declaration.

A Declaration for Religious Freedom November 28, 1981

The human spirit is irrepressible. It rejects any fatalistic resignation to oppression. On the contrary, it spurs mankind to achieve greater personal and social freedom so as to become, in some measure at least, responsible for his own destiny. Throughout the ages, the history of peoples everywhere is marked with the brave struggle for ideals which uplift the human spirit, inspire the common good, and enrich a nation's life.

Grounded on this fact of human history, and moved by our common pastoral concern, we address this appeal directly and sincerely to the leaders of the Albanian government.

As the Albanian people the world over observe the 69th anniversary of the establishment of an independent Albanian State, we reaffirm the principles of liberty, justice, and peace, which are the indispensable pillars of all human progress. We persist in our conscientious call for human respect for all human rights and especially for religious freedom in Albania. Furthermore, we voice our determined plea for the reopening of churches, mosques, and religious institutions to satisfy the spiritual thirst of the Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Muslim faithful in Albania.

In the tradition of an ancient people whose history and development have been nurtured by religious faith and action, the time has come for the benefits of free religious life to strengthen the Albanian people once again.

Like the Apostle Paul, we must insist that the Word of God be present in the very center of human affairs. Our plea, then, is intended to be an expression of that faith which is today binding on the lives of the faithful in hope and promise for, "...grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." (John 1:17)

Moreover, we confirm that Church life itself is an essential witness to faith in God and promotes good social order.

May He Who enlightens every man who comes into the world guide the leaders of Albania to a fuller realization of God's sovereignty and insure the free practice of religion to the Albanian people.

+ Bishop Mark I. Lipa

The Right Reverend
Bishop Mark I. Lipa

+ Humberto Cardinal Medeiros

The Most Reverend
Humberto Cardinal Medeiros



Bishop Mark Lipa head of the Albanian Orthodox Diocese of America and Humberto Cardinal Medeiros Archbishop of Boston signing the Declaration for Religious Freedom.

ARBERESH BISHOP DENOUNCES RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION IN ALBANIA

Albanians at home and particularly those in exile have wondered for years why the Arberesh Eastern Rite Church leaders in Italy have been silent for so long regarding the persecution of their brothers and sisters by the present Albanian government. Now, for the first time, an Arberesh Bishop has publicly denounced the anti-religious laws of that country. Giovanni Stamati, Bishop of the Arberesh Diocese of Lungro in Southern Italy, strongly condemned the anti-human practices of the Albanian Government toward the Church and other religious believers in his Easter homily last year. Here are some excerpts from the homily:

"While we rejoice today at the Resurrection of Our Lord, at the same time we are painfully aware of the suffering of our brothers in Albania, victims of an unheard of religious oppression.

"Only God knows how much we love Albania—country of our origin. We, Italo-Albanians (Arberesh), have for a long time been silent in regard to this tragic situation hoping that the leaders of the People's Republic of Albania would reconsider their position towards religion and lift the ban on worship. In no way has our silence meant an appeasement of those unjustly persecuting the clergy and believers.

"We are glad to see the economic and educational progress that Albania has made following World War Two, however, we know that this type of progress, though necessary, is lacking and incomplete if it doesn't include the deepest roots of the human person, which are freedom of expression and belief. Every dictatorship, no matter the color, far from elevating the dignity of the human person, only results in the degradation of mind and spirit."

Stamati expressed his gratitude to Pope John Paul II for his fatherly concern towards the Albanian church and his firm stand against all oppression. As is known, the Holy Father spoke at length about religious persecution in Albania during his pilgrimage to Otranto in October, 1980.

We are very grateful to Bishop Stamati for his encouraging words and hope that they signal a greater willingness on the part of religious and civic leaders to actively voice their condemnation of such a cruel situation as exists in Albania.

"CHURCH IN NEED" DISCUSSES ALBANIAN PERSECUTION AT ITS THIRTY-FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

One of the topics of the past year's 31st International Congress of the well-known organization, "Church in Need," was a presentation on religious persecution in Albania. Professor Bernard Tönnies, a scholar and authority on Albanian affairs, delivered the address under the title, "Faith in God Lives on Even in Albania." Below are some excerpts from Professor Tönnies' report. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Fr. Werenfried van Straaten, O. Praem., for his help to Albanian refugees and particularly for his valuable support to the Albanian situation in Yugoslavia.

"Almost 15 years have gone by since the political leaders in Tirana further intensified their 10 year old fight against religion and declared Albania to be the 'first atheistic state in the world.' In that terrible month of February, 1967, all 2,160 churches and mosques in the country were either ripped down or the entrances were boarded over, or at the very least, they were robbed of their sacred purpose and put to

some alien use. Since then many Albanians have been thrown into prison, tortured and murdered solely because of their religious beliefs. It is not even possible to give an up-to-date estimate of the numbers of people who have become the victims of this new, particularly brutal and carefully organized wave of repression.

"Not only public profession of one's faith is punishable by law, but even having a cross or the image of a saint hanging in one's own bedroom is sufficient cause to be declared a 'public enemy.' In the beginning, the women tried to conceal the crosses and images by pretending they were 'coat-hangers,' but of course it didn't take long for the agents of the state security service to see behind this trick. A number of years ago, the Albanian Party of Labor congratulated itself on its great success in confiscating all crosses, pictures, prayer-books, etc. 'The material basis of religious was now destroyed,' and since according to Marxist-Leninist dogma, the basis determines the superstructure, the party felt quite confident that religion, being part of the superstructure, would die a certain death and disappear from Albanian society.

"But they had forgotten to take into account how the people concerned would react. The Albanian State with all its instruments of power can stress its militant atheism as much as it wishes, but the Albanian people and the Albanian society are marked by the cross of Jesus and the Halfmoon of Islam more strongly than ever before. At the 26th Congress of "Church in Need" in the year 1976, I already gave some typical examples of how the population fights back against the state prohibition of religion. For my observations I based myself solely on the Albanian press which, of course, was spreading statements against these forms of religious belief. According to these newspaper accounts, the Albanian believers even today hold common services and go on pilgrimages, they fast, refuse to work during important religious feasts, and they even scratch a cross or halfmoon into the skin of their ring-finger as a sort of common code.

"Theoretically one could dismiss these acts of faith as 'individual cases.' Indeed, the government is very eager to see in these examples just leftovers, 'remains of religion.' In the meantime, I have come across a statistic in the Albanian press which clearly reveals the important role religion plays in Albanian society. In the summer of 1980, an Albanian sociologist was instructed by the Party to openly criticize the younger generation's attitude to marriage. In particular he pointed out that over the years, in the villages of Albania, only 3 percent of marriages had taken place between partners of different religious background. Since two-thirds of the Albanian population lives in the country and only one-third in the city, one obtains a countrywide average of 3.7 to 3.8 percent of marriages between different confessions or religions.

"In spite of the fact that the atheistic state has, in the name of 'unity of the country,' for decades made the greatest efforts to wipe out the differences between the four religious communities of the country, in 96 percent of all cases the Catholics, the Orthodox, the Sunnite-Muslims and the Shiite-Muslims find marriage-partners within their own religious communities. 'Atheistic' Albania is probably the only European country where religion has the most marked effect on the institution of marriage. And even in Albania in former times, there never was such a high percentage of marriage between partners of the same religion. But the coercion exercised by the Albanian State against religion, together with the general atheistic propaganda, have obviously made the religious communities close in upon themselves in order to better safeguard the purity of their faith from outside influences."

Professor Törnnes continues in his address to the Congress with a condensed presentation of the Albanian people's history and their religion.

He describes in detail the steps taken by the Albanian Communist Party and government, to wipe out every vestige of organized religion. He concludes the address:

"To date the last phase of persecution against the religious communities was started by Enver Hoxha's speech on 6 February 1967, which was printed the following day in the party newspaper Zëri i popullit (Voice of the People). According to official

propaganda school-children were so enthusiastic about this speech that they spontaneously boarded up or tore down all the churches and mosques. The anti-religious elán of the youth soon gripped the older generation too. And all this is supposed to have happened without the least bit of coercion, even the last Catholic priests of the country laid aside their cassocks of their own free will. On 13 November, 1967, the religious decrees of the years 1949 to 1951 were declared void and in the new constitution of 1976 all forms of religious expression were declared illegal.

"In spite of the 'fact' that the priests allegedly took off their cassocks and turned to atheism voluntarily, they were still the victims of further persecution. In 1967, soon after the Hoxha speech, the Franciscan, Gega Lumaj, was condemned to 15 years imprisonment. In the same year four other Franciscans died in a fire when a mob of pillaging youths, taking orders from the party, burnt down the last remains of the Franciscan monastery and church Arra Madhe in Shkodra.

"In the following year the young priest, Zef Bici, was shot to death. Two other priests, Mark Hasi and Zef Pllumbi, received prison sentences of 15 and 20 years respectively. In 1968, Nikolla Troshani, who had been appointed by the Vatican titular bishop of Cisamo and apostolic administrator of the bishoprics Durrës and Lezha was condemned to 20 years imprisonment. And in February, 1972, the 74-year-old priest, Shtjefen Korti, was executed because, at the specific request of a mother who was imprisoned in the same concentration camp, he had baptized her child.

"In 1971, apparently only 31 priests were still living, 12 of them in concentration camps. Out of the last three bishops who had been nominated by the Vatican, the Franciscan, Antonin Fishta, had already died in 1973, after great suffering and privations. Bishop Ernest Coba, who had been blind for years, was clubbed to death by a group of guards in the concentration camp. And since his condemnation, nothing is known of the whereabouts of Bishop Troshani.

"The victims I have here taken care to mention by name are only a few out of a long list of Albanian martyrs. The majority of the martyrs remain anonymous for us outsiders, their destiny remains in the dark. But in Albania itself these martyrs are a living symbol for all. Without their example the inner strength and steadfastness of the religious communities would hardly have been possible."

(Editor's note: Prof. Bernard Tønnes is author of two books on Albania. His recent book is briefly reviewed in this issue of our Bulletin, p.104.)

NEW BISHOP NAMED FOR PIANA DELGI ALBANESI

The Holy Father recently appointed Father Iračli Lupinacci the new Bishop of the diocese of Piana degli Albanesi. He succeeds Joseph Pernicaro who died last year after 40 years of devoted and fruitful ministry.

Lupinacci, born in 1933 to Arberesh parents in San Omo Albanese - Calabria (Southern Italy), is a graduate of the Gregorian University. Ordained in 1959, he served primarily as pastor in his native town.

The new Bishop also studied at the University of Pristina in Kosova, and is well informed on current Albanian affairs.

In the past, Bishop Lupinacci has published many articles and studies on Arberesh history, particularly in the journal of Ernest Kolind, *Le Pléiade* of Rome.

We all wish to our Arberesh brother a fruitful episcopate for the spiritual and cultural well being of his flock and assure him of our prayers and support.

CHURCH IN ALBANIA DISCUSSED IN ROME

Since the persecution of the Church in Albania was overlooked at three recent international forums addressing the present state of Christianity in Europe, a conference dedicated to the Albanian Church was held under the auspices of the cultural circle Besa (Fidelity) on November 21, 1981. This Italo-Albanian (Arberesh) cultural circle is headed by the committed Arberesh prelate Monsignor Eleutrio Fortino. The conference was attended by a multitude of religious scholars and distinguished political and cultural guests from Rome. The guest speaker was Fr. Daniel Gjecaj, O.F.M., Head Chaplain for the Albanian exiles in Europe. Father Gjecaj's talk covered a wide range of topics relating to the Albanian Church. He first presented the basic structure of the Catholic Church during her formative years in Albania and also during her present martyrdom, emphasizing the decisive role that the Church has played in the civil and cultural development of the country.

Fr. Gjecaj, after a detailed account of the conditions of the Church during the four hundred years of Ottoman occupation, spoke in warm terms about the progress of the Church that followed that occupation. He spoke at length about her present situation and gave up-to-date information regarding the continuing elimination of the clergy and religious believers, particularly Catholic.

He concluded his address:

"Life continues and even in the catacombs of Albania faith is proclaimed. Enver Hoxha himself is a witness that the Church in Albania is still alive and strong. The faith is rooted in the hearts and traditions of a proud people and cannot be annihilated, neither by legislation nor by tortures. Nor can it be weakened by forced resettlement or long prison sentences. Enver Hoxha himself takes advantage of every occasion to advise his followers: 'religion has still not been uprooted in our country'; 'religion is still alive among our working class'; 'enemies of the people who believe in God do not sleep, they continue to look with sympathy and hope to the Vatican'; these kinds of enemies are inside our own lines and active in our organizations.' (Hoxha's quotations are taken from the Party Publications of Albania.) Hoxha's words leave beyond a shadow of a doubt that God is not dead even in Albania and that He cannot be eliminated by human decree."

Fr. Gjecaj was warmly applauded at the end of his presentation. He responded to questions during a lively discussion period which followed.

ALBANIAN REFUGEES TELL OF RELIGIOUS OPPRESSION

Within the past two years, several young refugees from Albania arrived in the U.S., fleeing the oppressive conditions which are continuing in their homeland. During their escape to Yugoslavia they underwent tremendous physical hardships en route to a refugee camp in Italy. With generous help from the camp chaplain and humanitarian refugee organizations, the refugees are now living in the U.S. They have found jobs and are getting settled in their new environment. As they have a desire to help those loved ones from whom they are sadly parted, the refugees wish to provide our readers with a few of the reasons for their having taken the extreme step of seeking refuge outside their homeland.

During several meetings with the refugees, they related their experience of the unjust policies carried out by the Albanian Party of Labor and its Communist government. These policies place very harsh burdens on the lives of individuals and accord very little room for the freedoms which enlightened humanity has consistently taught are due to each human person.

According to the Albanian emigrés, travel between cities in Albania is strictly controlled by the SIGURIMI, the Albanian security police. All visits, including those to relatives, require permission from the party organization in the individual's factory or work-place, in addition to final approval by the SIGURIMI. Thus, ordinary citizens must be able to prove that they are authorized by their government to be at large in their own country. Distribution of food is also controlled through a ration system which restricts citizens to buy food only at the store at which they are registered. Travel permission slips are also necessary in order to buy rations in the city which is being visited. These controls on food and travel give the Albanian government extraordinary power over the private lives of Albanian citizens.

There is neither freedom of expression nor association in Albania. All organizations are under party control, the price for speaking out against the party or its policies being prison or the labor camps. Even faithful members of the party have recently ended up in these camps, labeled as "declassified elements."

But the topic which seems to evoke the strongest memories for the refugees is the anti-religious measures of the Albanian government. The refugees spoke passionately regarding the extreme difficulties of practicing their religious faith in their native land. As is well known, Albania's Communist government has declared the Albanian state to be officially "Atheistic." Since this declaration in 1967, the government (and those who profit from anti-religious systems) have destroyed, or converted to other uses, all churches and mosques in Albania. The Albanian faithful have continually attempted to visit the places where the churches and mosques were once located and have been barred from doing so by the police.

The refugees stated that they continued to practice their Catholic faith, after 1967, in the secrecy of their homes. Priests had been ordered to abandon priestly work which made it nearly impossible for them to be out, except at night. Many priests were soon caught and thrown into prison and labor camps, often losing their lives due to the harsh treatment received from their captors. The people now rely on lay leadership for their religious services. The eldest family member is chosen to lead and perform the rites of baptism and marriage. Religious medals, crucifixes, pictures and rosaries are kept hidden by the families due to the threat of raids by the SIGURIMI looking for religious articles. Such suppression of religious freedom greatly saddens the refugees, who were told by their parents and grandparents that not even during the Ottoman rule of Albania, when forced conversions took place, were such harsh measures taken against Catholics.

It seems that the Communist authorities intend to go to great lengths to prevent the distribution of bibles. The refugees told of the case in Shkodra of Pran Mark Gjoni, who

in 1977 was brought to trial for the possession of bibles. Acting on a tip the SIGURIMI searched his home where they found, in the attic, cases of books, many of them bibles. In response to their questioning, Gjoni said that the books belonged to his deceased grandfather. The police then produced newly printed bibles taken from Gjoni's attic. It seems that after torture he admitted that he had found the bibles in the parks and at the seashore and had kept them with the hope that the ban on religious material would be lifted. Having gotten an admission of Gjoni's "crime" the authorities sentenced him to TWELVE YEARS in prison! In spite of the fact that there was a total blackout in regard to the case by the government-controlled television and newspaper monopolies, everyone in Albania was aware of the trial and had great interest in it. The trial ironically served to testify to the continued existence of religious faith in Albania, as well as highlighting the outrageous reactions made by the atheistic government to even the most mild expression of that faith.

The above are only a few examples given by the refugees to explain their dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs in Albania. While we sincerely wish that our recently settled brothers may easily adapt themselves to the new community of which they are now a part, we earnestly pray that their families and friends, as well as all the Albanian people, might soon witness a new birth of liberty and religious freedom. After having heard these accounts of life in Albania it is only right that we, who live without such oppressive controls on our lives, should consider to what extent we are prepared to lend our support to those in Albania and elsewhere, who are unjustly deprived of their basic human liberties.

PRISTINA NEWSPAPER REPRINTS ARTICLE ON ALBANIAN ATHEISM

A French journalist, Michael Sidoma, was recently allowed, by the Albanian government, to tour the country and report on current religious conditions in Albania. Sidoma's visit resulted in a series of articles for the French journal Jeune Afrique which were reprinted in the Albanian language daily Rilindja, published in Kosovo's capital, Pristina. The main focus of the articles was on the progress made by the Albanian government in accomplishing its goal of eliminating religious practice. The series appeared under the heading, "Albania, A Country That Has Abolished Islam."

Sidoma clearly intended his writings to reach Moslem readers in Africa. The Yugoslav government, whose Albanian inhabitants are overwhelmingly Moslem and have been causing serious trouble within its borders, reprinted the series in order to give its Albanian citizens a glimpse of what life would be like in Albania as opposed to the "humane, democratic" socialism which the Yugoslav regime professes to practice. The reprinting of these articles seems to be an attempt by the Yugoslavs to stifle whatever movements might exist in favor of reuniting the Albanian sections of Yugoslavia with the country of Albania.

Among other things, Sidoma relates the fearful reactions of those whom he asks for "directions to the nearest mosque." No doubt their fear is typical of the unfortunate residents of police states who are kept in line by the iron-fisted actions dictated by self-appointed leaders.

ENVER HOXHA TALKS ABOUT RELIGION AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Albanian party and government repeatedly attests that the abolition of religion was implemented as a "result of the people's will." What has happened since then (1987) is that "religious superstitions are completely uprooted not only among the new generation but also among those who recall religion as a bitter remembrance of exploitation," according to the set explanation of guides taking foreign visitors around the Atheist Museum in Shkodra.

However, frequent writings about the Pope and the Vatican, about "individuals secretly engaged in illegal religious activity among the aged," about "revival of religion practices in (communist) revisionist countries," etc., show clearly that the atheist government is meeting serious obstacles in its drive to eradicate all religion from the people's minds and hearts.

At the VIII Party Congress the remarks of Fecor Shahu, recently deposed as Minister of Interior following the premier's suicide, give evidence of present difficulties. Among other paranoid allegations about "threats" to Albania's freedom and independence, he particularly emphasized the following: "There has been a continued increase in the number of organizations, people and centers from the ranks of reactionary emigration and "religious" groups that act against our country..."

Taking into consideration the above, along with the tragic end of Fr. Anton Luli as well as the statements of recent refugees, some of them only four years old when the abolition of religion was promulgated, it is obvious that believers are not yielding to the government's pressure.

In view of this, we reprint Enver Hoxha's remarks regarding religion in general and particularly the Catholic Faith, that he delivered not long ago on the occasion of the Anniversary of the Conference of Peza (1942).

The Party had undertaken a similar study before and after the Conference of Peza in regard to religious beliefs in Albania, also. We analysed the religious beliefs in two directions: the concrete impact of religions among the broad masses of the people and the danger of the religious hierarchy. I shall not deal at length with these analyses, but it is necessary, to define some main features which guided us when the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Albania drafted the report delivered at the Conference of Peza and the resolution that emerged from that meeting.

It is known that in our country there were three religious faiths: the Muslim faith, the most widespread, the orthodox christian faith, which was the second, and the Roman Catholic

faith, less widespread, with its centre in Shkodra which extended over the Highlands of Shkodra to Lezha and as far as Durrës where there was a bishopric. There were also some muslims belongig to unimportant sects which, except for the Bektashi sect, had no influence among the people.

With regard to the religious hierarchies, their influence was as follows: the Catholic clergy were people with no Homeland. They depended entirely on the Vatican, even for the most trifling things, regardless of the various orders such as Jesuits, Franciscans, etc. In Albania as in the other countries of the Catholic world, the Catholic Church had the same pyramidal organization, the same organization of churches, cells, monasteries, religious or even state schools, the

same rites and liturgy, the same method and style of work in general. Their subsidies, stipends and everything else came from their plundering of their believers in the form of donations, including forcing the faithful to leave their portable and fixed assets to the church.

The entire hierarchy of the Catholic Church, ranging from the highest ranking clergy down to the student in the seminary and the parish priest, were people of learning, gained in theological schools, with iron discipline, with the methods and tricks of suppressing peoples' will through the fear of God, Christ and the apostles. The catholic must be in the hands of the church «perinde ac cadaver». The faithful were entangled in the spiders' web of the laws of the church,

the canons and laws of the reactionary bourgeoisie, all of them were chains that shackled and oppressed the believers. The Catholic Church and its clergy were obscurantist, conservative, adaptable, and resilient to the highest degree, and always in alliance with the reactionary regimes such as that of Prince Wied, and Ahmet Zog, and indeed did not fail to have a finger in the democratic-bourgeois regime of Fan Noli, as well as kowtowing to every foreign invader that occupied Albania, whether Austro-Hungarian, Italian fascists, or German nazis.

Only our regime of the dictatorship of the proletariat cut off the hand and, later, the head, of the Catholic Church.

But we must not be diverted from the period under analysis. That was the situation among the hierarchy of the Catholic religion and the Catholic believers prior to the Conference of Peza. The top priests were double agents of the Vatican and of the Italian invaders. But for us, for the National-liberation War, there existed the broad field of the people of the

North, of those who believed in religion. There were also some poor, rank and file priests who might, to some extent, listen to our word, because they lived closer to the sufferings and worries of the people. In these directions we would work and make headway.

The Muslim religion, its adherents and its clergy, were not a serious obstacle to our war against the Italian invader like the Catholic religion. Even before the occupation of the country, but more so afterwards, the hierarchy of the Muslim faith was weak, without the least experience to give us trouble. The mosques existed. They each had a hodja, but very few, if any, practising adherents. The rites had been abandoned. No marriage was performed according to the Sheriat, and everything else, such as the observation of Ramadan, -the feast of Bajram- had become routine customs, which were practised only because they -existed-. The hodjas were all ignorant, none of them was in a position to propagate the philosophy, ethics or the morality of the Koran, nobody understood the Koran

because it was recited by heart in a foreign tongue (Arabic). Though conservative in customs, the hodjas were not politicians and incapable of exercising influence by means of the Islamic thought. The broad masses of the people were almost liberated from the bonds of religion, the intellectual development of the Muslim believers was more extensive and there was very great liberalism and tolerance. Hence the work of the Party in raising the people in struggle faced no serious obstacle in this direction.

In the Bektashi sect, too, most of the Muhibs displayed patriotism and fought for the liberation of Albania.

The same situation existed, also, in the orthodox christian faith, both in the hierarchy of the church as well as among the believers.

Thus, we had the question of religious beliefs in the centre of our attention during the period of the National-liberation War and also after the war, because the people's feelings must not be hurt if their participation in the war for the liberation of the Homeland and for the construction of a new Albania was to be achieved.

A Profaned Nation

In 1967 a teacher who had studied in France proclaimed Albania the first and as yet only atheist country in the world. What Hitler, Stalin, Mao and all other dictators failed to achieve has been accomplished by Enver Hodscha. This monstrous feat was confirmed by the new constitution of 1976: religious activity is forbidden the same as inciting to rebellion. Although this total ban on religion violates a whole series of international agreements, not one country in the world has done anything about it. Christian Europe sleeps peacefully on. Albania remains a member of the United Nations without being boycotted like South Africa or Israel. European countries that call themselves Christian keep up their trade with Tirana. No one protests.

Shortly after Hodscha passed his decree there occurred the 500th anniversary of the death of Skanderberg, the Albanian national hero who for his heroic resistance to the Turks was given the title of «Athleta Christi» by the pope. Where are the athletes of Christ today? Who raises his voice because 2,738 churches, convents and mosques were profaned or destroyed in 1967 and 1968? Who protests that priests are put to death, like the elderly Stefan Kurti, who had baptised a baby at its mother's request? Who protests that Skutari cathedral (see photograph) has been transformed into a sports gymnasium? Here a people is being profaned in the depths of its being, in the very roots of its existence, in its closeness to its Creator. Here we may not remain unactive.

Albania is closed to us, but Albanian refugees can be helped. There are Albanian catholic minorities living in southern Italy and in Kosovo, the «poor-house» of Yugoslavia. This is where our offensive and aid must begin, so that the faithful are helped and the numerous vocations to the priesthood are not lost. When Enver Hodscha, who is now 74 years old, is called to give account of himself to God and circumstances in Albania change, the spiritual reconquest of the country will be launched from here. So help us spread the word of God in the Albanian language and train new Albanian priests.

(Address: Aid to the

Church in Need, P.O. Box 1000, El Toro, CA 92630) 24



THE ALBANIAN PRESS AGAIN ATTACKS THE VATICAN AND POPE

As in past issues, we continue to bring to our reader's attention anti-religious and anti-Vatican reaction from the Albanian news media on current Church events. Tirana's daily, BASHKIMI (Unity), blasts the new leadership in China for making overtures to the Vatican aiming at re-establishment of diplomatic relations. Lulzim Cota, author of the article, in a tiresome harangue, describes the Holy Father's tour to Asia as an attempt to regain privileged status in China and establishment of cordial "dialogue" with the "revisionist ruling clique in Peking."

Another article against the Vatican, under the title "The Trade-Union Disguise of the Fire-extinguisher of the Vatican," was printed in the weekly FUNA (Work), organ of the Albanian Trade Unions. We reprint it here as it appears in Albania Today, July-August issue, 1981. The reader can judge for himself to what extent a blind ideology can go to in the attempts of justifying its anti-religious, and in particular, anti-Catholic actions.

The head of the Vatican Karol Wojtyla, with his ardent devotion to capital, is breaking some protocol rules established by his predecessors. For the first time in the history of the papacy, in March this year, he presided over a factory trade-union council of a large steel plant in Terni. Clerical propaganda and bourgeois press made a great noise about this "historical event" in the personal record of the present head of the Vatican, this man who in his early youth is claimed to have been a trade-union activist in Krakow. It is evident that Wojtyla did not go to the above-mentioned trade-union meeting prompted by the trade-union nostalgia of his young years. He went there on the advice of monopoly bourgeoisie which is labouring under the consequences of a deep crisis, impelled by the dread of capital, unless class struggle rises to new heights, unless the social and class contradictions in the sick capitalist society are made worse. This becomes clear from both the factory the pope chose and the calls and preachings for capitulation he addressed to the workers. This large plant in Terni — one of the biggest of the kind in Italy, will greatly curtail production, therefore 1,500 out of its 6,000 workers will be laid off. The workers of this factory were paid only 70 per cent of their February

wages, and only 50 per cent of their March wages.

The difficulties of Terni are part of the difficult situation in the entire Italian steel industry. That is why the proletariat is up in strikes and demonstrations against lay-offs, against bad conditions of work, life, for higher wages. Steel industry is the key branch of the economy, and it is clear that the class struggle, and the strike movement as integral part of it, gravely affects the interests of monopoly capital. The head of the Vatican chose precisely the steel industry to put on his former trade-union masks.

In his well-known terms, the pope let out a tirade against the workers who rise in defence of their rights, attacked the class struggle. According to him, the working class and the other oppressed and exploited should not rise against the bourgeoisie, but should look on indifferently when their vital interests are disregarded and the standard of living is lowered. Thousands of steel workers will swell the ranks of the unemployed, their families will fight for a livelihood, but all this does not affect the head of the Vatican. When a worker addressed himself directly to the pope, asking, "Is it not a crime to close down the factory?", the head of the Vatican was quick to come to the rescue of the owning class, saying, "The dif-

ficulties are great." According to the papal logic, these "difficulties" give capital the right to throw the workers into the street, to reduce wages, to increase prices and taxes. Wojtyla came openly in defence of the anti-popular and anti-worker policy of the monopoly bourgeoisie, defending the efforts of capital to overcome the crisis by saddling the working masses with its consequences. In this way he defends the interests of the Vatican which is at the same time one of the biggest monopoly companies of the world. The Holy See is engaged in big business and holds colossal shares in the steel and armaments companies of Italy, the United States, the German Federal Republic, Britain, etc. The secret investments of "holy" capital in these sectors are estimated by the foreign press at about ten billion dollars. When Wojtyla tells the steel workers to keep quiet and accept the lay-offs and wagecuts, he is concerned about his own shares, the value of which is raised through the exploitation of the sweat and toil of the proletariat.

However, the anti-worker zeal of the Vatican and its head, and the whole capitalist demagoguery and repression, can never stop the protest and indignation of the working masses against the bourgeoisie from reaching new heights.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL/ANNUAL REPORT 1981

ALBANIA

The concerns of Amnesty International were the existence and application of legislation punishing the non-violent exercise of human rights, the imprisonment and subjection to forced labour of prisoners of conscience, unfair trial procedures, harsh prison conditions and the death penalty.

Albania is a member of the United Nations, it has not, however, signed or ratified the international human rights covenants. Key provisions of the constitution, criminal and criminal procedure codes explicitly limit the exercise of certain human rights and stress the role of law in defending the socialist state and the Albanian Workers' Party from "socially dangerous acts," in particular, "manifestations of bureaucracy and liberalism." Amnesty International believes that the very broad formulation of Article 55 of the criminal code breaches international standards guaranteeing the freedom of conscience, belief, religion and expression. Article 55 defines as an offence:

"Fascist, anti-democratic, religious, war-mongering or anti-socialist agitation or propaganda, as well as the preparation, dissemination or the keeping for dissemination of literature with such a content as to weaken or undermine the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat."

The punishment is deprivation of liberty of from three to 10 years (in time of war or when "especially serious consequences have resulted" deprivation of liberty for not less than 10 years, or death).

The Albanian constitution does not guarantee the right to freedom of movement, and in practice travel abroad has been almost exclusively restricted to official delegations and officially authorized students. People who tried to leave the country without official authorization were liable under Article 127 of the criminal code to up to five years' deprivation of liberty for "illegal passage across the borders of the state." Amnesty International has been informed of several people sentenced in the 1960s to between 12 and 25 years' imprisonment for trying to leave Albania without official permission, under Article 64 of the former criminal code (1958). Under Article 47 the current criminal code retains the penalty of deprivation of liberty for from 10 to 25 years, or death, for:

"flight from the state and refusal to return to the fatherland on the part of a person sent on service or allowed temporarily to leave the state."

Information received by Amnesty International indicated that in the late 1970s up to 2,000 political prisoners were detained in the prison camps of Ballsh and Spaci alone, and that many had been convicted for expressing dissatisfaction with economic or political conditions in Albania. No information has since been received to indicate any substantial change. Since 1967 when Albania was officially proclaimed an atheist state all places of worship have been closed and religious leaders of the Moslem, Orthodox and Roman Catholic faiths prohibited from performing religious functions. Those who continued to do so have reportedly been severely repressed. Of three Roman Catholic titular bishops detained in the mid-1970s after privately conducting religious ceremonies, two — Bishops Fishta and Coka — were reported to have died in detention. The third, 65-year-old Nikoll Troshani, has variously been reported to be detained at Ballsh camp or at the camp of Tepelena. Reports received by Amnesty International alleged that Bishop Coka died in 1979 after being beaten by guards for trying to hold Easter mass for fellow detainees at a prison camp, Paperr, near Elbasan. Five other Roman Catholic priests have been reported to be detained in camps in southern Albania.

Amnesty International learned of two foreign nationals detained in a section of Ballsh camp reserved for foreigners; both had voluntarily left their own countries to live in Albania. One was reportedly arrested and convicted after he had applied to leave Albania, the other after he had criticized the authorities and listened to foreign radio broadcasts.

In past years Amnesty International has received reports alleging serious deficiencies in procedures during investigations and trials. There have been reports that psychological and sometimes physical pressure has been used to obtain confessions from the accused or testimony from witnesses. Some prisoners were held in solitary confinement without access to family or lawyer during pre-trial investigation for up to six months. Where defendants were permitted defence lawyers, counsel appeared to have always been state-appointed, and to have provided only nominal services. Some defendants did not see their defence counsel before the trial itself.

In April 1980 a new criminal procedure code came into force. The information available to Amnesty International was not sufficient to allow an assessment of its practical

application, but certain of its provisions gave grounds for concern and were incompatible with internationally recognized standards for fair trial. The right of the accused to defence counsel of their choice is not guaranteed in all circumstances, and indeed the wording of the criminal procedure code appears to imply that defence counsel is "designated" by the court and not by the accused. Amnesty International continued to be concerned about decree No. 5912 of 1979, which allows administrative internment or banishment without trial (in contravention of Article 56 of the constitution) for unspecified periods, a measure which may also be used "against members of the family of fugitives living inside or outside the state" — that is as a reprisal against people who have not themselves necessarily broken Albanian law.

Reports have described conditions in labour camps in Albania during the 1960s and 1970s where political prisoners were employed on projects including the construction of factories and housing, marsh-drainage and mining. Conditions at Spaci camp, with a population estimated at over 500 political prisoners, appeared to be particularly harsh. Prisoners reportedly mined copper in eight-hour shifts, six days a week, with little industrial protection apart from helmets and cotton masks. Work targets were described as excessive and prisoners who failed to meet these targets risked extra work hours or solitary confinement. Conditions for the approximately 1,400 political prisoners at Ballsh camp, (there are also camps at Ballsh for ordinary criminals and for foreigners), if less harsh than at Spaci, also appeared to be very poor. Prisoners reportedly slept in unheated barracks, on straw mattresses laid out on wooden platforms. At both camps food was reported to be deficient in quality and quantity, needing to be supplemented by parcels from prisoners' families and by food bought from the prisoners' wages. Medical care provided by staff mainly recruited from among the prisoners, was described as seriously inadequate. Prisoners punished by solitary confinement were reportedly kept in unheated, concrete cell measuring approximately 2m by 1m, with neither bed nor floor cover. It was also reported that guards have punished prisoners by stripping them to the waist and beating them with rubber hoses filled with sand or gravel.

The criminal code lists 34 crimes (of which 25 are political and military crimes) punishable by the death sentence.



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE:
COUNTRY REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS
PRACTICES FOR 1981
ALBANIA**

Albania is an isolated Balkan nation of about 2.6 million people. It is governed by a communist dictatorship which seized power at the close of World War II and has ruled without interruption since then.

The ruling Albanian Workers' Party and the government maintain rigid controls over the Albanian people and severely restrict the exercise of political and civil rights. There have been reports, corroborated by private international organizations, of serious, continuing human rights violations in Albania. Albania has not ratified the UN covenants on human rights, nor has it signed the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The United States does not have diplomatic relations with Albania, nor has it had official representatives in that country since 1946. This fact makes it difficult for the U.S. Government to comment authoritatively on conditions in Albania.

1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom from:

a. Torture

There are reports from private international groups of torture in Albania, specifically of persons accused of anti-state or religious activities.

b. Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

Private international organizations report that persons are imprisoned for "anti-state activity," "dissemination of religious propaganda," and "opposition to the state's anti-religious campaign." There are also reports of summary executions. Amnesty International has received reports of prisoners being held in solitary confinement during pre-trial investigation for up to six months. Under the present penal code, Albanian courts may impose the death penalty for a number of political offenses, including agitation and propaganda against the state (article 55); incitement of hatred or quarrels between nationalities and races (article 56); creation of a counter-revolutionary organization or participation therein (article 57); activity against the revolutionary movement of the working class (article 60); and refusal to carry out a duty and coercing others to refuse (article 144).

c. Disappearances

Available information on disappearances is insufficient for useful comment.

d. Arbitrary Arrest and Imprisonment

Available information on the practice of arbitrary arrest or imprisonment in Albania is insufficient for useful comment.

e. Denial of Fair Public Trial

The Albanian judiciary includes a supreme court and regional and district courts. While it is clear that the ruling party controls the administration of justice, virtually no further information concerning judicial practices is available.

f. Invasion of the Home

Information on the extent to which the Albanian authorities respect the constitutionally-guaranteed inviolability of the home is not available.

