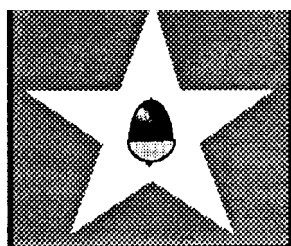


# **Conflict Studies Research Centre**

**C Dennison Lane**

**Once Upon An Army  
The Crisis in the Albanian Army,  
1995-1996**

**September 2002**



**G114**

# Contents

Report 1	End Of Week One: An Assessment
Report 2	Meetings With Minister of Defence & Chief of Staff
Report 3	Conversations With Minister Zhulali 1 June 95
Report 5	Further Conversations with Minister Zhulali
Report 6	Visits
Report 7	Post-Brussels Meeting With Minister Zhulali
Report 8	Post Brussels Meeting With Minister Zhulali (Round 2)
Report 10	17 June Visit To 3 <sup>rd</sup> Division Burreli
Report 12	21 June Meeting With President Berisha & Other Atmospherics
Report 13	21 June Meeting With Minister Zhulali
Report 18	Meetings With MinDef, Under-Minister Moisiu & BG Selami
Report 21	Where To From Here? - End of Month Two And A Half
Report 23	10 August Meeting With MinDef
Report 25	15 August Meeting With MinDef
Report 26	Biography - Alfred Moisiu
Report 28	Consolidation
Report 34	Visit To 2 <sup>nd</sup> Division - Kukes
Report 44	Ministerial Atmospherics
Report 45	Letter To Minister Zhulali
Report 49	Meeting With Chief of Staff Kosovo & Atmospherics
Report 50	28 November Meeting With Minister Zhulali
Report 52	Albanian Army - A History
Report 55	Priorities
Report 60	12 January Visit To Military Clothing Factory in Tirana
Report 65	Visit To 1 <sup>st</sup> Division - Skodra
Report 72	Tirana Explosion
Report 73	News Report: US Establishes Base In Albania
Report 75	Tirana Explosion II
Report 77	Conversations At The NCO Academy
Report 84	US Special Forces & More From The NCO Academy
Report 89	Conversations In Tirana & Change
Report 90	Visit To Sazan Island
Report 91	The German Military Connection
Report 93	Conversations With Officers
Report 95	The NCO Academy - After Action Report
Report 97	Election Atmospherics
Report 99	Downed WWII Aircraft In Albania
Report 100	Opening A Dialogue With NATO
Report 101	Biza Impressions
Report 102	The Elections - First Impressions
Report 103	The Elections - OSCE Statement
Report 104	The Elections - Post-Election Atmospherics
Report 105	Assignments
Report 108	3 June Letter To Minister Zhulali
Report 109	West Point Visit To The Defence Academies
Report 110	Possible Resignation Of Defence Minister

Report 116 Resignation Of MG Perlat Sula  
Report 119 13 July Meeting With MinDef  
Report 122 Possible US Crash Site (Circa 43/44) At Vermosh  
Report 123 Week's Activities For Week Ending 26 July 1996  
Report 127 Biography - Minister of Defence Safet Zhulali  
Report 128 Biography - Minister Zhulali, (Addendum)  
Report 129 7 August Meetings With Ministers Moisiu & Zhulali  
Report 135 Miscellany & Atmospherics  
Report 139 Crash Site/Conversations At Vermosh  
Report 143 20 September Meeting With MinDef  
Report 148 Thoughts On The "New" Army  
Report 150 Conversations In Belgrade  
Report 151 Impressions Of The South  
Report 152 The Week That Was  
Report 154 The 26 February '96 Vefa Explosion Revisited  
Report 155 Ponderings  
Report 156 MEICO Problems Highlighted  
Report 157 Conversations  
Report 158 MEICO Continued  
Report 159 22 October Meeting With MinDef  
Report 164 More Conversations  
Report 165 The Shape Of the Army - A German View  
Report 167 Albania & The "True Believer"  
Report 168 The Balkans & Their Impact On Stability  
Report 169 The "New" Albanian Army - Continued  
Report 170 Albanian Version Of The Swiss Army For The Nineties  
Report 171 The Final Days - I  
Report 172 The Final Days - II  
Report 173 The Final Days - III  
Report 175 Planning Of A Realistic Defence  
Report 176 The Defence Advisor - Some Thoughts



# Once Upon An Army

## The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

C Dennison Lane

### Introduction

For an extraordinary period of 20 months from May 1995 until December 1996, I was the Military Advisor to the Albanian Minister of Defence. My task was broadly to "reform" the Albanian Army. Several things need to be made clear at the outset vis-à-vis my title and my chain of command. I was not the American Military Advisor to the Albanian Minister of Defence, but simply the Military Advisor to the Albanian Minister of Defence. This meant that in meetings with the American or NATO Defence establishments I sat on the Albanian side of the table. At the same time I was directly answerable to the United States Army Europe (USAREUR) based in Stuttgart, and to a lesser degree to the United States Embassy in Tirana.

The basis of this book are the 178 Reports that I wrote from Tirana. This text is a selection to illustrate the main characteristics of military infrastructure and development, made with my colleague James Pettifer. The final four reports were written after having been expelled on 17 December 1996. The experience of being declared "persona non grata" by the President of a former totalitarian country when one is there on a tourist visa and one's Embassy is intent on sending only notes of "spiritual encouragement" is a rather heady experience. Being PNG-ed can be exhilarating but it helps to be alone and have diplomatic immunity. I was neither alone nor did I have diplomatic status. My then 14-year old son Peter, who had been attending the Tirana International School, was still there. And there was the realisation that the authorities knew that I knew a great deal more than they might necessarily want me to know. Accordingly the final four reports were written from outside Albania. In retrospect there was probably nothing to have been concerned about, but at the time the affair was unsettling.

It has been suggested that this text might be useful to some other individuals who are tasked with the formulation of an "army". I believe very strongly that an army reflects the identity of the people that compose it. There was a desire in many circles to simply "clone" the Albanian Army into a NATO-type organisation. Not only could Albania not afford in financial terms such an undertaking, NATO and the United States were philosophically unable to envisage anything that did not look familiar to them. The requirement for PfP that a national army be compatible to a NATO-like structure does not mean that it had to look like NATO but that it must be able to communicate and be interoperable. And at the same time, as the Defence Advisor I was never able to convince the leadership, both Albanian and American, that there were better models to follow than that of the US First Infantry Division.

I retired from the United States Army as a Colonel in February 1993 after an interesting career. Those who may be inclined to check the records will discover that I was a Special Forces Colonel. This needs a little clarification. Indeed I was a Special Forces Colonel but only because several years earlier the then Chief of Military Intelligence, the branch of service to which I belonged at the time, deemed that I was a "prima donna" and suggested that I should look elsewhere if I intended to continue my career. I had in fact served three tours with Special Forces. Unlike many of my peers, I had very quickly come to the conclusion that jumping out of airplanes, while exhilarating, was not intellectually very rewarding. In other words I was terrified of jumping. I don't suppose that I have ever been what the reader might have in mind when he conjures up the image of the Special Forces Officer. Fortuitously at the time that the Chief of Intelligence and I were at odds, Special Forces Branch had just been designated as a branch. Previously Special Forces Officers and Infantry Officers were all lumped together and had their respective careers managed by Infantry Branch. Special Forces were at the time finding it difficult to find enough senior officers to fill the Branch. My records were made available to them. The upshot was that I became a Special Forces Officer once again.

It was originally my intention to maintain a running diary of events. Ultimately the Reports from Tirana became the diary.

At the outset in Albania I found a group of well-read, thoughtful officers who were clearly seeking a new direction, but who at the same time had selectively retained some tactical and philosophical components from their earlier experiences with their Russian and Chinese advisors. I have found on various desks in various command posts Albanian translations of "Clausewitz On War", Sun Tzu's "The Art of War", "Caesar and Pompey", and a book by Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery of El Alamein. I have had a lively discussion with Brigadier-General Sula about the pros and cons of Napoleon and surprisingly found myself fielding questions on the Thai army's counterinsurgency operations. In this light it is interesting to note that the numerous book stores dotted about Tirana, distinct from many of their counterparts in Croatia and Macedonia whose main trade is in pornography, were selling everything from Anais Nin (pornographic but at least literature), to Marshal Zhukov. The Albanians seem to have thrown themselves into reading anything that they could find.

This was an army with its back to the wall. There were virtually no spare parts and the Army had an annual budget of less than \$50 million. They had, however, the best maintained Chinese tanks that I have ever seen (batteries were a problem but the Turks are keeping the battery factory running). The Military Liaison Team (MLT), after an artillery live fire exercise, reported that the artillery had rounds on target quicker than their American counterparts. At Durres naval base, a scene out of a WWII movie, we visited a torpedo boat section. While there was evidently a shortage of paint, as far as their weapons systems and engines were concerned, they were clearly capable of making life difficult for any likely adversary.

This text is dedicated to the men and women of the Albanian Armed Forces who deserved better. It is also dedicated to the late Minister Safet Zhulali, whom I grew to like and admire despite everything that happened.

RPT# 01

DATE: 29MAY95

**END OF WEEK ONE: AN ASSESSMENT**

This first report will have to necessarily address general perceptions as defence advisor (DA) is going through a "see everything" phase with DA's Albanian counterparts. There has been little time for reflection. This first report will accordingly focus on the main events of DA's first week and not where DA thinks we need to be going as that is a little premature. Thus far week two has not [been] dissimilar from the first.

DA has complete access to anything and to the minister if and when necessary. All of DA's questions are immediately fielded and an atmosphere has been established in which there are healthy discussions and exchanges, although BG Sula, DA's counterpart, and DA have yet to disagree on anything terribly fundamental. While it is difficult to find too many positive things to say about Enver Hoxha, from the point of view of defence, he left a formidable defensive system of between 200,000 - 300,000 pill boxes (perhaps 30,000 would have done the job), tunnels and other construction projects should anyone be idiotic enough to want to become embroiled in any form of adventurism in Albania.

DA has just returned from a visit combined with lunch at an ADA regiment at Kruje (SA2). Being the guest I had the honour of eating the goat's brains. This I am told is a custom of northern Albania. In southern Albanian the guest of honour gets the other end. DA can't wait to visit southern Albania. Tomorrow, Memorial Day, DA and BG Sula are off to Vlore to visit an air base, the Vlore naval base and infantry division. Thus far, in DA's first week DA has met the Minister of Defence and the Chief of Staff (see Report 02). Also have visited the Tirana based 8th Division (BG Gjergj Vladi). 8th Div was formed from the 1st & 5th Divisions, NCO Academy (Col Hysen Hodo), Ground Forces and Defence Academies (BG Luan Hoxha and BG Ali Koseku respectively) on 24 May, 7th Division (BG Mustafa Harizi) at Durres to include Coastal Defence Operations Centre, the Durres Naval Base (First Capt Nikolla Tole) and King Zog's Palace on 25 May, the Special Forces Command (BG Hysen Arapi), which are more accurately commandos and the 88th Tank Brigade (Col Pellumb Lame), a subordinate unit of the 8th Div on 26 May and today, 28 May the fore mentioned rocket (SA2) brigade (BG Ylli Dimraj). BG Perlat Sula, the Albanian military advisor to the minister, DA's counterpart, was DA's escort on all visits. He is as good a counterpart as you could ever want. He is an experienced infantry officer and who taught at the defence academy as well as having commanded a division. He is exceptionally well read, innovative and like so many of his colleagues, open to suggestions. (We both turned up with our respective language books - he is learning English while DA is learning Albanian.)

At the outset DA is finding a group of well read, thoughtful officers who are clearly seeking a new direction, but who at the same time have selectively retained some tactical and philosophical components from their earlier associations with their Russian (1950-1962) and Chinese (1963/4-1978) advisors. DA has found on various desks copies in various command posts Albanian translations of "Clausewitz on war", Sun Tzu's "The art of war", "Caesar and Pompey", and a book by Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery (El Alamein). DA has had a lively discussion with BG Sula about the pros and cons of Napoleon and surprisingly found myself fielding questions on the Thai army's counterinsurgency operations. In this light it

is interesting to note that the numerous book stores dotted about Tirana, distinct from their counterparts in Croatia and Macedonia whose main trade is in pornography, are selling everything from Aristotle to Zola. The Albanians seem to have thrown themselves into reading anything that they could find. Curiously at breakfast the other day in the state guest house, DA was seated next to a Greek doctor (EENT) who has been working with deaf Albanian children, something he says is identified with nations with a poor level of infrastructure. He too remarked how well read his Albanian counterparts were.

This is an army with its back to the wall on the availability of spare parts and an annual budget of \$50 million. They have however the best maintained Chinese tanks that DA has ever seen (batteries are a problem but the Turks are providing them, the Albanian battery factory being inoperative), and they seem to be capable of getting first round hits without benefit of range finders. Someone watching the artillery in action noted that they had rounds on target quicker than their American counterparts. At Durres Naval Base we visited two minesweepers and several torpedo boats. While there is clearly a shortage of paint, as far as their weapons systems and engines are concerned, they are clearly capable of making life interesting for any likely adversary although they seem not to have the slightest concern that they may be collectively embarking on a one-way mission.

There is recognition that an NCO Corps is essential and at the same time there is the realization that there are going to be problems introducing such a concept to officers, who until very recently, exercised complete control themselves. The fact that there will not be another graduating class of 2Lts for another 2-3 years (and there is an on-going debate of whether the new service academy should be two of three years), should let the NCO concept take hold before a new generation of young officers are commissioned. In addition to the new crop of NCO's graduating from the NCO academy, it has been proposed that the commando conscripts be used as a future source of additional NCOs at the end of their year of military service. Problems associated with this are primarily economic.

We have had conversations on whether or not the best "educated" army is really the best army. The general consensus is that it is the best "trained" army which prevails and not necessarily the best educated. For a country which had a very high profile police state apparatus (Sigurimi) it is curious to note that while there are 2-20 individuals assigned to the division operations section, there is only one (1) specifically assigned to intelligence, and it seems to have little to do with tactical intelligence. BG Sula and DA agree that the timely receipt and dissemination of tactical intelligence is especially essential to the success or failure of a light infantry army. The fact that the air force in recent years seldom conducts operations in conjunction with the ground forces and/or the navy is another area which is being studied. Fighter pilots are getting @ 8 hours annually - see Report 03 (to follow).

Prior to leaving Washington DA had a conversation about the minister's request of a visiting American dignitary for new uniforms. We both agreed at the time that there were many more important [matters] for the Albanian armed forces to occupy themselves with, and in this connection DA has always remembered an adage imparted by a Thai colleague some years ago that the group with the cheapest uniforms often wins. The overwhelming reason why the minister, and by extension the army wants new uniforms, "BDUs" in particular, is because they no longer consider themselves communists/socialists and no longer want to look like relatives of the Chinese People's Liberation Army. They have perceptually started the transition towards democracy and want to be identified as such; whether or not



**Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996**

they have arrived is unimportant. It is the perception that is important. There is also the problem that many only own a single uniform which complicates the introduction of a PT program. The Turks are providing limited numbers of BDUs. A meeting with the Turkish DATT is being organized so that any duplication of effort can be avoided.

There have been several conversations with senior Albanian officers apropos what the new Albanian army is to look like. Obviously they are taken with what they know about the US model, but they are sufficiently realistic to understand that this is not feasible for a litany of reasons. There is however interest in the Swiss army. Indeed the Swiss army does raise some interesting comparisons particularly as it relates to terrain and citizen's based defence.

What BG Sula and DA find to be intellectually exciting is the opportunity to be part of the reformation of an army coupled with the realization that no single model can be immediately superimposed onto Albania; rather the opportunity exists to create a new army choosing the best aspects of both the Albanian experience (citizen based) and other western models.

RPT# 02

DATE: 31MAY95

**MEETINGS WITH MINISTER OF DEFENCE & CHIEF OF STAFF**

**Summary:** The following reflects conversations associated with Defence Advisor's (DA) initial introduction with Chief, Foreign Liaison (LTC Arben Gjata), Minister of Defence Safet Zhulali on 22 May, and with the Chief of Staff, Gen Sheme Kosovo on 23 May. Assuming that we are both on a learning curve DA has elected to provide a rather detailed narrative of events. Regret tardiness of this first series of reports. The DATT returned on Monday, I received his comments on Wednesday and DA has been travelling until now. Anticipate from this date on an uninterrupted flow of traffic.

**Details:** Defence Advisor (DA) met initially with the Chief of Foreign Liaison (FLO), LTC Arben Gjata. LTC Gjata indicated that he has been the FLO since 1994 but that he [has] a myriad of additional duties to include that of interpreter for the minister (since July 93). Also introduced was Mr Astrit Gjunksi, who is responsible for the political relationship with the US. LTC Gjata emphasized throughout a 45 minute welcome, the proximity of the Albanian-US relationship. He also offered that the minister hoped to visit Washington in September 1995 and that he looked forward to meeting with Secretary Perry and other members of the Department of Defence. LTC Gjata spoke in glowing terms of the January 1993 meeting with Secretary Kruzel and the January 1994 visit of Secretary Nye. Describing the Defence of Albania, LTC Gjata extended his left hand likening it to Albania, his thumb representing the peninsula south of Vlore (kep i gjuhezes). "The Defence of Albania during the period 1945-1974 was against both NATO and the Warsaw Pact. We saw ourselves to be surrounded on all sides. In 1974 we embarked on a "people's war" concept in which every man, woman and child played a part. Our forces were dispersed in perhaps as many as 2,000 small groups so that we could fight a total war against any invader. When nuclear war appeared to be a likely response from an invader (NATO/Warsaw Pact), we responded with the construction of between 200,000 and 300,000 bunkers so that we could fight from protected positions. Our heaviest defensive lines were established between Durres and Tirana as this was considered to be the most likely invasion route. In some areas the distance between the lines of strong points were only 100-150 meters."

The difficulty of course was, continued LTC Gjata, that we were psychologically preparing for an invasion which of course never came. Incredible sums of money were spent and the environment ruined. We now have to ask ourselves what are we going to do with all of these bunkers. (LTC Hashi Asslani, my interpreter and assistant, offered that the only manner to dispose of the bunkers was to fill them up with tyres which are then set on fire. When the fire is really hot, cold water is poured on top of the pillbox causing it to crack and cave in on itself. He also suggested that they were useful in landfills but moving them was a tremendous effort). "Of course," concluded LTC Gjata, "we knew nothing about American culture at the time."