2. Respect for Civil and Political Liberties, Including:

a. Freedom of Speech, Press, Religion and Assembly

The Albanian Workers Party maintains rigid control over the Albanian people, severely restricting the exercise of individual political and civil liberties. The Albanian constitution states that citizens "enjoy freedom of speech, press, organization, association, assembly, and public manifestation." It prohibits discrimination, makes special mention of equal rights for women, and proclaims the inviolability of the home. It also provides, however, that "the rights of citizens are indivisible from the fulfillment of their duties and cannot be exercised in opposition to the socialist order." From the information available, the government respects few if any of these constitutional rights. For those who deviate from party or government-established norms of behavior, reprisals appear to be swift and severe.

Foreign and domestic news is rigidly controlled. Persons found listening to foreign radio broadcasts or exhibiting "alien manifestations" are reportedly reprimanded and punished. Albanian citizens receive mail from other countries on an extremely limited basis.

The Albanian Worker's Party controls the government. No other parties are permitted to exist.

Religious activity is expressly prohibited by the Albanian constitution and by government policy. In 1967 the government abrogated all laws dealing with church-state relations and began a campaign to eliminate all vestiges of religion. More than 2,000 mosques, churches, monasteries, and other religious institutions were closed; all religious literature was banned; and a number of church leaders were imprisoned or executed. The regime continues to suppress religious activity by imposing harsh penalties on persons who engage in religious practices, by conducting an educational campaign against religion, and by obliging citizens to expose believers. In spite of these pressures, some Albanians reportedly continue to practice religion secretly in the privacy of their homes.

b. Freedom of Movement Within the Country, Foreign Travel, Emigration and Repatriation

Movement within the country and travel abroad is rigidly controlled. Transgressors may be punished severely. Under article 47K of the penal code, "flight from the state and refusal to return to the fatherland on the part of a person sent on service or allowed to leave the state is punishable by imprisonment of not less than 10 years or by death." Under these

conditions, very few persons manage to leave Albania each year.

c. Freedom to Participate in the Political Process

The constitution provides for the exercise of state power and the direction and control of all other state organs by the people's assembly and by people's councils. The members of these bodies are selected by the party and then "elected" by universal suffrage.

Article 42 of the constitution states that national minorities are "guaranteed protection and development of their culture and popular traditions, the use of their mother tongue and its teaching in the schools, and equal development in all fields of social life." Information on the treatment of ethnic minority members in Albania is generally unavailable.

Women have the right to vote, but there are few women in positions of leadership in the party or state organizations.

3. Government Attitude and Record Regarding International and Non-government Investigation of Alleged Violations of Human Rights

The Albanian Government has refused to cooperate in any investigation of alleged human rights violations.

4. Economic and Social Circumstances

Albania is a poor country with limited natural resources and the smallest amount of arable land per capita in Europe. Per capita GNP is estimated to be about \$500, but accurate economic data are not available. No evidence has been received of chronic food shortages or rationing. Rents on residential housing appear to be low, but there are reportedly housing shortages, especially for newly-married couples.

Albania has taken steps toward industrial development, but its economy is grounded in agriculture and the production of raw materials. All land belongs to the state, and individual citizens are permitted to own only limited amounts of personal property.

Albania is a party to the International Convention on the Political Rights of Women and to the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women. The Albanian constitution asserts that women enjoy equal rights with men in work, pay, recreation, social security, education, political activity, and in the family. Information on the extent to which these asserted rights are protected in day-to-day life is generally not available. However, there do appear to have been advances in the rights and status of women. In 1975, reportedly 35 percent of students were women. Women reportedly participate equally in the obligatory labor and military service programs. There appear to be few women in positions of leadership in the economic apparatus, however.

JOURNEY INTO THE UNKNOWN: AN ALBANIAN ADVENTURE

BY

JOHN L. BROOM

Below we are printing an interesting essay by John L. Broom, who visited Albania along with a group of British tourists in the summer of 1980. It goes without saying that we disagree with some of his points of view; however, we welcome such opposite observations, and our reader's comments on them. (Editor's note)

As the giant jet soared into the skies above Heathrow on a sunny day in early April, I could scarcely believe that my long-cherished ambition of visiting the People's Socialist Republic of Albania was at last about to be realized. The mysterious isolation of this small country, the last bastion of unadulterated Stalinism in the world, had long fascinated me. For several years I had read many books and articles on the "Land of the Eagle" (as its inhabitants call it) I could lay my hands on, and listened regularly to the English broadcasts from Radio Tirana. Reports of conditions in the country, which has half the population of Scotland, varied enormously, and often flatly contradicted one another. According to some writers (and Radio Tirana), Albania was a veritable paradise on earth, the only nation in the world with no inflation, taxation, or unemployment. According to others it was a vile tyranny, wherein the people were held in subjection and fear, and denied the most elementary civil liberties. ("You had better make your will before you leave," advised some of my friends, not altogether in jest.) The saga of Glasgow Celtic's match against Tirana's Partisani team last September, when visas were refused for supporters and journalists, certainly seemed to confirm that visitors were unwelcome, to say the least.

In fact, it is not particularly difficult to have a holiday in Albania. True, individual tourists are not admitted, but parties of 20 or more can enter on a group visa obtained on their behalf by the only Company in Britain which organizes such tours, Regent Holidays, Ltd., of Small Street, Bristol. There were 22 in our group, including the Courier, who expertly guided us through the various Customs and passport formalities. We flew to Belgrade (magnificent views of the Austrian Alps en route), and then on to Titograd, a city near the Albanian border. Next morning, a Yugoslav bus took us along the road signposted with the magical word "Albanska," and after our passports had been scrutinized by an unsmiling Yugoslav frontier guard (the Yugoslavs, who are reviled daily by the Albanian media for their alleged "revisionism," regard all visitors to their unfriendly neighbor with suspicion), we actually crossed the border into the promised land. After we had satisfied the courteous officials that we were not attempting to smuggle any Bibles, pornography, Tory manifestos or other explosive material into their paradise, we were allowed to enter the luxurious coach owned by the Albanian Tourist Board, and introduced to two of the English-speaking guides. Then we set off for the city of Shkodra where we were to have lunch, regaled on the way by a propaganda pep talk over the tannoy in the virtues of Marxism-Leninism and the great achievements of the Albanian people since their country was liberated from the Italian and German occupiers in 1944.

The Hotel in the Capital, Tirana, where we stayed for most of the time, was a palatial building in the main Square which had been opened only recently. Tirana itself is a handsome city, with many fine houses and tree-lined avenues. The lack of traffic in the streets is immediately noticeable and refreshing. No one in Albania is allowed to own a car; the few that do exist are owned by the State, and

driven by Government officials. It is a pleasure to stroll through the almost traffic-free streets of the towns and cities.

We were all agreeably surprised by the amount of freedom we had to wander around on our own. I personally never had the slightest sensation of being followed, though while sitting in the beautiful park of the Capital one day, I was accosted by an old lady who spoke to me in Albanian for about five minutes, apparently quite oblivious of the fact that I was a totally uncomprehending foreigner.

The people did not give the impression of living under an oppressive regime. The cafes and restaurants were filled with laughing, chattering crowds as in any Western city, and the staff of the hotels and shops were mostly polite and friendly.

Political indoctrination is, however, almost complete. Everywhere one goes there are huge posters and banners exhorting one to support the Party of Labour (the only Party allowed to exist), and its "beloved" leader, Comrade Enver Hoxha (Hoja), who has been the virtual Dictator of the country for 37 years. Even in a kindergarten we visited, the five and six-year-olds sweetly sang propaganda songs to us; and in the English class of a junior secondary school in Elbasan, a precocious 13-year-old boy stood up and recited Marxist-Leninist slogans like an automaton. This enslavement of the mind at such an early age I found repellant, though it is possibly no worse than the religious indoctrination practised in segregated schools in Britain, and the power exercised over public opinion by the media. Still, here we, at least, have the freedom to choose between conflicting ideologies, whereas in Albania to question Marxism-Leninism is tantamount to treason.

The media is also completely controlled by the Party of Labor. No foreign newspapers or periodicals are allowed into the country, and the Albanian newspapers are incredibly dull propaganda sheets, four pages in length. Domestic news is confined to what the Party thinks the people ought to know, while foreign news (relegated to the back page), consists exclusively of reports of industrial unrest and revolutions in the capitalist and "revisionist" world. Nothing favourable about conditions in countries outside Albania is ever printed, so that the people are led to believe that the workers in other lands are living in abject poverty and misery. The radio and T V services are similarly rigidly controlled by the Party machine.

A considerable amount of English literature has been translated into Albanian, but nearly all of it is of safe, long-dead authors. In the catalogue of the well-equipped Public Library in the town of Korce, I saw translations of novels by Dickens, Hardy and Galsworthy, but none by Huxley, Greene, or even Somerset Maugham. One of our guides could recite huge chunks of Burns (his attempt at the Doric was praiseworthy if quaint!), and also admired, somewhat inconsistently, that High Tory and Monarchist, Sir Walter Scott. A few non-controversial foreign films are shown in the cinemas. (No sex movies, of course. Indeed, the regime's extreme Puritanical attitude towards any form of permissiveness, would delight the heart of Mary Whitehouse). While we were there, they were queuing up to see that Marxist classic The Adventures of Robin Hood, and Charlie Chaplin's The Great Dictator.

The Art Gallery in Tirana seemed to contain only Albanian Neo-Realist paintings extolling the Liberation struggle and attacking "reactionaries" such as the pope, though the guide assured me that they did have some works by what he mysteriously called "progressive Old Masters" in a gallery in another part of the city. On the other hand, classical composers are acceptable, and we attended an excellent concert in Tirana's Palace of Culture, which included Mozart's 40th Symphony, and arias by Verdi. Pop music is, of course, regarded as hopelessly decadent, and is completely proscribed.

Marx taught that religion is the opium of the masses, so in Albania it is banned, along with other harmful drugs. The churches and mosques of historical significance have been preserved as museums, while the others have been converted

into sports stadiums, youth hostels, workers apartments and so on. I asked our guide when we were being shown round a former Greek Orthodox Church in the lovely old city of Apollonia, what happened to all the priests and mullahs. "The older ones have retired," she replied, "the younger ones are now doing useful work for the state, while those who were spies and traitors," she added ominously, "have been sent to the proper place." In Shkodra, we visited the anti-religious museum, wherein the "absurd" doctrines of Christianity and Mohammedanism were rather naively "exposed," and the collaboration of the clergy with the Fascists during the Second World War, graphically depicted. Some of our party walked out of the museum in disgust.

We were shown around a huge textile combine in Berat, and a carpet factory in Korca. The former, mostly constructed with Chinese aid, had originally been called the Mao-tse-Tung textile mills, but the name was hastily changed a few years ago, when Hoxha suddenly decided that his erstwhile ally was, in fact, an anti-Marxist. Apart from the inevitable propaganda slogans, the walls in each Department sported diagrams of an airplane and a tortoise with lists of names underneath each. These, of course, depicted the current fast and slow workers respectively. Strikes, it is claimed, are unknown. "What would they strike against?" asked the guide rhetorically. "After all, they own the factory themselves." Everything in Albania is nationalized, down to the smallest corner shop. There is, therefore, no need for either direct or indirect taxation, since the profits of every enterprise go into the coffers of the State.

The growing of beards is quaintly forbidden, so the many barbers do a roaring trade. Our guide assured me that there was no sinister ideological reason behind the ban, which was imposed purely on hygienic grounds. "But Karl Marx had a large beard," I pointed out. "Ah, but we cannot all be Karl Marx!" was the unanswerable riposte. The keeping of domestic pets by town residents is also against the law, and I saw only three cats during my week's stay in the country. "The Albanian people have children, not pets," one guide said with some scorn when I ventured to query this rule (He was, himself, a 35-year-old bachelor).

My most embarrassing experience occurred when two men burst into my Hotel bedroom around midnight while I was taking a shower. For one horrifying moment I thought the secret police had found me out, but it transpired they were only the night porters whom I had inadvertantly summoned by pulling an alarm cord which I mistook for the light. It took several wet and shivering minutes to reassure them that I had not been scalded or otherwise injured.

The Albanian scenery is spectacular, much of it akin to the Scottish Highlands, though of course the mountains are higher and permanently snow-capped. The route between Elbasan and Tirana via the Kraba Pass where the road winds tortuously between massive gorges on either side, is particularly impressive. There are also some beautiful deserted beaches along the Adriatic coast, although sun-worshippers are advised not to travel as early in the year as April, when the temperature is not much above the Scottish level.

To sum up my impressions of the most fascinating and unusual holiday I have ever enjoyed, I would say (Surprise, surprise), that Albania is neither the Heaven of its adulators nor the Hell of its detractors. The economic system seems much more just than ours, wherein 7% of the population own 84% of the wealth. The obscene spectacle of poverty in the midst of plenty which is characteristic of capitalist society, is unknown in Albania, where the difference between the highest and lowest paid wage-earner is in the ratio of only 2:1, and where equality of income is the ultimate laudable aim. The people seem reasonably clothed and housed, though we did see some very ramshackle-looking crofts, especially in the country.

It is said that unemployment has been completely eliminated, and there was certainly no sign of any Job Centres. But there did seem to be some overmanning in the factories. It must be admitted that there were an extraordinary number of soldiers

around, many of whom seemed to spend a great amount of time simply strolling in the streets. The inculcation of the socialist ethic of respecting other people's personal property means, it is claimed, that crimes of violence are very few, and I certainly felt much less apprehensive walking through the dark streets of Tirana after sunset, than the brightly-lit ones of Glasgow or London.

On the debit side, the total lack of intellectual, political and religious freedom can never be justified. Anyone who is courageous enough to criticize publicly one of the leaders, or the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism, will soon find himself in prison or in a labour camp. Recently, Amnesty International calculated there were 12,000 political prisoners in Albania, and the testimonies of survivors such as the poet Arshi Pipa, Yousef Valyrakis and Peter Mali, make horrifying reading. The regime's apologists, of course, reply that the system is so manifestly just and works so well, that only the mad or the bad would wish to see it changed. Undoubtedly, the Government has the support of the majority of the population, though this has been achieved only by systematic brainwashing from childhood, and the execution or imprisonment of all the dissidents. If given the choice, I suspect that most British workers would willingly sacrifice freedom of expression and so on for freedom from the fear of unemployment, rampant inflation, and crippling taxes. But is it possible to have such an economically fair society, and still retain basic civil and religious liberties? I confess I do not know the answer to that 64,000 dollar question.



*Albanian youth being
trained to be obedient
to the doctrines of
Marxism-Leninism.*



Eric Newby penetrates Albania, Europe's

obscurer country.

MY FIRST ATTEMPT to obtain an Albanian visa was back in 1962. Albania had no diplomatic relations (and still hasn't) with Britain. By that time her only friends in the outside world were the Chinese, who had given her massive aid, but the nearest Albanian consulate was in Paris. So it was there I rang the bell after a rough crossing on the night ferry. Instantly a metal shutter opened, as if my arrival had been awaited.

"Qu'est-ce que vous voulez?" a disembodied voice asked in French as execrable as my own.

"Je désire aller en Albanie."

"D'où venez-vous?"

"Je suis Anglais."

"Non!" said the voice definitively, the shutter slammed and I went back to England.

Six years were to pass before I got an Albanian visa, and then it was only for a day trip from Yugoslavia with some German ladies. Now we sat (it is better to take someone you love to Albania, as love in Albania is not available even as an optional extra), waiting to join a nine-day tour of the country. We were in a hotel foyer on the shores of Lake Shkodër in Yugoslavia, through which runs the frontier with Albania. Because we had booked late we couldn't fly from London, so we had driven to Montenegro, each getting a reduction of £75 on the £323.83 it cost per person.

What sort of people, we wondered, were we going to be shackled up with in a country as little known as Tibet and, following the break with the Chinese in 1977-78, friendless too?

We had been told that Albanians assume one of Smiley's or similar people travels on every tour. We also knew, because the brochure said so, that there would be no Americans, nobody with "journalist" in his passport, no males with long hair or beards, unless with "a large shaven area between sideboards and start of beard". ("Should authorities not be satisfied in this respect, hair will be cut by the barber on arrival.") No minis, maxis, flared trousers, bright colours ("people may be asked to change"). No bibles either, since a bold band of evangelists, recoiling from dropping bibles on Albanians from aircraft, decided to join a tour and deliver them in person.

Eventually a Yugoslav bus delivered Group Alb 81/6. We now numbered 34: English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish from both sides of the border, three Canadians, a New Zealander and a German with fine full beard. There were also a couple of defiant folklorique maxis, Ages ranged from late teens to way up in the seventies, and some of our companions looked pretty fragile.

"What happens if I die?" one asked. "There's a hot line to the French ambassador in Tirana. He takes over. It shouldn't hold us up."

The Yugoslav customs was on an inlet of the lake. Also waiting to cross was the Albanian football team on its way home after having lost in the European Championships at Vienna. A Welsh enthusiast asked them for their autographs.

We lugged our luggage, the young aiding the aged and infirm, across 50 yards of no-man's land to the wilder shores of Albania where we were halted by an unfriendly soldier. A sign beneath a double-headed eagle announced that this was the *Republika Popullore e Shqipërisë* (Shqipëria being the "Land of the Eagles"). Here Nanny, our tour leader, handed over a multiple visa with photographs of all 34 of us on it. It looked like the catalogue of a chamber of horrors and it took the official some time to convince himself that what he was looking at were people.

Here, too, we had our first close-up of Enver Hoxha, the Leader—apparently for life (he was born in 1908)—photographed with survivors of an earthquake in 1978. From then on we were confronted by his smiling image everywhere, even in the middle of fields, usually wearing a silvery suit with matching trilby and carrying a bunch of

We passed shaven-headed parties from forced-labour camps

flowers as if about to present them to us. Sometimes he was chatting up pampered little Communist Party girls of the sort popular with his hero, Stalin, some in furs.

"Shall we be able to see him in Tirana?" was the first question we asked the interpreter, who was about 35 and looked like a baddie in a Tintin book. He looked at us as if we were a couple of loonies, and when we got to the capital we realized why. The entire plushy area in which the rulers live is sealed off with a host of armed guards—nothing like Downing Street.

The German's beard survived the customs—the demon barber of Albania must have been having a day off. So did the long skirts. On the third day the German had his beard shaved off at his own request.

Our driver was 55-60, a good Italian (his parents were Italian) and was a mine of sinister Italian proverbs that would have had the Mafia in stitches. As soon

as we got going the interpreter began to deluge us with statistics about percentage increases and kilowatt hours. We entered a wide plain. Above it loomed the bony mountains which cover the greater part of the country. Until it was reclaimed in the course of a succession of five-year plans the plain was malarial and poverty-stricken.

What first struck one about Albania was its defences. Everywhere, in countless thousands, what looked like fields of concrete mushrooms sprang from the ground. Every town and village was surrounded by them and in cities they popped up in the most improbable places. Every valley had line after line of them drawn across it, and back on the hillsides were bigger mushrooms for bigger guns. All this was not part of some dead and gone emergency. They were still being installed at a furious rate.

Other changes had taken place since I previously passed this way. What had been barren limestone foothills now burgeoned with fruit trees and, farther south, where the plantings were on a vast scale, there were new olive groves and enormous vineyards, so recent that they had not yet begun to bear fruit. Such vast works suggested the existence of forced labour.

Later on the tour, emerging from a gorge on the Shkumbini river, east of the industrial city of Elbasan, we passed four forced-labour camps with huge quarries behind them. From one of them we saw a shaven-headed party of unfortunates (many of them are religious dissidents) being marched back to their huts in the last of the light.

Mile after mile, the main roads were planted with poplars which formed tunnels of shade beneath which the workers in the fields sheltered from the noontime heat. Most were women wearing white headresses—and they looked whacked; nothing like the heroic women wearing rifles with fixed bayonets on the poster at the roadside. They were harvesting maize, tobacco, vegetables, grapes and sunflowers, and farther south they were working in rice and cotton fields. Their clothes were creches.

Albania is self-sufficient in oil and natural gas—it has an exportable surplus of oil—which makes possible its survival. Petrol is one litre a litre, at a rate of between 14 and 15 leks (the pound). But the only cars we saw in the whole country were a few official Polish-made Fiats and half a dozen Mercedes and Volvos for foreign officials. Otherwise transport consists of bullock carts, what look like old-fashioned motor vans drawn by horses, ageing Russian and Chinese jeeps, heavy goods vehicles, tractors with trailers, and small lorries—at

weekends we saw brides in white going to be married in the backs of open lorries. Buses everywhere were crammed full to suffocation.

There is also a small rail network linking Durres on the Adriatic with Tirana and Elbasan. A new line, badly built with the aid of 16-year-old Communists, is being pushed north near the coast and is now on the outskirts of Shkodër, towards which we were heading. Sometimes the road was blocked by cattle, flocks of sheep, goats and straying pigs. Through it all our driver wove his way, horn blaring, narrowly avoiding the home-going morning shift of black-smocked schoolchildren, all waving madly and uttering "oorays!" Grown-ups were not so wavy.

As in Russia, there was not a washbasin plug anywhere

As all other places in Albania, Shkodër appeared to be *en fête*. Hoardings announced the opening of the 8th Party Congress, which coincided with the 40th anniversary of the foundation of the Albanian Communist Party. Blow-ups of pictures of the bosses, taken anything up to 30 years back, testified to their capacity for survival. Streets were spanned by red banners bearing such slogans as "Long Live The Party And The People!"

The hotel was more or less a prototype of all the hotels we stayed in. Some had lifts that worked, some didn't, and some had no lifts at all, which could mean humping one's baggage up five floors or so, unless some kindly member of the staff (and many of them were) helped you. All staffs were almost insanely honest, charging out on departure mornings brandishing disposable razors and moulding old toothbrushes the owners had hoped they would never see again.

Rooms were spotless. Everything worked, except in one lousy hotel where nothing worked above ground level and someone had pinched all the communal lavatory seats and door locks. As in Russia there was not a washbasin plug anywhere. Take a dog ball for this purpose. There is scarcely a dog to be seen in Albania either (which means no dog mess) and no cats. There are no fat people either, except in foreign groups.

One Russian-built hotel on the coast at Durres had a notice on the terrace which read: *Obligatory consume! Undressing forbidden! No clothes on tables or chairs! In case of undressing and shoeer need, apply to the reception according to the regulation!* This seemed to show that they had had rougher customers than those on Tour Alb 81/6.

We ate, as always, in the tourist restaurant, cheek by jowl with French, Italian, German and Austrian groups, attended by waitresses in old-fashioned waitress kit with little lace caps. Albanians were excluded. The two meals we ate this first day were prototypes of all the good and bad meals we were to eat. Lunch was the good one: tomatoes with olive oil of a quality difficult to come by in the West, rice soup, calves' tongues, stuffed aubergines, crème caramel and a bottle of Kallmet, a local red wine (six leks).

After this, rejecting the suggested "rest", the two of us shot off to see the town unaccompanied, just in time to avoid being told we mustn't, dodging a horde of rather dirty furtive little boys lurking outside—nothing like the well-scrubbed scholars we visited in a secondary school in Elbasan—who asked us for gum and Biro's. Almost every hotel had a similar band outside it. Occasionally they were cuffed or frogmarched away by Albaturist drivers and the foreign VIPs' chauffeurs, but they always came back.

Outside, the main square was being swept and kept nice—as open spaces are in Communist countries everywhere—by dear old ladies who would long since have been in a home in Britain. There is no litter in Albania. Traffic consisted of one or two jeeps whining past on Chinese tyres, an occasional bus and people sedately pedalling what were mostly Chinese bicycles. A policeman, worn down by controlling this traffic, was blowing his whistle at careless pedestrians. He blew it at us as we crossed this expanse to inspect a bust of Stalin and by doing so saved us from being mowed down by a cyclist. Albania is the only place in the Communist world where you can still contemplate likenesses of Stalin without descending into the vaults in which currently unfashionable sculptures are kept.

Now we went "round the corner", where all the best things are in Albania, into what looked like a pre-1914 street. The shops were dark and cavernous and in some of them the floors had been watered, as had the streets. In a bookshop, finding myself separated from the wares by a wooden barrier, I leapt it and got a ticking off. There were sets of Hoxha's *Collected Works* in 34 volumes and his *Reflections on China* in which he says he knew all the time he was playing host to a lot of forgers. A *Life of Stalin* in photographs, which would have been £15 in England until remembered, was £22. A children's book showing little darlings brandishing toy rifles that like mummies on the hoardings, 50p. In shops we were generally well received. People, when sure that they were unobserved, were very friendly. Out in the street they became puffed.

According to the driver who was thoroughly untrustworthy in every

way, wages ranged from about 500 leks a month (about £36) to about 1,000. This, he said, might be a junior minister's portion, although, as such, he would have massive perks. He himself—he was married with grown-up children living elsewhere—got 650 leks, out of which he paid 40 leks for a two-room apartment in Tirana, 15 leks for electricity (whether this included heating was not clear), 10 leks for telephone. He couldn't, or wouldn't, tell us what agricultural workers were paid and whether they received part-payment in kind.

Most people in towns appeared to have television. A set cost 4,500 leks (£325), nine months' salary. There appeared to be no hire purchase or hiring. The programmes were primitive, endless shots of industrial plants and equally interminable political programmes. Newspapers were even more indigestible and we never saw anyone carrying, let alone reading, one. A non-portable radio was 950 leks, a small fridge 4,000.

Even taking into account the great efforts the Albanians were making, it was not surprising that the merchandise was poor and confined to essentials. What was surprising was what we later saw being worn and carried by favoured members of the Party and their wives or girl friends at resorts on the Adriatic, much of it imported luxuries. The top brass were permanently invisible even at the seaside, where they stayed inside heavily guarded villas.

Food was relatively cheap. There was no rationing, just shortages. Meat looked poor—no calves' tongues in the shops. In non-tourist cafes, mostly used by men, a large glass of wine and two bottles of beer cost three leks. The bottles arrived in pairs, two for each drinker, no glasses. As Albanians drink a lot of beer tables were usually hidden by empty bottles. Except at weekends, we rarely saw any drunks, unlike Russia.

Back at the hotel we were given a talking to for going out unaccompanied and taking photographs, which had already been reported. In theory you are allowed to take photographs of people if you ask their permission, but in practice no one gives it. Both the interpreter and the driver, who was a trusted Party member, ensured that we didn't photograph anyone in a so-called dirty job—not that we got anywhere near a mine, collective farm or factory to do so.

Like most trustees in Communist countries who have dealings with foreigners, our two mentors seemed ashamed of comrades whose eight hours' manual work a day were somewhat more arduous than theirs. Such as the girl carpet-makers of Korce, who hand-weave carpets in Persian designs at 360,000 knots to the square metre, mainly for the Dutch and German markets. They worked six days a week at this eye-destroying work, with half an hour off for lunch.

Then, after the ticking-off, up to a fortress where almost exactly 133 years ago, Edward Lear on a sketching trip was given a 50-course dinner by a Turkish pasha. Then back in the gloaming to find what appeared to be the entire population strolling under the trees. In Tirana, where a gigantic square has been hacked out of the centre, the crowds were enormous and continued to circulate far into the night.

After this, the prototype *bad meal*: no tomatoes (there was never any green salad at good or bad meals), the worst sort of Balkan rissoles, rubbery chips, sickly cream

We rarely saw any drunks except at weekends

cake—OK once in a while but it kept on turning up—and to drink, Riesling, which was like no other country's Riesling. Long after dinner some rather sad musicians began to play. Later, a pair of passionate women's libbers attacked the interpreter about the place of Albanian women in society, and to bed, which after some 10 hours in the country was beginning to seem not all that cosy. A lot of evenings were to end on an acrimonious-

note. The best thing was to follow the example of the inhabitants and go to bed early. God, what a day!

Next morning a visit to the Atheist Museum, a promised treat which our hosts perversely began to show signs of withholding when they saw how keen we were. We were shown "then" and "now" maps. The "then" ones were full of mosques and churches—65 per cent of Albanians were Muslims, the rest Orthodox and Roman Catholics, before religion was officially abolished. The "now" maps—hey presto!—had no mosques or churches, most of them having been knocked down or blown up; but lots of schools.

The visit was endless. The Director, the first director of an atheist museum most of us had ever seen, laboriously described every exhibit in Albanian: confessional boxes, engravings of Inquisitors sending heretics up in smoke, photographs of mad-looking mullahs, priests engaged in what the caption described as "rock and roll" with female parishioners, a hollowed-out bible with a pistol in it, and so on. The interpreter laboriously turned all of it into English. When someone pointed out that the gun in the bible was a dummy the director said he hadn't noticed. An entry in the visitors' book by a member of the Franco-Albanian Friendship Society said that *La groupe a été très ravi de la visite dans ce musée de l'Athéisme*. They must have been tight.

From now on twice and thrice daily we received admonitions about photography and "wandering off". Comparing notes with members of French and Italian groups we got the impression that we were being shown less than they were and treated worse. Perhaps this is because Albania's pre-war gold reserves are still in the Bank of England, where they may remain until some arrangement is made about the two British destroyers the Albanians sank in the Corfu Channel in 1946. Whatever the reason, if there was ever a next time, I would book in Italy or France rather than Britain.

Eventually a day came when the driver, convinced that we had photographed his mouldy old gun emplacements, revealed himself as the grey eminence of the tour to whom even interpreters deferred. He threatened to have the whole group expelled from the country and all the film confiscated if there was any more trouble.

Most memorable about Albania was the Albanian people—overworked, underpaid, without luxuries, lacking any of the carrot-like incentives offered to workers in the West. As far as one could make out they knew nothing about the world outside apart from the garbled information their leaders hand down to them. But their dignity and what they had achieved could not fail to command admiration and respect. ●

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In Albania work is never finished.

Isolation in Albania

A nation in pursuit of 'total Communism'

BO BOJESSEN

Bo Bojesen writes for "A Magasinet," supplement to the conservative "Aftenposten" of Oslo, from which this is adapted.

Twenty-seven-year-old, bikini-clad Commandant Mimosa sits on a rock and stares out over the Ionian Sea toward Corfu a few miles away. Nearby lies a military bunker just big enough to hold two soldiers with room to fire their rifles. Mimosa works in a printing plant but also is the leader of a military unit of women prepared to defend their country, the People's Socialist Republic of Albania. Now she is on vacation, less concerned with duty than with a suntan, but the soldiers who pass by make sure no one leaves Albania. "Anyone who tries to get to Corfu is shot," explains our guide.

To travel to Albania is to take a trip back in time. The Yugoslavian plane—which must fly over the Yugoslavian coast and then over the Adriatic until it reaches the same latitude as the airport—passes military installations as it rolls down the runway at Rinas airport. An officer and a group of soldiers—all with the obligatory red star on their caps, olive green uniforms, and heavy boots—return the passengers' papers after careful examination of their passports.

When asked how many flights land and take off from the field every day besides our flight and the Olympic Airways plane that just left for Athens, the airport commander replies, "None." There is one weekly departure for Rome and another to East Berlin. It is a country in isolation.

The regime led by Enver Hoxha, Albania's ruler who came to power after leading an effective resistance to the Nazi occupation, took over a land that had been occupied by foreigners for centuries. Distrust of foreigners became an obsession that turned into today's isolationism.

To become self-sufficient in food, great emphasis is placed on agriculture, and no land remains untilled. Where the country-

side is not plowed by oxen, ridges and rocks are decorated with revolutionary slogans praising Marxism-Leninism, the Central Committee, and Enver Hoxha.

The number of slogans pales in comparison with that of the mushroom-shaped bunkers, which appear at railroad lines, road crossings, factories, pipelines, and in the middle of fields. Our guide does not like to talk about military subjects but when pressed says, "These are part of our defenses against foreign or domestic enemies. Danger is everywhere."

A visitor to Albania will not meet dissidents. Business travelers seldom meet the same official more than once, and student or tourist groups are not allowed to go wherever they wish. It is difficult to meet "the man on the street."

Albania has 2.5 million inhabitants, with a population growth of about 3 per cent per year. Almost half the workers are young, and Leninist ideology is instilled in children beginning in kindergarten.

To achieve the national goal of total Communism, the liberation of women is especially important. According to official figures, 47 per cent of all work is done by

women. One sees them in the fields, in textile mills, in copper-wire factories. Women get the same pay men do, an average \$180 per month for factory and field workers, compared to about \$230 per month for doctors and teachers.

One often sees women on the street carrying wide boards laden with dishes of food. To save fuel—or perhaps because many lack kitchens—they take food to communal ovens, where they wait for it to be baked with other dishes.

Albania has made vast strides in literacy, public health, industry, and agriculture. Great efforts have been made in the production of raw materials, and the country is now self-sufficient in coal, natural gas, nickel, steel, cobalt, copper, and other minerals. But it is well known that there are problems and shortages in almost every sector of the economy.

There are no private cars or motorcycles here—only one or two hundred state-owned vehicles. No cruise ship has anchored here in thirty years, and Enver Hoxha, who was educated in Paris, has not left the country since 1961.

When we visit the art museum in Tirana, the capital, the guide explains that art must always reflect reality, and that "art for art's sake, rather than for the people's sake, is wrong." Most of the paintings are about resistance to the Nazis and about industrialization; portraits of Enver Hoxha are everywhere. "Naturally we have professional artists here," the guide says. Anyone showing talent has six to twelve months to develop his skill, and those who then demonstrate work that "reflects society" can continue to paint. Otherwise it is back to the factory. ■

(Feb. 6)



"Secret" Albanian dissidents.

INDOCTRINATION OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN IN ALBANIA

In the past issue we acquainted our readers with the methods the Albanian educational system employs in rearing preschool children. We continue to comment on this issue, this time about indoctrination of elementary school children. Among many presentations and writings on this theme, we selected the article which appeared in the Pedagogical Magazine printed in Tirana (#4, 1981, pp. 83-89) written by Sabah Sinani under the title "About the Work of the Elementary School Teacher (4th Grade) in Increasing the Output of the Educational Teaching Process." Sabah Sinani is the Principal of the elementary school "Mark Gjergji" in the locality of Qelez-Puke in Northern Albania.

"One of the duties of the Principal of the 'Mark Gjergji' school," explains Sinani, "is to give a detailed example as to how every primary (elementary school) teacher should keep records in his NOTEBOOK aside from the class register. In it the teacher is urged to plan the ideo-political and educational program of all activities with his children and make charts to be filled out on an every day basis so that he may have a clear view of the progress, and consequently be able to encourage growth and improve the negative sides."

The above activity, that Sinani recommends, would deserve a commendation if it were not for the way the regime imposes itself on the whole educational system, and through it on the innermost life of each member of the family. A glance at the translated CHART 1 here, especially in the last column "The Moral and Political Stand of Parents" probably would be enough for a free person to detest that educational system. In our judgement that question "AP" (i.e., "Is your father or mother against or disruptive to the Party"? and "What kind of punishment steps have been taken against them?") makes the fourth graders outright spies of their parents. The affirmative answers of innocent children open for them the first step towards being good young Communists. However, if their answers are negative, then they would be considered as unimprovable "brats of reactionaries," their behavior would be reported to the leaders of the pioneer organization and the collective farm, so that they could be watched and reported, provoked, discriminated against, and despised. The questionnaires, thus, are double-edged. Even without the childrens' revelations about their parents, in some cases incidents are brought up during teacher-pupil-parent gatherings, resulting in open warnings, reprimands, and threats. In other cases the party may deal with parents directly by displacing them, assigning them other jobs, or sending them to forced labor-camps. If the parents are state employees, they may be sent to remote village cooperatives to do manual work on a trial period basis of up to three years.

The only way for parents to avoid this type of treatment is "self-confession and self-criticism." Even a tongue-tight attitude won't help. At times a genuine confession of a child is sufficient reason to initiate an inquiry of his parents as a result of which they may wind up in prison or even lose their lives through the testimonies of false witnesses. These cases are mounted so craftily that the accused appears clearly at fault. Since the defense cannot make any investigation on its own, at the end of the verdict it is forced to agree with the prosecutor and make statements like this: "Although the state has found my assigned client guilty on charges so and so, the parents may bear the consequences of their actions assured that the state will take care of their children." The care that the state takes of children is that in most cases they remain with eight years of education and occasionally some vocational courses. If parents are sentenced to death, the state takes care of their children. There have been cases when pregnant women have been executed without waiting for the birth of the child. Such was the case of Liri Belishova-Gega, a member of the Central Committee who was executed along with her husband (General Ali Kiri) in 1957 while being in her fourth month of pregnancy. Even Premier Khrushchev intervened with Enver Hoxha for clemency but to no avail, since as Hoxha said "party doesn't have mercy on the traitors"!

ORDINAL NUMBER		FIRST AND LAST NAME OF THE PUPIL		Number of Members		Income per person		COM-POSITION OF THE FAMILY		PARENTS EDUCATION		PROFESSION		NO. OF CHILDREN		PARENTS MORAL AND POLITICAL STAND	
				one couple													
				two couples													
				three couples													
				Father	IL- LIT- ER- ATE												
				Mother													
				Father	LOWER CYCLE												
				Mother													
				Father	8 YEAR SCHOOL												
				Mother													
				Father	MID- DLE												
				Mother													
				Father	UNI- VER- SITY												
				Mother													
				Father	(WORKERS WITH OUT SHIFT)												
				Mother													
				Father	(WITH SHIFT)												
				Mother													
				Father	COOP. MET- BER												
				Mother													
				Father	MID- TLE EMPLOY- MENT												
				Mother													
				1 - 2													
				3 - 5													
				Over 5													
				Father	AP*												
				Mother	PUN- ISH- MENT STEPS												
				Father													
				Mother													

* AP = Anti-party, opponent or against the party

CHART No. 2 Ideo-political upbringing

Aim	Theoretical and practical activity	The person in charge	Dead-line
I. The Party and comrade Enver Hoxha lead us from victory to victory	1. The care of the Party and of comrade Enver Hoxha for our school is continuous (conversation on the occasion at the beginning of the new school year).	Teacher (female)	9.1.1979
	2. Our houses are prettier and stronger (educational hour on the occasion of the complete elimination of the earthquake consequences).	Teacher (f.) and pupils	10.1.1979
	3. Making albums with pictures of comrade Enver.	Pupils	10.5.1979
	4. The best songs for comrade Enver (artistic program on the occasion of his 71 birthday anniversary).	Artistic group	10.10.1979
	5. May you live as long as mountains live, comrade Enver! (Educational hour.)	Teacher (f.) and pupils	10.16.1979
	6. The Party and comrade Enver are respected in the whole world (reading from articles, interviews, etc.).	Teacher continuously	Continuously
	7. The best recitation for the party and comrade Enver (school competition between classes).	Pupils	11.8.1979
	8. Comrade Enver, the dearest person to pioneers (reading and extracted assignments from comrade Enver's book "For You Pioneers").	Teacher (f.) and pupils	Continuously
II. Albania proudly awaits the glorious 35th anniversary of her liberation.	9. Albania surrenders to no one, she will be the last to remain loyal to Marxism-Leninism (acquainting the pupils with comrade Enver Hoxha's book "Reflections on China," reading from the daily press parts of it in order to unmask the Chinese revisionists and those of all colors; foreign interviews about Albania, etc.).	Teacher	Continuously

The precedent for using children to reveal parents' disruptive actions against the party and the government was established in the Soviet Union in 1921 during the obligatory requisition of crops. Comrade Makarenko, the wife of Lenin and Head of the Pedagogical School at Moscow University, has described a tragic incident in one of her accounts. In Smolensk, Ukraine, a 12-year-old boy informed his teacher that his parents had hidden two sacks of potatoes under their bed. The state police were notified by the teacher and went to check. The parents denied that they had anything hidden from the government. The boy was brought in and ordered to show where the hidden sacks were. As the boy was showing the hiding place, his father was so much angered that he completely lost control of himself and kicked his child hard in the abdomen, resulting in the son's death. The police executed both parents on the spot. A monument of this horrendous scene was erected in Smolensk, near which the tragedy occurred, in order to immortalize the "martyrdom" of that pupil as the highest example of obedience to the party, and as an example of Communist education.

Among subjects taught in Albanian schools today the ideo-political education of children ranks in first place. In Sinani's article, CHART 2 demonstrates some of the scheduled themes during 1979 class activities of the fourth graders. The themes dedicated to the Secretary of the Party, Enver Hoxha, are almost identically repeated for comrade Stalin. We left out the long list of themes for Stalin so as not to tire the reader.

In the same magazine (February 1981, p. 23) there is a CHART with grades on all subjects taught in a high school. The average grade earned by all classes in "Political and Moral Education" (which corresponds to "Civics" in the American educational system) is one and a half points above the grades on all subjects. It seems that the oppressed teachers take great pains to make their students excel in this subject more than in any other. The writer at the end commends this achievement and urges the teachers to seek "higher goals."

K.A.B.

ATHEISM VS. RELIGION

Religion is not only surviving in the predominantly atheistic Soviet Union; it is being successfully conveyed to the younger generation, an article in Komsomolskaya Pravda concedes (April 4, 1981). Replying to readers' questions, Anatoly Belov, an atheistic-literature official, warns, "Despite the overall decline in religiosity, some sectarian communities are becoming younger in composition and are being replenished with believers." He attributes the change to family influence and Western propaganda.

Belov chides readers whose questions indicate they are poorly informed. Among such queries was one from a Baptist asking whom atheists believe in. Belov's reply: people with initiative such as the Stakhanovites or cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin.

SOVIET JOURNAL "SCIENCE AND RELIGION" ATTACKS THE VATICAN

In its June-July 1981 issue, the Soviet journal Science and Religion again attacked the Vatican. Under the title "Refugee Clerics, Their Vatican and Other Protectors," I. Anihas, a doctor of history and art, writes in a long article that the Vatican has changed its methods of influence towards Eastern European countries.

"Since evangelization of these peoples and countries has become impossible and unrealistic, the Vatican has begun now to interfere in the internal affairs of these countries. In this work—underlines the author—the Vatican is aided by bourgeois nationalists and clergy who have escaped from their homelands." Anihas concludes his article by requesting the Soviet government to investigate the situation of the Catholic Church in Lithuania.

ALBANIANS ARE NOT ATHEISTS

Albania is the only country in the world that has officially declared itself an "atheist state." Ironically this declaration, sanctioned by the new Constitution of 1976, has been repeatedly interpreted by the government as if the people themselves had voluntarily given up religion, namely that the believers of Muslim, Orthodox and Catholic faith had rejected the "opium of the people" and instead embraced the ideology of Communism. In spite of this, we know that freedom of religion, thought, and conscience cannot simply be suppressed by force and legislation.

A vivid example that Albanians are not atheist is their determination and sacrifice to preserve, in exile, their religious traditions. Albanian immigrants who settled in America toward the end of the past century, brought with them their Orthodox faith, and under the guidance of the late Bishop Fan Noli, along with earthly fortunes, built beautiful churches and cathedrals to maintain alive their religious identity. These institutions soon became centers of national and cultural revival at a time when Albania was still under Turkish yoke.

Albanian refugees of Muslim and Catholic faith who came to the U.S. after World War II when their country fell into the hands of Communists, followed in the footsteps of their Orthodox brothers and soon began to organize, first into religious associations and later with the help of one another, to start building mosques, tekkes (monasteries) and churches.

Albanian Bektashi and Sunnite Muslims of the Detroit area were the first to open Houses of Prayer. Albanian Muslim (Sunnite) Center and Mosque was opened in 1945; the Bektashi Tekke (monastery) in 1954. Under the wise and humble leadership of Rev. Imam Vehbi Ismaili and venerable Baba Rexhep (Rejep), these two Centers continue to serve tens of thousands of Albanian Muslims not only as places of worship, but also attend to their national, cultural and educational needs. Similar centers, mosques and monasteries have been established in other states such as New York, New Jersey and Illinois where large colonies of Albanian Muslims reside.



Albanian Muslim Center and Mosque near Detroit.

Albanian Catholics began to settle in the U.S. only in the fifties, first in New York then later, in the sixties and seventies in Detroit, Cleveland and Chicago. Msgr. Joseph J. Oroshi, their spiritual leader, administered to them in various American churches in Bronx, until the first church was established, thanks to his extraordinary apostolic zeal and organizing abilities. The original church has been rebuilt and enlarged and is dedicated to the Madonna of Shkodra, patroness of Albania. Msgr. Oroshi's parishioners are mostly from Northern Albania who escaped from the Communist storm in 1944-1948 and through much suffering came to America. Along with Oroshi, there

are three other Albanian priests and one Franciscan in the New York area: Reverends Rrok Mirdita, Lazer Sheldia and Mark Shestani. Rev. Mirdita is assistant to Msgr. Oroshi, while Sheldia and Shestani administer mostly to Albanians from Montenegro and Kosova. Franciscan Father Andrew Nargaj has been teaching for the past three decades at several Franciscan colleges.

In the Detroit area Albanian Catholics began to settle en masse in 1966 and by 1975 their number surpassed 10,000, and continues to grow every year. The need for religious services in their native language was greatly felt from the beginning. The new immigrants were from the parts of Montenegro and Kosova inhabited by Albanian mountaineers. Rev. Prenk Ndrevashaj, himself a refugee, administered to this community diligently in various Detroit areas from 1971 to 1976. In 1977 the Albanian Catholic community built their own church with the help of brothers and sisters of other religious affiliations. The church was again dedicated to our Blessed Mother, "Our Lady of Albanians" with Rev. Ndrevashaj as pastor. However, this only church couldn't meet the religious needs of such a large community, so, with the ordination of Rev. Prenk Camaj, an Albanian refugee who came to Detroit in 1970, studied in Ohio and Michigan, under his urging and guidance, the faithful Albanians purchased another piece of land and in a few years built a larger and more beautiful church in Warren, near Detroit. The new church was consecrated last year and is dedicated to St. Paul, who brought Christianity to Albania. Our Bulletin carried a photo of the new church on its back cover last year.

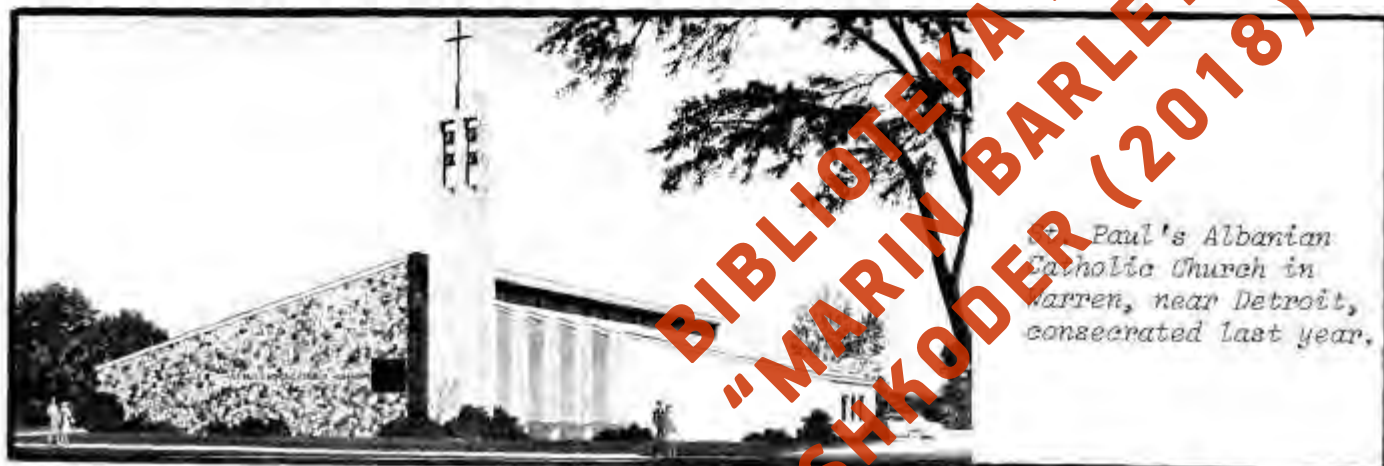


Albanian Catholic Church near Detroit

It is to be noted with gratitude and pride that the building of all these shrines has been accomplished by contributions of Albanians belonging to the three religions. Thus the wonderful ecumenical tradition and spirit, alive and in practice in Albania long before Vatican II, has been repeated; a great example to other minorities with different religious affiliations.

We trust that this short presentation speaks for itself that Albanians are not atheists but believers who hold fast to their proud religious, cultural and national tradition.

(Editor's note: We express our sincere thanks to Mr. Xhevdet Hoxha and Mr. Sharr Tomori from Detroit who supplied us with information for this article.)



Paul's Albanian Catholic Church in Warren, near Detroit, consecrated last year.

A CRY AGAINST WAR -- 1940



Ndalu: kû vetesh, bir, me pushk' në dorë?
Jo tamel u kè dhan', por helm me pi
Europ', bijve t' mjeruem, qe, i kè mizorë.

Nuk flën më fmi

N' djepa t' përgjakun, s' kjan ndër ta ferishte,
Perdhimbshem zhaurisin Sena e shueme e Reni;
E ju, kallzi t' praruem', tue u thà n' grënishte,
Mallin e shfreni.

O bir, sà her' tì zânin tëm e ndieve;
E ndjeu kah derdhei Soma n' dët e shkreta:
«A nuk u ngine më n' kobet qi kreve?»
Por kot un pveda.

Epshin ndigiove: rob t' kà bà dhunuesi.
Sot pshtet' permbi rrënimin tând, o i mjerë,
Vajton per t'y, per kobe kjan Shëlbuesi:
Ndalu një herë.

O kob! O dhun'! Me gjak endë s' jë ngimun?
M' kè krygizue mue, o bir, por villan deh! fale.
Pash gjakun tëm, pash token me lot rimun,
Dorën deh! ndale.

P. Gj.

The above anti-war poem in Albanian along with the illustration appeared in the Messenger of the Sacred Heart, June 1940 issue. This oldest Albanian magazine was published by the Jesuits in Shkodra. At that time the Soviets and Nazis - Fascists were allies and the Albanian communist groups were blind followers of Joseph Stalin's instructions. However, when the Communists grabbed power after the war, they accused the Catholic clergy of Nazi-Fascist sympathies and collaboration. The author of the poem, P. Gj., is Fr. Gjon Varma, S.J., who spent seventeen years in Albanian prisons, where he died for his faith in 1975.

The poem's strong impact upon readers is as equally powerful today as it was when first published more than 40 years ago. The poem is offered below in an English version by James Torrens, S.J.

Stop! Where do you go, my son, rifle in hand?
Those children of yours, each a spoiled bud,
sucking not milk but poison. Europe, cruel land,
they tread with blood

the cradles where they should sleep and cry.
The Rhine, the Seine, rotes with a harsh roar
that you, though crops for reaping in the fields lie,
go out to war.

*Dear son, how often you have heard me ask --
the fouled Somme has heard, rolling to sea --
"Are you not satisfied with horrors past?"
In vain my plea.*

*You yielded to greed; despots made you slave.
Today the Savior over your ruins bends,
bemoaning you; he prays, "Hear what I crave,
that slaughter ends."*

*"Such profanation! Does your thirst still rage?
You crucified me once. Now please allow
brothers of yours to live. May their tears assuage
war. Stop it now!"*



May Parade in Tirana - 1981



Armed with sub-machine guns, Albanian girl soldiers march through the streets of the capital, Tirana, in memory of Stalin's death.

POPE CLEMENT XI, THE ALBANIAN POPE

Among the many distinguished world personalities of Albanian descent in religious, cultural and political fields, Pope Clement XI is certainly one of the most outstanding. His ancestors left Albania shortly before the Ottoman occupation, along with many other noble families settling in Italy. According to historical documents, Clement's family, the Albani, descended from the noble Albanian family, Dukagjini. This family divided into two branches, one settling in Urbino (that of Pope Clement), and the other in Bergamo in Northern Italy.

John Francis Albani, later Clement XI, was born on June 23, 1649 in Urbino. He was educated in Rome, acquiring fame because of his genius. The Queen of Sweden, hearing of his wisdom, invited him to become a member of the Swedish Academy when he was only in his twenties. Pope Alexander VIII named him Cardinal in 1690. Ten years later, on November 23, 1700, on the first ballot of the papal conclave, he was elected Pope, taking the name Clement XI.

Immediately upon assuming the papal chair he demonstrated that he had not forgotten his ancestors. Thanks to his direct interest and help the Church in Albania was saved from decay. The Albanian Church was greatly encouraged by having a Pope who shared their own roots. Under Clement's orders the Second Council of Albanian Bishops was held in 1703. As a result of this Council the Church was reorganized and the number of the clergy multiplied. Franciscan, and later Jesuit, missionaries helped in the religious renewal of the Catholic population.

Albania is proud to have a man as holy as Pope Clement XI. At a decisive moment, he gave the Albanian Church help in preventing its demise. Albania is even prouder, however, that she has been able to produce figures of world stature such as Clement, Mother Teresa and Athanegoras. They no longer belong only to Albania but are revered and of great service to all of the human family. Albanians cannot help feeling for them as a sign of God's providence in their long struggle to preserve their national religious and cultural identity.

In this context we would like to share with our readers the beautiful "Universal Prayer" attributed to the Albanian Pope, Clement XI, printed on the following page.





LORD, I BELIEVE IN YOU: INCREASE MY FAITH.
I TRUST IN YOU: STRENGTHEN MY TRUST.
I LOVE YOU: LET ME LOVE YOU MORE AND MORE.
I AM SORRY FOR MY SINS: DEEPEN MY SORROW.

I WORSHIP YOU AS MY FIRST BEGINNING,
I LONG FOR YOU AS MY LAST END,
I PRAISE YOU AS MY CONSTANT HELPER,
AND CALL ON YOU AS MY LOVING PROTECTOR.

GUIDE ME BY YOUR WISDOM,
CORRECT ME WITH YOUR JUSTICE,
COMFORT ME WITH YOUR MERCY,
PROTECT ME WITH YOUR POWER.

I OFFER YOU, LORD, MY THOUGHTS: TO BE FIXED ON YOU;
MY WORDS: TO HAVE YOU FOR THEIR THEME;
MY ACTIONS: TO REFLECT MY LOVE FOR YOU;
MY SUFFERINGS: TO BE ENDURED FOR YOUR GREATER GLORY

I WANT TO DO WHAT YOU ASK OF ME:
IN THE WAY YOU ASK,
FOR AS LONG AS YOU ASK,
BECAUSE YOU ASK IT.

LORD, ENLIGHTEN MY UNDERSTANDING,
STRENGTHEN MY WILL,
PURIFY MY HEART,
AND MAKE ME HOLY.

HELP ME TO REPENT OF MY PAST SINS
AND TO RESIST TEMPTATION IN THE FUTURE.
HELP ME TO RISE ABOVE MY HUMAN WEAKNESSES
AND TO GROW STRONGER AS A CHRISTIAN.

LET ME LOVE YOU, MY LORD AND MY GOD,
AND SEE MYSELF AS I REALLY AM:
A PILGRIM IN THIS WORLD,
A CHRISTIAN CALLED TO RESPECT AND LOVE
ALL WHOSE LIVES I TOUCH,
THOSE IN AUTHORITY OVER ME
OR THOSE UNDER MY AUTHORITY,
MY FRIENDS AND MY ENEMIES.

HELP ME TO CONQUER ANGER WITH GENTLENESS,
GREED BY GENEROSITY,
APATHY BY FERVOR.
HELP ME TO FORGET MYSELF
AND REACH OUT TOWARD OTHERS.

MAKE ME PRUDENT IN PLANNING,
COURAGEOUS IN TAKING RISKS.
MAKE ME PATIENT IN SUFFERING, UNASSUMING IN PROSPERITY.

KEEP ME, LORD, ATTENTIVE AT PRAYER,
TEMPERATE IN FOOD AND DRINK,
DILIGENT IN MY WORK,
FIRM IN MY GOOD INTENTIONS.

LET MY CONSCIENCE BE CLEAR,
MY CONDUCT WITHOUT FAULT,
MY SPEECH BLAMELESS,
MY LIFE WELL-ORDERED.

PUT ME ON GUARD AGAINST MY HUMAN WEAKNESSES.
LET ME CHERISH YOUR LOVE FOR ME
KEEP YOUR LAW,
AND COME AT LAST TO YOUR SALVATION.

TEACH ME TO REALIZE THAT THIS WORLD IS PASSING,
THAT MY TRUE FUTURE IS THE HAPPINESS OF HEAVEN,
THAT LIFE ON EARTH IS SHORT,
AND THE LIFE TO COME ETERNAL.

HELP ME TO PREPARE FOR DEATH
WITH A PROPER FEAR OF JUDGMENT
BUT A GREATER TRUST IN YOUR GOODNESS
LEAD ME SAFELY THROUGH DEATH
TO THE ENDLESS JOY OF HEAVEN.

GRANT THIS THROUGH CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN.

Padre Pro: Viva Cristo Rey!

We are familiar with the martyrs that the Church has had since the time of the Apostles. However, the Twentieth Century martyrs remain somehow overlooked or undiscovered. Paradoxically, in every corner of our globe, many have given testimony to their faith and have died for it, yet remain almost anonymous. That is the case of Padre Pro during the persecution of the Church nearly sixty years ago in Mexico. Today, it is the case also of many martyrs in Albania, Lithuania, Ukraine, El Salvador, Guatemala, Vietnam, Cambodia, not to mention other countries.

Our Bulletin will continue to write about martyrs of our age, not only of Albania but also of other lands. Father Pro's apostolate among the persecuted Mexican believers, which brought him to martyrdom, strikingly parallels the apostolate of the few Albanian priests who, under great danger, secretly minister to many fellow Christians.

We hereby print the story of the life of Father Pro as it appeared in NEW COVENANT, August 1980.

All day long the mourners had been arriving, coming by the thousands from across Mexico City. When the office for the dead began at three o'clock the streets were jammed for blocks around Señora Valdes's house. The office, a liturgical reading of psalms, would be the only funeral service for the dead priest and his brother. There would be no funeral mass in the churches of the city; there had been no mass said in any Mexican church for over a year. In the year 1927, the Catholic Church in Mexico was a church in hiding.

"Make way for the martyrs!" someone cried.

The crowd, packed tight around the door, drew back. Silence fell. Then as a coffin was carried through the doorway, a deafening shout went up.

"Viva Cristo rey!" "Long live Christ the king!"

The crowd followed the hearses to the cemetery, marching four abreast between long lines of automobiles. At every intersection, bystanders dropped to their knees. Trolley cars stopped, and their passengers joined the procession. At the cemetery an even larger crowd waited, laden with palms and flowers.

"Viva Cristo rey!" the people shouted. And then, "Viva the martyr of Cristo rey!"

The man they acclaimed was a 36-year-old Jesuit priest, Miguel Pro. His story contains many paradoxes. The crowd proclaimed him a martyr, but his executors believed he was an assassin. The church he represented was persecuted, but the persecutors justified themselves by pointing to a long history of church corruption. Such paradoxes are commonplace in conflicts involving the Catholic Church in Latin America. In a way, it is the paradoxes that make the story of Padre Pro significant, for his is the story not just of an individual, but of an entire church.

Catholicism came to Mexico with the Spaniards, and for 300 years it was closely linked with the colonial system. The church accomplished much good in this position, but it was also guilty of many abuses. When Spanish rule was overthrown in the early 19th century, it was almost inevitable that some Mexicans would want to eject the Catholic Church with it.

A number of revolutionary leaders soon came under the influence of the European Enlightenment, which viewed Christianity as an enemy of human progress. By the latter part of the 19th century a succession of anti-religious governments had passed laws to confiscate church property, abolish religious orders, and secularize education.

Under the long dictatorship of Porfirio Diaz, who seized power in 1877, these antireligious laws remained on the books but were rarely enforced. During this respite from active conflict, Mexican Catholics began to consider the church's need of reform. Inspired by the encyclicals of Pope Leo XIII, a number of Catholic leaders searched for Christian solutions to the nation's many social problems. New organizations for lay Catholics appeared; the church's first national congresses were held; evangelization, spiritual renewal, and social reform were all encouraged.

Miguel Pro was born in 1891 to a family that might have been a model of the promising new breed of Mexican Catholics. His parents combined an intense spiritual life with deep, selfless concern for the poor and powerless. Don Miguel Pro, an engineer in the government's Department of mines, exposed his children to the problems of Mexico's workers. Doña Josefa, for her part, opened a free hospital for the poor and brought her children to work there.

Miguel himself was a high-spirited boy with a limitless appetite for practical jokes. Only when his two older sisters entered a convent in 1910 did he begin to consider religious life. He then made up his mind quickly, and in 1911 entered the Jesuit novitiate.

It was not a quiet time for theological studies. In the same year that Miguel entered the Jesuits, the Diaz dictatorship was overthrown. A new round of fighting erupted. In 1913, a coalition of revolutionaries, calling themselves the Constitutionalists, began battling their way through the country from the north. Horrifying stories were told of atrocities committed in their wake—churches and convents plundered, priests tortured or killed, nuns raped. In August 1914, the fighting reached Miguel's novitiate, and the Jesuits were dispersed.

Miguel, disguised as a peasant, made his way to the city of Guadalajara. Here he found his family, who had fled their home further north. Don Miguel was in hiding; even a mining engineer in the Diaz government was now a masked man. Miguel's mother, with the four younger children, was living in a single room in the Guadalajara slums.

After a month with his family, Miguel was sent north to the border and exile. The Mexican Jesuits went first to California where their American brothers provided them a home. Soon after, Miguel was sent to study in Spain. Miguel was never an exceptional scholar, but in Spain his great gifts for working with people became apparent. He was eventually transferred to Belgium for experience with the developing Catholic labor movement. In the Charleroi coal district, Miguel was happy

to be back among miners. He had an ardent interest in seeing that the workers obtained economic justice as well as in leading them to conversion.

Miguel was ordained in Belgium in 1925. Shortly after, his health, which had been poor for many years, broke down completely. When months in a clinic and three stomach operations failed to produce an improvement, his superiors decided to send the young priest back to Mexico. Perhaps his native climate would help him. If not, he would at least be able to die in his homeland.

The Mexico to which Padre Pro returned on July 6, 1926, was in the middle of a bitter religious conflict. When the leaders of the Constitutionalist revolution had consolidated their power over the country, Alvaro Obregón and his protegee Plutarco Calles emerged as principal leaders. Both were fiercely anti-Catholic. Calles especially was determined to enforce the nation's antireligious laws to the full.

Pressure on the church picked up when Calles became president in 1924. In Mexico City, a priest was jailed for wearing a Roman collar. The government backed a schismatic group that forcibly seized a Catholic church. Seminaries and Catholic schools were closed. Several states restricted the number of clergy so severely that only one priest was available for every 30,000 Catholics. The state of



Padre Pro kneeling in prayer moments before facing the firing squad.

Tabasco went even further, banning all Catholic priests by ruling that clergymen must be married.

The government claimed such measures aimed only to restrict the Catholic clergy's excessive power. In fact, Mexico's small Protestant churches were also affected. A number of lawmakers indicated that their real target was Christianity itself. This would become even more apparent at the height of the persecution in the 1930's. By that time, government officials were organizing rallies to burn religious images and were actively promoting atheism in the schools. One official in those years carried a calling card on which he described himself as "Personal Enemy of God."

In July 1926, Calles published a decree spelling out stricter enforcement of the religious laws. Rather than obey, the Catholic bishops announced that they would suspend worship in the nation's churches. On August 1, the day after the "Calles law" went into effect, the Catholic altars of Mexico were empty for the first time in 400 years.

The situation quickly deteriorated even further. By the end of August, armed rebellion broke out as Catholic laity banded together to fight for their church. Their battle cry, "Viva Cristo rey!" became the slogan of all Catholic resistance. Meanwhile the bishops were forced into exile or hiding. Foreign clergy were expelled from the country, and those Mexican priests who remained could only function in secret.

Padre Pro arrived in Mexico City, where his family now lived, just before the suspension of worship. Not being widely known as a priest, he was perfectly suited to the underground ministry. Soon he had established communion stations throughout the city where he distributed communion to an average of 300 people a day. He heard countless confessions, baptized babies, presided at marriages, gave talks and conferences. For a while he directed 150 "consultants"—young men who gave religious talks to Catholic groups. This activity had to stop as the consultants became known to the police and were arrested.

Pro himself avoided the police by keeping constantly on the move, criss-crossing the city by bicycle to get to his secret communion stations. Often he went disguised as a mechanic, and would toss out "unpriestly" jokes to policemen as he whizzed by. He had a number of narrow escapes from arrest, including the time he threw two government agents off his tail by leaping from a moving taxi.

He was not always so fortunate, however. In December 1926, the Padre and two of his brothers were arrested on suspicion of distributing literature for the Catholic resistance. The order of arrest identified Padre Miguel as a priest, but he convinced the officers that someone had mistaken "Pro" for an abbreviation of "presbitero" (Spanish for "priest"). The three brothers were set free, but on the 29th, police came again to arrest the entire family. The Pros managed to avoid

arrest, but Padre Miguel had to spend the next several months in hiding, confined to one small room. Even here he managed to direct others in collecting food for needy Catholic families.

What had happened to the delicate invalid who came home to die? "My health is like bronze," he wrote from his hideout. "I haven't had a single day in bed." Later he boasted, "I've been eating Toluca's famous *chorizos* and *pambezos*, which up to now haven't protested in my stomach. This certifies that I'm now bomb-proof." Danger apparently agreed with Padre Pro.

Pro's superiors wanted him to stay in hiding or leave the country, but he was eager to be back in the fray. "The most they can do is kill me," he argued. By April 1927, he was again in action. The secret communions and confessions resumed, with the added work of retreats for workers and young people. His collections of food for the poor grew to the point that he was supporting 96 families. By October, he wrote that he "would almost prefer being in jail, just to obtain a little rest."

By that time, however, Padre Pro's labors had almost reached their end.

On November 13, 1927, Catholic militants attempted to assassinate Alvaro Obregón. The Pro family read accounts of the attempt with horror: the car used had belonged to Miguel's brother Humberto until only a few days before. He had sold it to an acquaintance, Luis Segura Vilchis, who, unknown to Humberto, had decided that the only way to end the religious persecution was to kill the men responsible for it.

Fearing that the car would be traced to them, Padre Miguel, Humberto, and a third brother, Roberto, went into hiding at the home of Maria Valdes. The Padre was not about to let this stop his ministry, however. People were soon arriving for confession and communion.

At the mass on Thursday morning, November 17, Señora Valdes had an unusual experience. "At the moment of the elevation, I saw Padre Miguel seemingly transformed into a white silhouette and plainly raised above the level of the floor. I became aware of a great happiness. Later, my servants told me spontaneously that they had observed the same phenomenon."

That night, the police broke into the Valdes home and arrested the Pros.

When Luis Segura Vilchis learned that the Pros had been arrested, he confessed his part in the plot, exonerating them completely. But General Calles was convinced that the priest and his brothers were involved. "Here it was General Obregón," he told his police chief, Roberto Cruz. "Tomorrow it will be me. And then you. Give the necessary orders and have them all shot." Cruz pointed out the illegality of executing men without a trial, but Calles refused to tolerate a delay.

So despite the flimsiness of the evidence linking them to the plot, Padre Miguel and Humberto were led to the firing squad on November 23. (Roberto was spared at the last minute apparently at the intervention of the

Argentine ambassador.) The press was invited to publicize the shooting. Calles wanted to make sure his Catholic opponents got the message.

Padre Pro was the first to go before the guns. He asked permission to kneel and pray. Then he stood facing the rifles, his arms stretched out to form a cross. Witnesses said he spoke his last words quietly—not as a battle shout, but as a simple statement of fact.

"Viva Cristo rey."

In 1979, more than 50 years after Padre Pro's death, the streets of another Mexican city were packed with shouting, flower-laden crowds of faithful Catholics. They had not come to mourn a dead pastor, however, but to celebrate the arrival of a living one—Pope John Paul II. Only a few people outside Mexico fully realized how remarkable the celebration was in the light of the country's history, or the full significance of the Pope's words, "*Mexico semper fidelis*."

"Ever faithful Mexico." The long years of oppression could not extinguish the faith of Mexican Christians. The *Cristero* rebellion failed, but in 1929 the Catholic bishops negotiated an agreement with the government under which public worship resumed. Sadly the government soon betrayed its end of the bargain, and the next decade saw the persecution reach its peak.

Gradually, however, hostility to the church was tempered. In 1940 the newly elected president Manuel Avila Camacho signaled a new climate for religion with the pronouncement, "I am a believer." Today anti-religious legislation remains in force, but the government interprets it in such a way as to allow the churches a much greater degree of freedom.

Yet while religious conflict has subsided in Mexico, it has reached a new intensity elsewhere in Latin America. Often today the persecutors are not radicals who want to eliminate religion, but professedly Catholic leaders of right wing regimes, who are angry with church leaders when they defend the poor and oppressed. Archbishop Oscar Romero, recently murdered in El Salvador, is only one of thousands of victims of right wing violence. At the same time, Marxist forces are eager to use the church to advance their own struggle against these regimes; then the Marxists attack the church bitterly once they themselves are in control.

Only one thing seems certain for a church caught between these forces: in the time ahead there will be many Padre Pros. The Christians of Latin America need our prayers, attention, and support. ■

Nick Cavnar



GIULIETTA MASINA—"GOD IS FOR ME LOVE AND LIFE"

Giulietta Masina, an outstanding actress during the 50's and 60's, and wife of the renowned film director, Federico Fellini, is a professor of literature who intensely follows happenings in the cultural and religious life of her country, Italy. She is also editor of "Reader's Write," a section of the leading daily newspaper "Stampa" of Turin. In her book, "Diary with Others," which appeared in many editions, Masina describes in a warm and glowing manner, questions and answers to many aspects of human life and suffering.

Giuseppe Grieco, internationally known interviewer of many distinguished world personalities, spoke recently with Giulietta Masina about her life and particularly her faith. Stressing that she is not a theologian, Giulietta expressed her feelings about God with a simple believer's heart:

"God is for me, love, life, gratitude of a human being for his creator. God is something so beautiful, something with the taste of childhood.... He is for me a permanent presence, though inexpressible. I feel Him, for example, whenever I err, when I discover that my behavior is not that of a Christian, then I particularly feel His presence.... I lack the right expression for God. I can only say that I simply believe in a supreme Creator to whom I'm indebted for my life...."

MOTHER TERESA IN SAN FRANCISCO

Although Mother Teresa and her Sisters need no publicity, nevertheless, we feel compelled to present to our readers and friends just some highlights of Mother's untiring activity on behalf of the destitute and oppressed. We do this with a sense of pride and gratitude, to one who arose from our midst to achieve true holiness which shines in a darkened world and inspires us all to follow Christ's command: "Love one another."



Photo—Vano, San Francisco

A surprise greeting in Albanian, "Mirese vini nena Terese" for Mother Teresa. Others in photo, left to right: Sr. Pitschella (Mother's companion), Indian Consul General, Archbishop John R. Quinn, Fr. Milton Walsh, Roberta Ward (Assistant Editor of the Monitor), and Fr. John P. Penebsky, Editor of the Monitor.

Mother Teresa visited San Francisco on June 3 and 4, 1982. Through the graciousness of the Archbishop of San Francisco, John R. Quinn, our Editor had the honor of greeting Mother in Albanian when she was met at the airport. She was truly surprised and exclaimed, "Oh, Shqypar! Po une qadi kam harrue me fole, vetem shum rralle e pak. E tja flasim anglisht ma kollaj." (Oh, Albanian! But I have almost forgotten to speak it, just seldom and little, so it is easier to speak in English)

The following day at St. Mary's Cathedral amidst thousands, a group of San Francisco Bay Area Albanians heard Mother Teresa for the first time and were deeply moved by her captivating radiance and simple talk.

The San Francisco Archdiocesan weekly, *Monitor*, widely covered the event with many striking photos. Below we reprint the Editorial which appeared in the June 10, 1982 issue. This issue was dedicated to Mother Teresa's visit.

Editorial

Mother Teresa's visit

The whirlwind visit of Mother Teresa of Calcutta began on a windy Thursday night as she carried her small luggage cases off the jet from Dallas.

The next morning she stood before the altar in St. Mary's Cathedral and spoke to the crowd of approximately 4000 gathered there and to a live television audience.

At a small reception she greeted a number of people and then held a brief news conference.

Later she addressed approximately 1000 priests, nuns and brothers who had gathered in the lower hall of the Cathedral.

Then after a fast ride to the airport on Friday afternoon, she boarded another jet and was gone — on to another city and another speaking engagement.

Her visit lasted less than 24 hours; not enough time to know her well, but certainly time enough to get some vivid impressions:

- She remains calm and unruffled in the midst of feverish activity and is not bothered by all the attention she generates.

- At 71 years of age she maintains a daily personal schedule and a travel schedule which would exhaust a person half her age and yet she seems tireless.