In describing the Albanian army, LTC Gjata indicated that there were presently 9 Army Divisions but emphasized that few of them were at full strength. There was not, he said, a general commanding the army purse, but rather a general (Gen Kosovo) who commanded all of the armed forces (army, air force, navy and air Defence which is presently under the army (although there is a study group

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

weighing the pros and cons of placing air Defence under the air force)). (There are, parenthetically, all manner of study group. BG Sula, DA's counterpart appears to be involved in most of them and informs me that once the DA has his feet on the group the DA too will become very involved.) There are presently three (3) air force bases (Lezha, Tirana and Kulcova) and three (3) naval bases (Durrës, Vlorë and Saendjin). LTC Gjata added that all of the service academies are closed, as is the Defence university. When it was mentioned that there is presently a course being conducted at the Defence university, LTC Gjata responded that this was true but that it was a special course for very senior officers. What was on going, he suggested, was a total reorganization of the system of Defence education. Exempt from these closures was the NCO Academy.

He then briefly discussed the training of the reserves. LTC Gjata indicated that all persons between the age of 18-57 are required to report for training with the reserve unit for a period of seven days. Apropos conscription, LTC Gjata indicated that all males between the ages of 18 and 27 were required to serve. In order to stagger the induction of conscripts, they were inducted into the army in the January, May and September time frames. (DA gets the impression that the authorities are not trying terribly hard to enforce universal service.) When asked about university deferments, LTC Gjata indicated that those in university were now deferred from service although formerly university graduates served a six month stint.

The meeting with the minister, which included a photo session, included BG Perlat Sula, the principal advisor to the minister and my counterpart, LTCs Gjata and Asslani, the fore mentioned Mr Gjunksi from the America bureau. The formal note-taker was the Minister's Chef de Cabinet (Mr Tomor Shehu), although everyone seemed to be taking notes, and Mr Dale Fosnight from the USDAO.

The minister started by saying that Albania found it odd that the US did not differentiate between Albania and other more "fortunate countries". Specifically mentioned were US provided light trucks which were being provided to both Bulgaria and Albania. The minister's point was that Albanian had a substantially greater need than did Bulgaria who, after all, manufactured light trucks themselves. This, he suggested, inferred a lack of knowledge as it pertained to the realities of Albania on the part of the Americans and limited access and perhaps adequate understanding of the dynamics of Washington by Albanians. In response to whether there was any form of an Albanian lobby in Washington, the minister responded that there are on-going attempts to create such a body but that the process is slow. This, he suggested, was directly attributed to the communist era when all contacts with the west were forbidden. In fact, added the Minister, "Contacts with either super-power were specifically forbidden under the former constitution".

DA indicated that DA had heard that there had been offers of equipment and assistance from other NATO nations (Italian, Germans, Britain) which had been refused. The minister smiled and said that I was misinformed. The Italians, he said, had made several offers but they wanted to do a series of surveys. This was simply not necessary, said the minister, "as this is no longer the Albania of 1992 and we have already undertaken all manner of surveys. We know what we want and we are not prepared for yet another survey." (Subsequent conversation with LTC Asslani suggests that the other part of the equation was that the Italians rather [asked] so much in exchange for their assistance, that Albanian sovereignty was in jeopardy).

DA asked about the People's Republic of China (PRC) connection and whether the minister envisioned trying to go with what he already had or purchase new equipment? The minister responded that he anticipated no major purchases for the next 5-10 years. Apropos the PRC, the minister indicated that the PRC's monetary costs were too high, adding that he was disappointed that the PRC was not prepared to provide equipment no longer in the PLA's Inventory (Mi-4 helicopters specifically). There were, stated the minister, 40 Mi-4s in the Albanian inventory of which only 12 are operational. Apropos aircraft, while not provided a firm figure of operational MiG-19/21 (to follow), the minister indicated that aircraft engines generally had only another 50 hours remaining. (There are in fact numerous rebuilt MiG engines at Saendjin airfield. These were refurbished by the Germans.)

Enquired about acquisition through a barter system. The minister responded that this too presented difficulties as such transactions were very closely controlled and that even in the case of a barter deal which involved chromium, the ministry would have to purchase whatever was to be used as a source of barter.

The minister indicated that a lack of assistance was even apparent in the medical field. While he acknowledged the forthcoming military hospital/engineer project with the US, he indicated that there had been offers from both the French and the Brits to assume responsibility for equipping a wing of the hospital. This too has not been forthcoming to date.

The minister continued by saying that in their "propaganda" the Albanians have talked about military support from NATO. It has not come, he said, adding that there was even a shortage of uniforms. "Our military budget," said the minister, is only \$50million and from this we must cover salaries and the cost of modernization. "Even as the economy grows our military budget will increase but not to a level commensurate with our needs." The minister added that two years ago the Turks provided 5,000 uniforms. "5,000 uniforms," said the minister, "are not going to provide for an active force of 8,000 officers, 6,000 NCOs (these actually are not for the most part NCOs but rather technicians) and 30,000 conscripts."

The minister then moved to the area of military economic management. Here there are also substantial and seemingly insurmountable problems, said the minister. There is for instance, he continued, no single commercial company which can guarantee a contract to produce food (either vegetables or meat) for the army. Furthermore, even if a company could provide some of the needs, it is unlikely that there could be follow-on contracts with this particular company. "We cannot even assure a year's supply of beans," said the minister, "and beans are the staple of the army." The minister recounted that 2 years ago the Turks provided beans for the army. The result, said the minister, "was that the following year Albanian farmers did not grow beans and so Albania, a country which produces beans, had to purchase beans from abroad, and even today we still have a problem with beans." (Seem to recall a similar tale from an earlier conflict in which we introduced a "miracle" rice to South Vietnam which had three times the yield. The result was that the following year the South Vietnamese farmers planted one third as much rice.)

The minister concluded by saying that anytime I needed access to him he would be available. He suggested that first I visit units of the Albanian army to get a better handle on where the Albanian forces were at the present time and after this would we start working closely together.

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

In the meeting with Gen Kosovo, DA was welcomed to Albania and informed that DA's arrival had come at a critical time as the Albanian armed forces (AAF) were in the process of down-sizing and searching for new directions. He emphasized that in the "old days" there was a rather tedious process in which everything had to be approved by the party. He added that in order to understand the present it was necessary to examine the past. Gen Kosovo then provided a summary of the Russian, Chinese and the distinctly curious Albanian experience. Gen Kosovo emphasized that the AAF had been guided almost entirely by the Americans and was grateful for their assistance. "We understand," he said, "that NATO is for peace and not for war. That is why we wish to become a member of NATO, and this is why we exercise with other armies so that we can become familiar with other armies of the world and be compatible with them.

Bearing in mind the economic difficulties facing the AAF, Gen Kosovo was asked, within the context of compatibility, where his priorities lay apropos equipment. He responded that he would of course prefer to have US equipment but that this was not within the realm of possibility. What he suggested was trying to keep the Chinese equipment running for the time being. When asked about communications, Gen Kosovo stated that this was a critical area as the AAF's communications equipment was not compatible. (Others inform me that it is but with difficulty.) He stated that there was presently a company which had been prepared and equipped to participate in peacekeeping operations with NATO or the UN, and that this company would be expanded to brigade size.

Gen Kosovo was asked, assuming a perfect world, which particular army he would prefer to be modelled after. He stated the Americans of course, but added that reality dictated looking at several other models, noting that no single model would ideally meet the requirements for Albania. In this context he mentioned specifically the Swiss and the Austrian army and noted that there were all manner of similarities between Albania and these two countries, adding that further examination of the Swiss might prove useful.

**Comments:** Too early to add a great deal. One problem thus far, which may be a combination of the centralized control practised in an earlier era, and a rather too rigid and interpretation of what is involved by "civilian control of the military". Currently the system is too dependent upon the signature of the minister. Gen Kosovo mentioned in this regard that he may be part of the problem in that he has extraordinarily good relations with minister Zhulali, and because of this they are able to discuss most issues facing the armed forces. Obviously those with more distant relations with the minister feel the impact more. The issue of overly centralized control is something we will have to sort out in the days ahead.

RPT# 03

DATE: 02JUN95

**CONVERSATIONS WITH MINISTER ZHULALI 1 JUNE 95**

**Summary:** Report addresses Defence Advisor's (DA's) second formal meeting with defence minister Safet Zhulali on 1 June. Minister anticipates meetings with Secretary Perry this weekend in Brussels. Minister's greatest stated concern is troop welfare.

**Details:** At the end of defence advisor's (DA's) second week, and prior to Defence Minister Zhulali's departure to Brussels next weekend, BG Perlat Sula, DA's counterpart, LTC Asslani and DA met for one and a half hours with Minister Zhulali. A further session is scheduled for 04 June.

**General:** Minister Zhulali opened the session by asking about how DA was settling in. DA responded that everything was going exceptionally well and that DA enjoyed especially the relationship with BG Sula.

**Infrastructure:** In response to the minister's question apropos initial impressions, DA replied that DA's most immediate concern was related to the basic infrastructure of the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) housing, pay, clothing, food, and the closing, for a lack of spare parts, of virtually all of the military factories. (Ammunition and small arms manufacturing is a notable exception). Minister Zhulali responded that this too was his most immediate concern. As an example, at the Kucova Air Base (31 May) the air wing commander indicated he had not had a noonday meal the day before because there was no food available. This DA mentioned to the minister who responded that it was the fault of the wing commander himself noting that he had the funds to purchase food. (It is however representative of the basic problems facing the AAF and if a wing commander is not eating one can only wonder at the plight of the conscripts and other ranks). DA also indicated concern over the organization of the AAF and the reserves in general and suggested that it might be worth looking at the Swiss model. The minister agreed that looking at the Swiss model had some merit although Switzerland, he said, "did not have the same neighbours as Albania". (Of course in 1939 they did have the Italians and the Germans as neighbours.) Returning to the issue of the reserve, Minister Zhulali indicated that a law was in the process of being passed which was going to specifically address the reserve, and which would require the reserve to undergo a one (1) month training period every four (4) years as it was not possible to call them every year. (This solution DA believes to be unworkable.) Continuing in the same vein the minister returned to a recurrent theme that although several countries have approached him and offered various forms of assistance, he preferred to follow the American model. DA countered by suggesting that there were western models other than the American which might be more appropriate for Albania. Minister Zhulali conceded this to be true but he wished the central model followed to be American. Minister Zhulali added that with the military draw down in the US, all manner of equipment (and in this context he was talking in terms of blankets, mattresses, uniforms and probably furniture) must be available and could be provided to Albania. DA responded that the minister needed to understand that while there may be excess equipment available, that there are also all manner of US organizations which are in search of such commodities, not to mention NATO and other commitments. Returning to the conditions of the Officers' Corps, Minister Zhulali stated that he was unable to rotate officers away

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

from their homes as there was no available housing and when faced with such a move, officers resigned.

**Military Law:** Minister Zhulali stated that a new military law was also in the process of being reviewed and would shortly be sent to parliament. The minister thought that it would be useful for the DA to review it. DA responded that DA would be happy to review it and would seek the requisite legal assistance. Am informed by DAO that a team will be in Tirana specifically for this purpose in July. DA will accordingly attempt to delay the military law being sent on to parliament.

**NCO Corps:** Minister Zhulali said that an effective NCO Corps (distinct from the model presently in place whose members are for the most part technical specialist) for the AAF was essential and something that he wanted to be in place within the next eighteen months. Specifically the minister stated that his initial goal was 4,000 NCOs. The difficulty, he stated, was that the NCO Academy did not produce NCOs in sufficient quantity. DA suggested that perhaps a solution would be to use conscripts from the special forces units as a further source of NCOs at the squad level. DA also pointed out that in the tank units there were a significant number of conscripts who were presently tank commanders. They too could be integrated into an NCO Corps. (Curiously while there are NCOs in the tank battalions they function primarily as drivers vice tank commanders). DA continued by suggesting that if these individuals could be induced into staying in the AAF they could be rotated into the NCO Academy when spaces became available. The minister said that he thought that in the near future he would like to have a US training team whose mission would be to assist in the integration of an meaningful NCO Corps in all the services. The minister produced an abridged Albanian edition of "The Non-Commissioned Officer's Guide" and a booklet also in Albanian by John G Meyer entitled "The Company Commander's Guide". (The English title may be "Receiving the Mission".)

**Physical Training:** DA mentioned, having watched on 31 May a distinctly overweight 37 year old company commander take a hill in a company exercise (report to follow), that it might be a good idea to institute physical training (PT) for officers and a formal PT test for all military personnel which would take place six months after the institution of the program. DA suggested that having the Officer Corps do PT with their men would have a salutary effect on morale. Minister Zhulali was surprised this had not happened as it was something that he had ordered to be accomplished some time ago, although he had not suggested a test for all personnel. DA offered that one drawback was that generally the AAF only had one uniform each although DA was informed that there were uniforms in a reserve stock. The Minister indicated that he had ordered that these uniforms be issued and seemed surprised that they had not been so distributed.

**Uniforms & The Russians:** the issue of uniforms has been addressed in an earlier report but remains a primary concern of the minister. He stated that he has had offers from the Americans (5,000 sets of BDUs), the Germans, and the Italians. (The Turks have already provided 5,000 uniforms.) What the minister sought to avoid was having uniforms from a multitude of sources and to this end he had not accepted offers from either the Italians or the Germans. When DA mentioned that, given the scarcity of resources, taking what one could from whoever, as long as the "political cost" was not too high, the minister changed the subject. In this context it is important to note that the minister has been resisting overtures from the Russians who have been pressing for an agreement on technical cooperation. The

Russians have reportedly been prepared to provide spare parts and other assistance.

Aircraft & The People's Republic of China (PRC): DA having recently been to Kucova Air Base where DA met with the pilots and the maintenance chief (report to follow), DA asked the minister if [it] made sense to continue to attempt to maintain the AAF's aging MiG-19 aircraft. (The chief of maintenance indicated that the cost of maintaining a MiG-19 over a period of four years was \$5,000.) DA's question was based on the general inadequacy of the MiG-19 in virtually any role (other than targets), and the probable similar inadequacy of the limited number of MiG-21 aircraft. The minister stated that the issue had little to do with the effectiveness of the aircraft but in the symbol that they represented for Albania. In this of course he is correct although there is a perception that the MiGs would be used for interdicting paratroop transport. (The possibility of paratroop operations is a persistent theme.) DA has thus far resisted any attempt to explain how far air warfare has come since the departure of the Chinese and that airborne operations are not conducted independent of tactical air cover. Related to the use of aircraft is DA's first probable disagreement with BG Sula over aircraft support for ground forces, a concept which has yet to find root in the AAF. (Parenthetically it occurs to DA that the A-37 and any similar type aircraft would be more in line with the needs of the AAF in a ground support role. They are of course perhaps not "politically" viable even if they were available. This line of thought was not mentioned to the minister.) On the subject of relations with the PRC, the minister stated that perhaps Albania had been wrong to sever relations with the PRC over President Nixon's 1976 trip to the PRC. The minister reiterated his earlier comments that the PRC had indeed been approached for assistance and although they had made some limited equipment purchases, the PRC's prices were exorbitantly high considering the age of the equipment required. Support from the PRC directed at Albania's infrastructure across the board remained, said the minister, was the cheapest solution for the AAF in the near term. DA asked the minister if torpedo boat engines (M-50) had been sought. The minister responded that they had not as they were known to be too expensive. The minister noted that the PRC had promised \$2 million in credits many years ago, but nothing had been seen. "We are still filling out forms," said the minister. Minister Zhulali indicated he would have used most of the credit for sorely needed medical equipment and medicine for the AAF. (In addition to MiG-21 engines from Germany, the Bulgarians have provided other spare parts for the air force.)

General Staff Reorganization: Clearly an item high on the minister's agenda. Minister Zhulali wants first to look at the General Staff and then move on to the division and regimental staffs.

**Comments:** Nothing really more to add but the infrastructure problem is fundamental to everything. The minister talks persistently about this but DA is not convinced that anyone has a solution. It is probably worth remembering that during the Chinese period units of the AAF to a large extent fed themselves. It is a possible solution but is probably a non-starter because of its identification with an earlier era. Tomorrow, among other subjects we are going to address English language training for the headquarters.



Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

RPT# 05

DATE: 06JUN95

## **FURTHER CONVERSATIONS WITH MINISTER ZHULALI**

**Summary:** Report addresses defence advisor's (DA's) third formal meeting with Defence Minister Safet Zhulali on 3 June. Central topics discussed were positive feedback from the Swiss apropos looking at the Swiss Army model, English language training, the reorganization of the General Staff and Defence Minister Zhulali's determination to look to the United States for support and his perception that the US could do more.

**Details:** Defence Advisor (DA), accompanied by BG Perlat Sula, DA's counterpart, and LTC Haxhi Asslani (interpreter) met with Defence Minister Zhulali for two and a half hours on 03 June.

DA informed minister of the positive feed-back from DA's session with the Swiss chargé vis-à-vis the Swiss army. The Swiss indicated their willingness to provide DA the requisite guides to the formation of Swiss Army with emphasis on training, recruitment, military obligations and readiness. Minister indicated that this was a positive step but reiterated his desire to cull extensively from the American model. DA offered that the Swiss experience offered no real departures and did offer certain parallels which had application to Albania.

English Language Training: DA mentioned that in conversation with BG Sula, given the extensive literature on strategic and tactical matters available in English, BG Sula saw a need for English language training for senior officers in the general headquarters. The minister agreed adding that the British had indicated their interest in running an English language course for the headquarters. (It seems to be unclear when this course is supposed to start and DA is left with the impression that it is something mentioned by the Brits without there being any definite dates established.) In the same vein, Minister Zhulali stated that foreign language training was one of his highest priorities and that foreign language training is a compulsory part of the curriculum at the Defence colleges (ground forces and Defence). At the service academies each cadet is required to study two (2) foreign languages in addition to Albanian. (The issue of the need to maintain several service academies vice one is another item under discussion.) "By the year 2000," said the minister, "I want to have 2,000 officers who speak English and one third of them must be on active duty."