- She has traveled world-wide and has

met the most powerful persons in the world, but she would rather be with her own sisters working in the slums of Calcutta.

- In a barely audible voice, she speaks from the heart — not with words and ideas learned in books or classrooms, but with the certainty of a faith lived daily.

- She preaches the best sermon possible — the experiences she has lived.

- Her love and respect for the poor is genuine as is her love and respect for every human being — rich or poor, powerful or powerless.

- She has attained international fame and great respect and yet she remains the humble servant of Jesus Christ and His Church.

- When she is referred to as a "living saint," she quietly states that she is only living the Gospel message — something that everyone can and should do.

During this celebration of the 800th anniversary of the birth of St. Francis of Assisi, Mother Teresa was a most appropriate person to remind the City and the Archdiocese of San Francisco of the virtues which St. Francis exemplified so well.

— Father John P. Fenebsky

AMERICAN NOVITIATE FOR MOTHER TERESA'S SISTERS

The order of sisters founded by Mother Teresa, the Missionaries of Charity, has opened a novitiate in San Francisco to train sisters to serve in the United States and Central America. The invitation to open the novitiate in San Francisco was extended by Archbishop John R. Quinn. The novitiate is located in the convent of St. Paul's Parish in the Mission District of San Francisco and was personally chosen by Mother Teresa on a visit to the city in June of this year. Archbishop Quinn officiated at the dedication ceremony with Mother Teresa present.

MOTHER TERESA - A LIGHTHOUSE IN THE DARKNESS

Teresa Stratas, operatic star of the Metropolitan, in a recent interview published in the Italian magazine Gente speaks in touching terms about her life and admiration for Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

"I have returned to the stage after a long absence, because I want to help this friend of mine, Mother Teresa. I know well the misery and pain; I was born in a very poor family of immigrants. At the age of four I was struck down by tuberculosis. Only God knows how I was cured. For me, Mother Teresa is a lighthouse in the darkness of time. I spent several months in her house of destitutes in Calcutta last Spring. I had heard and read much about Mother Teresa and I felt I had to meet her. So, I arrived at her house for the destitute in Calcutta and the first person I met was an eight-year-old girl, blind and ugly. The girl smiled right away at me, and her face became suddenly beautiful. She embraced me and from that moment did not leave my side. On the day of my departure, when I had to leave her behind, I felt great pain.

"When I met Mother Teresa she captivated me. She took my hands into hers, and looked at me with eyes full of energy, strength and wisdom. I would be very happy to stay with her, but I know that it is more helpful to send her my earnings so she can help the poor."

MOTHER TERESA OF CALCUTTA AWARDED HONORARY DOCTORATE IN MEDICINE IN ROME

By Father Thomas A. Modugno

"I accept for the glory of God and as a sign of gratitude of what this institute has done for the sick and the suffering, and especially for the Holy Father. We have a number of sisters who are doctors, and also a certain number of voluntary doctors who work with us in mobile clinics, where we assist lepers, the dying, etc. We work for everyone and with everyone. These are all works of peace: assisting and caring for a sick person, feeding the hungry, helping the poor; these are all works of love, it is love for God in action."

This is the significance that Mother Teresa of Calcutta attributed to the doctorate in medicine "honoris causa," which she received from the Faculty of Medicine of the Catholic University (Gemelli) in Rome. The statements were made in an interview with Vatican Radio.

The Faculty of Medicine and Surgery of the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart conferred this first doctorate "honoris causa" on Mother Teresa during celebrations making the 20th anniversary of the inauguration of the Faculty.

For the occasion, Pope John Paul II sent Mother Teresa an autographed message, in which he stated that the conferring of the doctorate on Mother Teresa "has the value of a symbolic gesture, through which the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery wants to indicate the ultimate meaning of its own efforts of study and research in the various scientific fields: the meaning, that is, of service to man, which, animated by love, does not stop with the body but reaches to the spirit, to awaken the flame of hope in the transcendent world of Christian values."

The Holy Father then recalled that it was such a purpose that had inspired the foundation of the Faculty of Medicine of the Catholic University, and which also animates the commitment of Mother Teresa and of the generous persons who, in growing numbers, join her in sharing the ideal of total commitment to every type of sick person, to the poor, the marginalized, to persons bearing the burning brand of suffering in their body or spirit. And he added, "With her example, she shows how the words of the Gospel, 'I was hungry and you gave me food, naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me in prison and you came to see me' (Mt. 25,35) serve to open new horizons to the mind and the hearts of believers, in which the reality of human suffering is seen as a 'sacrament' of the transcendent presence of Christ."

Father Modugno is director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith of the New York Archdiocese.

SAN FRANCISCO ALBANIAN COMMUNITY CELEBRATES ITS NATIONAL HOLIDAY

On November 28, 1912, in the city of Vlora (Valona) a national Assembly of peoples representatives, under the leadership of venerable patriot Ismail QEMALI, proclaimed Albanian Independence from the long Turkish yoke. This day became the most important national holiday under the name DITA FLA-MURIT (Flag Day), and ever since it has been observed with great joy and enthusiasm by all Albanians at home and around the world. Flag Day festivities of the large Albanian communities in Europe, North and South America, and Australia are attended by high civil, religious, and cultural representatives. Programs include presentation of Albanian history, cultural and religious heritage, songs and dances, as well as national foods and delicacies. For Albanians Flag Day is a solemn occasion to commemorate their fallen heroes who fought for freedom, an occasion to be together and to celebrate as brothers and sisters free of any religious or political distinctions.

Last year, on November 28, the celebration of the Flag Day in the San Francisco Bay Area was very successful, thanks to the special efforts of the preparatory committee composed of Mrs. Lule Bushati, Messrs. Zef Shllaku, Tom Doday, Fahredin Nushi, Ali Mane and Rrok Coku. Although the community is relatively small, attendance was overwhelming. Also present were guests from as far as Orange County, San Diego, Monterey, Sacramento, Santa Rosa, as well as American friends from the area.

The program was particularly interesting since presentations of Albanian history were done by first generation Albanians, post WWII descendants, namely John Bushati (on Illyrian history), Miss Alexandra Coku (on Kosova), and Alush Nushi (on Albanian history and Albanian colonies in the world). At the end of the program, Prof. Peter Prifti from the University of California at San Diego gave a briefing on recent tragic events in Kosova.

Guests enjoyed many delicious Albanian dishes.

All who attended, we are certain, went home with fuller hearts and a deeper awareness of their proud national heritage and identity.

L.B.

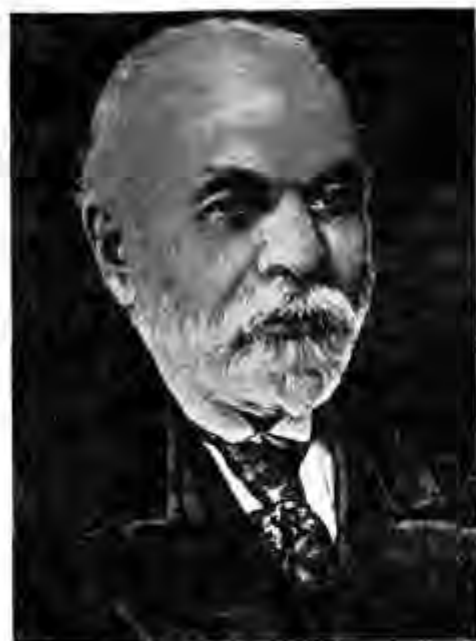
In San Jose, on the same day, the Arberesh Community held a Flag Day celebration and Christmas party. Mrs. Ann Meridier and her volunteer staff hosted a large number of people at the Italian Gardens. As in other similar gatherings, Mrs. Meridier prepared a program rich in cultural background of the Arberesh people who came to the States from Southern Italy over a century ago. By organizing such encounters, the Arberesh people in the USA and Canada are struggling to preserve with pride their national, cultural and religious identity.

Perhaps in the near future, the Arberesh and Albanian communities will celebrate Flag Day together to enhance closer ties with one another in a tradition common to all.



Mrs. Ann Meridier with the guest speaker of the evening.

70TH ANNIVERSARY OF ALBANIAN INDEPENDENCE



Ismail Qemali

This year marks the 70th Anniversary of Albanian Independence. Seventy years in the life of a country is not a long period, but the progress achieved in these seven decades is very significant, taking into consideration that Albania languished under Ottoman yoke for over four hundred years, cut off from the progressive influence of Europe. We are particularly glad to witness today that the perennial threat of partition that hounded our country continually has been removed. The Serbs (Yugoslavs), Greeks and Italians will never be able to partition our fatherland as they have wished in the past.

On this solemn and joyous occasion it seems most appropriate to print the speech of Ismail Qemali,* the Father of our Independence, delivered on November 28, 1912 in the historic city of Vlorë. Also to commemorate

this Anniversary, our back cover carries Albania's national emblem with ethnic boundaries marking three eventful dates in Albanian history.

Albanian brothers!

Oh, how happy I feel today, seeing so many Albanian countrymen gathered here in Vlorë, and waiting with anticipation and impatience the results of this meeting of historic importance for the fate of our beloved Fatherland.

With great joy and tears in my eyes from deep emotion, I stand here before you to greet you with the great news that this day, this very minute, the congress has proclaimed the independence of Albania, notifying the entire world of this action and charging me with the leadership of the provisional government of free Albania.

I feel as if I am dreaming, seeing this great change in our country which suffered so terribly under the yoke of five hundred years of Turkish rule, and which in recent times was practically on its death-bed, and facing ruin and extinction from the face of the earth; such was the condition of this Albania that in times past shone with deeds of unmatched bravery, and which, at a time when Europe was threatened with occupation

*EDITOR'S NOTE: We are grateful to Prof. Peter R. Mariti, of the University of California, San Diego, for the translation of the above speech, which was taken from the book in Albanian, *Ismail Qemali: Jeta dhe Vepra* (Ismail Qemali: Life and Works), Tirana, 1962, pp. 74-76, by Skender Laurasi.

by the Turks, under the intrepid leadership of its immortal Skënderbeu, became the insurmountable barrier to the furious assaults of the fiercest Sultans Turkey had ever had.

But, thanks be to God, with the labor, valor and unmatched daring of Albanians, the deprivations and sufferings of our Fatherland have come to an end, because from this day forward we are FREE, INDEPENDENT and SOVERIEGN, therefore rejoice and be happy!

To reach this bright and great day, we were helped by the blood of our martyrs and the worthy labors of our patriots and of all the companions who have participated in this assembly, and all of you whose hearts are now pounding with great emotion; yet, the assembly, in deference to my advanced age, charged me with the raising of our sacred national emblem, our venerated and cherished Flag.

("The moment the Flag is raised, the crowd breaks out in loud applause, and cheers, shouting: Long live the Flag! Long live Free Albania!" As taken from the text in Luarasi's book--P.R.P.)

Here, then is OUR FLAG! red and with a black double-headed eagle in the center. And now, all together, as a single and inseparable body, let us work to defend, to develop and to modernize, as is fitting, our FREE Fatherland.

In conclusion, it remains for me only to address a prayer to the Great Lord that, together with the blessings which I beseech Him to bestow upon us, that we may be worthy of this day, that He accept also my petition that I might be the first martyr of the Fatherland, just as I had the honor and was destined to be the first one to kiss our Flag and to cause it to wave in liberty in our Free Fatherland.

Long live the Flag! Long live Albania!

FREE ALBANIA COMMITTEE DENOUNCES YUGOSLAV OPPRESSION

Dr. Rexhep Krasniqi, president of Free Albania Committee in New York, in several press releases has accused the Yugoslav government of extraordinary oppressive measures in the Albanian populated region of Kosova. As it is now known, in the spring of last year, Yugoslavia sent to that province a large army and special police force to "quell" student, farmer and worker peaceful demonstrations against unemployment and discrimination. Hundreds were killed and thousands imprisoned and disappeared. Although the province is still sealed off from the outside, demonstrations again erupted this spring on the anniversary of last year's bloody confrontation.

The Free Albania Committee which is sponsored, in cooperation with church and other humanitarian organizations, some 12,000 Albanian refugees to settle in the U.S. and Canada, is strongly appealing to the U.N. and to Amnesty International on behalf of persecuted Albanians in Yugoslavia, urging them to take immediate action to protect basic human rights.

DEATH OF A TYRANT

The "suicide" of the Albanian Premier Mehmet Shehu was a complete surprise, in particular to Albanian exiles, since he was not a man to take his own life. Indeed, as second-in-command after ailing Enver Hoxha, he almost made it to the top of the party hierarchy by killing off all others. That was his successful career, his style, his aim, his means of survival, his life—all identical to his boss Hoxha. He masterminded the killings, and Shehu obediently carried them out. They used the diabolic methods similar to those used by Stalin with Yagoda and Beria in the Soviet Union.

Radio Tirana covered the event with the following announcement: "At the dawning of December 18, 1981, in a moment of nervous crisis, Comrade Mehmet Shehu, member of Politbureau of the Central Committee of the Workers Party, and Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania, killed himself." That same day the official newspaper Zeri i Popullit (Voice of the People) printed a brief obituary with the same content. There was no burial ceremony, no eulogy, absolutely nothing else for the right-hand man who from 1936 until his death had been the staunchest Albanian Communist and headbutcher of his people.

There were speculations about a plot, about quarrels, as if Shehu wanted a rapprochement with the West against Hoxha's self-imposed isolationism. There were rumors that squabbling Shehu threatened Hoxha personally. Other sources said that about nine people were killed, among them Enver Hoxha. However, Hoxha appeared a few days later with high officials at a ceremony of the National Liberation Military Museum's 40th anniversary, and so on....

The fact remains that the day before his death Mehmet Shehu met with Greek and Rumanian government delegations. Consequently, a logical question arises: If he was in sufficient health to carry out such important state affairs, why the sudden change? If he was not feeling well, those meetings would have been postponed or cancelled. On the other hand, if his health had deteriorated within ten hours, his close friends and doctors would have put him under the best government medical treatment. None of these reasonable possibilities occurred. So it becomes evident that something else happened. The only alternative left is that he was "bugged" during the conversation, or his conversation was recorded, and that was the end.

To us immigrants, these kinds of Shakespearean tragic plots within the communist party are no surprise. They all follow the old Stalin patterns incarnated in Enver Hoxha, reasserting that the party after it gets rid of the proletarian enemies turns to devouring its own children. At the same time the party tries to show a benign and paternalistic attitude towards youth, while affirming that the revolution is endless. This "endlessness" is always left to be explained later when somebody's head is cut off. Eventually these comrades that are left or this new generation will burn comrade Hoxha's corpse over his 35 volumes of tautological Communist-Stalinist theory and practice, with which he has been justifying his own actions in the name of the party and of the Marxist-Leninist doctrine.

One does not know if Hoxha will live to declare, as he has done for so many others, that Shehu deserved "the garbage of history" (Hoxha's expression). With this last killing one thing is certain and relieving, namely that with this action Enver Hoxha has shortened the slavery of the Albanian people, because when Hoxha disappears no other Albanian Communist like Shehu can rule the country with such cruelty.

What kind of a Communist was Hoxha's last victim?

Shehu's records as a stubbornly determined communist were outstanding: In the mid-thirties he fought with international brigades against Franco in Spain; during the last war he fought against the Italians and Germans, and simultaneously against Nationalists



Victory parade in Tirana, November 1944. First row, left to right: Koci Xoxe, Enver Hoxha, Omer Nishani, and Muslim Peza. Second row: Mehmet Shehu, Spiro Moisi, Medar Shtylla. With the exception of Peza and Shtylla the rest were all purged as traitors by Hoxha with execution or "suicide." The photo is now withdrawn from public view in Albania.

in the Albanian civil war from 1943-1944. After the war he mercilessly crushed every effort towards freedom, thus eliminating the armed resistance within ten years of the communist takeover. Finally, when the nationalist threat was eliminated, Hoxha and Shehu turned against their comrades-in-arms, purging them in 1948 after the break with Yugoslavia, in 1956 after the Hungarian revolution, in 1961-1962 after the break with the Soviet Union, and during 1973-1977 before the split with China. All these were done when Shehu was interior minister, defense minister and premier for 22 years. The people eliminated were generals, politbureau members, ministers, one fleet admiral, and many high ranking officials. But, in 1981 it was Shehu's turn. It seems that he waited too long to learn the name of the game.

Now some bits and pieces about Shehu's religious tactics and his actions with his adversaries.

During the summer of 1944 when he set his headquarters in the Lura Mountains in Northern Albania, he would send his partisan soldiers into Catholic villages singing church songs and repeating the rosary loudly so that the people could believe that the communists were not against religion. At the same time he would write personal letters to the priests of these areas urging them to sway their flock to the side of his guerrillas and assuring them that every one of their rights would be guaranteed by the incoming people's government. However, after the Communists took power, they started to

eliminate the priests one by one, and all the clergy in groups, confiscating church and mosque properties, closing and nationalizing printing plants, closing religious schools, churches, mosques and tekkes, and finally after more than 20 years of gradual persecution the Communists declared Albania "the first atheistic state in the world," granting themselves the right to persecute anybody who would try to profess or practice religion. The ironic, if not miraculous, thing of all this is that comrade Shehu, who was the man to execute to the fullest these decisions, ended up by, according to his boss, "killing himself"! During the war he could kill his partisan soldiers for picking up an ear of corn, when not allowed, in order to make people believe that Communists have high respect for private property. He could kill coldbloodedly the opponents whom he interviewed by shooting them in the mouth if they did not respond to him the way he liked. That is why he became a proverbial person by simple people who would say: "I wish that nobody could fall into the hands of the man whose reason is the bullet in the mouth"! It was because of this type of justice that by the end of the war, at least 65,000 Albanians left their country. Proportionally this number was the largest exodus in Europe, and is verified by the 1960 census analyst, F. Sherri. He writes that the number of women in Albania by far surpasses the males, mainly because the men who left the country right after the last war did not return.

In 1958 Shehu visited a concentration camp near the port of Vlora in Southern Albania. An old man interned at the end of the war got up the courage to ask the premier as to when was he going to be allowed to go home, since he really didn't know why he was there. Mehmet Shehu retorted: "You will die here just like a hungry street dog." No wonder that some years later the Hoxha-Shehu clique abolished the ministry of justice, thus investing the party (that is to say themselves) with the right to make, interpret and execute laws in the name of the state dictatorship of the proletariat, as sanctioned by the 1976 constitution of People's Socialist Republic of Albania.

The Albanian people, in and outside the country, do not miss their tyrant, Mehmet Shehu. They won't miss Enver Hoxha, either. But likely, what they are going to miss is the chance to bring Hoxha before the people's justice before he dies.

A NEW PREMIER FOR ALBANIA

According to a news release from Tirana Mehmet Shehu had committed suicide. The Yugoslav news agency TANJUG, however, in an attempt to divert attention from the delicate situation created by harsh government measures against Albanian Kosovars, released a different news report. TANJUG stated that Shehu's death had been the result of a gun battle in which Shehu had shot Enver Hoxha to death. However a few days later Hoxha personally presented to the People's Assembly his choice for the new premier, a choice which was "unanimously" accepted. He is Adil Carcani, an Italian-educated economist who held the post of vice-premier for several years.

Carcani inherits almost the entire cabinet from Shehu with only a few new names. The new Internal Affairs Minister is a certain Hekuran Isai, who has no background in Security Police affairs. Isai takes the place of Fejza Shehu, a veteran of many years in the Security Police.

Albanians at home and in exile were hoping that the new government would denounce before the United Nations the recent Yugoslav genocide in Kosova, but they were gravely disappointed. The Albanian representative has spoken at length regarding the rights of Palestinians, Cambodians and Salvadorans, just to mention a few, but he has not spoken a single word in defense of the Albanian victims of Kosova.

ALBANIANS IN YUGOSLAVIA: THE STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL AFFIRMATION



A photo of the peaceful student and workers' demonstration in Pristina, which turned into a bloodbath. Hundreds were killed and thousands were wounded by the machine guns of the Yugoslav Police and Army.

The massive Albanian demonstrations in the Socialist Autonomous Province (SAP) of Kosova (Yugoslavia), asking for a Republic of Kosova, during the months of March, April, May and July, 1981, have brought to the open a serious Yugoslav problem which is little known to the West, namely, the position of the Albanian minority presently living in Yugoslavia.

International and Yugoslav press reports have revealed the magnitude of the demonstrations, as well as the degree of the cruelty and indiscriminate use of brute force by the Yugoslav Government against unarmed Albanian students, workers and farmers in Prishtina, and at least seven more towns of the SAP of Kosova. Special Army units and militiamen armed with machine guns

were used to crack down on this great display of popular discontent; while tanks patrolled the streets, helicopters flew over heads and airplanes zoomed through the open skies in a show of the Government's military strength.

At the end, the dead covered the streets, the wounded were left lying on the ground unattended, while the security forces engaged in a massive operation of indiscriminate arrests. It has been officially admitted that at least nine persons died (one a militiaman of Albanian extraction). Amnesty International reported that "unofficial sources give much higher figures."¹ The Tirana (Albania) press gives the figures of 129 dead,² and the British Evening Standard of April 21, 1981 reports that "more than one thousand may have been killed" by the Yugoslav authorities. West German sources raise this figure to more than 2,600 people killed.³ It has also been admitted that 287 wounded persons have asked for medical help. As of June 1, 1981, over 1,700 people had been arrested, and, as of September 9, 1981, over 500 persons had received jail sentences from 1 to 15 years imprisonment, according to Amnesty International. The process of "differentiation," a term used by the Yugoslavs to indicate massive purges and condemnations, is going on unabated with no end in sight.

The Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosova, with an area of 10,800 km² has a population of 1,584,558 (April 1981 Census). The number of the Albanians is reported to be 1,227,424, or 77.6 percent. There are more than two million Albanians living in

Yugoslavia, mainly in the Socialist Republic (SR) of Macedonia (approximately 600,000), Montenegro (appr. 75,000), Serbia Proper (appr. 80,000). It is estimated that about 200,000 other Albanians are spread all over Yugoslavia, 35,000 of them in Belgrade alone.

The SAP of Kosova, where most of the Albanians live, is defined by the 1974 Yugoslav Constitution as "autonomous socialist, self-managing, democratic socio-political community" (Part I, Art. 4). This status, says the Constitution, fulfills the aspirations of a nationality (term used for autonomous provinces of Kosova and Vojvodina, i.e. minorities) as opposed to the nation, which refers to the "socialist republics... which are based on the sovereignty of the people" (Part I, Art. 3). This sovereignty is further explained as "proceeding from the right of every nation (excluding minorities) to self-determination, including the right of secession, on the basis of their free will expressed in the common struggle...and in conformity with their historic aspirations...." (Basic Principles). The SAP of Kosova, whose Albanians are treated as a "nationality" is not, therefore, entitled to its "sovereign state"; it cannot exercise its right to self-determination, and much less its right to secession. It exists as a territorial unit with its rights defined and limited by the Constitution of the SR of Serbia, whose integral and inseparable part of Kosova remains even today. It is this last position of dependency that is at the core of the entire struggle for Albanian national affirmation.

* * *

On the occasion of the opening of the November 11, 1980 Madrid Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), in an effort to publicize the tragic plight of the Albanian minority in Yugoslavia, I wrote the following:

The present treatment of the Albanian minority leads us to believe that they are viewed by the Yugoslav rulers as a voiceless entity, easy to be manipulated and even expunged; it leads us to believe that these Albanians are viewed, by those rulers and their dreadful security police, as potential candidates for destruction if the situation calls for it. Nothing that this defenseless minority says or does justifies these portentous and greatly disturbing views. Yet, innocent Albanians are assassinated in daylight, innocent Albanian students are murdered by Yugoslav police in the University dorms, defenseless Albanian prisoners of conscience are killed by order in Yugoslav jails.

Murder is always a senseless act, but Government's murdering of an unprotected victim, who is totally at the Government's mercy, is even more so....⁴

At the time of the writing no one knew of the Albanian underground movement that only five months later would explode in the greatest upheaval that Yugoslavia has seen since the days of World War II. The events of Spring 1981, and the resulting massacres brought upon the Albanians confirmed my earlier judgment. The bloody repressions of Albanian student demonstrations all over the SAP of Kosova, confirm beyond any shadow of doubt, the most extreme accusations of criminality and injustice addressed against the present Communist Government of the Socialist Federal Republics (SFR) of Yugoslavia by the entire civilized world.

For 37 consecutive years of Communist rule, there has been a clear and definite pattern of oppression directed against the Albanian population presently living in Yugoslavia. This pattern was even more evident during the several months prior to the explosions that shook that unfortunate region. Confronted with factual data, drawn mainly from Yugoslav sources, the reported statements made by the Communist rulers of Yugoslavia that the Kosova riots took them by surprise seem to be only a calculated propaganda gimmick to misinform world public opinion while at the same time issuing contradictory statements as the following ones may illustrate.

1. "Determined to maintain the unity of this turbulent multi-national state, Tito has given the police a strong grip. In the past six months several

hundred Albanians have been imprisoned in Kosova. These are preventive measures against a possible uprising of Albanians which Belgrade has long feared...." (The Albanian Minority in Yugoslavia, Der Spiegel, No. 6 [1980], pp. 149-151.)

2. "The fact that Kosova's consumption in social services per capita is just half of Yugoslavia's average, and for one job opening there are 27 candidates waiting for it in our Province, mainly young people—a figure which is 2.7 times higher than Yugoslavia's average—attesting to the degree of the complexity of the problems we are facing, especially to the fact that the crippling unemployment is hitting our youth harder." ("Crippling Unemployment," Belgrade, 20 February 1980, TANJUG.)
3. "...What is involved are nationalists from the ranks of the Albanian nationality in Kosova who have in an organized manner, spread lies about Yugoslavia and its system, and have advocated irredentist views in relation to our country. It can be assumed that such outbursts during the past year have introduced a sense of restlessness into the political life of Kosova...." ("Impressions from Kosova," POLITIKA [Belgrade, 30 March 1980].)
4. "The Albanian communities in Yugoslavia, particularly in Kosova, because of their economic underdevelopment, their unsatisfied national aspirations and the proximity of an Albanian national state, has become a hotbed of nationalist agitation and conflict, and Yugoslavia's most vulnerable area.... As compared with Macedonia, which now has a population slightly higher than that of Kosova (1,647,000 against 1,243,000) the number of the persecuted for criminal offenses against the state and the people was six times higher in Kosova than in Macedonia in 1976 and 1977." (Statisticki Godisnjak, SFRY, 1977, 78, 79; "The New Ferment Among the Albanians," REF Research, RAD/Background Report/77 [Yugoslavia], 2 April, 1980, p. 3.)
5. "Hundreds of pupils from the villages around the Lake of Prespa are completing elementary school, but only a few of them can pursue their secondary education. This situation was created because of the shortages of Albanian secondary schools (in the SR of Macedonia) and in the commune of Resnje.... The inhabitants of Prespa have petitioned the Government several times to open a secondary school for Albanians, but without any success. The need for a secondary school to serve the Albanian children is even greater because there are no classes in Albanian for Albanian children in the towns of Manastir, Krusheva, and Ochrida...." ("We Need a Secondary School" RILINDJA, 29 September 1980, p. 6.)
6. *On the other hand, the world opinion has clearly described the deplorable situation of Albanians in Yugoslavia as J. Darton summarizes it:*

"The Albanians in Yugoslavia are the dispossessed of Yugoslavia, the lowest paid menial workers, looked down upon and distrusted by all other groups." (J. Darton, "Tito's Yugoslavia" The New York Times Magazine, 13 April, 1980, p. 84.)

Against this background, the content of the slogans used by the demonstrators becomes understandable. Besides the main request "Kosova Republic" (which implies a demand to take their destiny into their own hands, namely the right and the obligations that derive from it in order to organize and develop the energies and the economy of their Province) the most frequently used slogans are: "Protect the Rights of Albanians Outside Kosova" as a reference to the constant violations of their rights by the SR of Macedonia and Montenegro where Albanians live in large and compact blocks; "Free Political Prisoners!" the only Albanian over representation in Yugoslavia, a country where more than half of the entire jail population is Albanian (including the prisoner

with the longest term served in that country, the writer Adem Demaci, presently completing his eighteenth year in prison); "Down with Serbian Chauvinism!" as a reference to the Albanian resentment of being a political appendage of the SR of Serbia; "Trepcha Works—Belgrade Builds" as a reference to economic exploitation and mismanagement; "Improve Student Living Conditions!" a demand for immediate steps to provide the minimum conditions necessary for a viable student life, etc. Signs with extremist ideological content were also displayed, but they encountered the opposition of the demonstrators who disapproved of them, according to eyewitness accounts. It is these signs, however, that the official Yugoslav propaganda has been giving maximum exposure.

There is no doubt that the Yugoslav authorities were fully aware of the gravity of the situation for the Albanians, but preferred to ignore it at their own great risk. On April 30, 1980, the French News Agency (AFP) reported "that this serious problem was worrying the federal authorities." In line with this feeling, the AFP said, "a highly placed official and close adviser to Marshal Tito confided last December that Kosova constituted the biggest problem that Yugoslavia is facing today!"

Only six weeks after the demonstrations, Interior Secretary General F. Hrljevic admitted that between 1974 and 1981, 618 persons of Albanian origin had been accused of various nationalist and irredentist activities; of them 89 persons have received sentences ranging from one to fifteen years imprisonment, and 503 persons were charged with making public nationalists statements."⁵

The deterioration of the situation in Kosova prompted the Provincial authorities to set up a new department with the purpose of "verifying information, and investigating activities which are not in compliance with our laws, and our constitutional principles."⁶ Two days later, on March 30, 1980, Belgrade's newspaper POLITIKA announced the arrest of more than fifty Albanians including nineteen former "convicted nationalists" charged with "anti-state activities," such as distributing leaflets, spreading false rumors about Yugoslavia and advocating "irredentist views." On April 3, 1980, speaking about those arrests, Mahmoud Bakalli, Chairman of the Communist League for Kosova, called the news "falsehoods and falsifications that are destined to be short lived." All this, he said, "is taking place now in these moments of a complex international situation in order to create the impression of an unstable and emergency situation in Kosova, which is not true...."⁷

And yet, it was true! The situation in Kosova was not only unstable, but also threatening. The events that took place since the euphoria of the 1974 Constitution did not fulfill the optimistic expectations of many Albanians concerning their national and human rights. This neglect was looked at by Albanians as being a reaction against them, in a country which seemed to refuse to free itself from the heavy hand of the past and its inherent evils. Thus, someone else, outside the Government, had to take the lead.

Consequently, what could be defined as the Albanian human rights first priority, namely the right to be free from government violations of the integrity of the person, was defended mainly by a group of courageous young intellectuals, primarily teachers and students. There are today several hundred Albanian political prisoners, most of them intellectuals. Many are unaccounted for, or kept secretly far from their towns, others are being arrested without due process of law, and large numbers of Albanians are denied the most elementary rights guaranteed by the "constitution" and, of course, the international covenants. "Past experience," reports Amnesty International, "indicates that ethnic Albanian nationalists brought to trial in Yugoslavia have frequently not been given a fair trial, and have been deprived of many of their rights."⁸

They are officially labeled "nationalists," "cosmetics," "irredentists," namely, reactionary and counterrevolutionary, although it is admitted that the "political situation in Kosova is loaded with economic and social problems."⁹ The economic problems included the inability to sustain the projected dynamic rate of development,

the unsatisfactory results of the entire economic activity, the falling rate of employment, the increase of all forms of consumption above the level of disposable income and the reproductive capacities of the economy. The main effect was the increase of unemployment. Among those arrested and sentenced to jail were victims of unemployment and the impoverished farmers. Thus, the official Yugoslav statements, trying to hide the truth rather than to solve the problem, remind us of George Orwell's saying: "In our times, political speeches and writings are largely the defense of the indefensible." Indeed, the deplorable position of Albanians in Yugoslavia is indefensible!

It appears now that local government efforts to avoid nationalistic manifestations were not successful, mainly because of the serious economic stagnation and disproportion, which if continued, warned a Party leader, "could generate great social upheavals, as well as undesirable political consequences."¹⁰ One of them was the aggravation of the unemployment which generated nepotism and favoritism, of one nationality at the expense of the other. In November 1980, 1,921 party secretaries out of a total of 3,020 were purged for indifference towards the grave problems facing the Province of Kosova.

Prisoners of their own closed society and blinded by a fanatical appraisal of reality, the official discussions were limited to the need for the Communist League of Kosova to relentlessly educate the young generation, to bring them to think that the Communist approach was the only working solution. The local Communist leaders publicly stated that national equality is being respected and that the political atmosphere in Kosova was good. At the same time, RILINDJA, of March 1, 1981, reported that the Presidium of the SAP of Kosova had studied important questions "concerning the need to increase the efficiency and the modernization of the organs of internal security and suggested concrete steps for a detailed program including the Province and the individual communes...so that they can successfully fulfill the tasks they are charged to perform by our self-managing socialist society." That first test of their efficiency came only ten days later, on March 11, 1981, the first day of a series of demonstrations that turned to be bloody, and that shook the entire state of Yugoslavia for more than six months.

The movement for more national rights was revived after the disclosures, in 1966, of the crimes against the Albanian population committed by the Yugoslav Secret Police, led by Alexander Rankovic. During the 1968 demonstrations, which left at least two dead and several wounded, the request for a republic of Kosova was made in Prishtina, while in Tetova (SR of Macedonia) demonstrators asked for an Albanian Republic of Kosova, i.e., a republic including all Albanians in Macedonia and Montenegro. Yugoslav officials have admitted that President Tito himself had reviewed the request, apparently made by some Albanian political leaders, for republican status, but had rejected it on the ground that "republican status alone would not resolve all the problems of the Province, and that it would require redefining the existing borderlines among the republics, therefore it would weaken the stability of Yugoslavia."

As was the case in 1968, the request for republican status was formally rejected in 1981 by the Serbian and Federal State and Party organs as being "reactionary," aiming at the destruction of the present constitutional order of Yugoslavia and other political "destablization." The rejection was followed by a series of violent attacks against everybody and everything that was Albanian. Domestic and foreign "enemies" were accused of fomenting the riots, while the press undertook a massive defamatory campaign against Albanians' past and present history. A few elements of this campaign are especially important:

1. The main culprit of the present crisis in which Kosova finds itself is the inability of the Albanian leaders, as well as the condemnable Albanian high rate of birth—and not the federal and republican neglect of that Province.

2. The dynamics of the educational development, with over 50,000 students (to be supported by 173,000 workers of the socialist sector of the economy) was much too much, and therefore, it drained local resources. (It is now confirmed that there are left only 20,840 full-time students, and 8,100 part-time students in the SAP of Kosova, including the several thousands coming from other parts of Yugoslavia.)

3. The atmosphere of insecurity in the SAP of Kosova is causing "an exodus of the local Serbian and Montenegrin population." (Without detailing the exodus of Albanians (1949-1967) of more than 300,000, one cannot but wonder to read the recent reports, that very few, if any, Serbians and Montenegrins have left the Province for reasons other than escaping poverty, the difficult life, and resettling in the more prosperous areas of Yugoslavia. Furthermore, no mention is made that over 10,000 Albanians have moved to Tetova (SR of Macedonia) since 1971, and that Albanians from Presheva, Bujanovce and Medvedje (SR of Serbia Proper) are leaving their towns, and resettling in the SAP of Kosova, only out of fear of Serbian reprisals.)

4. Even some duly elected Albanian delegates to the Chamber of Associated Labor, such as Miss Vahide Dushku of Prishtina and Miss Nadire Lutfiu of Tetova, have justified demonstrators during public debates on the grounds of the grave present economic and social conditions. (These two young ladies, along with many other daring civic leaders, have been expelled from the Yugoslav Communist League and their mandates have been revoked, so that no Albanian could say a word in support of the suffering population. Consequently, it seems that a pervasive fear has overshadowed Albanians in Yugoslavia.)

5. The all-out offensive against "the ideologic content" of the textbooks used by Albanians, the propaganda of "the professors coming from Albania" and lecturing at the University of Prishtina are the major culprits that brought the explosions of Spring 1981. (Recent reports indicate that the ideologic content was "insignificant," that the percentage of lecturing done by "Albania's professors" was only 1.6 percent of the total, and that the propaganda from Albania was mainly filling "a gap" existing in the SAP of Kosova, rather than a matter of "preference.")

6. Albanians were accused of laziness, irresponsible behavior, ingratitude and the like; even the medical institutions of Kosova and their staff were accused of "giving medical assistance to the wounded during the demonstrations."¹²

The most ominous consequence of this attitude was the resurgence of the Serbian, Macedonian and Montenegrin "nationalisms" and their claims to curtail the autonomy of the SAP of Kosova. Charges were made that "freedom" granted by the Constitution was used by Albanian leaders to present the Province as being essentially a separate Albanian socio-political community, rather than a community of nations and nationalities. The tendency of those leaders to present the SAP of Kosova as a constituent part of the Federation, with rights equal to those of the Republics, and less as an integral part of the SR of Serbia was also construed as an intentional orientation leading to the false assumption that the SAP of Kosova was enjoying its own sovereignty. The Serbian reaction was especially harsh, and included calls for revising the fundamental statute of the SAP of Kosova, as well as attempts to prohibit the display of the Albanian flag by Albanians in Yugoslavia. The trend for the limitation of the rights of Albanians was especially harmful in the SR of Macedonia and Montenegro, where the display of the Albanian flag was prohibited. Massive purges of teachers were made; the number of university students was drastically reduced; and the existing schools had their Albanian classes decreased or eliminated altogether. Following the example of the SAP of Kosova, Macedonians and Montenegrins began to arrest and sentence members of Albanian communities to long prison terms for "verbal abuses" and "support for demonstrations."

Summarizing the feelings of the Albanians, the Italian correspondent, Franco Barbieri, quotes an Albanian professor saying: "I am struck more by the irresponsibility of the motherland than by that of the demonstrators."¹³

Nevertheless, friction among the nationalities in Yugoslavia was reported in the international press as early as June 1981, two months after the demonstrations. "The Serbs talk about the Albanians the way the whites talked about the blacks demonstrating in Selma (Alabama) in the early 1960's" wrote the Boston Globe of June 18, 1981. Disparaging remarks, contained especially in many articles of the Belgrade press, were attacked by the provincial Albanian press. "The Serbs want collective guilt of all Albanians," concluded one Slovenian disapprovingly. Another Slovene noted that "you might think that there had been almost a holocaust of the Serbian population in Kosova," and "that every Albanian is thought to be a bandit," The Christian Science Monitor reported from Belgrade on August 5, 1981.

Disapproving voices were also heard from leading officials, especially from the SR of Croatia and Slovenia. The Croatian Minister of Culture warned his Serbian colleagues "...not to conduct a policy that would brand a great number of people as traitors." On September 2, 1981, Vladimir Bakaric, the only survivor of Tito's wartime group and still in power, told the top Croatian officials that information about Kosova events was being "turned into a full-fledged incitement against the Albanians."¹⁴

* * *

Whoever claims to have "given" Albanians in Yugoslavia their rights commits an unforgivable offense. It is a contemptuous formulation which originates from an even more contemptuous attitude implying that Albanians in Yugoslavia are unable to acquire for themselves their own political rights and freedoms which each individual human being is entitled to enjoy. This contemptuous attitude claims that the generous hand which offers the "gift of freedom" should be touched with reverence....

The Albanians' right to be free is an axiomatic right, unreserved, unlimited by any "constitutional" provision, unconditional. Nobody can expect to accord recognition to, or withhold it. That is why present crows' croaking sounds claiming credit for making Freedom "available" to Albanians sound racist and contemptible. Albanians in Yugoslavia cannot see how their "loyalty" could be conceived of as a direct function of that "privilege." And yet, we see on the non-Albanian side that few, if any, among those in government positions realize that nothing constructive could be achieved without genuine Albanian participation, and how much official statements of Albanian status and position remain merely a collection of meaningless words, a Yugoslav version of dadism.

Presently, the worst thing the present Yugoslav leaders can do is to pretend—and ask us to believe—that the desired change in their course of action towards Albanians has already taken place. Experience has shown that even the 1974 Constitution, the most advanced legal document the Communist Yugoslav leadership has produced to reassure the disaffected Albanians, is couched in a language on multi-national rights which has resulted only in a deceptive policy acknowledging Slavic and Communist rights alone, thus portraying the non-Slavic and non-Communist Albanians as nationally undesirable and politically unreliable. The recent full-fledged Yugoslav propaganda unleashed against the entire Albanian population in Yugoslavia is further contradicting those provisions that were seemingly approved to help Albanians, and those safeguards that were enacted allegedly to protect them, as the bloody repressions of Spring 1981 painfully revealed.

Even in its most elementary forms, autonomy means essentially the right to approve or disapprove any agreement affecting the lives and territory of the population involved. That is not the case with Albanians in Yugoslavia, where leaders are placed and replaced at Belgrade's whims, like puppets in a children's show, where executive

orders substitute for law, and where the moods of individual party bosses are "the courts of last resort." Things being as they are, what should Albanians do when faced with the image of the absurd in Yugoslavia? The answer is simple but vital: They must resist oppression by all means, as it was done for three thousand years of national history, and accept, alas, the unavoidable sacrifices!

* * *

The Albanian Golgotha, we believe, could be avoided mainly through a show of good will and statesmanship by the present ruling class of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which would hopefully lead to an open and genuine dialogue between the two opposing sides. For that purpose, we see the following elements to be essential to the establishment of an atmosphere that would make the dialogue possible, and potentially successful. They are:

1. The immediate withdrawal of all army and special police units dispatched to the SAP of Kosova after March 11, 1981.
2. The immediate stop of the interference, by the Federal and Republic organs, in the SAP of Kosova's internal affairs, including a stop in the anti-Albanian propaganda in the Yugoslav press, and a stop of the excesses against Albanians in the SR of Macedonia and Montenegro.
3. The immediate release of all Albanian political prisoners. The immediate cessation of new arrests, and other penal proceedings against Albanians.
4. The reinstating of the thousands who have lost their jobs, and the full compensation of all individuals, and families, victims of the repressive measures.
5. The election, not appointment, of a new leadership for the SAP of Kosova that will enjoy the full confidence of the entire local population.
6. The conception, planning, initiation and execution of new and realistic programs aiming at extracting the Albanians from their economic morass, educational limitations, and social neglect.
7. The initiation of a constructive dialogue aiming at a genuine sharing of power, with particular emphasis on Albanian proportional representation in government.
8. The formal commitment to abstain from violence—openly or secretly exercised—now and in the future, thus allowing the dialogue to be conducted freely and in a constructive manner.
9. The formal commitment that the present despicable treatment reserved to Albanians presently living as national minorities in the SR of Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia Proper will stop immediately, and that their civil and political rights will be respected now and in the future.
10. The promotion of free, genuine and effective opening and movement of people and ideas between Albanians in Yugoslavia and the outside world, especially with their Albanian brothers and sisters in Albania.

* * *

In conclusion, today, we see Albanians in Yugoslavia engaged in a struggle to eliminate absolute poverty from their lands, and absolute injustice from their society. We see them striving simply for a reasonable level of economic, educational and social development, striving for a reasonable level of political and individual freedom.

This evaluation leads us to reiterate that in our judgment, the problem of Kosova, is not as simple as the elevation of the SAP of Kosova's status from that of an autonomous province to that of a republic, although many Western observers see the process as being logical, and susceptible to bringing peace in the SAP of Kosova. We are convinced that the main problem remains the granting of genuine political rights and individual freedoms to all Albanians living in Yugoslavia, and that only then the meaningful process of finding a mutually acceptable solution to the problem will be possible.

Let Albanians be free individuals, proud and responsible human beings! They are showing the world that they are willing and able to take upon themselves the inevitable responsibilities which will emerge by the unavoidable evolutionary change of the Yugoslav Communist system.

Baldwin, New York

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1. Al Circular, 18 August 1981.
2. Zeri i Popullit, (Tirane, Albania) 9 September 1981, p. 4.
3. Neue Bildpost, (W. Germany) 20 September 1981, p. 18.
4. Memorandum: To the Foreign Ministers of the 35 Participating States at the Madrid Review Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Sami Repishti).
5. Rilindja, (Prishtina, Yugoslavia) 9 June 1981, p. 4. Rilindja is the official organ of the Socialist League of the Working People for Kosova.
6. Rilindja, 28 March 1980, p. 2.
7. Rilindja, 4 April 1981, p. 5.
8. Amnesty International, Circular date 18 August 1981.
9. Flaka E Vellazerimit (Skoplje, Macedonia), 17 October 1979, p. 3.
10. Rilindja, 27 July 1980, p. 6.
11. P. R. Artesian, "Yugoslavia; Albanian Nationalism" Co-Existence, No. 1 (1979), p. 179.
12. Novosti (Belgrade) 22 June 1981, p. 25.
13. La Stampa (Torino) 5 July 1981, p. 5.
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THE KOSOVA ISSUE AT
THE THIRTEENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION
OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR
THE ADVANCEMENT OF SLAVIC STUDIES (AAASS)

The 1981 AAASS convention, in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Western Slavic Association, was held at Asilomar Conference Center in Pacific Grove, California from September 20 to September 23, 1981. There were more than 800 papers read on different subjects about all of the Slavic and non-Slavic nations of Eastern Europe, as well as about Slavic culture and heritage outside of Europe, particularly in the United States.

Only two papers dealt with the Albanians, the first one being included in a panel discussion entitled "Yugoslavia after Tito," in which Albanians were discussed in the context of ethnic and political opposition in that country. That presentation was not attended by this reporter.

The second theme was entirely about Albanians in Yugoslavia and took place on the 23rd of September. The paper was read by Professor Thomas Poulsen of Portland State University in Oregon. Dr. Poulsen is an anthropologist and sociologist, specializing in the Balkans. The title of his paper was to be "The Territorial Expansion of the Yugoslav Albanians," but at the beginning he announced that he was not going to deal with that subject, but rather talk a little about the history of the people of Kosova since the victory of the Turks in 1389, and then analyze the events of last spring in the Autonomous Province of Kosova, and finally offer his suggestions for a permanent, peaceful solution.

Since his paper, which we would have been glad to publish as read, was not available, we decided to give below its highlights for our readers.

1. The war against the Turks, said Dr. Poulsen, was not limited only to the Serbs, but was a coalition war of Serbs, Bosnians, Hungarians, Albanians and others against the intruder.

2. Although numerically few, Albanians under the leadership of Scanderbeg stood against the Turks more valiantly than any other national entity in the Balkans during the first half of the 15th century.

3. As Slavic and, in particular, Serbian kings and despots had previously occupied and squeezed the Albanians in their mountain strongholds, so the Albanians, after their gradual conversion to the Moslem faith began to come back to their ancient lands. By this time, the whole Balkan peninsula was occupied.

4. The nascent spirit of the Albanians was inflamed after the defeat of the Ottoman Empire and the subsequent Treaty of San Stefano (1878) which forced Turkey to give up lands inhabited by Albanians as war reparations to the victorious Slavic governments. At that time the efforts, protests and rebellion of the Pan-Albanian League of Prizren made quite an impression in the international arena, even though their just cause was not taken into consideration by the Berlin Congress that same year. However, their activities made them more aware of their future fate, and at the same time paved the road to their attainment of independence in 1912.

5. Turkey's devastating defeat at the hands of the Balkan Allies in 1912 merely repeated and, indeed, exacerbated the effects of the defeat in 1878. The aim of the Balkan Allies was to suffocate the newly formed Albanian Provisional government's activities for freedom and to split its territories almost in half, mainly to the benefit of the Serbians and Montenegrins.

Kosovar demonstrations

Croatian discontent

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 3. Religion practiced; national idea implied | Yes |
| 4. Culture involved, such as folklore, music, mores, etc. | Yes |

He qualified all of these characteristics as "flexible," and then said that during his four trips in Yugoslavia he had noticed that people's reactions to simple questions such as "What are you?" are different. For example, a Serb might answer: "Licanin, Beogradjanin, Nisanin ("I am from Lika, Beograd, Nis [Nish]"), etc., while an Albanian would reply: "I am an Albanian Kosovar," or simply "Albanian," thus showing a more coherent national consciousness. However, Yugoslavia was built on the idea of agglomeration, he said. This bigger, better idea carries a natural prejudice: if you build a nation, you must destroy a subculture. Therefore it remains either aggregation or separation, and since separation is not permitted, people have either to aggregate or perish. It seems that some people do not appreciate the "unquantifiable" facts, but people are what they believe they are, Prof. Poulsen said, and not what we think they are or want them to be.

With the foundation of Prishtina University, he went on, and with the high birth-rate of the Albanians (the highest in Yugoslavia), the proportion of Serbs in Kosova has dropped. According to governmental figures, in 1961 there were 228,000 Serbs living in Kosova, while in 1971 there were 210,000, a decrease of 17,000. This was accompanied by a per capita earning decrease for Albanians as compared with the average per capita earnings of all republics and Vojvodina, shown by official figures: in 1961 Albanians earned 50% of that average, in 1967—42%, in 1970—33% and in 1980—25%. This is but one of the main reasons why Albanians feel as second or third class citizens in Yugoslavia, and they are suffering in Kosova of some 4,000 square miles of fertile land and mine treasure under the tutelage of Serbia, and still more in Montenegro and Macedonia. These Albanians total about 1,500,000, which is 45% of the population of Albania proper, while 230,000 others had to go and live in Turkey. It is to be noted, he added, that Albanian workers and youth emigrate outside of Yugoslavia temporarily or permanently more than other nationals of that country.

Speaking on some phenomena after the Second World War in Yugoslavia, Prof. Poulsen brought up the question of "the creation of the Macedonian language as a Serbian creation against Bulgarians," and now, he said, Macedonians build on that as a nation and are tied and allied with Serbs, and are used against Albanians who have their own old language, history, culture and traditions. On the other hand, he said, Albanians there do have bilingual difficulties, and they are trying to elevate themselves culturally in their own language. For these and other reasons, they are accused of being an "Albanian Mafia."

He described the Kosovar demonstrations led by Prishtina University students as a "peaceful and legitimate" voicing of their complaints about the food conditions at the University cafeteria. Afterwards they went into the streets. As the demonstration spread, he continued, the police put some of the students in prison; then like an avalanche, the whole city was in turmoil. By that time the 1968 slogan "Kosova - Republic" came into the open with other defiant calls which were answered by gunfire. In giving the official casualties, Prof. Poulsen said that they have become controversial, since 20 to 30,000 people demonstrated. Then he related that 340 professors have been expelled from the University and the number of students dropped from over 50,000 to 40,000.

Dr. Poulsen's suggested conclusive solution to the boiling problems of Albanians in Yugoslavia was without gloves and laconic: "If the Serbs and the Federal government of Yugoslavia do not accept Kosova as a Republic or fear separation, then let them allow it to secede to Albania and resolve a thorny perennial problem; and if they are afraid that Croatia too would split after that, then bear the Kosovars' actions!"

6. The presence of the Austro-Hungarian and Italian armies on one hand, and the Serbian, Montenegrin, French and Greek armies on the other in Albania during the First World War shows how eager each one of them was to set foot on the territory of this brave but poor and friendless little nation.

7. With the creation of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes under the Serbian Karadjordjević dynasty, and the subsequent change of this kingdom's name into "Yugoslavia" in 1929 (the "Slavs of the South" or the "South Slavs land"), the Serbs realized that their previous title was not representative of component nations; so they chose a more representative name in order to fit into their natural notion of history. But the fact still remained that the Albanians, as well as Turks, Greeks, Italians and Romanians, were not Slavs at all. They weren't and they aren't Yugoslavs in that historical notion. About half of the Albanians left under Yugoslav administration form a semi-circle of uninterrupted national identity among themselves around the independent Albania. Between the two world wars, 2.5 million acres of land owned by Albanians in Yugoslavia were colonized by 18,000 Serbo-Montenegrin emigrants. Albanians in Yugoslavia at that time had no schools, no radio, no press of their own in their language. An agreement with Turkey forced thousands of Moslem Albanians to emigrate to that country, and thousands more had to cross the border into the impoverished independent Albanian state.

8. During the short period of the Second World War most of these Albanian regions were annexed by the Axis powers to occupied Albania. Because of this action the situation was reversed for a while in favor of the Albanians, but it did not last after the war because of the communist understanding between Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia and Enver Hoxha of Albania.

9. By the end of the war a Serbian compound name to indicate the main Albanian region in Yugoslavia was proposed and adopted by Tito's Partisans: "Kosovo i Metohija," where "Kosova" recalled the defeat of the Serbian Tsar Lazar in 1389, and "Metohija" referred to the residence of the Péc (Peja) Serbian Patriarchate before 1766.¹ The Albanian inhabited regions left under the Republics of Montenegro and of Macedonia were not included in this region. Because of persecution and turmoil, by the end of the sixties this region was reorganized as the "Autonomous Province of Kosova" within the Republic of Serbia, on a basis equal to that of the "Vojvodina,"² inhabited by Hungarians in the Banat.

Dr. Poulsen stressed that Yugoslavia's constitution is based on the Soviet model, and that the creation of Republics is to keep nationalism and use it. On the basis of these principles, Tito has helped the growth of Kosova, he said, by letting Kosovar communists run things their own way, by accepting the use of the Albanian flag in the late sixties, and by allowing the Kosovars to increase relations with Tirana. He continued, saying that Albanians make up 78% of the population of Kosova, and it is hard to understand the repressive actions of the collective leadership in Yugoslavia against these Albanians, whose problems are like those of American innercities. This situation has nurtured hatred to the point that somebody set fire to the Pe Patriarchate. This is but one such example. Then Dr. Poulsen analyzed the Kosovar demonstrations in comparison with Croatian discontent by applying four characteristics in the following way:

<u>Kosovar demonstrations</u>	<u>Croatian discontent</u>
1. Physically seen	Not
2. Persistent language followed by action	Not

¹"Metohija" in Greek means "the land, property of the church." (Reporter's note)

²"Vojvodina" in Serbo-Croatian means "the administrative domain of a vojvoda," but the region is called the "Banat" by Hungarians and Romanians. (Reporter's note)

After panel discussions, the coordinating chairman, Prof. Dimitrije Djordjević of the University of California, Santa Barbara, recognized the people from the audience who had questions and comments. Among the others, Mr. Zef Nekaj of Pacific Grove, an instructor of Albanian at the Defense Language Institute - Foreign Language Center and an Associate of Stanford University's Linguistics Department serving as a foreign language teacher, took the floor. First he thanked and congratulated Dr. Poulsen for his highly objective paper, exact data and his historical and social analysis, and then he commented on the following points:

1. About the 14th of March 1981 fire at the Patriarchate of Peć, he said, there had been an investigation lasting for more than three months to find the culprit(s), because this accident coincided with the start of demonstrations in Prishtina and other cities of Kosova. Finally, by the middle of June, the Provincial League of Yugoslav Communists of Kosova, the leadership of the Executive Committee of Communists together with regional communist representatives issued, to the best of Mr. Nekaj's memory, the following report.

"Investigations about the fire in the Patriarchate of Peć are concluded. Thorough investigations found that during the night of the accident only two caretakers were present in the mansion and they testified that they did not see or hear anything else that night except when they were awakened by the smoke and fire. As it was cold, that night they filled the fireplace with wood. A lot of embers were found in the hearth of the fireplace. Apparently the flames reached a worn out asbestos hole close to the joint of the ceiling with the eave of the wooden roof which caught fire. Two rooms of the mansion were damaged, and only a part of the Patriarchate inventory was burned. No other documents or books were reached by the fire. No person was responsible for this accident. These findings were conclusive."

Mr. Nekaj then continued, saying that during the Second World War he served in Gjakova and its district as an educator, and had visited the Monastery of Decan, which was guarded day and night by Kosovar civilian volunteers, so that nobody could harm the shrine. In the same way, the Gracanica Church near Prishtina was taken care of; while guards for the Patriarchate of Pec, the Bogoslovijska and the Cathedral of Prizren were paid half by the city halls of these cities and half by the corresponding parishes. Then he added that with the exception of the communists, Albanians have always respected and protected the sacred places of others' religions. Mr. Nekaj noted that he was aware that Dr. Poulsen brought this accident up according to Tanjug's early press releases, but that his (Mr. Nekaj's) comments were entirely based on Prishtina's press and that from the start of demonstrations the press in Prishtina has had no choice but to report ad litterum the Belgrade decisions and declarations.

2. The reduction of Prishtina University students to 40,000 that Dr. Poulsen mentioned was correct up to some weeks ago, but now that number has since been further reduced to 28,000 on the basis of the new regulations. In addition, all student participants in the demonstrations either have been sentenced to prison terms up to 6 years or expelled, and the Prishtina press now claims that the number of students at the University was previously miscalculated and exaggerated. It is to be noted here that Prishtina University was attended not only by Albanian students, but also by students from all the nations of Yugoslavia, as well as by foreigners, and that the drastic reductions apply only to Albanian students. Indeed, Serbian sources propose that the Albanian students should be reduced to 12,000, i.e., to the number of Albanian students enrolled at the University a decade ago.

3. In connection with the quality of food and services at the University cafeteria: the day the demonstrations started there was only one single line serving, and now that the number of students has dropped by about half, there are seven lines serving. From this it should be clear how bad, cumbersome, time consuming and tense might have been the situation at the time the student demonstrations burst out.

4. The dropping of the quantity of Serbs from Kosova—or, as Serbs scurrilously refer to it, "the second exodus of Serbs from Kosova"—has been forcefully raised up by Dusan Ristić, the Serbian Chairman of the Executive Council of the Kosova Provincial Assembly.¹ The reasons for the hostile attitude shown by Mr. Ristić, who has been labeled by the Tirana press as a "rabid anti-Albanian," need a few explanations:

Until 1978 the hiring policy in Kosova had been—besides the educational and other qualifications—also five years of experience in the job. This policy excluded from jobs every Albanian graduate from the University and middle schools. Complaints about this policy were widely expressed. In 1978, when this hiring requirement was eliminated, the Kosovars still couldn't get enough jobs. Consequently, tensions rose higher. The only way they might obtain work was to apply for a mechanic's course so that they might be trained to go to West Germany or in other countries of Western Europe as *gestarbiters*. The sole alternative was simply to emigrate. A vivid example of the Albanian exodus is that of Detroit, Michigan, which in the 1970s became home to more than ten thousand Albanians from Montenegro and Kosova. At the same time, the number of Albanian guest workers in Europe surpassed 200,000. One may ask: why, then, did the Serbs start to leave Kosova, or did they really leave? The question is legitimate, if that really happened. Because of Ristić's allegations during and after the demonstrations, every district was ordered to investigate as to how many Serbs left Kosova and why. The vast majority of reports from *ad hoc* commissions and representatives after the spring demonstrations verified that no Serbians left their place of work or home by coercion. A few of them did leave, but because of better salaries and conditions. Indeed, those who left were traced and gave written declarations as to whether they were forced to move or did it of their own will. Apparently Mr. Ristić lost on the latter point, too. At any rate, we have to consider also that at least a third of the students at Prishtina University were Serbs, who upon graduation had guaranteed jobs all over Yugoslavia. After living 4-6 years in Prishtina they were considered Kosovar Serbians, even though they had come from all over Serbia and Montenegro. Apparently this too was a miscalculation on the part of Mr. Ristić, so that he had finally to realize it in the face of clear evidence, and pay for it.

5. A question was raised from the audience and directed to Dr. Poulsen about the meaning of *uedinenie Albanaca* ("the united Albanians"), referring to the change in dialects in Kosova in 1968-69 when Kosovar leaders agreed to accept and adopt the Tosk dialect as official (called interchangeably the "unified language" or "standard language"). Again Mr. Nekaž explained the perplexities in which Kosovars found themselves, i.e., on the one hand the Serbian administration didn't allow enough money to Albanians to print or reprint books from Albania in Albanian; on the other hand the Albanian government, having the cultural and printing priority, took the appropriate chance to force the Kosovars to abandon their own Gegh dialect in exchange for many ready-made books, booklets and lecturers from Albania supplied at almost half price, or even for free. Consequently, this deal referred to the language alone as "unified Albanian language" and has no bearing on the unification of Kosova with Albania in terms of territory. Indeed, Tirana officials have repeatedly declared that they have no territorial claims against Yugoslavia, but they have staunchly insisted that they will not stop complaining about the mistreatment of Albanians in Yugoslavia. The bitter fact remains that if Tirana leaders were serious about unification, then they would have rightfully brought the matter to the United Nations, but they certainly do not intend to take that step.

Once again the Kosovars' rights, interests and aspirations have been ignored in the mutual interests of trade relations between the Federal government of Yugoslavia and that of Albania proper. Actually, joint commissions on both sides have been continuing discussions almost without stopping while the ideological dispute has been at the same time

¹ This reporter has learned lately from Rilinda of 26 September 1981 that Mr. Ristić has been demoted from his position or resigned (as was previously the case with some of the Albanian leaders of Kosova) for fomenting hatred toward Albanians throughout Yugoslavia.

spoiling the air. The victor is the strongest and the victims are again the Albanians under Yugoslavia who have been hurt badly, but they have been greatly enriched spiritually, concluded Mr. Nekaj.

Special Reporter

Administrative Kosova

This map of Kosova was published by the (Yugoslav) Kosova and Pristina Tourist Association. The area shown represents what is normally referred to as "Administrative Kosova" or the Kosova which is an autonomous province of the Republic of Serbia of Yugoslavia. When Albanians refer to Kosova, it is meant in the ethnic context, which includes the Albanian regions of Yugoslavia. That is, those regions in the republics of Montenegro and Macedonia and Serbia that are Albanian, in addition to "Administrative Kosova." Yugoslav publications will usually spell the region as "Kosovo" whereas Albanian publications will usually use either "Kosova" or "Kossova."

Albanian nationalists argue that the Yugoslav government has purposely split up the Albanians in Yugoslavia by carving up Albanian territory and awarding these lands to three republics of Yugoslavia, rather than leaving the Albanian territory as a whole and giving the Albanians in Yugoslavia their own republic.

Albanians known as irredentists would like to see all Albanian regions of Yugoslavia united with Albania so that there exists one independent ethnic Albanian state. When evaluated in terms of thousands of years of past Albanian history, irredentists say that concerns with the type of government presently ruling Tirana should take a back seat to the more important issue of one Albanian state. Irredentists will comment, "governments can come and go, but the people will remain."

Albanian experts predict that the creation of a free and independent ethnic Albanian state will probably be preceded by the deaths of both Tito and Hoxha (heads of Yugoslavia and Albania respectively) and the declaration of republic status for the Kosova region of Serbia. Many people hope that the issue can be resolved without bloodshed and the participation of the same world powers who at the turn of the century imposed an injustice on the Albanian people.

(Ethnic Albanian Sun 1978)



We gladly print an article recently sent to us by John Nieman. We wish, though, to underscore the fact that Albanians in Kosova suffered and died for their right to display their national flag. Albanians in Yugoslavia are today the subject of virulent oppression by army and police forces. Their only "crime": desire and determination to realize their God-given rights.

I am an American with no Albanian ancestry but in many ways, I am an "adopted Albanian." During my studies of history in school I fell in love with Albania and the Albanian people. I became very interested in Albania from reading various books and articles and when I entered the Master's program at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas, I decided I wanted to do my thesis on Albania.

I have always been intrigued and impressed with the rugged independence of the Albanian people and their struggle to preserve their ancient language, culture and identity throughout hundreds of years of foreign occupation. The Albanians are truly an amazing people and they have won my admiration.

I have had the honor of meeting and getting to know many wonderful Albanian-Americans who have been fantastic friends. Many were very helpful in supplying me with material for my thesis which I completed in May 1978. The title of the thesis, "United States Policy Toward Albania, 1920-1928," proved to be a fascinating study and one which brought me closer to the Albanian people. My dream has been to visit "Meme Shqipëria" for myself and trace the steps of Skanderbeg. As an American, it is impossible to visit Albania, but I did have the marvelous opportunity of visiting Kosovo in Yugoslavia.

I journeyed to Europe in May, 1976 with high hopes of visiting Albania. I went to the Albanian embassy in Belgrade and was told to return in 10 days (although I was told it was very doubtful I would be granted a visa). I went to Bulgaria for a few days, then came back into Yugoslavia. My journey in Kosovo took me first to Prishtina. In Prishtina I visited the university and met with some of the professors. I had at one time hoped to possibly study Albanian in Prishtina. I felt very excited about being in an "Albanian city" although I was restless to get to Prizren.

The morning I left for Prizren was warm and sunny and I must admit I was quite excited. After reading so much about Prizren and its important place in Albanian history and being so involved with Albania, I almost felt as if I was going home. I was not to be disappointed. When I arrived in Prizren I checked in at the Hotel Theranda. Before leaving California an Albanian friend had given me the address of his brother. When I met my friend's brother he was very gracious but very insulted I had gone to a hotel. He insisted I check out and come to his home—an invitation I gladly accepted.

I spent the rest of my week in Prizren at the home of this gracious man and his family. I experienced first hand the traditional Albanian hospitality I had heard and read so much about and I was truly overwhelmed. I was made to feel like a long lost member of the family and my days with that beautiful Albanian family will also hold special memories for me.

I should mention here that I know only a few words of Albanian and my hosts spoke no English, but somehow we still managed to communicate. I had the great opportunity of meeting many wonderful people during my stay in Prizren and one young student and I still correspond on a regular basis. My hosts fed me a liberal feast for every meal and would not let me spend a dime of my own money for souvenirs. I soon learned not to point as we passed shop windows!

Walking through the streets of Prizren was a fascinating experience. Prizren is an old and dignified city and its history speaks from every building and street. The

Albanian flags flying from the lamp posts reminded me how intimately this city figures in the saga of the Albanian people. It was in Prizren, in 1878, that the League of Prizren was formed by Albanian patriots. The house where this momentous event took place is now a museum which portrays the Albanian struggle for independence from Ottoman rule. It is very well maintained and visiting there was one of the highlights of my trip. I felt an even stronger identity with the Albanian people after seeing this historic site.

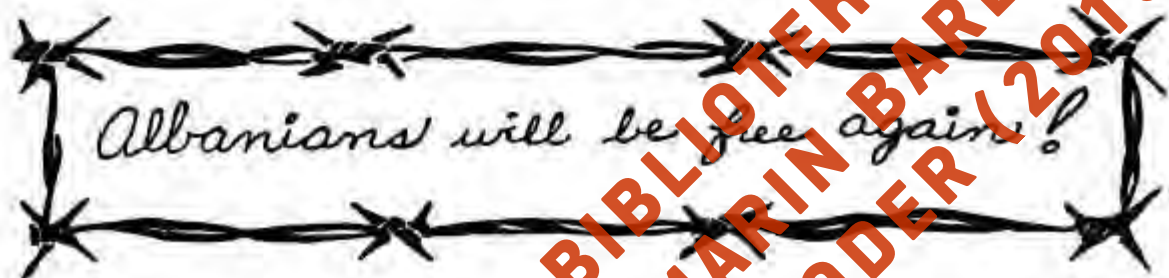
The natural beauty in and around Prizren is no less than breathtaking. The mountains which ring the city are truly spectacular and it is clearly evident that while history has not been kind to the Albanian people, nature has truly blessed them. Certainly one of the greatest moments of my visit to Kosovo was visiting a small cafe very close to the Albanian border and looking across to the snow-capped mountains on the other side. I was in awe and at the same time, saddened for I held out little hope that I would be able to visit Albania. Even though I am not Albanian, it was very thrilling to actually see a small piece of Mother Albania for myself.

My visit to Kosovo came to an end all too soon. Saying goodbye to my new-found friends was a tearful experience and I will carry the warmth of their kindness and hospitality in my heart as long as I live. Returning to Belgrade the news of my visa to Albania was, of course, negative. I departed Yugoslavia within a few days and continued my European adventure.

It has been six years since my visit to Prizren and I am looking forward to returning someday. My visit to Kosovo brought me closer to Albania and the Albanian people and helped me to appreciate even more the beautiful culture, language and history of the sons and daughters of the Eagle.

Today I am a Roman Catholic seminarian preparing to serve the people of God as a priest. I am a convert to the Catholic faith and was brought into the Church by Our Blessed Mother. I feel a strong bond with our suffering brothers and sisters in Albania—Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Moslem. I was not too familiar with the depth of the suffering of the Church in Albania until I read Gjon Sinishta's book. Ever since then I try to pray daily for those who are being tortured and martyred for their faith. The love and faith of our persecuted brethren is a great light that will one day illumine all of Albania, and will inspire us in the West to consecrate ourselves fully to Jesus Christ through Mary, his mother.

May our lady bless, comfort and protect our brothers and sisters in Albania and may the light of Christ's love melt the hearts of those who are persecuting them. Our Lord, who has won victory over sin and death through His passion, will certainly resurrect our Mother Albania.



THE ARBERESH, AN UNBROKEN BOND OF ALBANIAN PEOPLE

The Albanian National Organization From Kosova (LIDHJA Kosovare) met in March of this year in New York City to commemorate Albanian demonstrators who fell victims to Yugoslav repression in the peaceful uprising of 1981.

Present at the gathering were the members and leaders of other Albanian national organizations from the U.S. and Canada. Also present were representatives of Free Croatia. Dr. John A. Cardino, an ardent Arberesh, spoke at the gathering in the name of the Arberesh people in America. With great pride, we print his address.

I am pleased to speak here today and I accept the honor not only for myself but especially for members of my family, living and dead, who have never forgotten our heritage and the land of our forefathers, Albania.

We Arberesh, although separated from Albania proper, have not lost our love for, and interest in, the land of our ancestors. Circumstances of history resulted in a physical separation, but that is all. When our ancestors left Albania at the time of the Turkish occupation, they believed they would eventually return. What was to be a short period of time has, unfortunately, turned into 500 years, and still the separation exists. Yet, through the centuries, our old language, the language of Skanderbeg, was kept and loved and passed on to each new generation in Italy along with our history and tales about Albania's heroes, as well as songs, dances, customs, and prayers. And, in each Arberesh village, the main street or square is dedicated to Skanderbeg.

In Italy, as elsewhere, Albanians contributed much to their adopted land, and they rose to positions of importance. Their sons fought for Italian unification. Pope Clement XI, a member of the Albani family, was of Albanian descent. He did not forget his heritage, and by enabling the Albanians to keep their Eastern rite, he also helped them to keep their language. Cardinals and other members of the Church hierarchy were also of Albanian descent. Francis Crispi, one of the founders of modern Italy and a Prime Minister, was Arberesh. And, during the dark days of the Ottoman occupation, when people in Albania were forbidden to write in their language, DeRada and Schiro, to mention but two Arberesh, wrote in Albanian, thus helping to keep alive the national consciousness and the desire for a free Albania.

Here in the U.S.A. some traditions were maintained. A club in Jersey City, N.J., the Sons of the Eagle, was in existence till approximately 20 years ago. I remember going to dances and weddings as a child and watching people do vallës to the accompaniment of a bagpipe. And we children were taught a little about our history and the exploits of Skanderbeg. Never were we told about an Italian. In spite of our Italianized names, we were Albanians!

Many years have passed since our grandparents first came here and, unfortunately, most Americans still do not know anything about Albania and Albanians. We are older than the Greeks and have given emperors to the Roman Empire. St. Jerome, a Doctor of the Church; Athenagoras, the former Patriarch of Constantinople; Mother Teresa; Mustapha Kemal—better known as Ataturk—the founder of modern Turkey; all are of Albanian descent. And most Americans still do not know us. (Years ago a woman once told a member of my family that she thought we had white hair and pink eyes.) Too many Americans do not know where Albania is located, they mistake us for other national groups, and they show indifference. Yet, this indifference and ignorance are partly our fault, because little is done to inform Americans of our existence. We are separated, we do not publish our history—I have been told there are many books written in Albanian and other languages, and they need to be translated into English. American universities and schools do not teach about Albania. Occasionally, they may mention Skanderbeg's name in passing, but little else. When I mention a little of our history, teachers and other people usually look at me in disbelief, as if I had lost my mind, as

if I were talking nonsense. This is inexcusable and unacceptable, and we must educate them. Perhaps then they will show some concern for Albanians and the human rights denied to them.

We are here today to talk about the injustices and torture and suffering and deprivation our fellow Albanians have undergone and are still undergoing. Yet, how much can we do for them when there is so much indifference on the part of the American press? The daily newspapers are full of stories about Guatemala, El Salvador, Poland, etc. But, how many newspapers reported the shooting and maiming and killing and imprisonment of innocent Albanians last year as they tried to gain the attention of the world regarding their condition in Kosova, as they called out to the world for help? Very few, I am sad to say. Are Albanian lives less important than those of other ethnic groups? I think not!

Amnesty International has reported to the world that it suspected that hundreds of people in Yugoslavia had been wounded and killed, thousands had been arrested, and hundreds, mostly students and teachers, had received jail sentences of up to 15 years. Fifteen years for demanding human rights, for demanding that the Helsinki Pact be adhered to. Albanian history and literature books, too, are being banned.