Reorganization Of The Staff: Minister Zhulali stated that one of his highest priorities was the reorganization of the general, division, service and brigade staffs. Minister Zhulali pointed out his various responsibilities beyond that of Defence minister (member of parliament for one) left him very little time. It was, said the minister, impossible for him to get out to visit units. DA stated that the entire object of a staff was to provide the minister a vehicle through which he could better exercise control, and while there were no doubt certain things that he personally wished to oversee, there were countless others that could equally well be done by his staff. The minister stated that when he had come into office he had promoted many younger officers. Some of these officers he had come to trust. The majority, however, he could not trust. In response DA said that the entire concept of a staff was based on trust and confidence and that if the minister could not trust members of his staff to perform as he saw fit perhaps they should not be on the staff. On the

subject of draw down for instance, the minister should be able to turn to his chief of staff, give him a general overview of the problem and leave it to the Chief of Staff to go to the staff with the problem and come back to the minister with various options and a recommended course of action. The minister, as an example, suggested DA, should not have to personally sign DA's badge, nor be the approving authority for leave for this officers. (Subsequent to the meeting BG Sula said that the reason why the minister personally signed DA's badge was because only the minister could authorize DA's movement throughout the headquarters. DA presently has a laissez passer which seems to work very well. This is signed by BG Ismolli, Director of Operations. In response to BG Sula's comment DA stated that the chief of security, chief of manpower, or the chief of operations could equally well sign this badge. BG Sula agreed.) In the same light DA stated that it was going to take an example at the top, and a willingness to delegate authority before there was any possibility of the NCO corps, as an example, becoming a reality. DA asked how often the minister met with his staff. He responded that he met infrequently with the staff as a whole but frequently with specific members of the staff. Asked about using the Inspector General (IG) more, the minister responded that he kept the IG very busy and that the IG was constantly asking that various people be removed. Simply recommending people's removal is probably not the best way to introduce western style staff procedures to the Albanian Armed Forces. DA anticipates all manner of challenges in this area.

American Support: "We are a forgotten country," said the minister. He continued by saying that Albania, and he made it clear that he was not talking solely about the armed forces, needs American help. "I met recently with Petre Roman, the Romanian Defence Minister", said the minister. Mr Roman, the minister went on to say, said that he had managed to get 60% of the funds which the US had set aside for the countries of former Eastern Europe. Minister Zhulali went on to say that Albania is the poorest country in the region and must beg for assistance, however odious the act. The minister stated that he was of course grateful for the recent delivery of excess trucks but that Albania needed evidence of tangible US support. The minister is clearly very concerned about the future and possibly his reliance on the US. DA believes that the minister sees the provision of items like American uniforms in terms of something tangible from the United States.

**Comments:** BG Sula is right in his contention that addressing reorganization of the staff along those lines of a NATO country and the delegation of authority, goes against anything that Albanian officers are familiar with. This is the start of a social revolution. DA is informed of a meeting with the entire General Staff during the week of 12 July. Busy reading JCS PUB-1 as a starter. The minister's primary concern appears to remain issues relating to infrastructure, but DA does not think that Minister Zhulali has determined how to get from where we presently are to where he wants to go. We need to start prioritizing requirements dealing with infrastructure. Until DA gets out to a really remote unit, something which will happen in the not too distant future, it is difficult to determine how basic the Albanian Armed Forces requirements are.

RPT# 06

DATE: 14JUN95

**VISITS**

**Summary:** Report forwards observations following visits to the Tirana based 8th Infantry, NCO Academy, Ground Forces and Defence Academies, 7th Division (Durrës), the Durrës Naval Base, Special Forces, 88th Tank Brigade, an SA-2 Group (Vic Kruje) Saendjin Naval Base, Lez and Kucova Airbases, the 1017 Special Forces Battalion, the 6th Division (Vic Fieri), and a company training exercise. Observations regarding the air force follow in a separate report and will be based on a survey completed by the MLT.

**Details:**

## Ground Forces:

**Field Training:** There are presently nine (9) infantry divisions. The majority of the personnel assigned to these divisions are made up by reservists. In the presently unlikely event of an emergency it is doubtful if a brigade could be assembled in short order. Defence Advisor (DA) has observed one (1) training exercise, a company in the attack. In terms of strength it was no more than a reinforced platoon. The attacking force came off a ridge located less than 800m from a dug in platoon in column, and when they finally went on line to assault the defenders, little attention was paid to available terrain in terms of cover and concealment, and even less in executing anything resembling fire and manoeuvre. Members of the MLT have returned from another such exercise, in this instance a "demonstration". The same deficiencies were noted. At the training exercise in question @70 officers from the general headquarters and the division were on hand as spectators. Another interesting observation was that when artillery fire (simulated) was called in, the defenders, who were in trenches, all took shelter in a series of bunkers, emerging only after the artillery ceased firing. While in the bunkers their ability to defend their line was of course seriously minimized. DA was asked by a colonel from the General Staff for DA's assessment DA turned the question back to the staff colonel who said that he thought that it was very weak and proceeded to reel off shortcomings. DA agreed.

**Sociology Officer:** Every brigade/regiment and above has an officer assigned who is described as the sociology officer. The chief "sociologist" at the general headquarters is a playwright. While the "sociology" officer might once have been the commissar, in the "new" army the sociology officer is a combination of information, welfare and morale and the unit chaplain; the closest parallel organization which DA has ever run across was in the British army where they once had "education" officers. Having said that there remains a haunting suspicion that certain functions of the commissar remain although it has been made abundantly clear that the "sociology" officer is clearly subordinate to the commander and that he has no command responsibilities. When asked if there were in fact chaplains in the army, one "sociology officer" responded that there was really no need as in his regiment there were only two individuals who were inclined in this direction. Presently the army has no objection if anyone wishes to turn to god. The stipulation is that this is to be done out of uniform. A commander explained that there presently were no problems in the army created by religion, and it was his intention to keep it this way. There is, said a "sociology" officer interest among the

younger people in religion and when it becomes evident that there are sufficient in the AAF to merit the institution of the a chaplain, "we will deal with this as the situation demands."

Armour: The AAF have the best maintained Chinese tanks this DA has ever seen. DA remains unclear how representative of the rest of the army the 88th Tank Brigade is, but the Chinese tanks belonging to the 88th Brigade were the best maintained Chinese tanks that this DA has ever seen. There are, however, several problems which will need to be addressed. There are two (2) tanks set aside for training by every company. The rest of the tanks remain in their underground bunkers where they are started up once every year. What concerns some recent US tankers who visited the 88th is that while these tanks look superb from the outside, there is concern that this inactivity will lead to serious problems associated with the hydraulics when they are subject to road movement. Also, typically the Chinese tank mounts a 100mm gun. With the ammunition available (HE) it is probably not able to effectively engage more modern tanks. Conversation with a recent US team suggests that a possible solution to this problem is enhanced munitions. Also, the military factory which used to manufacture batteries for tanks, aircraft etc is inop and incidentally never manufactured batteries for MiG-21s. There is a shortage of tank batteries and those on hand have been provided by the Turks, ditto aircraft batteries.

Navy: Have visited two of the three naval bases. As previously reported paint is a serious problem. The commander at Saenjin states that they take the boats out once a month and apply primer. Certainly the torpedo boats look operational. The radar on the PT boats is of Russian manufacture and has a range of two miles or less. The navy claims that fuel is not a problem. Engines (Chinese M-50 1,700hp) may be a problem. Asked specifically at Saenjin how many engines in the PT boats worked and was assured that they all (3 or 4 depending on the boat) did. It is possible that Saenjin may have a better maintenance program than at Durres. There was a captured Italian stiletto boat at Saenjin which the Navy had run down so clearly some of the boats are capable of high speed. Asked if they had responsibility for contraband. The response was that they did not, but worked closely with the custom authorities. An American yachtsman apparently decided to visit Albania last year. He was informed that all that he had to do was to sail in and he would be given the appropriate visas. It turned out that he was arrested and initially fined \$3,000,000. The authorities are apparently trying to rewrite the various laws which deal with tourists, a relatively recent phenomenon.

**Comments:** Obviously the greatest problem facing the AAF is the lack of a viable infrastructure to support the AAF. There are soldiers without boots and most own a single Chinese style uniform. Rations too pose a problem. At the 1017th Commando Battalion, DA's arrival was delayed and by the time we arrived most of the officers had returned to quarters. DA was met by the paymaster. The paymaster indicated that in an effort to keep younger officers in the AAF, bachelor officers are provided three (3) meals a day, the equivalent of an additional \$30 monthly. When DA asked if this applied to married officers, the paymaster indicated that it did not, the assumption being that married officers have someone to cook for them. While true, the married officer still must provide food not only for himself, but also for his family. FYI BG Sula receives the equivalent of \$150 monthly, LTC Aslani gets \$80 and a lieutenant \$60.

Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

Apropos training, can you advise if USAREUR has any video films in European format (SECAM) which feature the squad/platoon/company in the attack which might be made available? We could probably dub them here.

Apropos batteries for MiG-21 aircraft, a series of rebuilt MiG-21 engines were provided through EUCOM. Wonder if this same source can provide batteries. We have, according to this morning's conversation with BG Binaj, a total of ten (10) MiG-21 of which three (3) are operational. The others are down for batteries.

RPT# 07

DATE: 14JUN95

**POST-BRUSSELS MEETING WITH MINISTER ZHULALI**

**Summary:** Met with Minister Zhulali 14 June. Subject was the minister's meeting with SecDef in Brussels. Minister Zhulali was elated with his meeting with SecDef and Secretary Nye. He appears to have been markedly less happy with his meeting with his Italian counterpart. Notes from today's meeting with the air force commander, communications chief, manpower and personnel directorates follows 15 June.

**Details:** Defence Advisor (DA) was summoned to Minister Zhulali's office 14 June. Minister Zhulali wished to brief DA on his recent trip to Belgium. He started by saying how happy he had been with the meeting and that SecDef went out of his way to single out the progress made by Albania during the past year and Albanian's attitude towards the Balkan situation in general. Minister Zhulali noted that in the context of the Partnership for Peace he was permitted to take the floor (along with his Hungarian, Polish and Romanian counterparts). Minister Zhulali noted that there were 15 delegates present but only 5 took the floor.

The minister stated that he had described the improvements in the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF), Albania's "democratic achievements and a recently produced document detailing security policy" (copy to follow). The minister indicated that he thought that some other countries were "jealous" of the attention directed towards Albania. The minister went on to say that he had addressed the issue of regional security and his belief that it was difficult for people to continue ignoring the situation in Kosovo. In this context the minister stated that he believed the "threat" to NATO to be from southern Europe vice the north.

Minister Zhulali then indicated that he met with his Italian and Greek counterparts. According to the minister his Italian counterpart said to him that Italy had done a great deal in assisting Albania. To this remark the minister responded that he could not remember anything specific that the Italians had done. The Italian minister reportedly countered by saying that he was speaking of various scholarships recently made available to Albanians. Minister Zhulali's responded that these were gestures for the future and not for the present and added that he was not in general "delighted" by the activities of the Italian Army within the context of detaining Albanian refugees, some of whom were in any event not Albanians but Montenegrins. The minister indicated that he invited his Italian counterpart to visit Albania but added that in this context the "future looked bleak". Apropos his meeting with his Greek counterpart, the minister stated that Greek minister had been delighted with the performance of the Albanian contingent in the recent exercises. The Greek minister was invited to visit Albania. The visit is scheduled for early July.

The minister recounted that he had asked for a personal meeting with SecDef and had been granted one. The minister stated that he had first talked about the need for improving the AAF's infrastructure, which he stressed remained his first priority, and then went on to address aircraft, ADA, helicopters and training for MiG pilots. The latter he said that he was told was very expensive. (Report on the air force in general follows.) Minister Zhulali stated that SecDef had indicated that he did not in any event think that the conflict would spread into southern Yugoslavia.

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

Apropos his forthcoming visit to Washington, SecDef asked for DA's advice apropos timing and the potential conflict with the unofficial visit of President Berisha. DA responded that DA had earlier spoken with LTC Bucci and that the embassy had this well in hand and were trying to resolve the issue to everyone's satisfaction. The minister was concerned that if he were to visit Washington in August many persons he might wish to see would be on vacation.

Minister Zhulali then asked DA if he had anything to add. DA spoke about the need for better coordination to preclude "surprises" and the necessity to have some idea prior to Minister Zhulali's next meeting with SecDef on what the future shape of the AAF should be. To this end DA suggested the need to assemble a small group of the best and the brightest to identify the future needs of the AAF as it was difficult to make any meaningful recommendations before this was done. This minister agreed and asked BG Sula, DA's counterpart, to gather together such a group.

**Comments:** Apropos the A-37 issue, DA apologizes for the furore caused. Believe that DA now has an understanding with the minister which will preclude such a repetition. There had in fact been an earlier conversation with the minister about aircraft. The purpose of the meeting was to suggest that there were other types of aircraft more in line with the Albanian Air Force's stated mission of supporting the ground forces, than F16S. This conversation was not undertaken in the light of what might be a topic for conversation with SecDef. The minister appears to understand that we need to avoid blind-siding SecDef et al. DA was misinformed about A-37s in particular and will ensure better coordination and greater circumspection in the future.

Apropos improvements in the armed forces there remains all manner of serious difficulties caused, in the most part, by an inadequate economic base. This is compounded to some degree by the AAF persisting in looking forward when perhaps some of their accomplishments in the past, particularly during the "Chinese" period as they related to agricultural production, might have application. In DA's 14 June meeting with the chief manpower (who reports to the General Kosovo distinct from the director of personnel who reports to the minister) the chief of manpower stated that the politicians were watching everything that the AAF did and that anything resembling engaging in commerce would be interpreted badly. The fact remains that the AAF cannot feed itself and perhaps this failure to look behind adds to the difficulties. Even if "returning to the land" were possible, it has been compounded by much of what had previously been "government" land having been returned to its original owners. This has greatly reduced the amount of land previously available to the army. DA asked the chief of manpower, BG Sula's old job, if he had ideas. He responded that he did not but that he would continue to work with this problem as it was of paramount importance.

RPT# 08

DATE: 16JUN95

**POST-BRUSSELS MEETING WITH MINISTER ZHULALI (ROUND 2)**

**Summary:** Marathon meeting (two and a half hours) with Minister Zhulali 15 June. Minister stated at the outset that he had come to realize that the United States was not going to solve all of the problems of the Albanian Armed Forces.

**Details:**

General: Defence Advisor (DA) was summoned to Minister Zhulali's office 15 June. The minister stated at the outset that he had come to realize that the US was not prepared to provide much of the assistance required by the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF). The minister stated that he had been informed (DATT) that the A37 aircraft were destined for Peru, but in any event Albania could not afford them. He was however appreciative of the recently arrived US vehicles. The minister stated emphatically that no matter what, Albania must maintain a "strong relationship with the United States for without the United States we are lost. Germany is also a good friend, but Germany does not have the strategic reach of the US." Defence Advisor (DA) mentioned that perhaps the AAF needed to take a look at the property disposal (DRMO) facilities in Italy and to this extent the DATT was trying to facilitate such a visit (the DATT is working this issue).

The PRC: The minister continued by saying that he had hosted a Chinese (PRC) delegation. This group was in Tirana to talk about a \$2million interest free loan. What upset the minister was that the prices the Chinese were quoting seemed extremely high. He added that he could understand why the loan was interest free. The Chinese had quoted the minister \$200,000 for a T-59 upgrade.

NCO Training: The minister stated once again his commitment to form an NCO Corps and that he had ordered the capacity of the NCO be immediately increased. DA offered that there was a ready source of NCOs in the conscripts already in the army. There are conscript tank commanders and squad leaders in the infantry and special forces. These suggested DA would start to make up the numbers required. DA added that if an individual was already performing the duties of an NCO why not make him an NCO? The minister responded that he had given some thought to selecting NCO candidates after they had been in the army for six (6) months. DA stated that the Swiss Army selects individuals for further training after three months. The mention of the Swiss model again caused the minister to leave his seat, open his safe and provide BG Sula, DA's counterpart, a large folder which contained all of the details pertaining to mobilization and organization of the Swiss Army. This had already been translated. Sula got through 200 pages last night. Returning to the subject of making competent conscripts NCOs the minister said that he did not think that Albanian youth was so motivated. DA suggested that by offering the prospect of promotion and recognition to a conscript gave him certain incentives and this, in DA's experience, is very important to anyone serving in any army. (DA and BG Sula are off to a depressed region 17 June and try to sound out various conscripts on this issue.)

Downsizing: DA stated that it seemed to be essential that before the minister went to Washington in the fall, that a group of bright Albanian officers be convened to look at the AAF and the Defence of Albania in conjunction with the DATT and the



## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

DA. A decision had to be made on how many divisions/brigades were needed for Albania, the role of the reserves, and the role of the navy and air force, if any. Until this was done, said DA, it is very difficult to plan anything. The minister asked BG Sula to take this project and select the requisite officers as soon as impossible.

Factories: DA mentioned that among the problems facing the AAF are several which relate to the former military enterprises (battery, clothing, motor repair etc). These facilities, while still having a connection with the military are producing a variety of civilian products as well as military products. The problem is that the AAF finds itself in a difficult position in that they must now purchase what they need from the factories and they simply do not have the funds to meet these requirements. The minister agreed, indicating that this too was among his priorities as the present situation was untenable. (According to knowledgeable individuals, in many cases it is cheaper to buy items like batteries from Bulgaria or Turkey than to purchase them from their own Albanian factories.)

Farms: The AAF, in their earlier incarnation, ran a series of farms which provided a certain percentage of the needs of the AAF. What has happened with the introduction of democracy has been the return and redistribution of land thereby nullifying also this source of support.

**Comments:** The A-37 issue may in fact have been issue which finally convinced Minister Zhulali that US assistance was not open ended. Notes from meetings with the air force commander, communications chief, manpower and personnel, CBW and logistics directorate and end of week three should be in your hands Monday. Writing as fast as I can.

RPT# 10

DATE: 20JUN95

**17 JUNE VISIT TO 3RD DIVISION BURRELI**

**Summary:** On 17 June, Defence Advisor, BG Sula and LTC Asllani visited 3rd Division in Burreli - three hours by car from Tirana. DA was briefed by the Division Commander (BG Bilaver Laci) who had just returned from Turkey, spoke to some 50 recruits and part of the division/brigade staff. Conditions were appalling but no worse than many other locations visited. At least Burreli is in the country and the air is better.

**Details:** The 3rd Division is located in one of the previously most heavily defended parts of Albania. The unit sits on a main avenue of approach from the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia (FYRMC), which was more a matter of concern before the break-up of the Yugoslav Federation than it is now. In the old days (pre-1983) there was one (1) Army Corps with four (4) Infantry Brigades, one (1) Cadre Brigade, and one (1) Artillery Brigade assigned to this sector. In 1983 the corps and four (4) brigades became a part of the northeastern front. This sector was then controlled by five (5) divisions under the command of the northeastern front. In 1992 the sector was reorganized into a division headquarters (Burreli) and four (4) infantry brigades (Burreli, Librazhd, Peshkopi and Bulqiza). All four (4) infantry brigades are organized at "peacetime" strength (@300 men). Wartime strength for an Albanian brigade is @500 men. At Peshkopi there is an additional cadre brigade. Also in Burreli is an artillery brigade. Individual weapons are maintained in the barracks.

DA has now seen more than ten barracks. The standard Albanian Army mattress for conscripts is @50cms wide (20"). Conscripts are issued two (2) blankets which should have been dx'ed years ago. Typically a conscript has one (1) summer and one (1) winter uniform. He is issued also a winter woollen greatcoat. There are no raincoats. At the Burreli division, there are a total of four (4) repeat four (4) water pipes. One serves the kitchen, another the laundry in which the spin dryer (Chinese) is broken. The other two are outside on the parade ground. The only latrine is some 300m from the parade field and is co-located with the laundry. Food is rudimentary with the conscripts eating in shifts. The staple of the AAF is beans but of course there are no beans. Vegetables have been substituted for beans for the morning meal (0630). There is also no meat which suggests that the standard diet is less than satisfactory. Apropos the water supply, officers explained that improvement was possible (there is a functioning water tower) but the unit lacked the funds to purchase the necessary pipes. One conscript, in response to how often he bathed, replied once every 10 days. The majority of the barracks were built by the Italians before WWII, others by the Chinese. Many, from a safety point of view, should be condemned. The unit has a total of four (4) TV sets. In DA's session with the conscripts, their most pressing complaints related not to food but to infrastructure - include uniforms, blankets, water, bathing facilities and latrines. DA specifically asked the assembled conscripts, recalling DA's recent conversation with the minister, if they thought that if they were in a leadership position, squad leaders for instance, would they be prepared to be designated as NCOs even if they could not be so paid. The answer was a strong affirmative. Apropos what kind of an incentive a conscript would have to have to remain in the AAF after his period of conscription, one conscript squad leader replied that a salary of \$250 monthly would be adequate as long as he could be assured of reasonable housing. Another

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

conscript stated that at the end of the training day (1600) there was little or nothing to do and perhaps movies could be made available on an occasional basis. (Curiously DA had raised this question 30 minutes earlier and was informed that indeed they used to show movies but the projector was now inop.) Towards the end of the session, one of the officers, a senior captain stated, almost with tears in his eyes, that while conditions for the conscripts were horrendous, conditions for the Officers Corps were not much better. The difference, he stated, was that a conscript served for a single (1) year. For an officer it was different. An officer, he said, dedicated his life to service for his country. He saw little hope for any amelioration of his circumstances and wanted to be certain that this was understood by DA.

**Comments:** DA is in his third week of going in and out of army barracks. The conditions in Burreli are not appreciably worse than anywhere else. One of the problems which has contributed to the water problem is that Hoxha had units placed on top of almost every major land feature. There was no attempt to determine if there was any water. Usually there was not. Once upon a time the AAF had something akin to special services which brought films around and various other "shows" dedicated towards the improvement of troop morale. While most regiments have a movie projector, all are broken and the special services program is now defunct. Apropos the conscript squad leader asking for \$250 per month. It is of course unsupportable given the AAF's present budget. In real terms however, the request is not unreasonable. LTC Asslani, DA's interpreter receives the following allowances:

Position pay:	8,300L (He is instructor qualified. His counterpart in a division receives @6,000L)
LTC:	850L
Relocation pay:	900L (An officer assigned to Burreli receives more not because Burreli is more expensive, which it is not, but because it is more remote)
Time in service:	900L
Electricity:	700L

LTC Asslani must reimburse the Ministry for Housing (1,200L). LTC Asslani electricity bill is around 3,000L monthly. BG Sula has a base pay of @14,000L per month. His allowances bring his monthly salary up to 23,000L or \$250. His electricity bill runs 4,000L. LTC Asslani, under the present system, has no discretionary income. BG Sula may have a little (although he has three daughters) but only because his wife is a LTC at the Staff College.

One of the problems which remains from the old days when excessive displays of initiative could get one imprisoned or worse, is a general disinclination for officers to take the initiative and start undertaking changes. While there are all manner of study groups, few of the study group have progressed beyond studying the problem. While the problems at Burreli are pretty horrendous, DA is convinced that some things could be undertaken with what is available to improve conditions there. BG Laci, it should be said, has been hospitalized since his return from Turkey. Nevertheless he stayed with DA and BG Sula for the entire day and appeared to be genuinely appreciative of a visit from Tirana. DA adds that he was wearing a beautifully cut slightly off-purple suit. DA's indoctrination and preparation for Albania did not include an orientation on kissing my fellow officers. DA was at first confused by the Albanian custom of nodding one's head to signify dissent and shaking it to demonstrate agreement. It appears that the Albanians too are now

confused as we are both trying to adopt to the other's customs with the result that neither of us has the slightest idea of which particular non-verbal language is being utilized.

RPT# 12

DATE: 23JUN95

**21 JUNE MEETING WITH PRESIDENT BERISHA & OTHER ATMOSPHERICS**

**Summary:** Defence Advisor (DA) and LTC Asslani (interpreter) met with President Berisha at his office 21 June for forty minutes. The president's primary concern as it related to the army is the Albanian Armed Force's (AAF) infrastructure. The president added that the army is to be downsized. At the same time the president is very concerned about the capacity of the air force.

**Details:**

**General:** DA and LTC Haxhi Asslani (DA's interpreter) met with President Berisha for 40 minutes on 21 June. The meeting was conducted entirely in English. President Berisha welcomed DA to Albania and added that Minister Zhulali had informed him that he was very pleased with the relationship. Albania, said the president, was faced with numerous political and economic problems many of which were brought about by the direction taken by the previous government which was very different. Albania, said the president, has many resources (economic and touristic) which could bring Albania additional capital but they have not been adequately exploited due to an overall lack of investment from abroad.

**The Army:** President Berisha stated that DA's assignment was particularly important to Albania at this time because the AAF was one of those areas in which Albania had to begin again from scratch. The president specifically stated that his greatest concern as it related to the AAF was infrastructure. "This", said the president, "is an even greater problem today than it was before because the nation's economy in general has improved and while before a conscript from the countryside might enjoy a better life in the army, this is no longer the case." DA mentioned that one of DA's concerns was the present ineffective relationship which existed between the former military industries and the AAF and the AAF's current inability to support itself (DA meets with the Under-Minister for Economics 24 June). The president agreed and stated that this continued to be a difficult problem because it was also necessary that the military industries be able to pay their own way economically and that they must be, to some extent, diverted towards the manufacture of goods directed at the civil community. The president stated that he was very concerned about the state of the Albanian Air Force and offered that in his opinion his best option was to gradually up grade Albania's ageing fleet (10) of MiG-21 aircraft at the expense of other types of aircraft. There were, he added, similar problems associated with the navy's Chinese built torpedo boats and the navy's submarines. Returning to the essential requirements of the AAF, the president stated that the TCTs and other related security assistance training teams, while both informative and useful, had little or no impact on the basic infrastructural needs of the AAF. Additionally, added the president, while the AAF is in the process of undertaking a further downsizing (see comments), there is a need to reintroduce modern tactical training into the AAF as the AAF's training legacy is inappropriate for the present day. Furthermore, said the president, Albania is part of the Balkans and AAF must be ready to confront a real threat.

**September Meeting With President Clinton:** The president was particularly looking forward to his meeting with President Clinton in September and indicated that it

was his intention to further address the matter of military preparedness and assistance for Albania with President Clinton.

**Comments:** DA was struck most by the sheer "presence" and charisma of President Berisha. He is not only a very large man, very much in the mould of northern Albanians, but projects also an aura of self-assurance and at the same time informality. While DA been informed that the meeting would most probably be conducted in French, President Berisha spoke entirely in clear and concise English throughout the meeting, only once turning to LTC Asslani for assistance. Apropos the TCTs and other security assistance related training, DA is of the opinion that while in some cases the AAF may not be ready to integrate much of such information into the manner in which it does business, one of DA's greatest concerns relates to staff procedures and the willingness to delegate authority. This is a far more complex undertaking than dealing simply with staffing wiring diagrams as it calls into question the way in which the army has done business for the past forty years. It is in fact the start of a social revolution and to the extent that the TCTs etc cause the AAF to be exposed philosophical alternatives, DA strongly suggests that we keep them coming. In DA's next meeting with Minister Zhulali DA will stress that not sending TCTs does not translate into there being more money for infrastructure. Although covered in greater detail in Report 13, the orders have been given to downsize from nine (9) divisions to five (5).

RPT# 13

DATE: 25JUN95

**21 JUNE MEETING WITH MINISTER ZHULALI**

**Summary:** Defence Advisor (DA) and LTC Asslani (interpreter) met with Defence Minister Zhulali late in the evening of 21 June. MinDef has ordered a consolidation of the army from nine (9) to five (5) divisions. Minister Zhulali has recommended approval of an interest free loan from the PRC for spare parts and medicines.

**Details:**

General: DA and LTC Haxhi Asslani (DA's interpreter) met with Minister Zhulali late 21 June. The meeting followed DA's meeting with President Berisha. The minister asked DA to cover the main points which was done (see Report 12).

Facilities & AAF Consolidation: Minister Zhulali then uncharacteristically entered into a ministerial soliloquy on the subject of Albania's decision to provide the United States access to certain facilities at no cost (repayment for fuel, food and lodging) noting that the Italians had asked for \$1million to provide the same services and wondering, given the state of the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) if he should have asked for some form of payment. DA suggested that in terms of training and assistance Albanian was receiving a not inconsiderable amount of assistance, but that DA believed it to be imperative, prior to the minister's trip to Washington later this year, that the minister have a better grasp on what the immediate requirements were for the defence of Albania and that this be provided to Secretary Perry. Only then would the United States be able to undertake a full assessment of the needs of the AAF. Minister Zhulali agreed and added that he had already ordered the army to be further consolidated. What the minister foresaw was an army reduction from nine (9) divisions to five (5), two divisions in the north, two in the south and a central reserve division (see comments).

Civilian control of the military: the minister then chided DA by asking why DA disagreed with civilian control of the military. DA responded that DA was very pro civil control of the military, but that DA thought that the minister simply could not run the Albanian military single handedly and that some of the decisions being made by the minister should be made by the uniformed services. This, after all, said DA was why there was a general and ministerial Defence staff. The problem, said the minister (and this is a recurring theme) was that many on the staff are not capable of adhering to the wishes of the minister. The minister continued that it had been necessary to purge the army of many officers because of their connections with the earlier regime. What of course this meant was that many of the best and the brightest have been separated and that many who were now general officers had been significantly lower in the scheme of things less than a year ago. The personnel directorate was a particular problem as the director took care of his relatives and friends without any regard to their capabilities. (LTC Asslani suggests that there have been all manner of problems associated with this director and that various people have been able to "pay" for assignments). DA suggested that perhaps the director in question should be moved. The minister agreed that his assignment has been a mistake, and that there had been several others but he has managed to assign these people away from the flagpole (Brussels and Turkey).

**Comments:** DA asked BG Sula (DA's counterpart) on 22 June what he knew about the "consolidation of the army" into five (5) divisions. BG Sula stated that it was news to him. DA spoke then with Colonel Kolasi (Col Morgan's recent counterpart), the Director of Strategic Planning (sort of a planning directorate and net assessment rolled into one). Col Kolasi, who is a particularly capable officer and who has been told by the minister to get with DA next week, had in fact just received the order. He thought that they may be able to consolidate one (1) division during the year but that consolidating the entire army was going to take somewhat longer. (DA will be meeting with Colonel Kolasi during the week.) The downsizing of the army will provide an excellent medium through which to observe the working of the staffs (both ministerial and general). DA would have preferred the minister to have ordered a reduction of the Army without specifying by how many divisions and let the general staff sort out the optimum solution. (It is also possible, given the excellent relationship which exists between General Kosovo and the minister, that Minister Zhulali and General Kosovo arrived at this figure.) Apropos the director of personnel, DA has actually met the this officer (BG Aliko Laze). He is very much old school. When DA asked him if he was able to make personnel assignments without the approval of the minister, he responded that he was not. When further asked if he thought that he should be able to make that kind of decision, he responded that he thought that would have been inappropriate. To re-emphasize an earlier comment, the organization of the staff is not nearly the problem that instilling adequate staff procedures is.



Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

RPT# 18

DATE: 15JUL95

## MEETINGS WITH MINDEF, UNDER-MINISTER MOISIU & BG SELAMI

**Summary:** Report forwards the main points of an 11 Jul late evening meeting with MinDef and 12 Jul meeting with Under-Minister Alfred Moisiu and Intelligence Directorate Chief, BG Besnik Selami. Ground forces consolidation will begin with the Skodra Division. MinDef characterizes the Albanian press as being unhelpful towards the military. Dislikes "Predator" being identified as a "spy" plane. Israel has offered the AAF a naval system identified as "Sea Eye" (see Report 19).

**Details:** 11 July meeting with Minister Zhulali:

General: Defence Advisor (DA) accompanied by LTC Asslani, and later, military liaison team (MLT) Colonel Akil Bubesi, met with Minister Zhulali late in the evening of 11 July.

Predator & The Press: Minister Zhulali was concerned about the Albanian press characterizing "Predator" as a "spy" plane. This, the minister intimated, was typical of the Albanian press who found it difficult to say anything positive about the armed forces and took considerable liberties with the truth. The minister also indicated his disappointment that the Americans had been either unable or unwilling to leave anything behind for the Albanians in the aftermath of last year's "Predator" experience.

Israel & Coastal Surveillance: Shifting his focus, the minister stated that it was his intention to try to do something positive for each service in the interests of morale and had, in that regard, spoken with representatives from the Israeli firm "Rafael" about the purchase of a patrol boat observation system identified as "Sea Eye" for the navy. These negotiations had been broken off because the prices quoted by a "Rafael" delegation had been inordinately high (\$443,900 for the system and in excess of \$3.4m for the supporting software, training and integration). (See Report 19.)

Consolidation: Apropos the consolidation of the Defence forces, the minister stated that this was something that was going to have to be handled very carefully and necessarily classified, but that it would start with the strategically important 1<sup>st</sup> Div (Skodra - BG Aqif Cikalleshi) and would be followed by the consolidation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Div (Kukes - BG Ndue Mjekaj). The reason for classification was that ultimately it would mean a possible reduction of the officer corps by 2,000 persons over the next several years, and should this be a matter of general knowledge, morale would be further affected. (DA is maintaining liaison with Colonel Bektash Kolaci - Chief of Defence Planning among his other various duties.) Currently discussions are ongoing apropos whether the reserves should be organized separate to the regular army or as an integral part. DA and BG Sula are taking the line that they should be integrated into the main force.

The minister was highly enthusiastic about "Uje Krystal" and informed DA that the following day he intended to publicly (in his opening ceremony address) press for more assistance of this type. The minister was specifically interested in engineer assistance in the area of the construction of a national training centre. DA responded that Albania had received the largest of such projects for 1995 and that

while DA/MLT/DATT would be prepared to recommend future projects, it was unlikely that Albania would get a major project for 1996. This the minister recognized but added that it was important to continue to urge such cooperation for the future.

In DA's 12 July separate meetings with Under-Minister Alfred Moisiu and BG Besnik Selami, DA is left with the very clear impression that there is considerable duplication in the intelligence field and perhaps inadequate measures being taken to include intelligence sharing.

Under-Minister Moisiu provided DA a brief overview of his background. The under-minister's father was a major military figure in WWII and enjoyed a close relationship with Enver Hoxha. The minister himself first saw combat at the age of fourteen, retiring from the army in 1983. Under-Minister Moisiu was appointed Defence Minister on an interim basis and, after the appointment of Minister Zhulali, stayed on as an advisor, until he was made Under-Minister for Defence Policy, which is a tad of a misnomer as the under-minister for policy has little if anything to do with policy. DA, having noted Under-Minister Moisiu's title, specifically asked the under-minister if he was involved in the "consolidation" of the AAF. He replied that he was not. In US terms, the under-minister is the chief of the foreign intelligence directorate as he is responsible for the Albanian Attaché Service and for those attachés residing in Tirana. He further oversees various geographically organized intelligence desk officers. Also under the under-minister's umbrella is arms control, a function filled by a single officer, protocol, and veterans' affairs which occupies most of his time. Defence studies were to be placed under Minister Moisiu but it looks as though this is going to be placed at the Defence university. Under-Minister Moisiu, in an earlier incarnation, was responsible for bunker construction. (See comments for further thoughts.)

BG Besnik Selami, the Director of Intelligence, appears to perform many of the same functions as Under-Minister Moisiu to include geo-political analysis. When asked about the lack of an organised section to deal with tactical intelligence at the battalion level and above, BG Selami suggested that this was indeed a shortcoming but that one (1) of his officers had been integrated into BG Vladimir Ismolli's operations directorate.