It has been written that "the pen is mightier than the sword." Is this what the Yugoslav government fears—the pen in the hands of educated Albanians, the pen that writes the truth, the truth about oppression, secret trials, police brutality, and people who have disappeared from the face of the earth? And now we also learn that the Yugoslav government is sending agents to Germany and Belgium to kill in cold blood Albanians who speak out against the policy of Yugoslavia. How frightened of the truth Belgrade must be!

Throughout our long history we have endured and survived oppressors, and in time we will survive the present ones. Till then, we must continue to strive for the freedom of all Albanians. I am afraid the task will be long and difficult, but it can be done, it must be done. We are over 5,000,000 strong. If we stay united, forget past differences, success will come. We must be like a hand: If we look at an open hand, the fingers are extended, separated, and going in different directions. And, individually, each finger is rather weak. But, if we were to close our hands and make it into a fist, then there is much strength. That is what must be done. We must be united like a closed hand. We must be united as we were under Skanderbeg and as we were over 100 years ago, when Albanians from various countries met at Prizren. As descendants of the ancient Illyrians, jemi nje gjak. That is how we must act—together, regardless of where we come from, regardless of what our background is, regardless of our beliefs. Albanian historians must make our history known. We must make our voices heard. The young must gain an education and also work toward this end.

With the help of God, we who live in freedom can help those Albanians who are suffering under tyranny. We must let them know that we have not forgotten them!

Falemnderit! Rrnofte popullit shqiptar!



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YUGOSLAVIA SPECIAL ACTION: CIRCULAR NO. 2 & 6 IMPRISONED WRITERS, JOURNALISTS AND ACADEMICS

Adem Demaci (aged 45) is an ethnic Albanian from Pristina, the capital of Kosovo province. While still at school he became known for his short stories published in the Albanian-language literary journal *Jeta i Re*, which later also serialized his historical novel about Kosovo entitled *Serpents of Blood*. Following Adem Demaci's imprisonment in 1958, for alleged nationalist agitation, this novel was reportedly suppressed. He was again arrested and served a second term of imprisonment for alleged crimes against the people and the State from 1964 to 1974. In 1976 he and 18 other Kosovo Albanians were tried by the district court of Pristina. They were accused of "hostile propaganda," "association against the people and the State" and "endangering the territorial integrity and the independence of Yugoslavia." It is reported that the charges against Demaci and his co-defendants arose from a petition they had planned to distribute and to submit to the Yugoslav authorities in which they alleged that Albanians in Kosovo were politically oppressed and urged that a referendum be held in Kosovo to determine whether the province — which is predominantly inhabited by ethnic Albanians — should remain part of Yugoslavia or be united with Albania.

To Amnesty International's knowledge, Adem Demaci did not advocate the use of violence. On 8 February 1976 he was sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment; his co-defendants received prison terms of between four and 12 years.

Adem Demaci has now spent altogether some 17 years in prison; he is believed to suffer from poor health and in particular to have problems with his eye-sight. According to the most recent reports he is detained in Stara Gradiska prison in Croatia. Adem Demaci has been adopted by Amnesty International as a

prisoner of conscience; Amnesty International has called for his immediate and unconditional release.

Sabedin Haljiti and Sabit Rustemi, Sabedin Haljiti is the editor of an Albanian-language literary journal *Fjalja*, published in Pristina, Kosovo. Sabit Rustemi is the author of a short story entitled *Under the Mask of Guests* which was published in an issue of this review which appeared on sale on 4 April 1981 just after several days of nationalist demonstrations by ethnic Albanians in Kosovo province in support of a demand that Kosovo be granted republic status within the Yugoslav federation. The demonstrations culminated in violent clashes with security forces in which, according to official figures, nine (or 11) people were killed and several hundred wounded (unofficial sources quote far higher figures).

Sabit Rustemi and Sabedin Haljiti were shortly afterwards arrested and charged with "hostile propaganda." On 28 August 1981 they were sentenced by the district court of Pristina to four and three years' imprisonment respectively. According to a report by the official Yugoslav newsagency *Tanjug*, "Rustemi wrote about 'grey uniforms' which came as guests and were greeted with gun-shots because 'this is required by the honour of these regions' ... The intention of the author was undoubtedly to sow national hatred and to depict the situation in the country maliciously and untruthfully. This story, for whose publication Sabedin Haljiti is responsible ... reached the review's editorial offices at the beginning of this year, but it was published after the March demonstrations. Although the defence during the trial in Pristina showed that the story does not mention either the date or place of the events, it was nonetheless irrefutably proved that this was a hostile text."

Amnesty International notes that according to the Belgrade news weekly *NTN* of 20 November 1981, the story had already been published the previous year in a collection of literary works about the Partisan resistance in Yugoslavia during the Second World War. It thus appears that the story was both written and published well before the demonstrations of March and April in Kosovo and cannot have referred to them. Amnesty International considers that Sabedin Haljiti and Sabit Rustemi have been imprisoned for the non-violent exercise of their right to freedom of expression and has adopted them as prisoners of conscience.

Muharrem SHALANI is an ethnic Albanian from Macedonia, Yugoslavia's southernmost republic. He is a law graduate and at the time of arrest was employed by the Public Lawyer's Office of the commune of Kumanovo. On 3 July 1980 he and two other Albanians, Haxhi Maliqi, a student, and Gani Sylaj, a teacher, were sentenced to five, three and six years' imprisonment respectively by the district court of Skopje on charges of "hostile propaganda" under Article 133 of the SFRJ Criminal Code.

According to reports in the official Yugoslav press, the accused were found guilty of having "falsely and untruthfully depicted the existing socio-political conditions and position of the Albanian nationality in Yugoslavia, with the intent of destroying the unity, brotherhood and equality of the nations and nationalities of Yugoslavia."

The arrest and conviction of these three men followed renewed unrest in late 1979 and early 1980 among ethnic Albanians in Yugoslavia and is reported to be connected with the clandestine distribution of anti-government pamphlets in the province of Kosovo and other regions inhabited by Albanians, alleging that Albanians were politically and economically oppressed.



AMERICA, AMERICA, HEAR OUR CRY

One year ago, on March 11, 1981, large crowds of Albanian students of the University of Kosove, Prishtine (Yugoslavia) demonstrating peacefully were confronted by the Yugoslav police; and cruelly beaten. Two weeks later, on March 26, 1981, a new wave of angry students demonstrated against the unjustified police brutality. As a result, 35 students were left wounded on the ground.

The spilling of innocent Albanian blood angered the entire Albanian population in Yugoslavia. One week later, on April 1, 2, and 3, 1981, more than 20,000 persons, students, workers and farmers in the town of Prishtine alone, took their anger to the streets. They were met by Yugoslav army units, special crack police forces and thousands of militiamen. Many people were killed, several hundreds wounded, more than 2,000 persons arrested, and sent to jail. Over 300 persons, mostly students, received jail sentences going up to 15 years imprisonment. Unofficial, but reliable sources, put the number of the dead alone to several hundreds.

The entire world was shocked by the widespread dissatisfaction demonstrated by the two million Albanians presently living in Yugoslavia as a national minority, and by the intensity of the Yugoslav Communist Government's reaction, and brutality. Yugoslavia is filling her Katyns and Gulags with thousands of innocent Albanians.

The Yugoslav Communist Government has now initiated a large and systematic campaign of harassment and persecution of Albanians in Yugoslavia. Students are being expelled, Albanian books on national history and literature are being banned, development funds are being curtailed, as hundreds of high school and university students and teachers are being arrested every passing day, tortured and sentenced to long prison terms. One quarter of the Yugoslav army is now camping in the small Province of Kosove, where most of the Albanians live. Every street, every village in

Kosove is an armed camp. Every school is treated as a potential source of unrest, and every Albanian graduate remains a suspicious element in the eyes of the Yugoslav Communist Government, and therefore, threatened with arrest. Amnesty International suspects now that many people have "disappeared."

The Albanian inhabited regions of Yugoslavia have been transformed into a military occupied zone, very much like the European lands under the iron heel of the Nazis during the Second World War. No foreign correspondent has been allowed to visit the region since March 11, 1981, without government supervision. No Albanian in Yugoslavia is allowed to move freely within his own country, as fear and threat reign supreme over them.

Dear countrymen, and friends:

We are raising our voices for the victims who are silenced by the oppression apparatus of the Yugoslav Communist Government. We are the victims' sons and daughters; they are our parents, our brothers and sisters. Blessed with the chance of escaping the Communist hell, and now benefiting from the generosity of this great American nation, we feel, as Mark Twain put it, that being American "is, of itself, almost a moral condition." — and we applaud it.

Please, join with us, today, in helping those who are helplessly caught into the nightmare of Yugoslav communism. You can call, or write to, your congressman, your senator, and the White House. You can present this problem to them, and request their intervention on behalf of the oppressed and the persecuted two million Albanians presently living in Yugoslavia.

With God's help and yours, we can save many innocent human lives!

New York City, N.Y.

March 23, 1982

THE ALBANIAN KOSOVAR YOUTH
IN THE FREE WORLD



Demonstrations in the streets of Prishtine on the First Anniversary of the peaceful uprising last year.

Why Ethnic Unrest in Serbia Has the Yugoslavs Worried

By Michael Dobbs

Pristina, Yugoslavia

A year after it was shaken by the bloodiest riots ever seen in Yugoslavia, the ethnic Albanian province of Kosovo remains a major problem for President Tito's successors and a touchstone of their ability to hold the country together after his death.

This peculiar-looking provincial capital, where architecturally extravagant buildings jar with the obvious poverty of many of the 70,000 inhabitants, shows few outward signs of the disturbances that erupted here in March and April 1981. After the riots, in which at least 10 people were killed, a state of emergency was declared in Kosovo. Hundreds of students and workers were arrested, and several local Communist Party leaders were purged after being accused of turning a blind eye to Albanian nationalism.

The state of emergency has been lifted and the university, which was the flashpoint of much of the unrest, now seems calm. The anti-Yugoslav slogans of the young Albanian demonstrators have been rubbed off the walls and the broken windows of shops and apartment buildings in the city center have been repaired.

The calm, however, is superficial. Even Yugoslav officials agree that the causes of the explosion in Kosovo — the economic backwardness of the province, the historic rivalry between the Albanian and Serb populations and the frustrations felt by half-educated university students who have little prospect of finding jobs — have not been eradicated.

Disturbances occurred recently in Pristina when chanting students marched on the city center. On April 3, the first anniversary of the declaration of the state of emergency, nationalist protests flared in the town of Urosevac, 25 miles to the south. Both demonstrations were broken up by riot police and, according to official accounts, 133 people were arrested.

Overshadowed by the dramatic developments in Poland, the unrest last year in Kosovo received relatively little attention from the Western press. Yet, coming only a year after Tito's death, it severely jolted Yugoslavia and illustrated some of the structural weaknesses of this federation of Balkan nations that he ruled for 35 years.

The head of the local television station, Agim Zatriqi, an intensely pro-Yugoslav Albanian, said, "What happened here was like an earthquake. It worried people all over Yugoslavia, particularly since we thought we had settled the national question under President Tito."

The main demand of the demonstrators was that Kosovo, which is about half the size of Maryland, be upgraded from an autonomous province of Serbia to Yugoslavia's seventh constituent republic. The demand was rejected by Yugoslav leaders, who saw it as a step toward Kosovo's secession from Yugoslavia and its unification with neighboring Albania.

Describing the riots in Kosovo as an attempt at "counterrevolution," Zatriqi said: "The enemy thought that the period after Tito's death gave them their best chance for action. Without Tito, they thought they would be successful. Their analysis was not realistic, but certainly they caused us a lot of trouble."

For an outsider, it is difficult to understand why a significant portion of Yugoslavia's 17 million ethnic Albanians should be attracted to Albania's Stalinist government. Albanian leader Enver Hoxha, who calls himself a disciple of the late Soviet dictator Joseph

Stalin, presides over what is certainly the most isolated and probably the most politically repressive society in Europe. Poor as they are, Yugoslav Albanians are undoubtedly materially better off than their cousins across the mountains in Albania.

The explanation lies partly in the potency of Albanian nationalism, partly in the failure of a costly development strategy for Kosovo that consisted largely of pouring money into the province without controlling how it was spent.

The Albanians, said to be descended from the ancient Illyrians, kept their national identity intact despite centuries of foreign occupation. Hoxha, in World War II, led a Communist uprising against the Italians, who had annexed Albania in 1939. Hoxha then pursued a foreign policy similar in many ways to that of Albania's feudal rulers before him. To preserve his country's independence, he switched allegiances from one patron to another: first Yugoslavia, then the Soviet Union, and finally China.

Culturally, the Albanians have little in common with the Slav races who account for more than 85 percent of Yugoslavia's 22.5 million population. They speak a separate language that bears no resemblance to those of other Yugoslavs and have their own elaborate codes of honor, including the blood feud or vendetta.

Complicating the problem is the emotional attachment that the Serbs, Yugoslavia's largest national group, always have felt for Kosovo.

Today the province is 71 percent Albanian, but historically it was the cradle of Serbia's medieval empire. Every Serbian child is brought up on the heroic tale of how their Prince Lazar was killed fighting the Turks on Kosovo field in 1389.

For two decades after World War II Kosovo was run by the Serb minority. This ended with the fall of Alexander Rankovic, Tito's hard-line Serb police chief in 1966, and widespread riots among Albanians in 1968. The federal government then embarked on a policy of



Yugoslavia, which rose from the ruins of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and surrounding lands after World War I, comprises six republics. Ethnic Albanians are demanding that Kosovo, an autonomous province in Serbia, be made Yugoslavia's seventh constituent republic

granting Kosovo autonomy and trying to promote its economic development.

Unfortunately, much of the money was misspent on unprofitable industrial projects or grandiose buildings in Pristina such as the university library — a glass-and-marble palace.

During the 1970s the Yugoslav leadership encouraged Kosovo to develop ties with Albania. Albanian books and pamphlets poured into the province and numerous cultural delegations were exchanged. Outside Kosovo, few people paid much attention.

Within Kosovo, however, Hoxha's egalitarian propaganda found fertile ground. With annual incomes averaging \$800 — one-sixth the level of more developed Yugoslav republics such as Slovenia — many Albanians felt discriminated against.

Nationalist ideas spread particularly strongly at Pristina University. Only 12 years old, it is already

one of the largest in the country with 30,000 students, many of them enrolled in the humanities. But while Kosovo is desperately short of qualified experts, many young Albanians cannot find work after leaving college.

Throughout the Tito era, Kosovo's political leadership prevented the Yugoslav press from writing about the stirrings of nationalism in the province and the mass exodus of Serbs and Montenegrins.

Only recently was it revealed that 57,000 Serbs and Montenegrins left Kosovo between 1971 and 1981 — more than a fourth of the total Slav population. Thousands more are believed to have left after last year's riots.

Press restrictions have ended, and Belgrade newspapers are now carrying lurid accounts of Serb families fleeing Kosovo after allegedly receiving death threats. Magazines have carried pictures of Serbian monasteries being guarded by nuns with rifles.

Many Yugoslavs confess that they see little hope of any short-term solution to the problem. Order has been reimposed through rigorous security measures and all cultural links with Albania have been cut.

In the long term, Tito's successors say they will maintain tighter controls over Kosovo and will not give in to nationalism.

Other republics have promised to send an additional \$4 billion to the province during the next five years and to keep a closer watch on how it is spent. Political and ideological education of young people is being stepped up.

Washington Post

Clouds in Yugoslavia

Although over a year has passed since the bloody demonstrations in Kosova took place, we feel that the article "Clouds in Yugoslavia" which appeared in The Tablet in August of 1981 by Christopher Cuiic, gives a true picture of the discontent still brewing there. Part of the article is printed below.

Kosovo province

The other subject of this summer's anniversary speeches has been, predictably, the unrest in the Kosovo province, the largely Albanian-inhabited area in Yugoslavia's south-east on the border of Albania proper. So bad was the unrest in the cities and villages of Kosovo in the period from March to May of this year that the authorities had to bring in large reinforcements, including army units from other parts of Yugoslavia, complete with tanks, armoured cars and helicopters. The unrest in Kosovo (Yugoslavia's poorest area and one with a proportionately higher number of unemployed) is still simmering despite a purge in the Party and the Government and a large number of arrests. Trials have begun of people who had taken part in the disturbances which claimed hundreds of injured and a number of dead, among both the security forces and civilians. Among Kosovo Albanians there is a good deal of bitterness and resentment based on the widespread impression that Yugoslav security forces overreacted and behaved with excessive brutality. Although there were among these forces members of various Yugoslav nationalities (including Kosovo Albanians) the popular feeling appears to be that this was yet another instance of traditional Serbian brutality towards the Albanians.

The Kosovo demonstrators' main political demand — for the province, which is at present an autonomous part of the Serbian republic of the Yugoslav federation, to be given the status of a full republic on a par with the other six (Bosnia and Hercegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia) — has been rejected. Yet Kosovo has three times as many inhabitants as neighbouring Montenegro, a fully fledged republic, and almost as many inhabitants as two other republics, Macedonia and Slovenia. Kosovo's population increased by 27.4 per cent in the period between the 1971 and 1981

censuses to 1.6 million. The proportion of Albanians in Kosovo increased from 74 per cent in 1971 to 77.4 per cent this year, while that of the Serbs fell from 18.3 per cent to 13.2 per cent. As well as the fear that Kosovo, now so predominantly Albanian, might, if allowed to become a republic, secede from Yugoslavia and join Albania, the authorities in Belgrade entertain another, that there could be pressure among the strong Albanian minority in Macedonia to join the new Kosovo republic and that, similarly, the Albanians living in Montenegro might want to do the same. Any change in Kosovo's constitutional position within Yugoslavia may have been ruled out, but agitation for such a change continues even in Kosovo itself (despite a continuing security clampdown there) as well as among the Albanians who are living and working in the West. There have been anti-Yugoslav demonstrations in a number of west European cities as well as attacks against Yugoslav government offices and clubs run by the government-employed Albanians working abroad. Last month two members of the staff of the Yugoslav embassy in Brussels were wounded inside the embassy by assailants alleged by the Yugoslav authorities to belong to an Albanian "irredentist" organisation.

The clash in Kosovo has led to bitter recriminations with neighbouring Albania which the Yugoslav authorities accuse of inciting Albanians in Kosovo to rebellion. The Albanian government has rejected Yugoslav allegations that it is behind the riots. It argues that it is not incitement from abroad but accumulated economic, political and other wrongs done to Kosovo Albanians in Yugoslavia that are responsible. But the Government in Tirana is offering the Kosovo Albanians moral support in their demand for a republic.

Inside Yugoslavia there has been a strong backlash against the Albanians, particularly in Serbia. Many Serbs resent

the fact that Kosovo, once the centre of Serbia's medieval kingdom, should have come to be dominated numerically and, in recent years, also politically by the Albanians. The Albanians, for their part, refuse to see themselves as in any way intruders in Kosovo. On the contrary, they feel that as one of the oldest European nations and the oldest inhabitants of the Balkan peninsula, they have rights that go far further back than anybody else's (including the Serbs'). What is incontrovertible is that, discriminated against in pre-war and for a time also in post-war Communist Yugoslavia, they have been given more political rights as well as economic development since the fall in 1966 of Alexander Rankovic, the powerful secret police boss, who was regarded by most Yugoslav Albanians (and many other non-Serbs) as not just a party hardliner but also something of a Serbian nationalist. A visible symbol of the post-1966 policy of "Albanisation" in Kosovo is the university in Pristina, Kosovo's capital, whose full-time student population had recently grown to more than 35,000. But Kosovo has the highest unemployment rate in Yugoslavia and per capita income in Kosovo is less than a half of the Yugoslav national average. It is easy to see how social and national expectations and frustration could come together here and form an explosive mixture. It is, as Communists like to say, no accident that the first demonstrations in March which sparked off the present troubles were by Pristina students who were later joined by the workers and farmers. There is talk now of the Pristina university being reorganised and even scaled down.

It can be assumed that the present crackdown on Albanian nationalism will be popular with many Serbs. The Government, for its part, may in the light of its troubles in Kosovo come to regard Serbian nationalism as something of an ally, at least tactically and for the time being.



Our photo shows the procession of mourners for Jusuf and Bardosh Gervalla and Zeka Kadi, Albanian Kosovar patriots assassinated in Germany by the Yugoslav Secret Police UDB-a on the night of January 18, 1982. Heading the procession are the parents of the victims, with a cousin in national dress, carrying the Albanian flag. The father of Jusuf and Bardosh Gervalla is a living example of the Albanian tragedy in Kosova today; the Yugoslav authorities have killed two of his sons and imprisoned two others. The oldest, Hyson (39), was sentenced in 1980 to five years in prison and his youngest, Avdil (19), recently received a three-year sentence. The charges: demonstration against oppressive conditions. Present at the funeral were representatives of Croatian and German people.

ALBANIAN BLOOD LIES IN THE STREETS OF KOSOVA

"Write," he said, "write for my people. They are dying in their hundreds, in their thousands in Kossova."

How do you write the agonies of a people whose young are being sacrificed on the altar of inter-necine hatreds memorializing with their blood and past stupidities of politicians, the linked into one political non-entity peoples whose traditional racial hatreds continue from generation to generation and spill over into the lands of their adoption. We have heard of Serbian atrocities in the past. Is this any different, that the students of Kossova should die in Serbian hands? It is unrelated to the Serbian Croatian troubles in the Steel City, Hamilton, only a few years ago.

Albanian blood lies black in the streets of Kossova, the blood of a people who alone, under Skanderbeg's light cavalry, held off the Ottoman Turks for twenty-five years — a pastoral, poetic, and warrior people, and the Western world raises not a finger to point the shame or a voice to protest it. The flower of a nation dies in Kossova in Yugoslavia and the world will bear it on its conscience to the end of time and beyond.

This is the people, little Albania, of whom it was said by the Patriarch Athenagoras: "These Albanians gave us two fingers to honour on our foreheads." Another remarked that they have been the "shield of faith and the salvation of Europe." Past glories give greater pathos to present horrors. Germany, France, Greece, Switzerland, Turkey, indeed almost all of free Europe have reported the killings, extensive slaughter of Kossova students at the hands of Serbian controlled police in Yugo-slavia. Descendants of the ancient Myrians they would die with a bravery and honour — but that they should die undefended while politicians in our Western world smile, posture, and prattle insincerities brings dishonour upon us all.

(Dielli)

Hugh Macdonald,
Minister

Archbishop Theophan S. Noli

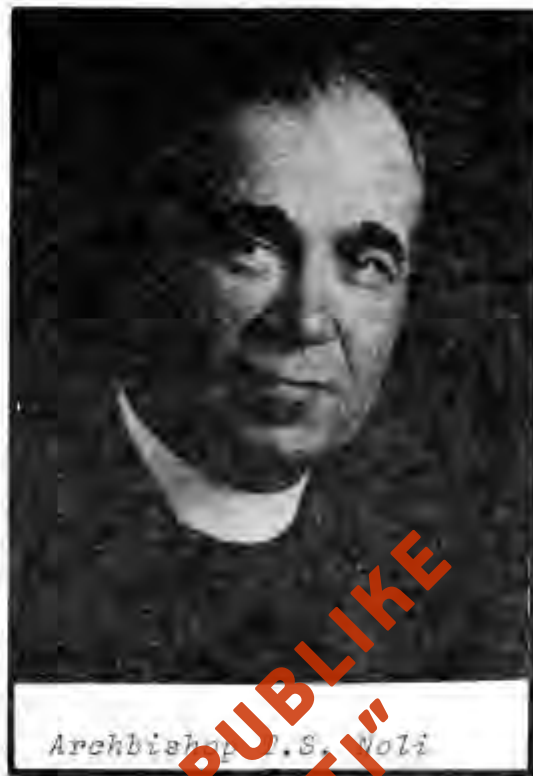
Centennial Symposium May 1-2, 1982

On May 1 and 2 of this year, Albanians and friends of Albania gathered in Boston, Massachusetts, to honor the memory of one of their great leaders, the late Bishop Theophan Stylian Noli. The occasion was the centennial of his birth (1882-1982).

Bishop Noli is recognized as one of the most distinguished figures in contemporary Albanian history. He was the founder of the Albanian Orthodox Church in America. In 1924 he served as Premier of Albania. As a delegate to the League of Nations, he played perhaps the leading role in gaining Albania's admission to the League in 1920. In the field of Albanian letters, he occupies a preeminent position as the translator into Albanian of works of Shakespeare, Ibsen, Cervantes, Blasco-Ibanez, Longfellow, Poe, and other renowned authors. As a scholar and critic, he won acclaim for his study Beethoven and the French Revolution, and the history of Albania's national hero, George Castrioti Scanderbeg. This is but a part of his accomplishments and services to the Albanian nation.

The broad two-day program of activities to honor Noli was sponsored and organized by the Albanian Orthodox Archdiocese in America and the Society for Albanian Studies in the United States. Harvard University played a major role as well.

The commemoration began with a Symposium on Saturday, May 1, at the Ralph Waldo Emerson Hall on the Harvard campus. The day-long talks and discussions started with a welcoming address by Prof. Albert Lord, of Harvard University, who acted as host. Prof. Lord presented an absorbing account of Noli's interactions with Harvard, his alma mater, following his graduation with a B.A. degree, cum laude, in 1912. After Lord, the audience of some 150 people heard brief introductory remarks from three other persons: the V. Rev. Arthur E. Liolin, Chancellor of the Albanian Orthodox Archdiocese; Anthony Athanas, acclaimed restaurateur and Honorary Chairman of the Noli Centennial; and Dr. Nicholas C. Pano, President of the Society for Albanian Studies.



The morning session of the Symposium was chaired by Prof. Janet Byron of Cleveland State University. The first speaker was Prof. Arsh. Pipa of the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. He gave an incisive discourse on "Noli as a National and International Figure." He was followed by Prof. Byron who talked briefly but in a most engaging manner on "Noli the Translator," using as material a passage from Hamlet, and comparing the English and Albanian versions of that passage. The session concluded with a paper by Prof. John Kolsti of the University of Texas at Austin. An attentive audience heard him discuss the topic, "Noli's Precursors: The Birth of Modern Albanian Literature." A brief but stimulating discussion period followed the presentation of the three papers.

During the lunch recess, guests and speakers were invited to partake of delicious Albanian "lakror" (pie) and a variety of pastries, prepared by the ladies' society, Daughters of St. George Cathedral—St. George being the name of the Albanian cathedral in Boston.

Prior to the opening of the afternoon session, the audience was treated to a slide show on the life of Metropolitan Noli by Linda Chako, a vivacious young lady of Albanian descent in the Boston area.

Acting as moderator of the second half of the Symposium, Dr. Nicholas Pano introduced the first speaker, Peter R. Prifti of San Diego, California. Mr. Prifti spoke on "Noli and the Albanian Community in the U.S." He was well received. The second speaker was Prof. Pano of Western Illinois University, at Macomb, Ill. He gave a dynamic and illuminating talk on "The Political Career of F. S. Noli." The last speaker and the youngest was Gregory Pano, a doctoral student at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University in Medford, a suburb of Boston. Mr. Pano discussed in a forthright and informative way the career of Noli as a cleric, under the topic, "Noli the Churchman." A brief question-and-answer period concluded the afternoon session.

A reception followed in the Harvard Yard, at the home of Harvard's former Presidents. A string quartet of the New England Conservatory of Music played music for the guests in the foyer of the ornate residence. In the Grand Ballroom they were greeted by, among others, Dr. Derek Bok, President of Harvard.

The program of activities on Sunday, May 2 began with a hierarchal liturgy at the Cathedral of St. George, which included hymns arranged by Bishop Noli. After the liturgy, the congregation gathered in the auditorium of the cathedral to see an Exhibit of Noli Memorabilia, arranged by David Kosta.

The final event in the two-day program was the commemorative banquet at Anthony's Pier 4 restaurant on Boston Harbor. An estimated three hundred people attended the banquet. Among the guests was a classmate of Bishop Noli, John Demirjian, from the New England Conservatory of Music, where Noli received a B.A. in music. Bishop Mark of the Albanian Archdiocese blessed the convocation, after which the guests feasted on a sumptuous dinner, of the sort that has made Pier 4 a landmark in Boston.

The banquet program included a large number of speakers, led off by Mr. Athanas who delivered the keynote address. He was applauded many times in the course of his personal reminiscences about Noli. Other speakers were: Louis Prifti of Arlington, Virginia, who enriched the Noli archives with his donation of tapes he had made of speeches and chats by Noli; Dr. Sami Repishti, Albanian-American educator from the New York area; Dhimitri Nikolla, editor of the Albanian paper Liria (Liberty) in Boston; Mrs. Persefoni Karchenes, president of the Daughters of St. George organization; Dr. Andrew Elia, president of the Pan-Albanian Federation of America, VATRA (The Hearth); and Mr. Thomas Sotir, Lay Chairman of the Archdiocese.

The convocation also heard a Proclamation honoring Bishop Noli by His Excellency, Edward J. King, Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Nancy Sotiros and Florence Pano entertained the crowd with recitations of two poems by F. S. Noli. Other activities included delivery of an excerpt from a Noli speech to the League of Nations by the V. Rev. Spero L. Page, pastor of the Albanian Church of St. Mary in Worcester, Massachusetts, and a choral rendition by the talented Kor i Usterit, directed by Van Christo, a leading Albanian figure in Boston.

The Noli Centennial aroused much interest, attracting Albanians as far as New York, as well as a good number of non-Albanian scholars and friends of Albania from the Boston area and beyond.



MAPS OF ALBANIA THROUGHOUT THE CENTURIES

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THE ALBANIAN LANGUAGE IN THE WORLD

The Albanian language belongs to the Indo-European family of languages, in which it occupies special place. It derives from none of them, but has a common source with them. This explains the special interest and value which the study of the Albanian language has for comparative Indo-European linguistics. The ancestors of the Albanians were the Illyrians, while their language was the ancient stage and source of Albanian.

The Albanians are indigenous on their present territories. According to statistics published in 1976, there are more than 6 million Albanians in the world, including only those who have preserved their nationality, their national consciousness, awareness of their origin, their language and folk traditions. The Albanian language is spoken not only within the state borders of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania, but also in other countries of the world where Albanians are living.

In Yugoslavia it is spoken in the region of Kosovo, in Prashvo and Bujanovo, in present day western Macedonia, down to Scopia, and in Montenegro. In 1960, at the consultative meeting of the representatives of all the Albanians living in Yugoslavia, it was decided that the national literary language should be used as the language of culture. Today it is used there in all fields of social activity.

The Albanian language is spoken in Greece, too, in Philat, Gumenica, Paramithi, Margellio, Shul and Frax, with Preveza as its southernmost border. It is also spoken in the Albanian settlements in Italy, Bulgaria, Ruma-

nia, the Soviet Union, Turkey, Egypt, the United States of America, Syria, Argentina, Australia, France and Canada.

The most ancient Albanian settlements abroad are those of Greece. There are varying opinions about the time of the settlement of the Albanians on Greek territories. Some say they were established there at least by the 7th-8th centuries, may be even earlier (the 4th century), while others were established much later, up to the 14th century. The first big wave of Arbereshi emigration to Greek territory started in the 14th century. The German historian Fallmerieier says this emigration took place in the years 36-40 of the 14th century. The Albanian villages in Thessali, Attica, and Peloponnesia belong to this period; from there they moved on to several islands in the Aegean Sea such as Eube, Hydra, Spicia, Poros, etc.

The Albanian settlements in Italy were founded between the 15th and 18th centuries. The oldest groups of Albanians in Italy date back to year 1437. However, the greatest migrations took place after the death of Skanderbeg (the national hero of the Albanian people, who led them in the triumphant battles against the countless Ottoman hordes) in the 15th century. The Albanians settled in the districts of Calabria, Apuglia and Sicily. The first of those villages - Vila Balessa in Abrucia - was founded in 1744 by inhabitants from the village of Pigeras in Souda district (Southern Albania).

There were 8 Albanian colonies in the European part of Turkey - in the districts of Adriaopolis and Kerkise, at the beginning

of this century. In Istanbul and other cities and villages of Turkey many Albanians live in separate quarters, mostly grouped according to their place of origin. They speak Albanian at home, especially the older generation.

The languages of the Albanian settlements abroad are like linguistic islands, isolated from the tongue of the motherland and surrounded by other languages. As a result they retain their archaic character, and to some degree, are mixed with words and constructions from the surrounding languages. Of course, the development of the language spoken in the Albanian settlements differs depending on the age of the formation, size and compactness of the settlements, as well as on their relations with the surrounding populations.

In general, the Albanian spoken in the settlements abroad is characterized, on the one hand, by the preservation of some archaic features inherited from the language of their motherland, and on the other hand by some new features gained during their independent development on the new land, or from the influence of the language of the surrounding environment. The entirety of these factors has determined the specific linguistic features of each Albanian settlement abroad. It is known that economic, social and political reasons forced the Albanians to emigrate from their Homeland during the past centuries. The preservation of the national consciousness and the mother tongue in the circumstances in which they have been living for centuries proves the vitality of the Albanian people and their languages.

«THE ALBANIAN JEANNE D'ARC»



The tableau «The Albanian Jeanne D'Arc» was published on the front cover of the French magazine «Le Petit Journal», on May 28, 1911. The time of the publication of this tableau coincides with the year of the great Albanian uprisings for independence: Kosova had risen in 1910 and the Shkodra Highlands in 1911.

The author of the article about this «Jeanne D'Arc» of the Albanian insurgents of May 1911 informs us that this is Janica Martini, the daughter of an Albanian clan chief who had been killed in a battle of those days. His eldest son, who, according to custom should have taken his place, was then only 8 years old. In these circumstances Janica rose and called «Follow me, and I will lead you to glory!»

And the 22-year old «Albanian Jeanne D'Arc» hurled herself upon the enemy».

In the Shkodra of those times such titles were frequently encountered. Proceeding from a romantic desire the painter used that title for his painting because for the French people it created the analogy with the French Jeanne.

All the elements of the tableau — the embossed weapons, the costumes, the long white pleated kilts, the head-scarves — all are Albanian. Even the landscape is simply

the barren side of Mt. Tarabosh seen from Shkodra.

This is a work by the Albanian painter Ndoc Martini who was in Paris at that time. His family, relatives and friends were in Shkodra. Through them he was informed about the great events taking place in his Homeland, about the dawn of Albanian independence which was proclaimed on November 28, 1912.

Ndoc Martini, called the «great painter from Shkodra», lived only 36 years (1880-1916). He died of tuberculosis on foreign soil. He painted many works. The themes of most of those we know are national and about the struggle for independence. The foreign press of that time has pointed out the worth of some of them, such as «Skanderbeg» (1912-1913) which was shown in the Istanbul Exhibition in 1913. He was the first Albanian painter to open exhibitions in Paris and Istanbul. The «Arbëreshi Woman», the «Albanian Shepherd», «The Albanian Bride» and «The Albanian Jeanne D'Arc». His portrait of a boy Prelo from the Tirana Art Gallery, while his drawing of the child is in the Shkodra gallery.

After his death, many of his works were burnt or left without a trace, scattered over Europe, because Ndoc Martini did not sign his works.

Albanian Folk Dances

Many readers have asked about Albanian history, culture and traditions. Therefore, in this issue we reprint an article on Albanian Folk Dances by Ian Price, first published in Folk Dance Scene. We trust that it will be found both informative and enjoyable.



The folk dances of the Albanian people reflect many aspects of life and are among the most interesting and most beautiful expressions of Albanian folklore. Their beauty has been noted by a number of writers and artists including Lord Byron, who gives a very picturesque description of Albanian dances in his work *Childe Harold*.

Albanian folk dances vary according to districts, the participants age and sex, the form and content, etc., Every district, and in fact, nearly every village, has its own characteristic dances. The distinctive features of every district conform to the dialectical and ethnographic branches with which a number of variants are linked. However, in spite of the great variation of the dances of different districts, they also contain common elements which stem from the unity of the Albanian tradition. In the past, the women and men of certain districts used to dance separately, while mixed dances were rare, even within one clan. Regarding distinctions according to generation, there are dances for old and

young men, old and young brides, and there are also dances for children.

Categorizing the dances with regard to the number of participants, there are solo dances, which are danced in northern Albania and Kosova. There are duo dances by couples of the same sex, but nowadays there are dances which are performed by one man and one woman. In the south these duo dances exist only as an integral part of collective dances. As a rule trio dances are danced by two women and a man or vice-versa. Most of them are of a dramatic character.