**Comments:** There has always been a struggle in western armies between operations and intelligence in which intelligence invariably loses - a phenomenon which Norman Dixon places under the heading of muscular christianity, something which the AAF does not have to worry about. In DA's book, the smaller and the more irregular the army, the greater becomes the importance of intelligence. In the case of the AAF, while there is an agreement on this point of view, in practical terms there is little evidence that this truism is a reality. Indeed, in DA's opinion the overlap of responsibilities between intelligence function undertaken by Under-Minister Moisiu and BG Selami needs to be systematically reviewed. Also there continues to be little concept of the integration of tactical intelligence into the combat command structure, other than the organization of reconnaissance units. In one of many conversations with Perlat Sula (DA's counterpart) we got onto the subject of such training. BG Sula mentioned, more or less in passing, that during the time of the Vietnam War, the AAF sent at least one small group of reconnaissance officers for training under the aegis of the PRC and by extension the People's Army of Vietnam. The training afforded, according to Sula, was exceptionally good. (DA asked BG Sula if it would be possible to chat with any such

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

participants. Apparently this presents no problem and searches are being conducted for anyone from the era who had such an experience.)

Given that Intelligence 101 dictates "the daily reading of a newspaper", currently the only copy of the International Herald Tribune in the ministry is bought daily by this DA (as long as Alitalia is not on strike). DA currently provides DA's copy to the MLT LNO, Colonel Bubesi, but there are bids from both the intelligence directorate and the under-minister for this copy. DA has suggested that they should subscribe to both the Economist's and Jane's confidential reports, but funding appears to preclude both that and access to Internet; indeed every week, Col Kraja, the Washington based Albanian DA faxes thirty pages of news to the under-minister's office. Have recommended internet, Jane's and the Economist's confidential reports.

DA has been tasked by the minister to start intervening in the organisation of the ministerial staff. DA maintains, as reported earlier, that the problems with the staff are not so much related to the line diagram but rather to systemic problems. DA, in conjunction with BG Sula, intends to recommend that the under-minister for policy get involved with policy and that Col Kolasi's future planning directorate (a combination of net assessment and J5 OJCs) be put directly under the minister, and that Colonel Kolasi's responsibility for PFP related training be given to the operations directorate. Also intend to recommend that tactical and strategic intelligence functions be streamlined and that the apparent duplication be stopped. DA is not going to get involved in counter-intelligence but will strive for the creation of a separate tactical intelligence division. In DA's opinion, the emphasis remains heavily weighted towards counter-intelligence vice tactical intelligence, and what tactical intelligence there is is the responsibility of specifically designated reconnaissance units. Curiously when DA spoke with BG Ismolli, BG Ismolli indicated that it was the intention of the C/S to create an intelligence directorate but this alternative was never mentioned by BG Selami. Finally, again in DA's opinion (also shared by the DATT), there is a very real need for a tactical intelligence MTT the object of which would be to preach the need for tactical intelligence acquisition and integration into the battalion, brigade and division staffs.

DA has been provided 17AF Sembach AB message 151350Z Jun, subject: after action report, AL175, Albanian Air Force pilot training. DA generally concurs with the message with the exception of Para 6a which calls for reducing the number of aircraft and pilots. While the MiG-17s should be phased out for the reasons cited, DA believes it is wrong to reduce the number of pilots as the air force is not producing new pilots and because many of the pilots currently in the force are themselves getting along in years.

RPT# 21

DATE: 02AUG95

**WHERE TO FROM HERE? - END OF MONTH TWO AND A HALF**

**Summary:** Preparatory to a late August meeting with EUCOM J-5, and the visit to Washington of both President Berisha and Minister Zhulali, Defence Advisor (DA) met with Chief of General Staff (C/S) SHEME Kosova and other members of the General Staff on 27 July. C/S provided DA an overview of the staff's work to date following the order of the minister for a "consolidation" of the army to be undertaken. The main force army is to consist of five (5) infantry divisions with at least one (1) full strength brigade each. DA is starting to wonder if we are concentrating on the right army (see comments and message 22 which follows).

**Details:**

General: Defence Advisor (DA), accompanied DA's counterpart BG Perlat Sula and LTC Asslani (interpreter) met with Chief of Staff General SHEME Kosova, newly appointed Deputy Chief of Staff MG Armando Vincani (fresh from the German Staff College and promoted to Major General from Colonel), and operations director BG Vladimir Ismulli. The purpose of the meeting was to establish a framework for the "consolidation" of the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) and to advise DA on the progress to date of the C/S's study group. This is a specific task ordered by Minister Zhulali in July. A draft of this study is to be provided to the minister no later than 15 August 1995 and will serve as the basis for DA's programmed trip to Stuttgart in late August which is to address requirements for the AAF, as well as the main talking points for President Berisha's September and Minister Zhulali's October visits to Washington.

C/S welcomed DA and suggested that there be more meeting between C/S and DA. Gen Kosova noted that this was an important milestone for the AAF as previously the only strategy employed by the AAF was one of static Defence from prepared emplacements. (This perhaps explains DA's first training exercise in which DA noted that on various signals defenders would rush into bunkers thereby becoming "blind" to the situation at hand. (This is addressed in Report 6.) DA was then asked to provide an overview of DA's views.

DA stated at the outset that DA believed it to be imperative that whatever form the new AAF was to take, the solution and form of the "new" AAF, must necessarily be Albanian and that it was pointless to attempt to become something other than a reflection of Albanian national ethos, this because, in DA's view, all armed forces are to varying extents reflective of their nation's/group's national/tribal ethos. (For details see Report 22 which follows.)

DA added that the consolidation of the AAF came at a particularly propitious time in that the AAF was currently in a period of formational transition when armies are more accessible to change. Fortuitous also was the fact that planning vis-à-vis the reformation and consolidation of the army was coming immediately before the visits to Washington of both President Berisha and of Defence Minister Zhulali. The study, said DA, would also provide a basis for equipment requests, although DA emphasized that it was important that the AAF be prepared to do whatever they could do to improve the combat capabilities of the AAF (upgrading the MiG-21s and selected tank units as an example) exclusive of any external assistance.

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

In general terms DA stated that the much heralded figure of five (5) infantry divisions appeared not to have been a figure arrived at through any serious research on the part of the AAF's strategic community (in fact it appears to have been a figure first mentioned two years ago by a Vienna based US Defence Attache) and that the figure was only coincidentally within the range of possible options. It was essential, said DA, that the staff examine the Defence of Albania in detail, to include both the political and economic environment, and only then decide upon the most proper force structure which was commensurate with the "threat". DA offered that opinions within the AAF suggested that the regular army should consist of between four (4) and six (6) infantry divisions. DA further stated that the general staff would need to address the organization of the reserve noting only that the reserve should be integrated into the regular army and, said DA, a decision is going to have to be made about what if any function the territorials (also known as volunteers) are to play in the new Albanian Armed Forces. DA concluded by saying that DA was prepared to play whatever role the chief of staff thought proper, adding that perhaps when the study is taken to EUCOM, BG Sula should accompany DA to EUCOM as, after all, at issue was the Albanian Armed Forces.

Gen Kosova thanked DA and said that a considerable amount of thought had already gone into this project. Gen Kosova said that the emphasis on reorganization was going to be on the ground forces and that Gen Kosova would like to call on DA for assistance and comments when the first draft was in print (anticipated during the week of 7 August.) In that light, said Gen Kosova, it had been decided that there should be five (5) infantry divisions (Skodra, Kukes, Tirana, Girojkastra and Korca). In terms of manpower the C/S anticipated the separation from the service of some 2,000 officers (see comments). Gen Kosova also stated that there would not be any single specific table of organization and equipment (TO&E) for the new divisions but that they would be organized in accordance with the terrain which had to be defended. It was also conceived that there would be at least one (1) full strength brigade (3,000-5,000 personnel) in each of the five divisions. General Kosova differentiated between cadre and reserve battalions/brigades, noting that as the name implied the cadre units would maintain an active duty cadre to facilitate call-up and deployment, while reserve battalions/brigades would be totally reserve and that there would not be an active duty cadre. No mention was made of the territorials/volunteers (for DA's dissent in this area - see comments below). Also at no time did the C/S specifically identify what he perceived to be the "threat" faced by Albania.

**Comments:**

General: The Albanian Army, not surprisingly, has certain similarities with the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA). There are several Albanian armies: an amorphous 46,000 man regular army, a more amorphous 150,000 man reserve, and 15,000 decidedly even more amorphous territorials. There are also troops dedicated to the semi-defunct military enterprises which need to be revived if the army is to survive and a "politically correct" NATO compatible company, to be expanded to a battalion, which is specifically being established for peacekeeping duties and which may in fact be robbing the main force AAF of much needed resources.

Consolidation Planning: It needs to be underscored that no one in the C/S planning group, with the possibly exception of Colonel Kolasi, was ever been systematically involved in force structure or the reformation of an entire army. (To that extent neither has DA although BG Sula, DA's counterpart has.) It should also be noted

that only BG Ismolli in the special study group has had "tactical" command. Gen Kosova indicated that the first draft of the "consolidated" army will be ready no later than 15 August. In a 31 July meeting with Minister Zhulali, DA was specifically asked when the issue of AAF consolidation would be ready to be briefed to President Berisha. DA told the minister what DA had been told by General Kosova, adding that there was some chance of having a very general scheme on the minister's desk before he returned from two weeks' leave on or around 14 August. (Anticipate getting a copy to EUCOM as soon as DA has access to one which hopefully will be during the week of 7 August.) Apropos consolidation and the AAF, the bottom line, assuming that the present levels of funding remain, in the near term, at their present levels and given the present mood of the Albanian parliament, there is no discernible reason why they should not, the AAF is going to remain unable to support its own infrastructure and no amount of training and assistance is going to change that. It is doubtful also that the projected "consolidation" of the AAF will contribute to any substantial fiscal savings.

Officer Reductions: There was a reduction of 2,600 officers in 1993. The criterion at the time for dismissal was a lack of a solid education, a rubric which may include the dismissal of officers who had been "politically" tainted with what had been before. Formally included were officers who had not attended the military academy, officers who had attended the NCO Academy vice the military academy and officers over the age of 39.

Reserve & Territorials: Reserve: DA (and BG Sula) believe that the trend of the CoS's study group is that the reserve battalions and regiments will have no cadre at all. This DA mentioned to the minister noting that DA believed it to be essential that there at least be a small body of full-time cadre who have administrative responsibility for the reserve and who are further responsible for maintaining records on the whereabouts of members of the reserve and overseeing the maintenance of equipment. Minister Zhulali agreed that this was essential. (Immediately after DA's 31 July meeting with Minister Zhulali the minister met with C/S Kosova.)

Territorials: In the old days, ie before the reforms and the advent of "democracy", the territorials/volunteers played a major role in the Defence of Ablania but only came under the army for periods of training. Otherwise they answered to the Interior Ministry. BG Sula maintains (and DA is again in complete agreement with BG Sula) that the territorials are essential, if not fundamental, given their historical positions, to the Defence of Albania. Here too the minister is in agreement, although the minister sees a much reduced role for the territorials. It is interesting to note that at no time did the C/S mention the role of the territorials in any future armed forces organization and there is currently no office in MOD which has responsibility for the territorials.

Apropos the former organization of the territorials, Albania was formerly divided into 36 districts, with each district having a brigade of volunteers (women and men over the age of 50). Each brigade had @6 battalions. The smaller districts had a territorial group vice a brigade which was composed of a fewer number of battalions. Each battalion in the territorial system was commanded by an active duty officer. There were some 200,000 individuals in the territorials who were divided into @640 battalions. In 1973 the system was reorganized into 50 battalions and, on paper at least, was placed under MOD. DA has the distinct impression that this organization exists on paper only. DA has suggested that the

Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

overseeing of the territorial forces is a mission which could well be given to the special forces regiment.

Coda: Additional thoughts on the process of consolidation are provided in Report 22 which follows. DA is wondering if the rapid movement towards the establishment of a conventional army for Albania at the expense of all other military alternatives, is not perhaps doing a disservice to Albania although the impetus to be more like us (American) is very hard to counter. The Swiss have never depended upon a regular force for the Defence of Switzerland, but rather to provide the time in which to activate the militia.

RPT# 23

DATE: 14AUG95

**10 AUGUST MEETING WITH MINDEF**

**Details:** Defence Advisor was summoned to a meeting with Minister Zhulali on the morning of 10 August. Minef asked about the status of DA's end of ninety-day report and DA's trip to Stuttgart. DA responded that DA awaits the first draft of General Kosova's concept paper on the "consolidation" of the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF). DA added that, according to what DA knew thus far, DA was concerned that the concept paper overlooked the importance of the territorial forces towards the Defence of Albania, and that the concept of reserves was not workable and overlooked traditional Albanian Defence arrangements. This is a sentiment shared by BG Sula, who was described by the minister as the most knowledgeable and experienced officer in the AAF. DA informed the minister that in any event the report would serve as the basis for planning as it related to the future of the AAF. MinDef stated that he doubted that the United States would be very forthcoming as it related to the provision of equipment, adding that he had been advised not to ask for any material assistance during his October visit to Washington. MinDef asked for DA's views on the subject. DA responded that DA too was less than optimistic but that the end of ninety-day report due EUCom would provide the minister and the AAF a blueprint for the future and would clarify what could and what could not be expected in terms of material support from the US, and provide the starting point for other sources of support.

The minister then asked for DA's assistance apropos the military hospital, noting that what the hospital now needed was equipment. The minister stated that he proposed calling the hospital the "Partnership for Peace" hospital and that he would seek multi-national assistance. (The Brits have already spoken about providing cardiology related equipment and the British Defence Attache (stationed in Rome) will address this when he visits at the end of the month.) Also, the French were supposed to send a medical assessment team which has yet to appear. (The French DA will be absent until September.) The minister added, on the positive side, that the Greeks were providing much needed ambulances. The purpose of the minister's enquiry was obviously to sound out the prospects for US assistance in outfitting a clinic in the hospital.

The minister then asked if DA had any thoughts on DOD's future plans for Albania. DA avoided the question by saying that DA had a fax from C2Corps which mentioned the "Lazarus Concept" and until DA was familiar with the "Lazarus Concept" and what it included, DA would prefer to avoid answering the question (see comments).

MinDef said that he had a positive reaction from the US apropos support for the construction of a national training centre (NTC). DA stated that this indeed was something that was of interest to Cdr McClain and that Albania would have to compete in this with other nations vying for engineering assistance in the year to come. DA indicated that DA needed as soon as possible the sites of the proposed locations. The minister indicated there to be three (3) sites which might lend themselves to a NTC. This will be further discussed in a follow-on message.



## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

**Comments:** The opportunity to step back from immediate involvement in the "reformation" of the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) provided a better perspective. While the office of the chief of staff is hard at work on identifying the organizational and materiel requirements for the "new" army, the minister is not particularly optimistic about seeing very much in terms of needed assistance. DA continues to urge that all requests remain commensurate with the immediate needs of the AAF and address the basic needs of the AAF. DA anticipates that in addition to basic infrastructure, the AAF will need trucks, communications equipment, radars, anti-tank weapons and some form of air defence. There are also tactical skills which cannot be addressed under "PfP" which are essential, such as tactical intelligence (which exists at no level) and air-ground operations 101. (Another report is in preparation which will address specifically the minister's concern apropos his forthcoming visit to Washington and the relationship in general. This follows a 15 August meeting with MinDef.)

It should be noted that some "consolidation" has already started with the 1st Division (Skodra). While a new commander has been assigned (no further information) there is reportedly a great deal of unhappiness and the approach to consolidation has apparently not been very well implemented. The impact on officer morale has been very negative, and this reaction has apparently spread throughout the army, officers being uncertain of their immediate future. (DA has asked to visit the 1st Division and the northern border in the near term.)

While this DA has some serious reservations about the utility of "PfP" in forming an army (among DA's greatest concern is the total absence of any form of tactical intelligence at any level of the armed forces, and only the most simplistic vision of air-to-ground support), DA is in general agreement with the thrust of the proposals contained in the "Lazarus" concept (a copy of which has been provided separately to Cdr McClain). Vis-à-vis the Lazarus proposals DA believes that priority should go to the most expeditious assignment of a logistics expert to be stationed in Europe as a Defence redistribution and marketing officer (DRMO). The DRMO expeditor would obtain and ship excess US Defence materials that meet the needs of the AAF, and for that matter other "armies" in the region which are in their more formative phases. DA believes that this should have priority over the provision of a "peacekeeping unit advisor".

Brigadier Johnny Thoys, the British Defence Attaché posted to Rome, will visit Tirana at the end of August. They will discuss language training, the provision of hospital related equipment, and the offer of a nine (9) month course at the War Studies Institute at Kings College, London. The Foreign Liaison (FLO) chief, LTC Arben Gyata is lining himself up for the course. This is very much opposed by DA on the grounds that the FLO is by no stretch of the imagination a strategist and that this would be squandering a marvellous opportunity for an able Albanian officer involved with steering the AAF towards new frontiers. Also discussed will be the possibility of the Brits working with the various guard units in Tirana with the aim of sprucing up the appearance of Albanian drill and ceremonies. They are coming with a videotape of the Queen's Birthday Parade. (A new manual of arms is in the process of being approved.)

Two reports are in preparation and will follow. One will address the "threat" as seen from Tirana, the other the minister's concerns for the future and the "relationship".

RPT# 25

DATE: 19AUG95

**15 AUGUST MEETING WITH MINDEF**

**Summary:** Minister is concerned about "hidden" agendas and the number of visitors. Believes that his trip to Washington will not be fruitful in terms of the provision of equipment. Believes that there has been too much emphasis on peacekeeping and continues to have reservations about the Chief of Staff Report on armed forces "consolidation".

**Details:**

Visitors: MinDef summoned Defence Advisor (DA) on the afternoon of 15 August. MinDef wanted DA's opinion on why so many visitors were suddenly coming to Albania, to include the Secretary of the Army, and if there was an "alternative" agenda to the stated visit to "Uje Kristal". Also, asked the minister, why were these individuals not also visiting Macedonia, and why were they seemingly not interested in "helping" Albania? DA responded that in the first place it was probable that the visitors were taking advantage of end of year funds, and, as far as DA knew, Sec Army had never been to Albania. DA also suggested that the forthcoming visit of both President Berisha (September) and the minister (October) to Washington was raising the profile of Albania, and that there were certain initiatives to place more emphasis on the national guard and reserve forces, and "Uje Kristal" provided perhaps the best example of reserve/national guard forces in the field. Apropos there being an "alternative agenda", DA stated that Americans were rather more straightforward than many of their European colleagues and that the minister should not try to read anything untoward into the visits. Visitors were interested in Albania, "Uje Kristal" happened to be in Albania and end of year funds were available. On the subject of why the visitors were not going on to Macedonia as well, DA suggested that the United States had yet to fully recognize the unfortunate Macedonians and that the Greeks would probably not be terribly amused by a visit of the Secretary of the Army to Macedonia. In response to the minister's question about whether or not the visitors were "interested" in Albania, DA suggested that the fact that they were coming to Albania gave the minister a somewhat captive audience which he should probably take advantage of, particularly in the light of his forthcoming trip to the US.