Collective dances have four or more participants. These too, differ, both from the standpoint of form and content. The most common form is a straight chain which is the structure of many of the dances performed by the peasants of northern and northeastern Albania. There are also dances in ranks, which interchange with rows and winding movements as, for example, those danced by the Albanian soldiers in Italy, in which all kinds of figures are formed. In addition, there

are also dances of two facing rows, which are accompanied by songs. The most common form is the circular dance which has spread all over Albania, as well as to the Albanians beyond its borders. The circle may be an open one, like an arch, spiral and so on, or it can be closed. The circle dances of southern Albania have two leaders, as required by the parts in polymovements, steps and figures expressing some lyric, epic or dramatic content.

Dances of the Warrior type, are from many points of view, very interesting. In the Greater Highlands of northern Albania we can find the "Sword Dance" which is a sort of pantomime. This dance is performed without musical accompaniment and with free-flowing rhythmic movements. A rather recent introduction into this dance is that of a woman, whose ultimate aim is to prevent bloodshed. Very similar to the "Sword Dance" are some of the dances of the Kosova region — for example, the "Fight for the Girl", which is accompanied by the "loder" (drum). Here the drummer prevents blood being spilled.

Fustanella e Famëshme e Shqipëtarit

The Celebrated Albanian Kilt (Fustanella)

This costume at one time was worn by men throughout Albania. Today it is seen only on special occasions in Southern Albania, particularly in the Gjirokaster area.

With the wish that all Albanians in America will work zealously to preserve the noble Albanian name and cultural heritage.

Ky kostum në kohë të shkuara përdorej në të gjithë Shqipërinë, sot përdoret vetëm në Shqipërinë Jugore në disa raste, sidomos në rrethet e Gjirokastrës.

Me shpresë se të gjithë Shqipëtarët në Amerikë do të punojnë me zell për të ruajtur emrin kreshnik dhe trashëgimin kulturor Shqipëtar.



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**BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)**

In the village of Shtiqen (Lume region) the older men do a dance called the "First Sabre". This dance seems to be related to the Kalac which is performed in Prizen, except that in the Kalac, they now perform using a handkerchief rather than a sword and the dance is also mixed. In the Librazhd region they dance the "Clash of Blades" which can also be found in the Dibra and Ohrid regions. A variant of this dance is the "Slaughter Dance", or "Macedonian Slaughter", performed in the Gostivar region of Yugoslavia.

Also of interest are the ritual dances performed during wedding ceremonies. Marriage is one of the landmarks in life and connected with it are found a great variety of rites and customs which show the people's conception of life and different social groupings down through the centuries. Most marriage customs of that patriarchal society were aimed at consolidating its social relationships, which put the woman in a subordinate position.

One is also reminded of those relationships in the conduct of the ceremony, the songs and especially the dances. The very content and structure of the dances are a clear expression of the situation and role of women in society.

The type now described is found in several regions of Albania and the particular variant is performed in Rajce, Berzheshte and in surrounding villages in the Librazhd region (east central Albania). As soon as the new wife enters the room, the women all rise to form a circle with hands joined at their sides. The oldest lead, then the other in descending age order. The bride also participates, and sometimes her attendants too. In the center of the circle stands or sits the mother-in-law.

Apart from this case, one can find other examples, which, though not performed exactly at the time of the bride's arrival, are kept to the women's room and to the marriage ceremony. These include the closed circle

dances of the Moisit (Tirana region), Shushice (Elbasan region), Shkoder, and a variant in the Malëssia of Tirana and Kruja, where the closed circle progresses into an open circle. The dancers begin the dance linked and begin the first verse of the song. Only when this is completed do they begin the dance, moving to the right in an open circle, repeating the first verse.

Because this dance and its close variants are so widespread, especially in the mountains, it can be assumed that it is extremely old and that the rites associated with it have continued unbroken, creating a common tradition in the spiritual domain as well. These ancient dance forms, ritualistic in form and content, which have survived up until the present day, are now breaking out of the narrow confines of the wedding, and are being more widely danced, for instance, at local and national festivals, social evenings at the co-op and particularly at folklore festivals.



Attractive, petite folk dancers of Dardha in Southern Albania.

THE SON OF THE MIDNIGHT SUN

Alfred Berglund, a long time friend, wrote to us recently and included an article about his life in Sweden. Mr. Berglund has been a contributor to several Nordic magazines and newspapers with stories about Albania, its culture and religion. He translated into Swedish Ernest Koliqi's "Desperate Prayer," dedicated to the martyrs of Albania which was carried in last year's issue. We are most grateful for his support and his dedication to the cause of Albanian believers. We happily print his story.

My birthplace, Ammarnas, is situated near the Arctic Circle in the mountain region of Lapland. In this region, the winter season is about seven months. For some weeks in mid-winter the sun is not visible above the horizon. The dazzlingly white and clean sheet of snow, along with the flashing northern lights illuminate the arctic landscape and, therefore, the polar darkness is reduced. It is a day of rejoicing when the eagerly desired sun rises again above the southern horizon. The daylight increases rapidly and, by the beginning of May, the night-darkness is vanquished by the midnight-sun. We then have almost three months of daylight.

My father, Oskar, was a very godly man but owing to an incurable foot injury (caused by frost) he was incapable of managing our small farmstead—"Flowerhome." My mother, Charlotta, was a "busy bee" who managed both the household and the farmstead.

After the death of my father, a time of great hardship followed. My mother was, at times, weak in health due to overstrain of work. In the wintertime it was very cold, both indoors and out, so the water would freeze and white frost would gather around the floor, as well as on the windows in the kitchen. In our beds we had sheepskin rugs and were thus able to endure the coldness. By God's help we did not starve, we had a morsel of food each day.

I was a very clever boy and especially interested in foreign languages. Because I was very peculiar I was called "The Mysterious." After primary school it was impossible to continue my studies due to our poverty. I stayed at home, helped my mother, and sometimes I earned a little money by hunting, fishing, and wood-working. I was able to buy dictionaries and manuals, and I taught myself a lot of languages. Because I am only a self-taught man, I have no social status.

I am like my father and grandfather, a godly man, and I have an important Bible collection in nearly 700 languages, including Albanian. I am also fond of travelling and I have visited the Holy Land, Israel, five times, as well as other countries within and outside Europe.

I am also an amateur writer. I write articles, particularly on ethnic minorities and about Biblical subjects. Finally, I am a botanist.



Like a crooked birch
on the edge of the cliff
So is my life
beaten by hard winds.
Like the white trunk of the birch
gleams towards the bare soil
So I long for the mountains
the plains, the dwelling place.
This is my life which I love.

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Immigrant Restaurant Owner Says ... *Hard Work & High Hopes Made Me a Millionaire*

He was just 7 when he came to America with his family, penniless Albanian immigrants. He couldn't speak a word of English and he lived in a slum. At 13, he quit school to help support his brother and four sisters.

Today 70-year-old Anthony Athanas owns Boston's famous Pier 4 restaurant and also four other restaurants that grossed nearly \$20 million last year.

But there's no secret to his success, Athanas says.

"You've got to have enthusiasm. You've got to have the desire to succeed. And you've got to do the best pos-

RAGS TO RICHES

sible job you can. But most of all, you've got to work damn hard," declared the hard-driving millionaire.

He recalled growing up in New Bedford, Mass.: "Because I couldn't understand English when I went to school, I would go home at recess — and they sent the truant officer after me.

"We lived with eight other

families in a tenement building that today you'd call a ghetto. We didn't have electricity, just gas lights. And at night I'd go over to the cotton mill next door to pick up the burned coal they threw away for our kitchen stove."

When he was 13, Athanas quit school and joined his father peddling fruit on the streets.

He left home at 16 to work in a New York City restaurant. And some nine years later he started his first restaurant with money he had saved.

He recalled: "I'd meet people at the door, seat them and take their order. Then I'd shout the orders to a pretentious chef in the kitchen, run back there and cook the food. Then come out and serve it. Finally, I took the money as the cashier."

In 1963 he opened Anthony's Pier 4 — and today all his restaurants are roaring successes, and the millionaire former immigrant lives in an



SUCCESS Anthony and his famed restaurant, elegant 12-room home, drives a Cadillac and speaks perfect English.

He concluded: "Success doesn't come with a magic wand. You have to learn a craft and constantly work at it."

— PHILIP SMITH



FIRST eatery: Anthony is at right behind counter.

A PHOTOGRAPHER'S JOURNEY INTO THE MEMORY OF HIS MOTHER

BY GJON MILI

Our last issue carried a short story about the life and works of the famed Albanian photographer, Gjon Mili. Mr. Malcolm J. Smith, from England, very much enjoyed reading the story and has kindly sent us an article which Gjon Mili had written a decade ago for "LIFE" magazine in memory of his mother. We are grateful to Mr. Smith for his warm expression towards our work and we gladly reprint the article he sent in its entirety, omitting only the photographs. We feel that the story told by Mili about his mother's life and legacy is so similar to the many stories of countless Albanian immigrants around the world. We trust that our readers will learn more about the wonderful family traditions in Albania.

I flew from New York to Bucharest for my first homecoming after 48 years in America. When we separated, my sister and brother and I were teen-agers; now we would meet again as sexagenarians. Once past the customs barrier at Otopeni, Bucharest's main airport, I saw in the waiting crowd a tightly knit group, faces I recognized from photographs. As I moved toward them, my sister, Constanta, stepped forward. Shocking, how short she was! Being two years younger than she, I had always had to look up to her in our childhood. Now, I judged she would barely come up to my shoulders. She was laughing, but her face was strained. "You see, I am laughing, laughing," and pointing to our brother, Vasile, and her son, Toma, she let herself go. "They forbade me to cry, they said you would not like it." I bent low to press my arms hard around her shoulders and we wept. Riding home in the back seat of the family car—the three of us with arms interlocked, sister bubbling, sentimentalizing without stop, my brother, four years younger than I, wordless, holding my hand as he did on the first day I took him to school, and I, nodding abstractedly, without listening—it seemed we had never stopped being children. But one person was missing: our mother, who had died 12 years before. She animated every one of our recollections, which gave me pause to realize it was to her legacy that I had returned.

Thinking back, the first thing I remember is that it was spring, though very early in the season because I was still wearing my overcoat. Now I know it was the first of the month because it was the day when I, like every other student in the city, had to renew the pass for riding the streetcar to school. We all arrived simultaneously at the old car barn after classes, like a flood, looking forward to the hours to follow of interminable arguing, horseplay and name-calling with boys from rival schools. We would keep at it long into the night, until we were exhausted. On the day I so vividly remember, it was midnight before I got home. When I let myself in, I

found my mother, sister and brother, who—by now—should have been asleep, waiting seated at the table, set for supper. Without a greeting all three rose as one. Mother stepped behind the chair at the head of the table, where father always sat. She pulled it out. "Sit down, son," was all she said. It was so I learned my father was dead. Being the oldest male, I was now head of the house. I was barely 13 years old.

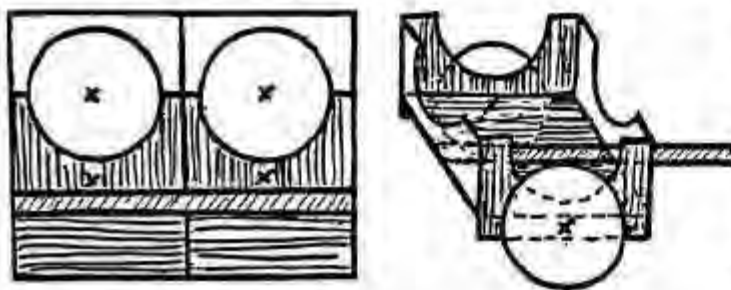
They made me walk alone behind the hearse, with everybody else keeping a respectable distance, they waited for me to throw the first fistful of earth over the lowered coffin and, after returning home for the feast of the mourners, they sat me again at the head of the table, flanked by the elders and kin and friends present—as custom decreed in the mountains of Albania where I was born.

My mother was married at 12, after languishing for five years in hope of a suitable match. She had been a brilliant pupil, much pampered by her teachers, and upon graduation she herself became a teacher. But only four years later, at 17, she had to give up teaching and, like all girls of marriageable age in Albania, became a home body. At feasts the elders would beg her to lead the women's dance—a much-sought-after chance for feminine display for match-making—though they were sadly aware that no one among the young in her little town was worthy of her. With no likely prospect of marriage at home, she dutifully accepted the middle-aged man her uncle Hristo had vouched for. They were complete strangers, situated hundreds of miles apart; they exchanged photographs so each could see what the other looked like, and, without her being present, a betrothal ceremony took place in a church in Bucharest. My father declared his vows and kissed the bride, normally used for benediction, which stood in place of her. It was only then that the bride-to-be, dowry-laden, undertook the hopeful journey to a new life in Romania.

A dreamer, an aristocrat by nature, my father, born Vasile Mili, but later known as Milidi, was a man of ingrained

habits. When he went out, there was just one way to present him with his Edwardian hardtop and his black ebony walking stick with the bulldog head (a souvenir of his youthful, dandy, South American days) so that he could pick up both with a simultaneous reach of his hands while turning away. This I practiced from the time I was barely big enough to handle the two props until I had it to perfection.

To show how his mind ran, here is his idea of how to do things: "This is a useless piece of board," he would say. "Let us make a toy out of it. Let us draw on this board so when we saw it following the indications and then assemble the parts, nothing will be missing, nothing will be left over." (Depending on the shape and size of the material, he could improvise endlessly, making use of its irregularities for decoration.) The two sketches shown below present his simplest solution for a two-wheel cart.



My father died in spring, 1917, six months before Romania entered World War I on the side of the Western Allies. In a matter of weeks the country was invaded by a host of German armies, hungry for its grain and oil. An arctic, storm-driven winter blanketed the land, piling snow three feet high. It paralyzed all transport, which providentially curtailed fighting at the front, but also reduced the flow of food and fuel to practically nothing. This turned Bucharest into a hungry, cold city, our schools into makeshift hospitals for the wounded. Now, foot-loose, I joined in nightly expeditions with other boys, some much older than I, tearing fences for firewood and stealing coal from the railroad yards. Standing in line for bread involved a midnight-to-morning vigil, often to no avail. Not that the bread was anything to savor, but it relieved the hunger.

One morning when I came home empty-handed to my family, I noticed a young soldier, stocky, blond, "fatcheeks," squatting under the lime tree in front of our store. He had just finished cutting a huge slice from a four-pound round loaf of bread and now he was spreading goose lard on it. "Look at him. They fatten him like a pig before Christmas," I challenged my mother, while sister and brother stood listlessly by, "because he can carry a gun, but I am not old enough, big enough to handle one, so I must go hungry. Where is the benevolent God you ask me to pray to every day, the Almighty whose praises I must sing in church every Sunday?"

Mother ushered me inside with my sister and brother and rushed out again without a word. When she returned she held in hand one egg and just enough bread—pure white—for four slices (easily worth a family heirloom on the black market). In no time each of us had a piece of french toast on our plates and a cup of hot milk. We made a race of our meal, but mother, content to watch us, would not touch hers. Suddenly we

felt like celebrating. We made her stand against her will and, joining hands around, pressing for a smile, we began to dance, pounding with our feet, shrieking with laughter and shouting an irreverent ditty reserved for poor givers at Christmas.

*Sarmara godina
ciu-ciu, vak, vak.
Old bag, give us a doughnut
or we'll blood your head.*

Mother shared in our hilarity, a rare treat for us now that she wore black.

When we were about to go out to play, mother held me back. She sat down and, as she slowly sipped her cup of milk, she pushed her plate toward me. Then she spoke her mind. "When you grow, you will have more occasions than you can wish for to fight God. You should remember that generation after generation before you—all your forebears—have believed. People still do."

Now I was 16. The prescribed three years of mourning after father's death were over and mother could once more wear colors other than black. I asked her bluntly—which was very improper of me—why she should not marry again. She did not answer, but I persisted, even suggesting likely candidates, full of pleasure in the notion of playing my own mother's matchmaker. Finally she spoke severely. "I would not step on your father's grave." But then, almost instantly, she added, very softly, "One man I lived my time with. I need no other."

My uncle Kocho from "Boston, Mass.," was at the time visiting with us. He offered to sponsor my passage to America in search of a career. Two years later I was off.

There was to be no feast for my departure; the women were mourning, this time for granduncle Hristo's death. When, one month earlier, mother and I had rushed to his house in the still dark hours of the morning, Mother, as I used to call my great-grandmother, had already changed the blood-soaked linen and washed and dressed the corpse. She beckoned mother to her side and, as ritual ordained, started her lament, while mother added her own entreaties to underscore in counterpoint what the older woman had to say.

Moma: You have already taken from me nine sons, and now this, my tenth, my last.

Mother: Lost my dearest, my only uncle.

Moma: Why did I part with them, why did I send them away?

Mother: Give us our daily bread, oh Lord.

Moma: One after another, this one to come back sick, the other never to return.

Mother: One after another, all of them.

Moma: Forgive me, but why did you not take me instead? I have not lived long enough, suffered enough?

Mother: A man's time is not a woman's time.

Moma: He was my best, the one to look after me.

Mother: Lost, the son, the father, the uncle, the elder.

Moma: I am a wasted root—no son to plant the cross over my grave.

Mother: Lost, wasted.

The keening lasted a day and a night, punctured at random by Moma's reflex reminders of the daily cares. She would ask, "Have the children come home from school? They must be fed. . . . How many eggs have the hens laid this morning?"—only to return to the dangling thread of her anguish, without waiting for answers.

At Moma's advanced age (she was past 60), sorrow seemed to have an unphysical reality which did not unduly punish her body. But mother, at half her age, was distraught and exhausted. She had lost not only her childhood hero but also the anchor which kept our lives safely shored. Although my going away added to her worries, she welcomed the turmoil of the last-minute preparations that kept her mind too busy to think of herself.

It was my last night at home. Undressing, I soon realized that mother, having gotten everything ready for my bathing, was not about to leave me alone, as was her habit. There she stood by the primitive tub, scooped out of half a tree trunk, a statue that one of her ancient forebears might have fashioned. She washed me and she dried me. Her task over, still holding the wet towel across her arms as if it were an offering, she spoke out: "Now you walk alone. Do everything in measure."

In the morning I left for America.

It would be 14 years before I saw her again. My letters home told of my graduation from college, my early career as an engineer, my growing involvement in photography. Her replies were oblique but to the point. "I am continuously being asked when you will return," she wrote. "There are most suitable maidens." Again, "Do not worry about work. We have friends." How could I, raised to self-denial, explain to her the promise, the unbounded opportunities for learning that my new life gave me? I felt I could not. Instead, I asked her to come to America to see for herself.

The boat had already been in dock for some time, though it was still early morning, when I got there to greet my mother. The last trickle of passengers was already coming down the gangplank as I rushed past them to reach the lounge reserved for immigrants. The place was empty except for the two officials and one solitary figure in black, seated in the corner, knitting. "Je ti" (Is it you)? "Po" (Yes). We stood motionless, nearly touching, transfixed as in shock. I had left home a puny 5'2"-tall, 92-pounds-stripped 18-year-old; at school I was *piciul*, the midget; a highly compressed bundle of energy, responsive to the least challenge. And there I stood, after 14 years had gone by, a gaunt six-footer; by acquired habit, a self-contained man, looking startlingly like her long-deceased father.

Mostly when I had looked back, I had thought of mother as she appeared on feast days, occasions when I was completely captivated by her. Of stoic mien, she still retained her capacity for joy: it came in her singing, it showed in the uprightness of her dance. Pride and physical stamina were part of her heritage. Now she was 60, meek of aspect and aged unduly, her pallid face furrowed as if she were constantly ailing; it was obvious her burdens were wearing her out. Only her widely set eyes, projecting warmth and understanding out of their deep-seated sockets, remained the same: alive, serene, though searching. Her appearance, so out of joint with

my imaginings, was painful to bear and, to add to my distress, when she opened her mouth, I lost my composure entirely and with it all sense of filial piety. I picked her up body and baggage and away we went to see my dentist.

Underneath the ill-fitting, jarring golden caps (two uninterrupted rows extending from ear to ear) which had so disturbed me, there was hardly a tooth that was not rotten at the root, and the infection was poisoning her whole system. Prizing her golden teeth as a son's overt gift, she tried to absolve her dentist for what he had done. Had he not made her rich-looking and beautiful? When for health's sake I suggested pulling out the rotten teeth, she complained, "The Lord spare me, how can I meet people, an old toothless hag," and she resisted the idea. But I kept insisting until finally, realizing I meant to be firm, she bowed, not without castigating herself for being so vain.

What a strange welcome for her, certainly not what she had expected, but soon she left it all behind her. Challenged by the onrush of new experiences, she came to life. The speed of an express subway ride exhilarated her, and a four-flight climb to lunch with relatives fazed her not one bit. After that, it was off to Macy's for her first American acquisition, new shoes. Though she would not complain, it was obvious from her mincing steps that the ones she wore, borrowed for the trip from her daughter, were altogether too small. Sight-seeing through Rockefeller Center made her wish she had a stork's neck to properly enjoy the skyscrapers. Then home. I did what I most wanted to do the whole day: I sat her on the couch by the window and took her photograph.

When it came to filling the tub, I made it plain it would be quite all right to take not one but, if she chose, two or even three baths a day. She was puzzled, incredulous. "What do you tell me, so much water to waste on one body, is it not sinful?" Laughing, I bent down on one knee and took off her shoes.

Everything she saw wherever she went opened her eyes: she was most impressed with the vigor, the bustle. "These Americans know what to do," and wonder ran over her face like a splash.

One after-supper visit with friends came to mind. I recall that mother and I stopped for a moment before the imposing house and the extended, meticulously cared-for garden surrounding it. I felt mother stiffen up. It was her first contact with a really rich or, as she would say, "high" American household. If she had any reservations, she did not let on. As we were led to the rose garden our hostess was advancing to meet mother and, with that slight pause reserved for muted appreciation of each other, pressed a choice of long stemmed roses into her arms. I saw mother melt.

We had tea with our host, his wife and his mother in the living room while I fielded their questions, mostly about family and mother's first impressions of America. When the spare dialogue had shrunk to an intensely human by-play of reciprocal glances, our host's mother, an old, refined, spare figure of a woman, observed, "I was so anxious for words, but we seem to understand each other."

At the end, after taking our host's parting bow, "So gracious of you to share the evening with us," there was mother, suffused with delight like a child in school suddenly remembering her lesson, blurting out her first English of the eve-

ning. "Nice—to—have—met—you—too." Everybody broke out laughing. It felt cool in the night as we walked away, mother hugging so tenderly her gift of roses. In the morning over coffee she made her comment, "Your friends, they are so simple-hearted."

When the time came (I knew she had given herself six months in America at the most), to my entreaties to stay longer she simply answered, "The others need me more." She left on schedule, but not without first indulging in a week-long compulsive shopping spree which reduced me to borrowing. "When will they ever have the chance to wear clothes as good as these if I do not bring them to them?" she would say, brushing me aside. She was more carefree than I could ever remember as she went about packing her purchases, whether toy, coat or toothbrush; she chattered about anything that came into her heart and she looked years younger.

During the postwar decades, when travel to Eastern Europe was so restricted, I kept hoping for a propitious moment to go back. I took it for granted that mother, like her own mother and grandmother before her, would live well into her 90s.

The news of her death at 83 took me completely by surprise. Impulsively I bowed and started to say the Lord's Prayer only to realize how pitifully little of it I remembered. "Our Father who art in heaven . . . give us . . . forgive us . . ." I wrote my sister and brother a few lines about our

good fortune for the mother we had had. She had lived to span six generations, long enough to console and bury great-grandmother Moma as well as to hold in her arms her great-grandson, Calin. She spoke of "nothing in excess," and served, as necessity beckoned, both the outsider and her own, leaving her imprint on all. And in her time she had danced with the resilience of a young tree swaying in the spring wind.

One of my mother's oldest friends, finding her in bed, chided her, "Get up, Victoria, you are not sick." Mother, who at that point was hovering between reality and remembrance, had simply smiled and then answered, "Dear friend, how long must I live?" (I could see her composed face and, moreover, relish the "equal eye" with which she would face the inevitable . . . "neither as victim nor as fanatic. . .")

So now in Bucharest, sitting in her chair by the rosebush, standing by her grave, I found these but bloodless substitutes for the hurt of an embrace. A vexing wind, grief; private, unspoken. For as long as I could remember, I had wanted to put a stone over my mother's head, all trimmings, loving inscription and enameled cameo. But here was this gray, fissured wooden cross, slightly askew, that spoke so clearly of reason and of her simple station in life, this clumsily put together artifact which the elements, in their confounding ways, had already molded into a proper monument. So let it stand. When sun, wind and rain will have rent its shape, effaced its identity, let these memory's gleanings speak of her. ■

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BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

BOOK REVIEWS

BALKAN CULTURAL STUDIES

by Prof. STAVRO SKENDI

PART III

RELIGION IN ALBANIA DURING THE OTTOMAN RULE

(pp. 151-162)

In the last issue of our Bulletin for 1981, it was stated that our main interest in Prof. Skendi's Balkan Studies book was the chapter on "Religion in Albania during the Ottoman Rule." Here are some highlights from that chapter. We raise some questions along the way. We make some comments on religious demise in Albania.

The author opens his chapter by pointing out that Albania has experienced unusual confessional changes since the religious schism of 1054 when she was split into Catholic North and Orthodox (Byzantine) South. The Normans, Angevins and Venetians passing through the Adriatic attacked the Byzantine Empire and the church power followed the vicissitudes of the political power which supported it. The local lords and bishops wavered between these two religions according to their momentary interests, which in turn prevented violent acts among Albanians.

It was Charles Thopia, a feudal lord of central Albania, who in 1385 asked for Turkish support to fight the Venetians and the northern Balshas. With this invitation the Ottomans stepped for the first time onto Albanian soil and Islam was introduced. A coalition headed by Balsha II and other Albanian lords to get rid of the Turks failed; subsequently, a large part of Albania reaching as far as Shkodra was invaded by Sultan Beyazid I in 1394-1396, and again in 1423 by Sultan Murad II, whose armies reached the Adriatic.

According to his research, Skendi attests that the Ottomans did not seem to have employed force in Albania for the propagation of Islam, and he stresses that the occupier forced the Albanian lords to pay a tribute (harac), send their sons as hostages, and furnish auxiliary troops (p. 152).

Skendi does not mention for how long the sons of the lords were taken hostage, a question which hasn't been made clear yet for lack of hard evidence, contradictions and interpretations. If hostages were kept for life, then the occupier had sentenced their parents not to have and enjoy their offspring forever; however, the lords were allowed to keep their possessions. The author also does not clarify if the hostages were allowed a free choice in the matter of religion. A vivid example of the hostage treatment comes from no less than our national hero, Skanderbeg, and his brothers. The principle of heritage was deep-rooted in the Middle Ages and with the exception of the Communist countries, it persists even today. Maybe it is because of this fact that Skendi writes mainly about these captured lords and their hostage sons in the beginning of his treatise rather than of the people who were actually left without leaders at the mercy of the conqueror; for, if the lords would rebel, our understanding is that their sons would have been beheaded. Consequently, leaders' activities were bound to silence and complete obedience until they would perish in misery. As he says yes, "You don't kill the snake until you have hit it on the head." The Ottomans applied this simple warning most effectively. Other circumstantial evidence and justifications by them range but from secondary to trivial ones.

As for the furnishing of the auxiliary troops, one may say for sure that most of the time they didn't return home, because they were usually put in the front lines, and if they tried to retreat, the Ottomans finished them. That was the fate of Albanians during the Ottoman occupation, and the term "auxiliary troops" really became a euphemism for a sure death.

Comparing the introductions of the first three themes of PART III, namely "Religion in Albania during the Ottoman Rule," "The Complex Environment of Skanderbeg's Activity" and "The Millet System and Its Contribution to the Blurring of Orthodox National Identity in Albania," Skendi has used not only the same facts and ideas, but also, at times, the same sentences embodied for the treatment of these themes. Consequently, "religion" seems to be one of the pillars of the two other themes as well, and raises some questions of fact.

Researching for the history of a nation which had but a limited number of documents left, since they were destroyed or burned by invaders, is a very hard job. The researcher has to base his work on foreign documents and particularly on those of the occupying power(s). In this respect, the Albanian historical researchers have a very hard task, i.e., to divest themselves of their national and/or religious bias. It is worst of all when the remaining documents are ignored or mis-read because of prejudice. On the other hand, accepting a thesis in terms of the victor's bias, or of indifferent scholars, creates a defeatist attitude, which weakens and confuses the spirit of people that survived. It was exactly this defeatism of lay Albanian intellectuals, so much admired by inexperienced youth, who didn't have even printed texts for the subjects they were studying, that during the 30s prepared the mistrust in them towards the Albanian traditional system and set the trap for the Communist-Panslavic ideology under the camouflage of the National Liberation Front.

Reading some statements and conclusions of PART III, the reader wonders whether the Albanians, whose alternatives for survival were very limited, were historically to be blamed or is the blame mainly with the oppressor. Part of a dim picture of the Albanian history is revealed, and by using but a limited number of Albanian documents, that dimness becomes darker.

Since the Albanian Communist government has repeatedly declared that it was the people themselves (and not the Party) who rejected all three religions, then it follows that a researcher could accept the communist propaganda as the truth. Did something similar happen recently with Billy Graham in Moscow?

Even when Albanian documents are quoted, the Albanian reader is left with a chilly hollow feeling about the values of his nation's traditions which helped him survive with that proud and magic name, "Albanian." (Well, we know that "pride and magic" are no concern to research and science, but the fact remains that people still fight and win by the magic of their national pride.)

Skendi is nowhere so harsh on the oppressor as he is on our national hero Skanderbeg, when he writes:

"Skanderbeg invited the Moslem colonists and converts to choose between Christianity and death. Those who rejected lost their lives." (p. 155)

However, he does mention that the Albanian Ali Pasha Tepelena demanded of the Albanian Christian Himariotes a similar mass conversion to Islam (p. 155).

The Albanian reader tends to wonder why Skendi gives the impression that the occupation by Turks wasn't so bad for Albanians until the troublemaker Skanderbeg came onto the scene. Our national hero comes out to be at fault. On the other hand the main source about Skanderbeg's wars against the Ottomans was written by a contemporary eyewitness, a priest from Shkodra, Marin Barleti (Marinus Barletius, *Historia de Vita et Gestis Scanderbegi*, Rome, 1506-1510). Skendi does not mention Barleti in this question of forced conversion. Apparently Skendi agrees with critics of Barleti (p. 205), considering his work unhistorical, and stating that he survived because of its literary merits. In this context one may well ask: "Who is biased against whom?"

For the apostasy among Catholics, the author finds three main reasons: to avoid paying taxes, the attraction of worldly advantages, and the lack of clergy (p. 154).

For the apostasy among the Orthodox, who did not lack clergy, he gives only the first two reasons. The lack of Catholic clergy was deeply felt right after the death of the national hero Skanderbeg and the great exodus of Albanians to Italy. The baptismal formula written in Albanian in 1502 (the earliest Albanian document found to date) by Archbishop Pal Engjëlli (Paulus Angjelus) was propagated so that any Catholic could baptize either a newly born child or an adult who had not been baptized because of the war.

Apostasy in Albania appears to have been properly researched. However, in describing the "Catholic north," few specifics are given. Rather, Skendi cites generally life in the secluded mountains of the north as the main reason for the survival of Catholicism in Albania. This statement is true as far as mountaineers of the Albanian Alps north of the river Drin, and those of Pukë, south of Drin, are concerned, but that does not apply to the Mirdita region which remained during the whole occupation the only compact and intact Catholic zone with no Crypto-Christians at all, nor does it apply to Himara in the South, with a type of semi-independence recognized by the High Port. Furthermore, one can enter this region through the right bank of the lower Mati River, which joins the Fani River, and then through Kthella right into the heart of Mirdita. The river beds and banks continue northeast from a lower elevation to the gradually elevated arable lands of Kthella and on up to the hills and lower mountains. The same goes for the other west-east road from Deja Ford (Vau i Dejës) and Bushati village via Giadri River which takes the traveler even in a smoother way into the center of Mirdita. The region is protected by mountains only in the eastern and northern sides, but none of them reaching 2,000 m. A third way to enter the region from the west is from Lezha and Nenshat of Zadrina. One needs only half an hour walk to reach the peak of Kreshta which was the border between Zadrina and Mirdita. Therefore, the phrase "secluded by mountains" really does not apply to Mirdita, and even until the last war one could see ruins of monasteries, churches and other buildings burned and ruined by the occupier, just as one could notice similar ruins in the lower lands of Shkodër, Mat, Magellar (Allajbegi), Kruja, Shpat, Polis, Voskopojë, and other parts of our country. Unfortunately the destruction of these ruins has continued in this region even after the independence. Indeed, even the main schools and remaining ancient carved stone walls have been demolished to obtain gravel.

Again in this context, we might ask, why also the present Albanian Communist government didn't spare, as an historic cultural heritage, at least one single Albanian Catholic church, as it did with a good number of Orthodox churches and a few mosques, when it officially abolished all three religions and their institutions? The reason given by its press is that they were lately built and that they didn't have any historical or artistic value. This sounds as if Catholicism in Albania was introduced for the first time during the 18th century when, as Prof. Skendi points out, the Catholics fared better than in the 17th century under the protection of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. And still one may continue to ask: Weren't there Catholic churches during the Middle Ages in our towns and villages? Was the ambassador and emissary of Skanderbeg, Archbishop Pal Engjëlli (Paulus Angjelus) without a church and bishopry residence? How about other bishoprics? Weren't monasteries and schools built? Perhaps they were built so purely that they couldn't stand the time? What else could the Christian names of hundreds of Albanian villages indicate besides the names of their saint protectors and the names of ruined churches? Who caused the destruction? Was the Albanian Catholic clergy of that time so ignorant, indifferent and unconcerned as to leave no records in any carved stone or other documents in Latin or Albanian? Weren't there Buzuku, Budi, Bardhi, Bogdani, Matranga and other northern Catholic priests who translated the Bible, wrote the Catechism and poems in Albanian after the occupation and offered to the nation for the first time written documents in our vernacular? Weren't there the northern Albanian Catholics who defied the Turkish rule? Why then such an indifference and nonrecognition directed towards them? Haven't the majority of Albanians during our country's calamities followed the emigration path not towards the East but towards the West, just as the Albanians did in the aftermath of Skanderbeg's death and complete occupation by the invader?

Analyzing the religious reasons why Skanderbeg was accepted as a national hero by the three religious groups (Orthodox, Catholic, and Moslem) Skendi writes:

"Let it be said from the outset that the Albanians, owing to historical conditions, have never been religious people." (p. 208) (our underlining)

We must object to this assertion for the following reasons:

1. It seems to contradict the author's repeated statement that "whenever an uprising occurred [and we add: consequently crushed], apostasy followed" (p. 155). Didn't the Turks use force to crush revolts? The author vaguely excludes force as a reason for Albanians' apostasy.
2. When a person denies his religion and becomes either agnostic or antireligious, then we say that he is not a religious person, but we don't say this when a person is converted from one religion to another, which is the case of Albanians who became Moslems. Certainly one cannot prove or say that Albanian Moslems have been or are non-religious people. That categorical statement applies solely to the present Albanian Communist government. It cannot be applied so strictly either before the occupation, or after it, or even to Albanians leaving at the present time under the pressure of an antireligious government.
3. It is true that religions were used to anesthetize the Albanian national awakening, but this was done by the occupier and by our neighbors. (Skendi himself stresses this point on p. 162.) Their active religious propaganda didn't by any means create non-religious people in Albania. On the contrary, it tended to create fanatics, for it was exactly against this perfidious propaganda that our Albanian renaissance leaders arose, because of the Slavic and Hellenic threats to the partition of our lands and the nation (Skendi's masterpiece The Albanian National Awakening 1878-1912 confirms this). However, neither our enlightened leaders nor those who followed them became non-religious people. In fact, among them were priests and Moslem clergy, and indeed, some of the latter were executed or exiled. If we adhere to Skendi's assertion, then we would have to label the Behtashian Moslem poet, Niam Frashëri, the national poet, Fr. Gjergj Fishta of Franciscan order, and the Orthodox Bishop Fan S. Noli as non-religious Albanians.
4. Finally, what about Albanian emigrants and particularly those living in the USA, and what about Albanians living under the Belgrade Communist regime? Haven't the Albanian emigrants here in the USA built their religious shrines, churches and mosques, in an exemplary spirit of ecumenism and nationalism?