The minister also asked DA to place the Secretary of the Army's position vis-à-vis SecDef's position in perspective. This DA did.

October In Washington: A recurring theme of recent conversations with the minister has been his October trip to Washington. The minister stated that he has been to Washington at least twice, has hosted an untold number of VIPs and has given innumerable US military teams complete access to the Albanian Armed Forces, and in return, in real terms, he has received fifty (50) plus excess light trucks. Also MinDef stated that during his trips to Washington and in conversations with senior American officials, there had been talk of the provision of uniforms, TOW missiles and anti-tank guns, patrol boats, coastal surveillance aircraft, radios and radars etc. None, said the minister, had ever materialized. DA asked the minister if officials in Washington has said that they would specifically provide equipment, or only that such and such equipment was possibly available to Albania. Minister Zhulali responded that he had been told that various items were available but no

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

commitment had been made other than "we will see". The minister was particularly galled about being taken to the service academies, but when asked if he could send someone to any of the academies, he was told no. "Why then take me there in the first place?" Continuing in the same vein the minister stated that he remained pessimistic about this year's trip to Washington and feared that he would once again return empty handed. In that case, intimated the minister, the entire relationship with the United States was up for review.

"PfP" and peacekeeping: Minister Zhulali questioned what "peacekeeping" and the creation of a "peacekeeping company" did for the Albanian Army, stressing that while it might improve Albania's image abroad, it did little or nothing in the scheme of defending Albania, and in fact diverted assets from the main force army into peacekeeping.

Armed Forces Consolidation: The minister pointed out that today (15 August) was the day that DA was supposed to speak to the minister about General Kosova's plan to reorganize the Armed Forces. DA responded that indeed it was but as General Kosova had yet to make distribution to even Col Kolasi (Net Assessments) there was little that DA could say without having seen the plan. DA went on to say that DA thought that there were going to be certain problems as they pertained to both the territorials and the reserve. Apropos the territorials apparently they appear nowhere and DA does not think that there is the remotest possibility that if the alarm is sounded, the reserves could answer the colours even if they wanted to. What appears also to be missing is an adequate evaluation of the threat. Only if such forecasting is done can one adequately prepare for the future (see Report 26 to follow).

**Comments:** DA has now known Minister Zhulali for three months. He is probably the best thing ever to happen to the Albanian Armed Forces, and this DA believes that he is determined to lead the army into a new era. He may have erred to some extent in taking too literally the concept of "civil" control of the military, but there is no one in uniform who is by any stretch of the imagination his intellectual equal. (It is interesting to note that in the English language version of the May 1995 "Security And Defence Policy of Albania" (Report 15) the term "leadership" is used in lieu of "control" and "leadership" is clearly what we have from Minister Zhulali.)

DA believes that the minister is totally committed to building a new army for Albania, and is perhaps concerned about his own political future. He may in fact wonder how much longer he has to do what he believes is essential for the Albanian Armed Forces and for Albania. He finds it hard to believe that the United States is prepared to send as many visitors as it does to Albania just to look at a deployment exercise, and wonders aloud if the amount of money being so spent could not have been put to better use in providing much needed infrastructure for the Albanian Armed Forces.

The minister also has problems with the wider ramifications of "PfP" and peacekeeping in general. In one of the minister's conversations with a senior US official, the official stated that the AAF had many "holes that needed to be filled and that peacekeeping was one of them". It is not that the minister disagrees (and he clearly understands the benefits in financial terms), but he has a different sense of priorities, believing that one needs to have a functional military before embarking on extra-military diversions such as "peacekeeping". Indeed much of what is essential for the AAF is not commensurate with the wider precepts of "PfP", and while there are clearly benefits to garner from joint SAREX exercises and the like,

the Albanians need to address their warfighting and organizational skills before turning outward into "peacekeeping". Perhaps one of the underlying assumptions of "PfP" is the pre-existence of an army which, in the Albanian instance, is not the case.

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

RPT# 26

DATE: 22AUG95

**BIOGRAPHY - ALFRED MOISIU<sup>1</sup>**

The following information relates to the Under-Minister for Policy Mr Alfred Moisiu.

Alfred Moisiu is a 1946 graduate of the St Petersburg (Russia) Military Academy. He was commissioned as an engineer. Between 1952 and 1956 Mr Moisiu attended the Engineering Academy in Moscow. Mr Moisiu attended the General Staff Academy in Tirana in 1957-1958. Mr Moisiu formally retired from the army in December 1985. Other key military assignments of Mr Moisiu's career have been:

1948-1949: Platoon leader.

1949-1951: Instructor, army academy.

1958-1966: Staff officer and branch chief, Engineering Directorate, Ministry of Defence.

1966-1971: Engineer brigade commander - pontoon bridge brigade.

1971-1981: Director of Engineering Director, Ministry of Defence and later Director of Fortifications.

1981-1982: Deputy Minister of Defence (discharged for political reasons).

1982-1985: Chief of engineers in the town of Burreli.

1991-1992: Minister of Defence.

1992-1994: Advisor to the Minister of Defence for "Special" Affairs.

1994: Under-Minister for Defence Policy.

Alfred Moisiu is married and has four children (two daughters, who are married, and two sons).

---

<sup>1</sup> General Moisiu became President of Albania in July 2002.

RPT# 28  
DATE: 26AUG95

## CONSOLIDATION

**Summary:** Report forwards an English language translation of the Chief of Staff's draft paper addressing the consolidation of Albanian Armed Forces (AAF). DA has proposed to the minister "round table" discussion which will place the "best and the brightest" all at the same table for the first time to discuss the "Defence" of Albania and the threat. DA agrees with the consolidation to five (5) divisions (really five (5) brigades). The more important issue remains the organization of the reserve and the territorials.

**Details:** Report on the present situation and the future of the Albanian Armed Forces

General: The last 5 years in the Balkans have been marked by conflict. National perspectives and the need for a new system of regional cooperation remains a major concept of not only the nations of the Balkans, but also of the international community. Albania continues to support all positive efforts undertaken by the international community to stop the conflict and to prevrising [sic] in Albania's relationship with Albania's neighbours through political and diplomatic means, Albania will also take those actions deemed to be necessary to protect Albania's national interests and way of life. This will be done in a manner commensurate with the perceived threat to Albania. At the present our military potential is defensive and can be characterized as "forward defence".

The Present State Of The Military: The 1992 reforms reorganized the Albanian Armed Forces in a manner commensurate with that of a democratic society. Civilian control of the military has been established and the army has been reorganized into larger units in order to make it more "professional"; also the structure of the army has been reorganized from the top (MOD) to bottom; all military activity now has a legal basis; the process of cooperation, communication and integration has been intensified; the armed forces education and training system has been reformed and a considerable number of military students have been abroad to study; also the system of planning, programming and budgeting is in the process of being updated.

The present structure of the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF):

Army: 90% of the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) are army ground forces. In 1992 there were 22 infantry divisions. This number was reduced to nine (9) infantry and one (1) special forces division and plans are underway to further consolidate the ground forces into five (5) infantry and one (1) special forces division. All divisions currently have about 15% of their personnel and are equipped with light infantry weapons, mortars and artillery up to and including 152mm, counter-air defence artillery (12.7-57mm guns), and tanks with 100mm guns etc. Each division consists of 3-4 infantry brigades, 1 artillery brigade, 1 armoured brigade, 1 ADA regiment and other support and service support units. In terms of mobility and manoeuvrability, little is available. Accordingly units have been stationed close to the traditional avenues of attack.

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

The present combat capability of the ground forces in general is such that deployments have been planned to as much as possible avoid close combat operations when and wherever possible. The range of artillery is from 11-15km (?). The army lacks any organic air assets and there is no system in place to support close air support. All information systems, most particularly command and control and related communication systems, are out of date. The AAF's C3 system is very rudimentary. There is no computer or other such equipment to assist in the elaboration or transmitting of data.

Similarly, combat support (reconnaissance, communications, engineers, logistics and chemical) is limited due primarily to the age of associated equipment which dates back to the period 1970-1970 [sic].

Significant problems are also faced by all deployed units in respect to the provision of basic infrastructure. This has had a negative impact on unit deployment (as well as morale) as it is not possible to provide adequate facilities for the deployment of larger consolidated units.

Air Defence Forces: There are 3 ADA regiments, 1 electronic warfare regiment, 1 SAM-2 missile regiment and supporting counter-air artillery regiments armed with 57-100mm guns.

The MiG-19 is the mainstay of the Albanian Air Force and has a close air support role. There are also 10 operational MiG-21 aircraft. These aircraft have an interceptor mission.

The air force C3 system, like the rest of the AAF, is antiquated and has no communality with western (NATO) systems, and has only the most limited compatibility. Importantly the AAF has no system of "friend-foe" identification. All air force related infrastructure (runways, hanger, housing, uniforms, food, etc) are likewise in need of replacement or immediate upgrade. The cost of aircraft maintenance is growing daily.

Naval Forces: There are 4 naval districts. The navy performs largely a coastal Defence mission and is equipped mainly with PRC manufactured torpedo boats. These are supplemented by a limited number of gunboats and minesweepers. There are also 4 Whisky-class submarines (inop). The navy also has a limited electronic warfare capability.

All naval equipment is either of Russian or Chinese manufacture and dates back to the 1970s. This creates problems as to the successful performance of the navy's mission of coastal and maritime surveillance.

There are additionally 4 logistic bases. Other service units are: 2 engineering brigades, 1 communication regiment, and 1 chemical warfare regiment. These units support the AAF as a whole.

#### Armed Forces Consolidation:

The raison d'être of the armed forces is to be able to muster a credible Defence and/or deterrence should the primacy of the diplomatic/political fail. The size and deployment of the AAF will be commensurate with the maintenance of security and is to be based upon the perceived threat to Albania.

Based on the present situation in the region it remains necessary to maintain, along the main avenues of approach, forward based units. These units will continue to be held in a state of readiness.

The aim of the AAF in the future is to raise the combat effectiveness of the AAF by the acquisition of more modern weaponry and associated equipment.

The process of modernization requires substantial improvements in the basic structure of the armed forces. For example inment (as well as morale) as it is not possible to provide adequate facilities for the deployment of larger consolidated units.

After the process of modernisation the AAF will consist of the following:

Ground Forces: 5 Infantry divisions. Each division will consist of 1 infantry brigade, 1 armoured brigade, 1 ground artillery brigade, 1 anti-air defence artillery and 1 missile battalion.

Full strength infantry units will consist of: 5 infantry brigades, 4 armoured brigades, 1 armoured battalion, 5 artillery brigades, 5 anti-air defence artillery battalions and 5 anti-air missile battalions.

Infantry brigades will consist of: 3-4 infantry battalions, 3 armoured battalions and 3-4 ground artillery battalions.

The infantry division will also have a reserve component which when mobilized will round-out division strength to from 3 to 4 infantry brigades plus other support and service support units.

The ground forces, in addition to the above, will have 3 reserve divisions. During peacetime each of these divisions will consist of 1 brigade organised at 50%.

The ground forces will have also 1 full strength commando brigade which will be maintained at 100% strength.

In conclusion, the ground forces, following consolidation will consist of 5 infantry divisions, 5 infantry brigades, 4 armoured brigades, 1 tank battalion, 5 anti-air artillery battalions, 5 missile battalions and 1 commando brigade. In wartime the ground forces will comprise 8 infantry divisions with their own supporting elements.

ADA Forces: 3 ADA regiments, 1 transportation squadron, 1 electronic warfare battalion and 1 missile brigade.

Naval Forces: 2 naval districts and 2 independent squadrons.

Personnel:

Peacetime	6,000 officers 4,000 NCOs 2,500 civilian employees 28,000 soldiers/conscripts
Total:	33,000 military and 2,500 civilians
Wartime	22,400 officers



## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

	33,000 NCOs
	175,000 soldiers/conscripts
Total:	231,400 military

Reserve Components: The reserve components comprise the basis of the Defence of Albania. The reserve components are composed of 73.22% of the officers, 87.83% of the NCOs and 84.1% of the soldiers (these figures are included in the wartime totals above).

Apropos infrastructure it is the intention of the AAF to improve the living conditions for all soldiers, NCOs and officers. It is also necessary to upgrade the AAF's training facilities, weapons and equipment storage facilities. There is an urgent need for the construction of barracks for each of the 5 main force brigades, 8 logistic centres, 2 central training centres (1 for mountain training and 1 for brigade training).

### Conclusions:

General: The AAF can only reach its goals with the assistance of the United States. Emphasis remains on the provision of infrastructural assistance (personal equipment, barracks construction etc) and for the construction of the two national training centres which will have application for joint exercises and training.

Equipment Acquisitions: As for the acquisition of equipment and other systems, the AAF must first meet the needs of the present army. While infrastructural needs are a priority, so too are improvements of the C3 system. The AAF will participate in peacekeeping because such forces are small and because there are special funds for such assistance. Also through the initiatives of Warsaw and American assistance, the AAF hopes to gradually improve C3.

Radar: Another necessity is the replacement of the AAF's radar system. The present systems are both obsolete and inaccurate. It is proposed that 2 new systems be activated (one for land and the other for ocean coverage). In this area the AAF too seeks US assistance through access to excess Defence articles or direct assistance.

Air Defence: Air defence lacks essentially everything. The basis of the AAF's AAA remains 37mm, 57mm and 100mm guns. There are also some obsolete SA-2 missiles. There is an obvious need for a modern air Defence system for the interdiction of low-flying aircraft. Anything more sophisticated is beyond Albania's financial means and assistance from the US is likewise required.

Artillery: The artillery requires an improved firing system and enhanced munitions in order to achieve greater ranges (40-80kms).

Anti-Tank Warfare: An enhanced anti-tank capability is an additional goal of the AAF. The AAF plans to use Albanian funds for the provision of an anti-tank missile system, but anything more sophisticated remains beyond the financial capabilities of the AAF. The AAF plans also to gradually upgrade the AAF's T-59 and T-62 tanks.

The AAF's doctrine, military education and training will be a primary concern for the future. The sharing of experiences with other armies, the sending of Albanian military students to American service schools will be of great utility to the AAF.

## **G114**

C Dennison Lane

Modernization of the AAF is another concern. The air forces requires replacement aircraft, while the navy similarly needs to replace the ageing patrol craft.

**Comments:** To follow.

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

RPT# 34

DATE: 26SPT95

**VISIT TO 2<sup>nd</sup> DIVISION - KUKES**

**Summary:** Defence Advisor (DA) visited 2D Infantry Division (Kukes) 23-24 September. Conditions at Krume (2D Battalion) were even grimmer than those in Burreli (Rpt 10 dated 06-10-95). DA was asked to visit another battalion vicinity Golaj but as the division commander was awaiting DA in Kukes this was not possible. Next time.

**Details:**

General: DA visited 2D Division (Kukes) 23-24 Sept. The Division is commanded by another very able and experienced infantry commander, BG Ndue Mjexaj. The 1st Brigade (Kukes) Commander is LTC Malic Doci. 1st Battalion, co-located with the Brigade, is LTC Hasan Basha. 2D Battalion (Krume) is commander by LTC Qani Merhani who has recently returned from an orientation at Fort Drum. Kukes is a rather odd and ultra-conservative town even by Albanian standards. One of DA's colleagues, who has bravely made several trips there, has coined the term "kukerotic". Driving time to Kukes was five and a half hours even with DA driving (an average speed of 25 mph). The road to Kukes beyond Puke is horrendous, but pales in comparison to the road from Kukes to Krume. At least going to Kukes one drives on the inside of the road. The potential drop into the abyss below is cause for serious reflection. Bridges are marked with 10-ton signs which can't be right considering the amount of heavy transport seen. Spectacular scenery.

Krume (212 Bn): DA was met by the Chief of Staff (LTC Malic Doci) at the Division HQ. LTC Doci is an affable but formidable looking man. (DA was delayed an hour by a tire change and an "on-board" electrical fire en route.) LTC Doci accompanied DA to Krume as BG Ndue Mjekaj was overseeing rescue and digging-out operations following the ravages of a recent heavy rain which had caused wide-spread flooding and led to the death of four young Albanians just outside Kukes. (They were caught in a landslide and swept into the lake.) DA had met the 212 battalion commander (LTC Qani Merhani) in Tirana early in DA's assignment. Conditions in Krume, through no fault of the commander, were even worse than those in Burreli (Rpt 10). There were 351 troops assigned to the battalion with another 219 due in as part of the consolidation process - a full strength battalion is 570. One of the company commanders, due to a lack of housing, routinely walked to and from home daily, a two hour trip each way. (DA has accepted an invitation to go to his village on DA's next trip.) When asked about monies provided by MOD for recreation, the battalion commander indicated that he received \$50 in the last eight months. When DA's 13 year old son discovered that the battalion did not even have a football (soccer in US parlance) he donated his football to the battalion for which he received rave reviews from the assembled conscripts. As we left the battalion was gleefully playing football.

The existing barracks (photos to follow) have the soldiers packed in like sardines in bunk beds. By stitching mattresses together, the conscripts enjoy full-sized mattresses vice the usual 16" variety. In lieu of glass the windows are covered with plastic. The roof leaks and predictably there is neither heat nor running water in the barracks. (Parenthetically a 5 million mark German project to provide water for the town of Krume will not provide for the army although the reservoir is located on

the mountain almost directly adjacent to the battalion. The unit can tap into the water system but lacks the funds to purchase the necessary pipes.) The battalion commander is turning a store room into billeting for the anticipated 200 conscripts who will fill up the battalion. The mess hall seats 72 people in a room measuring 20' x 30'. There are shortages of staples - beans and meat (conscripts are supposed to receive 60 grams of meat daily and officers 100). "Quantity is not a problem," said LTC Merhani, "Quality is". Vegetables, which supplement and in many cases replace beans and meat which comes from Tirana, are locally purchased, and are not of a very high quality.

LTC Merhani noted that there was a significant exodus of people from Krume and therefore there was an abundance of housing on the economy. The problem was that officers did not have the necessary funds (\$3,000) to purchase a house. DA asked if there was anything which equated to a US-style GI loan. The answer was that there was not although Minister Zhulali, in a subsequent conversation, indicated that Under Minister for Economics Shehu is looking into the establishment of such a programme. Discussions also ran over into retirement benefits. The officers noted that this entire issue was hung up in the parliament which further tended to depress officer morale.

The troops have a single uniform and no alternative clothing for PT or organized athletics. They have a winter overcoat. DA asked about socks. Conscripts are not issued socks but rather use rags to bind their feet. (DA mentioned this to DA's Albanian teacher whose father is a LTC. He reportedly had told her that this was the normal practice in the Albanian Army and that he had done the same thing when a young officer.) The boots are for the most part provided by Turkey and also are of poor quality. DA was asked to talk to a platoon. Their greatest complaint was predictably the housing and the food. One of two present conscript squad leaders (who were without a visible sign of rank but who, in deference to their rank, were allowed to sleep next to the door in the top bunk in the barracks) when asked what they would need to make the army a career stated that in addition to better clothing, lodging and food, would like to have a reasonable salary (currently conscripts receive 300 lek (\$3.15) monthly). When asked what they considered "reasonable" they provided the figure of \$200 monthly. (It is curious to note that the response in Burreli was essentially the same.) DA will try to get an explanation of what is so magic about this figure. Apropos showers, there are three (3) showers for the battalion. The soldiers are supposed to have a shower daily, but in actuality have no more than two per week, something DA finds reminiscent of British boarding schools.

Meteor: 21st Brigade, 212 Battalion and Organic ADA (12.7) Battery: DA was taken around the 21st Brigade by the Division Commander, BG Mjekaj. The general stated at the outset that he had been ordered to accommodate a full strength infantry brigade plus attachments. This he indicated was simply not possible given the housing and space available (see comments). Conditions at the brigade and collocated battalion and ADA battery (Vic. Gostille) were very much better than those found at Krume, although the ADA battery was cramped for space. There were 85 people assigned with 20 more in the pipeline. A graduate of the 1st NCO Academy Class was assigned to the ADA battery and was, in the words of the division commander, one of his best men. Apropos the visibly better conditions, BG Mjekaj suggested that this was due to being "closer to the flag pole". There was nevertheless insufficient room to accommodate a battalion and again store rooms were being converted into housing for conscripts. While conditions for conscripts were bad, BG Mjekaj mentioned that he had 150 homeless officers and saw no relief

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

in sight. While he stated that he had the ability to carry out the construction of barracks, he did not have the funds necessary to purchase the necessary building materials. BG Mjekaj was visibly upset at the conditions for his officers and men and saw no immediate prospects for improvement. At dinner, DA and BG Mjekaj talked about training and US provided training assistance. What the units needed, said BG Mjekaj, was platoon and company sized training and training in the use of the integration of close air support. DA specifically asked if BG Mjekaj and/or any of his infantry division commander colleagues had been involved in recent discussions in the general headquarters vis-à-vis "consolidation", the use of reserves and territorials (partisans). He said that he had not and thought that an informal discussion on the subject would be invaluable. BG Mjekaj was adamant that the territorials played a major role in the defence of Albania.

**Comments:**

General: There are problems associated with the Albanian Army (AA) that are hard to come to terms with, paramount among them remains the lack of the most basic infrastructure which impacts directly on the "quality of life" in the armed forces.

Consolidation: Prior to the onset of "consolidation" there were in excess of 2,000 small units dotted about the country. "Consolidation" is supposed to do away with excess facilities and the maintenance costs attached thereunto. The problem is that there will have to be a massive building effort if "consolidation" is to take place and there are not the funds to do this. "Consolidation" is not going to save money. Orders have been distributed to the field, but, as in the case of 2<sup>nd</sup> Division, their implementation is not possible.

Officers Corps: DA in the past has perhaps been too critical of the Officers Corps. It is perhaps an educational process. While officers in the western armies understand their responsibilities for their personnel, it is assumed that someone is looking out after the interests of the Officers Corps. This provides the western officer the ability to focus on the needs of his personnel. Such is not the case in Albania, and Albanian Army officers are becoming increasingly concerned that the system has passed them by and that there is little hope that the prospects will change in the foreseeable future. It is not surprising accordingly that at times the Officers Corps appears inadequately motivated vis-à-vis the well-being of their troops: out of necessity they are looking out after themselves.

Division Commander's Conference: DA has spoken with Minister Zhulali about having a conference in Tirana which all of the combat unit commanders are invited to attend and to informally discuss the defence of the nation, and the role of the reserve and territorials. DA has the Minister's concurrence but will suggest that General SHEME Kosova sponsor such a meeting. DA believes that there is an incredible amount of talent in the field with the field commanders who understand fully the finer points of partisan warfare and the need to retain the services of the territorials.

System Of Unit Identification: The system of unit identification seems to be reminiscent of the system used by the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA). The subordinate brigade of the 2<sup>nd</sup> division is the 21<sup>st</sup> Brigade. The 1<sup>st</sup> battalion of the 21<sup>st</sup> Brigade is the 211 battalion. The second battalion is correspondingly the 212 etc. DA has recommended doing away with this system and adopting a more willy-nilly system of unit identification, perhaps along US lines.

Priorities, Relationships & The DRMO: Currently the AA is trying to do everything at the same time. BG Mjekaj suggested, and he is correct, that we should prioritize institution reforms starting with either of the northern divisions (1 or 2) and then move on to other units who are potentially less under the gun. In the same light, DA wonders if we could not organize a unit to unit relationship between Albanian army units and selected units of the National Guard? Although the momentum is already there, the provision of an SAO with access to DRMO facilities is essential for the betterment of the AA.

Training: Once again commanders are asking for joint exercise with US forces which emphasize platoon and company operations as well as air-ground coordination. Commanders want to return to basics.

RPT# 44

DATE: 27NOV95

**MINISTERIAL ATMOSPHERICS**

**Summary:** Report addresses the temporary disestablishment of the "sociology" section. Discussions with Vice-Minister Luan Lazimi, and Defence Advisor's (DA's) views of the provision of infrastructure.

**Details:** At a recent meeting with the minister, the minister indicated his unhappiness with the performance of the "sociology" section of the General Staff. (The "sociology" section is a combination of the chaplain, troop morale and unit welfare officer, G5, public information and education officer all rolled into one.) Minister Zhulali stated that the section was nonfunctional and would therefore be abolished. DA stated that while DA agreed that the section was not responsive to the needs of the army, in DA's opinion, the "sociology" section was of fundamental importance to the army, as it was the only section specifically dedicated to morale, welfare and education of the army.

DA suggested to the minister that perhaps the solution was not to disestablish the section but alternatively to make it work. What DA believes really was of concern to the minister, was the fact that in an earlier era, the "sociology" section was the commissar, a total anathema to the present regime. In the same breath, the minister explained his concerns about the lack of a command information program, moving DA to suggest that the "sociology" section could easily perform that mission.

On 15 November, DA met with Vice-Minister Lazimi. Among the subjects discussed was again that of the "sociology" section. Minister Lazimi indicated that he was about to convene a meeting of senior general officers to discuss the "sociology" section, but that he believed that it was essential to the welfare of the army, but the manning of the organization needed to be subject to a widespread review. In a subsequent meeting with MG Perlat Sula, Chief of the Air Command, who attended the meeting with the Vice-Minister, it appears that there was no discussion and that the section had simply been disestablished. (DA was informed by DA's assistant, LTC Asslani, that General Kosovo, the Chief of Staff, had twice resisted the minister's order to disestablish the "sociology" section, but when ordered to disestablish the section a third time, he went along with the minister.) Coincidentally, a note from DA to the minister appealing this decision went through General Kosovo's office the day after he had submitted to the minister's wishes.

**Comments:** DA's greatest unhappiness with the army remains in the area of the provision of the most basic of services to the troops, and to this end DA has been routinely dissatisfied with the operation of the "sociology" section, however, with an annual funding limit of \$10,000, there was not much latitude, and the operation and publication of the Albanian Army magazine is also drawn from these monies. DA met a conscript who was functionally AWOL from his unit (2nd Div at Krume) who stated that the conditions were in fact every bit as bad as DA thought they were: seldom was there any meat in the diet, essentially there was no water, no warm clothing, no heat, their already meagre pay (\$2.50 monthly) sometimes never appeared and, in his opinion, warehouse men were getting rich. Clearly the vision of the conscripts is that many of their officers are indifferent to their plight. One conscript stated, "Why should I fight if no one cares about my welfare". DA believes him to be correct. The problem of course is exacerbated by many officers at the

same time believing than no one cares about their welfare. Accordingly, while various officers on the General Staff argue about staff cars, many junior and middle grade officers, particularly those in the field, are scratching to take care of themselves and their families and have neither the time, nor the resources to expend on the conscripts. The conditions in the north remain terrible and are marked by inadequate food, a lack of water, no heat, and an inadequate level of pay and allowances (the provision of one bar of soap monthly, as an example, is inadequate for personal hygiene and laundry).

DA has prepared and forwarded a letter to Minister Zhulali (see Report 45) which specifically addresses the issue of infrastructure.



## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

RPT# 45

DATE: 22NOV95

**LETTER TO MINISTER ZHULALI**

**Summary:** The letter, provided below in total, was translated and delivered to Minister Zhulali upon his return from Germany.

**Details:** Report forwards 15 November letter to Minister Zhulali from Defence Advisor: start quote

Dear Minister Zhulali,

On 20 November, I will have been in Albania for six months. I think that I am now in a better position to start providing advice. In keeping with our commitment to have a frank and pointed dialogue, this letter address a series of items which I believe should be discussed with you at your convenience. Virtually all are related one to another.

**The Role of the Defence Advisor:** The Defence Advisor (DA) is, as the name implies, the Defence advisor to the minister. During the minister's recent trip to Washington, as noted by the minister, the DA was largely side-lined. In the future this will not occur. Should a year's extension be approved, it will include funding for two trips to the United States and four to countries of western Europe and one to Asia. (DA's last trip to Washington came out DA's personal funds.)

**MOD Control of Training:** Currently there is a general lack of communications between the American embassy, the MLT and the Defence Advisor apropos training teams in Albania. Suggest that in the future, BG Ismolli should host a monthly meeting which is attended by the DAO, the MLT and DA. This would place the Albanians in control over their training and would at the same time provide for better coordination.

**The Ministerial and Defence Staffs:** Defence Advisor fully understands the minister's unhappiness with the staffs. Rather than trying to do everything in a week, DA proposes that in cooperation with perhaps Colonel Kolasi, DA would like to take on one staff section at a time starting with Colonel Kolasi's. There is little point in trying to do anything with the Intelligence Division until a new director is appointed. Apropos the problems associated with the staff, the overwhelming number are functional, the reasons being essentially threefold:

- Officers, in many instances, have been assigned to positions of staff responsibility based more on their political "connections" than on their ability. Curiously this seems not to be true of many of the field commanders.
- As we have discussed before, in the previous era, decentralized decision making was not something that was encouraged. To the contrary, initiative, a trait essential in any staff officer, was something which could get one quickly into trouble. We are now asking officers to forget everything they knew and to start all over again. Most officers are not psychologically ready to do this, and most also have a very healthy respect for the minister's ire and probably believe that making no decision is better than making a decision which may turn out to be wrong.

- Unless the minister is prepared to give the staff a chance to function and delegate some of his authority, it is unlikely that the staff will ever gain the self-confidence that they need.

Meeting With General Kosovo: DA believes that the General Staff needs assistance to a far greater degree than does the minister. Unless we can get the General Staff to function to the satisfaction of the minister, the minister will continue to do everything himself. My meeting with Gen Kosovo was arranged by mutual consent. DA's intent was to try to get the CoS to take a stand on issues of fundamental importance to the troops in the field and demonstrate committed "leadership". From this point of view DA believes the meeting to have been unsuccessful. In the future, however, DA will inform the minister of all proposed meetings with the CoS.

Troop Morale & Welfare: DA is concerned about a host of conditions in the field ranging from pay and allowances for conscripts, NCOs and officers.

Weapons are an important factor in war, but not the decisive factor; it is people, not things that are decisive.

One conscript, met by DA stated "why should I fight if no one cares about my welfare". I think that he is correct. The vision of the conscripts is that many of their officers are indifferent to their plight. This problem of course is exacerbated by many officers at the same time believing that no one cares about their welfare. Accordingly, while various officers on the General Staff argue about staff cars, many junior and middle grade officers, particularly those in the field, are scratching to take care of themselves and their families and have neither the time nor the resources to expend on the conscripts. The conditions in the north remain terrible and are marked by inadequate food, a lack of water, no heat, and an inadequate level of pay and allowances (the provision of one bar of soap monthly, as an example, is inadequate for personal hygiene and laundry).

The NCO Corps: If a soldier, regardless of rank, is in a command position, such as a tank commander or a squad leader, he is an NCO. If we are building towards the establishment of a "professional" army, we must further "professionalize" the NCO Corps and encourage talented conscripts to remain in the army. This can only be done by recognizing their achievements and providing a support package similar, or better to what a conscript might find at home in rural Albania. If a conscript is a squad leader (Tetor) or higher (Rreshter), he is an NCO and should be so recognized both in terms of insignia of rank, privileges and salary. Passage to Kapter and/or to Kapter I Pare, should require attendance and graduation from the NCO Academy.

The Threat: Virtually every American team to have visited Albania has remarked that until a coherent "threat" briefing is produced, it is next to impossible to organize a meaningful force structure. As far as DA can ascertain, we continue to rebuild the armed forces without an adequate threat assessment. Only when that has been accomplished will it be possible to realistically decide the form of Defence required for Albania. There continues also to be differences of opinion between the direction in which the General Staff is going, and that suggested by Albanian officers in the field.

Respectfully

Defence Advisor

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

**Comments:** DA met with the minister on 24 November to discuss the letter and other issues. While DA was accused of being too "easter" (meaning Chinese) by the minister, he stated that he agreed with everything contained in the letter. Two hours after the meeting, the minister summoned the Chief of General Staff and ordered a large number of officers in the General Staff out into the countryside. (Other topics discussed at the 24 November meeting, to include DA's supposed "eastern" orientation, follow in message 47.)

RPT# 49

DATE: 30NOV95

**MEETING WITH CHIEF OF STAFF KOSOVO & ATMOSPHERICS**

**Summary:** On 21 Nov, Defence Advisor met with Albanian Armed Forces Chief of Staff, General Sheme Kosovo. The meeting was arranged by mutual consent. DA's objective was to try to persuade CoS, unsuccessfully, to take a stand on matters important to soldiers, in other words to "lead". That being the purpose of the meeting, the meeting was not a success.

**Details:**

Background: During the week of 20 November, DA was informed that the Chief of Staff, General Sheme Kosovo, would like to see DA. DA too believed a meeting with CoS to be useful. Accordingly, a meeting took place on 20 November. It was DA's intention to urge the CoS to take a stand, particularly on matters relating to the general welfare of the troops, the unilateral disestablishment of the "sociology" section being a case in point (see Report 44).

The Meeting: CoS Kosovo welcomed DA to his office and suggested that we meet more often. DA proposed that we should meet at least twice a month. Beyond that, said CoS, he had nothing urgent to pass on. DA noted that DA now had six months in country and was in a better position to make some comments. DA also mentioned that the CoS might find DA's end of 5 month report (Report 41) to be of interest. It was in fact being translated by CoS' XO. DA indicated that what was of paramount concern to DA, was the continued conditions under which soldiers in the field lived. "They believe," said DA, "that no one really cares about them." DA emphasized in particular the conditions in the north which are simply not acceptable by any standards. (Apropos DA's report, the CoS' only comment seems to be from where DA obtained his various figures, particularly those relating to personnel strengths. Just for the record, the figures were provided to DA by the CoS) - see Report 23.

CoS stated that funding was a problem and that there was, at the same time, an urgent need for some new equipment (tanks, aircraft etc), to which DA responded that in the near term there appeared to be no obvious external military threat to Albania, and perhaps rather than spend the armed forces' already limited budget on unnecessary weapons systems, it would be better to start correcting conditions in the countryside and at the same time provide houses for a large number of the Officers Corps. DA also suggested the reactivation of the territorials/volunteers in order to provide the army with some "teeth" might be the cheapest solution. The reference to "teeth" caused Gen Kosovo to say that he did not envision the creation of an army with "teeth". Rather than becoming confrontational over this point, DA merely suggested that a nation's Defence is only meaningful if it is credible.

DA said that DA had been impressed with the quality and dedication of the infantry division commanders, and, returning to a recurring theme, asked if these commanders had ever been invited into Tirana to discuss the Defence of Albania from their operational perspective. The CoS said that this had already been done. (When DA specifically asks field commanders the same question, they have all replied that their views have never been sought.)

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

**Comments:** While DA remains entirely supportive of Minister Zhulali, the minister continues to ride rough-shod over the military services, and in DA's opinion, will continue to do so until the staff demonstrates backbone/leadership, which, following DA's most recent meeting with the CoS, is not likely to occur anytime soon. Parenthetically, DA was admonished by Minister Zhulali for meeting with the CoS without first informing the minister. (LTC Asslani, DA's assistant reminded DA that in an earlier meeting the minister had told DA that DA had complete access to anyone on the staff.) In a recent meeting with the minister, the minister reiterated his intention to "guide" the staff as they were, for the most part inexperienced and made serious errors. DA offered that ultimately the staff was only going to learn how to function if the minister provided them the space in which to grow.