Prof. Skendi's assertion about the non-religious Albanian character does not stand. Perhaps, rather unconsciously and naively, it follows the line of Communist propaganda.

The preceding objections and questions were mainly offered so that Albanian emigrants without distinction of religion may strive for the creation of an independent Institute of Albanian Studies in this country of opportunities. By doing this our students wouldn't be forced to pursue their liberal arts studies under the constrictions of Romanic, Slavic, Arabic or other institutions. The Society for Albanian Studies (SAS), already functioning in Illinois under the presidency of Dr. Nikollë Pano, and the Honorary President, Prof. Skendi, should be supported in these aims.





"THE QUEST FOR THE HISTORICAL JESUS OF NAZARETH"

By

Armando Guidetti, S.J.
(Rusconi, Rome)

The new book by Armando Guidetti fills a present need for greater insight into the historical facts about Jesus' life. As much as we would like to review Guidetti's recent work, we have been unable to obtain a copy. Nevertheless, we are happy to inform our readers that Armando Guidetti is an Italian Jesuit priest and well known author. His book Padre Fausti, published in 1976 (Civiltà Cattolica, Rome), is a suspense-filled biography of his confrere, Fr. Gjon Fausti, Jesuit Vice-Provincial martyred in Albania in March of 1946. Father Guidetti has shown his love and concern for the persecuted Church and believers in Albania, not only through this book, but in many other ways. He was deeply involved in the task of obtaining

the canonization of modern Albanian martyrs.

Our photo shows Fr. Guidetti during the recent presentation of his book at the Cultural Center in Rome, attended by over 300 dignitaries. Among those present were Sabastiano Cardinal Baggio, Mrs. Nannini, wife of the President of the Italian Senate, many scholars of Sacred Scripture, and other religious and civic leaders.

The forth-coming Encyclopedia of 20th Century Jesuits, will include Father Guidetti's work on the Jesuits in Albania. This work will contain biographies of distinguished Albanian Jesuits as well as their works, schools and colleges, periodicals, and other activities. Important as an historical tool, this work will shed new light about the Jesuit presence in Albania during turbulent times, and new insights of individuals who made great contributions to the Church and country.

Father Guidetti's book, The Quest for the Historical Jesus of Nazareth, was well received by the Italian press and readership. We hope to have the opportunity of reading the book soon in an English translation.



A NEW BOOK ON SCANDERBEG

Ever since Scanderbeg and his handful of intrepid warriors halted the Ottoman tide on the shores of the Adriatic for a quarter of a century, the medieval national hero of Albania has been a focal point of interest and fascination for the outside world. The bibliography on Scanderbeg numbers in the hundreds of titles, and includes works of history, novels, poems, and plays in French, Italian, German, English, Rumanian, Turkish, Greek and other languages. Nor is that all. Artists have painted his portrait, engravers have depicted his battles against the Turks, and composers have written operas about him. And only recently, a plaque was dedicated to his memory in one of the plazas of Paris.

He has been praised and eulogized by soldiers, historians, and poets. General James Wolfe, the English commander who seized Quebec from the French in 1759, said of Scanderbeg that "He excels all officers, ancient and modern, in the conduct of a small defensive army." And the French philosopher and historian, Voltaire, had remarked: "Had the Green Emperors been men like Scanderbeg, the Eastern Empire would have been saved" from the Turks.

Now a new book on Scanderbeg has just come off the press. Its author, Charles Ewert, is a 34-year-old Canadian in Newcastle, Ontario. A lawyer by profession, Mr. Ewert wrote the book on the "request and inspiration" of Duro Cini, whom he describes as "a devout Albanian" living in Toronto.

The book is in the genre of the historical romance. It is fictionalized history, or a form of history which allows the author wide latitude for the imaginative treatment of events, in order to impart "flesh and blood" to those events, and make history come alive. This book succeeds well in that aim. It tells with force and passion the legendary story of Scanderbeg. It's a colorful and moving story, full of the human drama in moments of crisis and struggle. It's an enjoyable story, if it is read as fiction—or primarily as fiction—rather than as history. Otherwise, the reader would be disappointed or led astray.

The book has many points in its favor. There are passages of fine dialogue and a number of striking lines. Thus: "We may not kill the Turk but we will drive him mad." And when Scanderbeg asks Andronica (Donika) "what manner of son" she would bear him, she says: "He shall be proud and brave; as handsome as the princes of Illyrian legend and as pure and strong as the heart of his country.... He shall be, my lord, like his father."

There are moving descriptions of places like Adrianople and the Sultan's court, and stirring accounts of battles and jousting tournaments. The portraits of two leading female characters, Donika and Dara, are drawn well. The author is knowledgeable about Turkish life and culture at the time; customs and psychology, etiquette in the Sultan's court, and the secrets for climbing up the ladder of power and glory in the Ottoman Empire.

The defects of the book relate mainly to history and questions of morals. As one reads *Scanderbeg*, one keeps asking oneself: Is this true? Did this really happen? Is this consistent with the character of Scanderbeg, or Sultan Murat (the author uses the Turkish rendering "Ahmuret" instead), or the moral code of the time?

We are told that Scanderbeg returned to Gheya in October, instead of in late November of 1443. We are told that two of Scanderbeg's brothers, Stanish and Constantine, were poisoned by the Sultan in Adrianople. But this is far from certain. Bishop Noli, for example, disagrees. The figures for battle casualties are so heavily in favor of the Albanians that one has difficulty believing them, even allowing for the extraordinary skill and daring of the Albanians, and the genius of Scanderbeg. It is

even more difficult to accept the story that Scanderbeg's sister, Mamica ("Mamitza" in the book) had sexual relations while yet a maiden, and that Scanderbeg forgave her this infraction of the moral code. Such an account, I'm afraid, takes too much liberty with the morality of the age, even if it does make Scanderbeg a magnanimous Christian.

The main consideration, of course, is the treatment of Scanderbeg in the book. It is evident from the start that the author is fascinated by Albania's national hero. His admiration for him is unmistakable. Scanderbeg is portrayed here not only as a military genius, but as a judicious statesman, a patriot wholly devoted to his country, a man of upright character, selfless, fearless, and gracious. Frustrated by Scanderbeg's brilliant victories, Sultan Murat cries out: "He is not a man. He cannot be or we would have defeated him years ago. He must be a devil or a wizard...." Colorful language, indeed.

Yet here, too, the book is not above criticism. It seems that, in an effort to make Scanderbeg a more rounded figure, subject to human doubts and frailties, the book tends to alter or even to tarnish his image in some respects. In one passage he is depicted as slovenly and "insanely drunk," and elsewhere he is shown consorting intimately with Dara, the ravishing Turkish slave. In places he questions his destiny, feels despondent, and talks like a defeatist. And here and there he seems overly pious in his rhetoric for a hard-headed general and statesman. But perhaps such elements are necessary ingredients for a book in this genre.

This book does not tell the whole story of Scanderbeg. It only takes the story to about 1450, or the end of the reign of Sultan Murat. The author intends to complete the story in another book, on which he is presently working.

Mr. Charles Ewert has written a readable historical romance on Scanderbeg and medieval Albania. The pages of this book shine with his warm sentiments for Albania and the Albanian people. He respects Albanians for their heroic acts of courage and daring, their spirit of freedom and their love of independence. Understandably, he sees in Scanderbeg the immortal embodiment of those virtues.

The book's publisher is Double Eagle Publishing Ltd., P.O. Box 9, Newcastle, Ont., Canada.

GRAMOZI

SANDERFALL ALBANIEN
(Albania, an Extraordinary Case)

by Bernard Tönnies

This outstanding work of 512 pages on contemporary Albania, recently published in Germany, has aroused great interest among scholars and people interested in South Eastern European affairs. A book of this kind has been sorely needed to fill the vacuum of actual knowledge of that region, and particularly, Albania.

The author has divided the book in two parts. The first deals with Albania's past and present-day history, while the second contains the most important events of the twentieth century, and an analysis of factors which brought Enver Hoxha to power.

Bernard Tönnies, an Associate of the well-known University of Munich Institute for South Eastern Europe, studied in Yugoslavia, speaks Albanian and Serbian, and is an expert on Balkan affairs. Written in German, we hope to see the book soon translated into other languages, especially English. It is available through the Publishing House R. Oldenburg, Munich, West Germany or by writing to: Südost Institut, Güllstr. 7, München, West Germany.

"OH ALBANIA, MY POOR ALBANIA"

by James Wm. Pandeli

Albanian-American presents a unique history book about the Albanian people from 'the beginning of time,' 'the beginning of the world.' This book projects the idea that the ancient Albanian history has been preserved in Greek literature. The idea is based on a combination of Greek literature, the Albanian language, and the possible etymology of ancient names. The analysis is made by applying the perceptions of pre-historic man. The book also reveals an 'archeological find'—the Shkumbi (Genusus) River—and its relation to antiquity and the Albanian tribes.

Did the people of the ancient world think that 'the beginning' took place in what is now the general area of Albania? If so, what are the implications for western man? Does this book represent a new understanding of the dawn of western civilization and the Albanian culture? Does it reconcile, in part, Darwin's Theory of Evolution with both the Biblical conception of 'the beginning' and Hesiod's 'Genesis of the Gods' in Greek literature by showing how pre-historic man—through the Albanian language—might have created the ideas and names of the gods from his perception of the natural surroundings? Have we reached a stage in our evolution—the nuclear age—where the concept of 'Earth-Mother' should again be a primary concern? These questions are not answered by the book, but are created from an insight it can provide.

The book is soft-cover; 8½ x 11 in.; 78 pages plus introductory material and bibliography. Available by writing to James Wm. Pandeli, P.O. Box 2414, Darien, CT, 06820.

VALUABLE PUBLICATION

FRASHERI'S SONG OF ALBANIA

Under this title we present Prof. Ali Cungu's English version of Naim Frasheri's Baqeti e Bujqesia beautifully bound and printed by one of the best printing presses of New York.

For those who have not been to Albania or read about the beauty and natural splendor of this Balkan country, Frasheri's descriptions present a vivid picture of man and nature in complete harmony as opposed to the theme of man against nature.

For the Albanians living in the free world, Frasheri's work has a special significance. Naim's cry almost a century ago is to this day alive on the lips of every exile: *Alas! will the day be dawning: / will I ever live to see / My beloved mother country / happy, prosperous, truly free!*

But perhaps the greatest advantage of this English version of Frasheri's work lies in the fact that it will keep the national spirit alive among the descendants of present day Albanian immigrants for generations to come. It will inspire every generation to take an interest in the land of its forefathers and be proud of its heritage.

For this and many other reasons Frasheri's Song of Albania should be found in every Albanian home. Copies may be ordered from: Mahmoud Cungu, 21 Sycamore Ave., Floral Park, N.Y., 11001.

AN ALBANIAN'S PRAYER

GOD ALMIGHTY—we beseech you
grant to man what is true and good:
Wisdom, kindness and compassion,
friendship, love and brotherhood!

Grant that happy days of freedom
dawn again for our land.
May the people of Albania
live together, hand in hand!

May the days of truth and justice
reign supreme and men be free.
May the days of darkness vanish
and deception cease to be!

From FRASHERI'S SONG OF ALBANIA

STANDARD ALBANIAN

A Reference Grammar for Students

Leonard Newmark, Philip Hubbard, and Peter Prifti

Since World War II, a concerted effort has been under way to agree on a single dialect of Albanian to serve as a standard language of the country. That effort has resulted in the publication in Albania of three important reference works: a volume of orthographic rules, an authoritative orthographic dictionary, and a comprehensive reference grammar. The present volume is in large part an adaptation and translation of the reference grammar.

Intended for English-speaking students of present-day Albanian, it is not a complete textbook for learning the language, but rather a book to be consulted for clarification and amplification of grammatical matters raised during the study of the language. An introductory chapter presents a sketch of the country and its background, a history and classification of the language and its dialects, and a sketch of Albanian phonology. Following that is a detailed grammatical description of standard Albanian, with individual chapters on verbs; nouns; adjectives; adverbs; gradation, comparison, and qualification; numbers; pronouns; prepositions; conjunctions and clauses; particles; and interjections.

Leonard Newmark is Professor of Linguistics at the University of California, San Diego. Philip Hubbard is Lecturer in Linguistics at San Diego State University. Peter Prifti is Albanian Consultant to the Albanian Language Project at the University of California, San Diego. Standard Albanian is available by writing to the Stanford University Press, Palo Alto, California.

THE MIRACLE OF LOVE

Mother Teresa of Calcutta, Her Missionaries of Charity, and Her Co-Workers

by KATHRYN SPINK

Inspiring text, compelling photographs, and the words of Mother Teresa—including letters published here for the first time—combine in the most complete account of how one remarkable woman's mission has blossomed into a global outpouring of love. The Miracle of Love relates the inexhaustible efforts of the International Co-Workers as it points the way for all of us, everywhere, to share in the work of the Missionaries of Charity by doing "small things with great love."

256 pages; large format; 34 full-color, 56 black-and-white photographs. Available at your local bookstores, or directly from: Harper & Row, San Francisco, 1700 Montgomery St., CA 94111.

NEW FILMS ON THE LIFE OF MOTHER TERESA

Two Yugoslav film production companies, SADRAN FILMS of Zagreb and VALDAR FILMS of Skopje, are filming in cooperation with Italian state television a documentary on the life of Mother Teresa. The main source for the documentary is a biography of Mother Teresa published in Albanian last year by Dr. Lush Gjergji, an Albanian priest and author residing in Yugoslavia.

At the same time a feature length film on the life of Mother Teresa, entitled "La Voce" (The Call) is in the final stages of completion. The producer of the film is the well known Italian filmmaker Oscar Bracci. The role of Mother Teresa's father is played by the internationally acclaimed Albanian actor, Bekim Fehmiu, while the main

role of Gonxha Bojaxhiu (Mother Teresa) is taken by Lilian Tari. The film will be premiered in the native city of Mother Teresa, Skopje, by the end of this year. Many journalists from Europe and abroad are scheduled to attend.

BISHOPS' COUNCIL PAMPHLET ON

EASTERN EUROPE

A twenty page pamphlet regarding the state of the Catholic Church in Eastern Europe has been published by the Catholic Truth Society and the Catholic Information Services in England. It is the work of the Bishops of England and Wales' Committee for Europe. The pamphlet gives a short synopsis of the history of Communist religious persecution in Eastern Europe coupled with a rundown on the current situation including a small paragraph on Albania. The reality of persecution is balanced with a summary of the basic principles of religious freedom which Pope John Paul II enumerates in his letter of September 1, 1980, to all the governments which signed the Helsinki Final Act (all the governments of Eastern Europe signed except Albania). There is a section (which includes a bibliography) encouraging action on behalf of the believers. The pamphlet can be obtained from the Incorporated Catholic Truth Society, 38-40 Eccleston Square, London SW1C 1PD.

ANOTHER ALBANIAN TRANSLATION OF

THE NEW TESTAMENT

At Easter time another translation of the New Testament in Albanian was published by the Croatian religious publishing house, Krscanska Sadasnjost of Zagreb. An Albanian priest, Fr. Simon Filipaj, a diocesan priest in Montenegro near the Albanian border, is responsible for this new translation. He is also the author of several religious works in Albanian.

We are informed that a group of Albanian priests and scholars from Kosova and Montenegro are preparing a complete Bible in Albanian. They hope to make this available by the end of next year.

The first translation of the New Testament into Albanian was made several years ago by Monsignor Joseph J. Oroshi*. We have learned that copies are still available; they can be obtained by writing to Monsignor Oroshi at 4221 Park Avenue, Bronx, New York, 10457.

* After WW II, Mgr. Oroshi was imprisoned in Albania for his religious leadership. Upon his release he evaded the police by hiding in the Albanian mountains and there became the spiritual guide to the guerrilla freedom fighters, celebrating underground Mass, preaching the word of God whenever and wherever he could. Through persistent efforts and great sacrifices, he established the first Albanian Catholic Church in the Western hemisphere, located in the Bronx, N.Y.

A NEW BOOK PUBLISHED IN ITALY ABOUT THE ILLYRIANS

Enzo Gatti «The Illyrians»

Recently the book «The Illyrians», written by advocate Enzo Gatti, was published and put into circulation by the Fram Sud Publishing House of Chiaravalle. It is in two volumes; the first «Iliri propo dletti» («Autochthonous Illyrians»), and the second «I popoli iliri» («The Illyrian People»).

Advocate Enzo Gatti has won recognition as a scholar of prehistory and ancient writings through earlier works, including two volumes on the Etruscans, a good part of which is occupied by inscriptions.

Gatti's latest work, «The Illyrians», was welcomed by archaeological circles and amateurs of Catanzaro, where it made its first appearance. In the first volume the author deals with the main questions concerning the autochthonous Illyrians, such as the relationship between Illyrians and the barbarians, the Illyrian economy and society, the writing and religious beliefs of the Illyrians, archaeology and toponymy. The second volume covers a wider field than that of the autochthonous Illyrians, and includes populations not only from Italy, but also from the Iberian Peninsula and the Aegean.

This broad coverage, in which attention is always centered on the Illyrians, has obliged the author to do a great deal of research, to use and interpret the most varied sources. As in his other studies, however, it must be said that one field, to which the author has dedicated himself with the passion of a true researcher, is ancient writings. This strikes the eye in both volumes, but especially in the second. This new work by Enzo Gatti is enriched

by the wealth of illustrations which accompany the different texts, in which pictures of the monuments and objects found in the PSR of Albania are of interest.

Regarding this new work on the Illyrians one frequently comes across original opinions of the author. In general, he maintains a critical stand towards Greco-Latin sources, something which has been lacking in the old historiography about the Illyrians. In regard to the economy of the Illyrians, the role of agriculture is properly appreciated in the book, while the Illyrian ceramics and its characteristic features are dealt with well in the chapter on archaeology.

In both volumes, especially concerning the ancient writings, the author tries to give new interpretations which often deviate from the traditional ones. Like every new opinion, these interpretations or explanations may not find many supporters at first, but they open the way to extensive discussion, which is always beneficial.

The new work of advocate Enzo Gatti merits the attention of scholars, not only because it is devoted to the Illyrians, a major population of the Mediterranean basin in ancient times, but also because questions of special interest not only about the Illyrians but also about other inhabitants of the Mediterranean basin are presented and discussed.

Congratulating the author on the great research he has done in his study of the Illyrians, we wish him further success in producing new works of scientific value.

NEW ALBANIA



A SCHOOL'S BIOGRAPHY

RED CROSS-BLACK EAGLE: A Biography of Albania's American School, 1921-1933, by Joan Fultz Kontos, East European Monographs, distributed by Columbia University Press, \$17.

After World War I, Albania was the smallest of the independent southeastern European states and the most lacking in technological expertise. With its battle-scarred, earthquake-prone terrain being covetously eyed by Yugoslavia, Greece, and Italy, it struggled to maintain a very shaky independence, gained in 1912 from the Ottoman Empire. Problems of poverty, illiteracy, disease-induced lethargy, and political instability were formidable. Education was limited to a meager network of primary schools plus two secondary schools, neither of which offered technical or vocational courses.

The American Red Cross came to Albania in 1919 on a disaster relief mission to alleviate the suffering caused by the constant Balkan wars and numerous earthquakes. Since its mission focused on public health, the Red Cross asked the Junior Red Cross to help es-

tablish and maintain a technical school in Tirana with the aid and cooperation of the Albanian Ministry of Education. The effort, begun in 1921, was a cooperative one of Albanian material and U.S. experience, ideas, and technology. And no attempt was made to transplant a typical American institution to Albania. *Red Cross-Black Eagle* is a fascinating "biography" of this 12-year accomplishment.

Those readers who are familiar with the remarkable influence of two nearby American schools which were well established at this time—the American Farm School in Thessaloniki, Greece, and Robert College in Istanbul, Turkey—will appreciate the author's insights into the spirit of the Albanian Vocational School as well as its practical accomplishments. AVS did more than provide technical and agricultural training for its students. It derived income from its training operations—a printing press, an ice plant, a power plant, a dairy farm, a stock-breeding experiment—and from short post-graduate classes open to alumni living in the Tirana area. As in the American Farm School and Robert College, the personal dedication, character, and expertise of the American directors

and teachers were influential in shaping students who later became leaders throughout the Balkans and the Near East.

Joan Fultz Kontos is eminently qualified to write the school's biography. She is the daughter of Harry T. Fultz, who served as its director for 11 years before it was nationalized in 1933. The author includes correspondence from both her father and Charles Hollingshead, the assistant director, to friends and families, giving a first-hand view of the school's exceptional accomplishments. She includes detailed reports from the National Archives, Red Cross files, and the AVS newspaper. A bibliography and collection of photographs complete the book.

Kontos has both the personal knowledge of the country and the scholastic qualifications to present an accurate background of the political and social conditions in Albania during the period. In addition to having lived and traveled in Albania, the author was a member of a U.S. diplomatic mission to that country in the late 1940s.

—DAWN H. CUTHELL

("Foreign Service Journal," January 1982)

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION ON CRYPTO-CHRISTIANS OF STUBLA (KOSOVA)

In last year's issue we printed an article regarding the Albanian Crypto-Christians in Kosova who were known in Albania by the name "Iaramani." Because of the persecution against Catholics during the Turkish occupation, they adopted Muslim names and customs while secretly praying, celebrating Catholic feasts and receiving the sacrament at home.

Last November, Dr. Gjergji Gjergji-Gashi, a priest of the diocese of Prizren in Kosova, defended his dissertation entitled Albanian Martyrs of the Diocese of Skopje-Prizren in Kosova, 1846-1848. Many professors and students were present to hear his defense along with Cardinal N. Rossi, President of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, and other prelates.

The introduction of the dissertation is a condensed survey of Albanian history, with a particular emphasis on the period of the Ottoman occupation. In the main body of the work Dr. Gjergji-Gashi describes in touching ways, the martyrdom of a group of Albanian Crypto-Christians during their bloody journey from Kosova to Turkey and back. The author of this valuable documentary also includes an overwhelming dossier of 218 documents in different languages which deal with these Albanian martyrs. Dr. Gjergji-Gashi did research for his work at the archives of Rome, the Vatican, Paris, Vienna, Istanbul, London and Ankara. His dissertation is expected to be published soon, in book form in the Albanian, Italian and Croatian languages.

MICHEL PICCOLI FILMING IN ALBANIA

Michel Piccoli, a leading French movie actor, is presently filming "The General of the Dead Army" in Albania. The film is based upon the book of the same title by the contemporary Albanian writer Ismail Kadare.

Before going to Albania, Piccoli was interviewed last year by the Croatian Catholic bi-weekly, Voice of the Council (Glas Koncila). He spoke at length to the readers about his happy childhood and his life as an actor and believer. He emphasized the determined role Christ has played in his life.

Piccoli said, "To me, Christ is the greatest example in human history. He is the meaning of our existence and of everything in this world. Many might say that I am a traditionalist, but I believe that without Christ, the world will be like a body without a soul. Today, Christ belongs to everyone, irrespective of race, social or cultural categories. He belongs to all who sincerely seek good for themselves and humanity."



In a recent interview with the Albanian journalists in Tirana, Michel Piccoli spoke with high praise of the Albanian people and their noble traditions of freedom and hospitality. We trust and hope that during the present filming this great artist will encounter and be inspired by witnesses for the faith and for God.

COMMUNIST LEADERS ATTACK KADARE, LEADING ALBANIAN AUTHOR

The most popular writer in Albania, Ismail Kadare, who has reportedly been a protege of Albanian dictator Enver Hoxha, was accused earlier this year by several of the leading Albanian communists of using the device of historical themes to raise issues which are damaging to the socialist society of Albania. These attacks on Kadare come at a time when his works are gaining international acceptance and acclaim as well as in the middle of the Albanian filming of Kadare's novel, The General of the Dead Army, by an Italian company. The most direct accusation against Kadare has been made by Dritan Agolli, chairman of

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the Writer's Union, who was recently elevated to membership in the Central Committee of the Albanian Party of Labor. Agolli, himself a writer who has not attained the popularity of Kadare, claims that Kadare's use of terms such as "isolationism" and "foreign influences" in his historical novels amounts to a criticism of the current socialist society in Albania. Ramiz Alia, the country's chief communist ideologist, while not referring to Kadare by name, has strongly supported the views of Agolli in speeches before the Writer's Union.

The attacks on Kadare were fairly unexpected in light of the prominence which Kadare has gained in Albania. In a recent interview with a foreign correspondent in Albania, given before the attacks on him began, Kadare stated that he had no problem with the regime, his books sold well, and he was by no means a dissident writer because there were none in Albania. In addition Kadare has been allowed to travel to France, Germany and Italy on a regular basis, a highly unusual liberty for the leaders of Albania to grant.

The open charge made by these high ranking communist officials against a popular writer, who until only recently was thought to be considered above reproach by the communist leadership, signals the presence of serious dissent within some Albanian circles and also the nervousness of the Party of Labor in regard to that dissent.

NINTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF ALBANIAN STUDIES

Last November 25 to 28 the Ninth International Congress of Albanian Studies was held at the University of Palermo. The purpose of this gathering was multi-faceted, however, the main goal was to inform the public about the presence of the large Arberesh ethnic population in Italy and the urgent need for legislation by the Italian parliament to guarantee national rights to all minorities.

The final session of the Congress took place on the Albanian national Independence Day, November 28. That evening the newly appointed Bishop of Piana degli Albanesi, Iracli Lupinacci, officiated at a special liturgy in Arberesh attended by a multitude of the Congress participants along with many others, including Cardinal Salvatore Pappalardo, Archbishop of Palermo. After the service, Cardinal Pappalardo congratulated the new Bishop and the other Arberesh clergy for the beautiful singing and liturgy.



IN MEMORIAM

BISHOP JOSEPH PERNICIARO
(1907-1981)

The name of Bishop Joseph Perniciaro is now inscribed in the Book of Life. His soul rests in the bosom of Abraham, Issac and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven. The beloved bishop died June 5, 1981. To his flock in Piana degli Albanesi (near Palermo), whom he



guided for forty years, to the Arberesh in Italy and around the world, and to all Albanians, he leaves a rich patrimony of virtue and a bright example of humility, simplicity and goodness of soul. A good and caring father to all, he filled with hope, comfort, love and faith everyone with whom he came in contact. His charity was lived with intensity and tact based on the Gospels' message of love.

The venerable Bishop was born January 11, 1907, in Mezzojuso, in the heart of the Arberesh people in Sicily. In his teens, Perniciaro entered the seminary and completed high school in Palermo. He graduated (with a degree in Philosophy and Theology) from the Pontifical College of the Byzantine Rite, St. Athanasius, in Rome. In 1929, he obtained his doctorate in Theology from the Gregorian University and bachelor's degree in Oriental Church Studies. Ordained the same year, Perniciaro was named Rector of the Arberesh Seminary in Palermo. There he excelled in cultivating faithfully the Arberesh traditions of that august institution. Even today, many priests and educators remember him with gratitude for the decisive role he played in their formation. His piety and hard work soon became known and appreciated by the

people and Church hierarchy. Recognizing Perniciaro's abilities, the Holy Father named him Bishop of Piana degli Albanesi on October 26, 1937, making him the youngest bishop in the world.

During his long pastoral ministry as bishop and Patriarch of the Arberesh Byzantine Rite Church, Joseph Perniciaro became a pioneer and distinguished leader in the ecumenical process between the Church of Rome and Constantinople. He actively participated in the works of Vatican Council II.

On the national level, Bishop Perniciaro, with the help of many notable Arberesh, founded the Italian Catholic Association for Eastern Christians, with the aim of promoting Christian understanding and unity. Several years later, in 1948, he became a co-founder of the Center for Albanian Studies at the University of Palermo and one of its presidents. His love and zeal for the Arberesh and Albanians did not stop there. In 1963, with his closest associates and friends, he founded the Relief Committee for Albanian Refugees, based in Palermo, which served and helped many needy and desperate refugees, particularly in Italy.

In 1968, the Bishop led at the Vatican the Albanian and Arberesh around the world in a solemn commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the death of Skanderbeg, the 15th

century Albanian national hero. On this occasion Pope Paul VI referred to Albanians as the "bridge of Ecumenism." The next year the venerable bishop travelled to the United States as the head of a large delegation of Arberesh bishops, clergy and laity to continue the Skanderbeg commemoration organized in New York and Boston by Pan Albanian federation VATRA. In New York's St. Patrick Cathedral, the beloved bishop and the Arberesh clergy, together with Bishop Iasko, head of the Albanian Orthodox Arch in America and his clergy, celebrated an ecumenical liturgy in the presence of Cardinal Terrence Cook. A similar celebration took place at the Albanian Orthodox Cathedral of St. George, Boston, in the presence of the Cardinal, the Governor and other civic and religious leaders.



Fr. Gjergji Shiroci & Mr. Ndue P. Gjomarkaj, associates of Bishop Perniciaro's relief committee, visiting with Albanian refugees in Italy.

His labors in the ecumenical field and most of all his fatherly goodness were highlighted at his solemn funeral celebration in the presence of many church and civic leaders from Italy and abroad as well as a multitude of his flock.

With the death of Bishop Perniciaro, we have lost a great champion of unity and a loving, devoted father. Yet his image and work remain with us forever.

P.D.—S

A proof of the loving concern for his beloved Albanians is exemplified in the brief note written to us which we reprint as a sign of our gratitude for the privilege of knowing him.



Dearest Friend,

I greatly appreciated the beautiful publication The Fulfilled Promise you sent me. Many thanks.

I would also appreciate it if you could tell me, from time to time, something regarding our Albanian brothers in the USA.

I hope this letter finds you in good health.

With cordial greetings,

Yours,

Giuseppe Perniciaro

FRANJO CARDINAL ŠEPER
(1905-1981)

Franjo Cardinal Šeper, President of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, died in Rome on December 30, 1981. His long life was spent in the service of the Universal Church and his Croatian people.

After the death of Cardinal A. Stepinac in 1960, Šeper was appointed Archbishop of Zagreb, and in 1965, Pope Paul VI nominated him cardinal. In January 1968, Cardinal Šeper was chosen to lead the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, the key position in Church hierarchy.

Pope John Paul II celebrated the Mass of the Resurrection and, in His homily, referred to Šeper as "strong in faith and unwavering in purpose as his Croatian people."

The Cardinal was most sympathetic to the suffering church in Albania and Albanian seminarians in Rome looked to him for their needs as if he was one of their prelates.

With deep gratitude for his life and work, we print a letter from the Cardinal which affirms his sympathy for our people and close spiritual links between the Church in Croatia and Albania. Bishop Bumci, of whom he speaks in the letter, died in Albania in 1945 while under arrest.

Estimated Sir,

You were kind to send me the book "The Fulfilled Promise" which you have published. Thank you from my heart. I thank you especially for your effort to inform the public about the martyrdom of believers in Albania. Albania is covered by a thick curtain through which almost nothing can be seen. You have opened that curtain and have warned about the tragic facts which show how far militant atheism can go when it is identified with the state. Tyrannies are not for ever. We hope that the blood of the martyrs in Albania will bear fruit.

With cordial greetings,
Franjo Cardinal Šeper

P.S. It might interest you to know that in 1934 the Albanian bishop (Luigj) Bumci was present at the consecration of my school-mate and predecessor, Dr. Alojzije Stepinac, as the Archbishop of Zagreb.

FRANJO KARD. ŠEPER

Rim, 27. XI. 1977.

Poštovani gospodine,

Bili ste baš o ljubavni pa ste se pobrli knjigu "The fulfilled promise" koju ste objavili. Od srca Vas zahvaljujem. Posebno zahvaljujem da ste ovu knjigu izdali da upoznate javnost s martirijom vjernika u Albaniji. Nad albancima je spušten zaslon kroz koji se skoro ništa ne vidi. Vi ste taj zaslon odgrnuli i upozorili na stravične činjenice koje pokazuju dokle može ići militarna tiranija kad se identifikira s vjerskim aparatom.

Ni jedna tiranija nije vječna. Nadam se da će i u Albaniji doći mračni konjati plovo.

Uz srdačne pozdrave

Franjo Kard. Šeper

P.S. - Možda Vas zanima da je god. 1934. kod skupljanja novca za poljskog drugu i predšesnika na katedru zagrebačkih nadbiskupa Dra Alojzija Stepinca bio prisutan i jedan albanski biskup Mons. Bumci.

BISHOP MARK LIPA
(1919-1982)

On March 23, 1982 after a brief illness, Bishop Mark Lipa died unexpectedly in a Boston hospital. He was the last surviving Albanian Orthodox Bishop in the world.

Born in 1919 in the city of Korcha in Southern Albania, he pursued priestly education in his hometown and later in Greece, excelling in his studies. After ordination he gained respect for his piety and humility in the service to God and to his Albanian people. Because of this dedication, Lipa was made bishop. The ceremony of the consecration took place at the Patriarchal Church of St. George in Istanbul in 1950. The same year Bishop Lipa came to the United States, and became head of the Albanian Orthodox Diocese of America, under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Lipa was deeply involved in strengthening ecumenical ties with other churches, particularly with the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston, where a large Albanian population reside. He was a member of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in Americas and a member of the New England Consultation of Church Leaders. Lipa's memorable Appeals for religious freedom in Albania issued jointly with Humberto Cardinal Medeiros, Archbishop of Boston, exemplifies his firm stand about religious liberty and dedication to his Albanian people, who still suffer under an atheistic yoke.

Funeral services for the Bishop were attended by a multitude of clergy and people. Among the other dignitaries who participated in the services was Archbishop Jakovos of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America and ex-arch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

The untimely death of Bishop Mark Lipa is deeply felt, not only by his beloved flock, but by countless others whom he touched with his simple dignity and spiritual strength.

BRO. SIMON VUKAJ, S.J.
(1903-1981)

Brother Simon Vukaj, another member of that remarkable group of Jesuits who worked in the religious and cultural revival of Albania for one hundred years, died in August of last year in Rome. He was also known as Brother Sime Vukic. Brother was born in 1903, in Zara (Dalmatia), to Albanian parents. His forefathers settled on the outskirts of Zara in the 18th Century after escaping the Ottoman-occupied Albania.

Brother Vukaj joined the Society of Jesus in 1932 and, from 1935 until 1946, was assigned to various duties in Albania, mainly in Shkodra and Tirane. Able to speak Croatian and Italian, Brother was a great help to the Jesuit missionaries who spent much of their time traveling among the mountaineers in continuing attempts to bring peace and harmony to Albanian clans. In the "Calvary" that followed the Communist takeover, Brother Vukaj was expelled from the country, along with many other priests and religious. He never returned to his beloved Albania.

In Italy, Brother Simon served well in various jobs at many Jesuit houses and institutions. His intense piety was a profound inspiration to all who knew him, even those who briefly met him for a needed handout. His free afternoons were spent in visiting hospitals and homes for the aged, where his main apostolate was to comfort the needy and give them an inspirational booklet composed by himself. He goes to a deserved rest for his tireless work among his brother Jesuits and among his beloved Albanians. We will always remember his goodness.

COLONEL LAZAR BOJAXHIU
(1908-1981)

The brother of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, Colonel Lazar Bojaxhiu, died in Italy July 2, 1981. Born into an Albanian family in Skoplje (formerly Shkupi, a city largely inhabited by Albanians), Lazar was two years older than Mother Teresa. Their father, owner of a construction company and an ardent Albanian nationalist, died in 1919 under mysterious circumstances at the early age of 44. His family and friends believe that he was a victim of the Yugoslav police.

Lazar Bojaxhiu pursued his military training in Italy and served his native country as an officer until 1939 when Albania was invaded by fascist troops of Mussolini's Italy. He then moved to Palermo, married and became director of a pharmaceutical firm. He never applied for Italian citizenship in spite of his eligibility.



Mother Teresa with her brother, Lazar, in Oslo.

Lazar Bojaxhiu accompanied Mother Teresa to the ceremonies in Stockholm where she received the Nobel Peace Prize for 1979. Lazar was much loved and admired, not only by his close friends, but by all who came to know him. He leaves behind, aside from Mother Teresa, his wife Maria, a daughter Age (Agatha), and two grandchildren.

JOHN BELUSHI
(1949-1982)

Well-known American actor and comedian John Belushi died on March 5 of this year in Los Angeles. His tragic death cut short his promising career and saddened his family and friends. John's parents came to the United States before World War Two from the small village of Blush near the beautiful city of Korca in southern Albania.

The funeral took place in Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, attended by a multitude of friends. The ceremony was conducted according to the rites of the Albanian Orthodox Church by Fr. Ilia Katre, a close friend of Belushi's family.



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