To fully understand why various officers occupy key positions, as has been noted elsewhere, it should be remembered that the majority of senior staff appointments have been made, as is so often the case in armies undergoing transition, not because of any demonstrated ability as either a commander or as a staff officer, but because of political reliability and/or family connections. The intelligence director, eg Besnik Selami, who has been "benevolently" reassigned to the United States (a year at Lackland AFB followed by a year in Washington) is the brother of the former head of the democratic party, Edward Selami to whom BG Selami owes his appointment. In the same vein, the Chief of Staff is a cousin of Edward Selami (their mothers being sisters). The Vice Chief of Staff, MG Armando Vincani, has similar family/political connections.

Apropos the elections, if the socialists prevail, it seems probable that there are going to be several reassignments in the several headquarters, most prominently the CoS himself. One of those being touted to replace the CoS is a former commander of the Northeastern Front, Ismail Shulku, who presently resides in Peshkopi and who is said to have a less than savoury "biografi" in the democratic context. DA finds both the CoS and the VCoS very pleasant and cosmetically all that one could possibly want from a general officers - both look and act the part. What both seem not to have, and what is critical until democratic institutions are in place, is charisma. It is of course quite possible, as one officer suggested, that this is exactly why they are assigned where they are as the minister pushes through his changes. There continue to be reports that the socialists have circulated a list containing some 4,000 appointments extending down to the district level. It can only be assumed that many of them are military.

RPT# 50  
DATE: 06DEC95

## 28 NOVEMBER MEETING WITH MINISTER ZHULALI

**Summary:** Defence Advisor (DA) met with minister on 28 November. Minister indicated that we must destroy all in order to start again, has asked DA to systematically reorganize the staff, (and has at the same time forbidden contact with anyone other than the CoS and/or Vice CoS). The minister has proposed a Defence Ministers' conference on the Balkans to be convened in Tirana 4 April. He anticipates the attendance of Secretary Perry, and the Brits are to provide a peace-keeping advisor for a six month period.

**Details:** DA is finding recent meeting with Minister Zhulali increasingly interesting and the complexities of the relationship are starting to manifest themselves. The minister continues to tweak DA apropos DA being against civilian control of the military. DA continues to assert that DA is all for civilian control of the military, but thinks that the minister must learn to delegate some of his authority and that it is the mission of the uniformed services to provide leadership, not the minister.

**Philosophy:** Recently, an article appeared in the Washington Post and in the International Herald Tribune, entitled "The Pentagon's Latest Outpost: Albania". The article ends with a quote following a conversation with MG Adem Copani, President Berisha's military advisor:

We need to be brainwashed again. We must forget everything we learned in the past and move on.

MG Copani's comment becomes all the more interesting as it is reflective of Minister Zhulali's vision. Addressing DA's "end of five month report" (Report 41) the minister indicated his complete agreement apropos DA's urging of the adoption of a less 'conventional' model for Albania, but at the same time wrong because "we must destroy everything that has gone before and start again"; surely it is better to learn from the past in lieu of forgetting the past. Minister Zhulali offered that perhaps DA was too "eastern' in DA's orientation (and in this context he means Chinese and not Russian). In fact, as far as war fighting is concerned, DA is not pushing the Chinese model but rather the creation of a small, mobile, and to some extent NATO compatible regular army supplemented by civilian militia, more or less along the Swiss lines. DA and other thoughtful members of the General Staff believe that at no time will the Albanians have the strength to conventionally confront any of their potential adversaries. Apropos logistics, DA does remain interested in the Chinese model as not only are the Albanian military industries Chinese, the Chinese "entrepreneurial" army model probably has a great deal of application to the Albanian Armed Forces (report to follow).

**Training Exercises & Ministerial Meeting:** Minister Zhulali very much wants to have exercise "Peaceful Eagle 96" prior to the May/June elections. Obviously this is something that is not going to happen. The minister has been approached by the Italians to support their idea of a "Mediterranean Initiative", but has declined as he believes it does not really lend itself to the problem of the Balkans. Rather, the minister has proposed that Macedonia should participate in Peaceful Eagle in addition to Greece, Italy, Albania and the United States. What the minister is proposing as an alternative, is a meeting to be convened in Tirana on 4 April (just

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

before the start of active election campaigning (10-15 April), a meeting of Defence ministers of "PfP" countries in the Balkan region (Bulgaria, Rumania, Greece, Italy, Turkey etc).

The Staff: Most recently DA was told to fix the staff. Although in DA's view the problems are mainly functional, the minister's refusal to let them function somewhat compounds the problem. Although DA is inclined to share the minister's feeling that he would not ultimately be happy with the result, this is largely a function of senior staff appointments (see Report 49). In any event, in an attempt to avoid the recent impasse associated with talking to the G3 about the recent visit of the EUCOM team to discuss training areas, DA, on the eve of the minister's trip to England asked that the various staff sections be informed of DA's tasking. The minister's reaction was to restrict DA to talking solely to the Chief of Staff (who is leaving for a visit to Italy today (4 Dec)) and Deputy Chief of Staff. It has always been DA's belief that if one is interested in know what various problems are one should speak to the Indians vice the chiefs. If one wants to maintain the status quo, then one talks to the various staff directors. Change is usually a function of younger minds although the minister himself is an exception to that policy.

The British & Peacekeeping: Among the themes in this session was that of peacekeeping and the British. The minister has approved a British proposal to provide an officer who will spend six months working with the peacekeeping company. Then minister stated that he will from then on entertain British proposals on a case by case basis but wishes to see one project completed before the next one is started. This is fall-out from a series of commitments made by the Brits which have not yet come to fruition. On the subject of the Brits, hopefully the Brits will take the minister to Buckingham Palace to see the Changing of the Guard. DA has proposed to the minister that there is a lot that a good drill sergeant could do for the general appearance of the guard force assigned to the ministry and the Brits seem to have the edge in this area. Off-line discussions with the Brits suggests that this kind of assistance could be very easily done and it would go a long way towards improving morale.

Albanians & Peacekeeping: The minister is thinking that now that he has in fact a peacekeeping company, he wonders if it is going to be used. His obvious preference is to have it deployed before he starts raising the second peacekeeping company.

Mitre: DA is in the process of drafting a letter from the Vice Chief of Staff to the Air Force, through the DAO, which will request the services of the Mitre Corporation. Mitre has indicated an interest, during the minister's recent trip to Washington, in assisting the Albanian MOD in joining the computer age and getting "on-line".

**Comments:** The MLT is in the process of preparing an excellent paper, still in draft, entitled "Goals of the Albanian Military". What this paper does is to for the first time collate everything that has been said or written by the Albanians. It of course gives the MLT something to sink their teeth into. The expressed goals of the Albanian Armed Forces are as following:

- To become a full NATO member
- To create a comprehensive officer education system on the western model
- Modernize and organize the force from MOD to platoon along western lines with a goal of full compatibility with NATO

- Create a comprehensive legal basis for a military in a democratic state
- Be able to participate in peacekeeping operations.

DA is becoming increasingly frustrated in not being able to get the hierarchy to at least slow the train long enough to think about where we are going. The major problem is that with the exception of the minister, there are not too many “thinkers” being heard, and neither the CoS nor the VCoS are themselves of this inclination. There has obviously been progress. The military education program has been revamped, an environment for the basis for a military in a democratic state is being created, a peacekeeping company exists, and Albania’s desire to achieve NATO integration is commendable albeit, in DA’s opinion, rather distant. What bothers DA is the fundamental problem of what this army is going to look like and the march towards becoming a conventional army à la NATO from “MOD to platoon with a goal of full compatibility with NATO”. Perhaps as a long term objective, but in the near term it is simply not a workable proposition. It should be said that the Albanian vision of the employment of the reserves calls for some of them to be employed in partisan organization then to be employed in partisan-like formations, but this remains very much in the conceptual phase, and again, none of the people who understand the employment of irregulars, have been brought into the process. It should also be noted, that if there is such a thing as a “threat” briefing, which would provide the basis for force structure, DA has been unable to locate same. Something DA will take up with the minister upon his return from the UK. Clearly one has not been prepared by the Intelligence Directorate.

What perhaps is needed is an Albanian version of JCS PUB1 as that might provide the mechanism to get the various directorates to actually sit down and think out where we are going. Perhaps this is something that DA is going to tackle in the months ahead.



RPT# 52

DATE: 10DEC95

**ALBANIAN ARMY - A HISTORY**

**Summary:** Report forwards English language translation of the Armed Forces Day speech given by CoS Sheme Kosovo on 26 November. Speech roughly describes the transformation of the Albanian Army from its establishment in 1912 to the present day.

**Details:** The Albanian Army was established on 4 December 1912, one week after the proclamation of Albanian independence. Army Day itself was established by one of the most famous of Albanian leaders, Ismail Qemalit, the then leader of the Albanian Government which had its seat in Vlora. Ismail Qemalit also appointed the first minister for war, Mehmet Pashe Derralles.

The new structure was quite simple. There was a War Ministry and the minister served also as the Chief of Staff (CoS). The General Staff at the time was headed by Major Ali Shefqeti. Under the War Ministry there were two departments, the army and the police.

The organization of the army, at that time, was not very different from the Albanian and other armies today, consisting of the active army, volunteers and reserves. The strength of the army was 12,000 people. The army's mission was to defend the territory of Albania and to maintain the peace.

To assist in the organization of the army, there was a Dutch advisory team headed first by a Colonel de Verin, and later by Major Tonson. This group, together with their Albanian counterparts, in addition to organizing the army, wrote and published (22 April 1913) the first set of regulations which provided the basis for military service and the role of the army. They also established compulsory service for all Albanian males between 20 and 40 years of age.

During the period 1920-1924, the Albanian Army began to take form. In 1920, the police department was separated from the army and was reorganized into a battalion/regimental structure. In 1921 the police were designated a division with three regiments. Leaders at that time were Ali Riza Kolonja, Selaudin Shxoza, Ali Shefqeti and Kasem Qafezezi.

In 1925, when Ahmet Zogu returned to Albania, he attempted to organize a regular and apolitical army existing under a frame of law. From 1925 to 1939, the army underwent two more periods of reorganization. While members of the army had been salaried, under the new reorganization they were no longer paid. Also a navy and other "special service units" were integrated into the army. Also, reserve forces were integrated into the regular army. The mission of the army remained the defence of Albania from any external threat.

On 7 April 1939, Albania was attacked by Italy. This was a difficult period for Albania. Gradually however, those units of the Albanian Army which continued to fight the Italians underwent reorganizations. While they started as loose guerrilla type organizations, they gradually started to assume more conventional formations. By the end of the war in 1945, the Albanian Army was organized into battalions, brigades, divisions and corps.

Following liberation, the organization of the army was changed once more. This reorganization was almost entirely political and was based upon Albania's isolation from the rest of the world, particularly in the 1960s. There was at this time an absurd slogan "to live and fight as though you are surrounded (beseiged)". Clearly, the 1960s represent a period of retreat.

When it became clear that the government could no longer support the army, several measures were undertaken to reduce the cost of the army. Under the rubric of "democratization", ranks were abolished, and soldiers started to assume the dual function of soldier and worker. Communist party committees were integrated into the army. The army "left their barracks, their mission and their training", and were dispersed into thousands of small units throughout the country. Additionally at this time, reflecting the thoughts of Lenin, the "free school" system was instituted. In 1970, the Albanians started the program of the construction of fortifications to further strengthen the country.

All Albanians were taught not to fight against other Albanians, but rather with invaders who would come from the sky. The regime at this time arrested, jailed and shot numerous high-ranking cadres, many of them officers, for less than adequate reasons.

The advent of democracy in 1990 found a politicised, demoralized and undisciplined Albanian Army. This fact was directly related to the role of the commander being subordinated to that of the commissar. Democratic change was welcomed by the army and almost immediately the army started upon its reforms.

The main goal of the army was to transform the Albanian military from that associated with a totalitarian system into an army which had its basis in the democratic model. The Albanian military of today is prepared to not only perform combat operations, but also to undertake peacekeeping and other "humanitarian" operations.

The army, and the people of Albania have come to realize that Albania is not surrounded by enemies, but rather by allies. The army of today realizes that the Albanian Army must be integrated into NATO. Today we encourage personnel to study abroad, and continue to conduct training exercises with many countries, such as the United States, Germany, Italy, Greece and Turkey.

The government of Albania has approved many laws and regulations for the armed forces. They include items such as improving the status of the army. This includes civilian control of the military along Western models, and establishing an apolitical army that is not answerable to any party. Ranks have been reintroduced and all signs of Albania's previous communist era have been removed.

The new Albanian Army remains close to the people of Albania. A new sense of prestige and authority is to be found. Two important Defence related documents have been written: the policy of Defence and security, and a draft regulation on military doctrine. In these two documents, the roles and missions of the armed forces are stated. As President Berisha has said, the Republic of Albania considers the Defence of the country to have precedence over the interests of any party.

**Comments:** The above may be something to put in the Albania file.

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

RPT# 55

DATE: 08JAN96

**PRIORITIES**

**Summary:** The following message reflects DA and DATT best understanding of the minister's priorities. This is the list carried by the DATT to Washington for the Marshall Symposium 8-12 December 1996.

**Details:** The current priorities of the ministry (not to be confused with those of the Defence Advisor) are probably:

- Establishment of a National Training Centre
- Coastal waters and air space protection and early warning
- The equipping of the peacekeeping company
- Acquisition of excess Defence articles (EDA).

In order to accomplish these priorities the probable goals for FMF funding are:

- Acquisition of US T-37 aircraft
- Acquisition of US patrol boats
- Acquisition of air traffic and air defence radars
- Communications equipment for the peacekeeping company
- Shipment of EDA articles
- Acquisition of vehicle spare parts and maintenance
- Acquisition of small unit equipment
- Acquisition of anti-air weapons - Vulcan
- Acquisition of anti-armour weapons - TOW.

**Comments:** This list was hurriedly put together and is DA's best appreciation of what the minister is going to be asking for while he is in DC. DA is writing another message which tries to relate some of the minister's rationale. You should have this message on 10 Jan.

RPT# 60

DATE: 15JAN96

**12 JAN VISIT TO MILITARY CLOTHING FACTORY IN TIRANA**

**Summary:** Defence Advisor (DA) visited the military clothing factory in Tirana on 12 January 1996. Factory director Mr Anastas Mihali was frustrated by a general lack of initiative and unwillingness to make decisions, and by taxation which destroys initiative. Most unhappiness appears to be focused on the economic block which comes under the control of the Under Minister for Economics, Mr Bashkim Shehu and the apparent inability/unwillingness of the economic block to make the necessary corrections.

**Details:**

Background: Defence Advisor (DA), in furtherance of Minister Zhulali's directive to "fix" logistics, on 12 January 1996 visited the military clothing factory located in central Tirana. DA was accompanied by LTC Hadji Asslani, DA's assistant and interpreter. The facility director is Mr Anastas Mihali, a former university economics professor. The Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) continue to operate a number of factories. One of the most successful among them is the central uniform factory in Tirana. (There are smaller subordinate clothing factories in other major cities.)

The Factory: The clothing factory and its subsidiaries come under the general supervision of the Under Minister for Economics, Mr Bashkim Shehu. The factories manufacture in excess of 190 items. Under the current staff reorganizational proposals, all military industries involved in "production", vice maintenance, will remain under the control of Under Minister Shehu. The factory, in an attempt to compensate for diminishing governmental resources, has had at least two (2) private contracts with two (2) Italian companies. According to Director Mihali, the second was more lucrative, but at the same time the company did not uphold their end of the agreement. The result has been that the director kept the machinery that they had provided to offset his losses. The director indicated that among the problems associated with the other Italian company was that they (the Italians) wanted to run the company vice the Albanians. This contract was not renewed. The director stated that external contracts were of great importance to the factory as they provided additional income for the employees.

Taxation & Government Regulations: Director Mihali stated that almost all companies in Albania are having difficulties in dealing with outmoded equipment and a general lack of infrastructure. On the positive side is the fact that he has a staff with in some cases 20 years of experience. Also, said Director Mihali, a factor which has contributed to general financial malaise is the legacy of several fundamental errors made by the government at the on-set of the democratic period. These have to date not yet been corrected. They are for the most part related to taxation, but in the process destroy initiative. As an example, 30% of the clothing factory's profits go automatically to the government. Of the remaining 70%, 35% is kept by the factory of which @15% goes into a fund set up for items like unemployment, and 20% goes to paying wages, which leaves a profit margin of 20% but this is negligible given the state of the Albanian economy. A further 20%, indicated Director Mihali, is dedicated to salaries, and 15% is set aside for unemployment and other crises. Director Mihali indicated that furthermore, a tax

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

is paid on all imports regardless of their end user. Director Mihali did not object to providing the government 30% of their profits on commodities manufactured for the non-military markets, but thought that items being made for the armed forces should not be subject to taxation. Expanding the same point, the director indicated that his overcoat cost \$38. Of this amount, even if the coat is to be used for the army, 15% of the cost of the coat is returned to the national government, but this 15% is not figured into the manufacturing cost of the overcoat. Profit is therefore relative.

**Wages & Contracts:** Director Mihali indicated that additional external contracts were essential if he was to stem to flow of skilled labour away from the factory. A skilled labourer, he indicated, made \$80 per month. Director Mihali stated that a tailor in Tirana charged \$35 to make a suit. A skilled tailor can make at a minimum five (5) suits a month and accordingly, a skilled tailor from the company could almost double his salary by working out of his home.

**Cloth For Camouflage Uniforms:** DA asked Director Mihali about the new camouflage uniforms seen in Tirana. Director Mihali indicated that they were indeed manufactured at his factory, but that the government factory which manufactured the material had suddenly stopped manufacturing the material. This factory, he indicated, came under the Ministry of Finance, ergo a sudden end to field uniform production at least for the time being.

**Military Industries Initiatives:** DA informed Director Mihali about initiatives suggested under the auspices of the United Nations Development Plan (UNDP) to assist military industries in the development of civilian industries, and provided Director Mihali an English language paper on Chinese military industries. Director Mihali indicated that he was of the opinion that the AAF could do considerably more than they are presently doing, and had in fact been frustrated in his attempts to do more by the economic block. Director Mihali indicated that he had recently entertained a Turkish delegation and has asked them if Turkey had any military industries. The Turkish delegation responded the one of the largest textile manufacturing companies in Turkey was in fact military.

**Privatization:** According to Director Mihali the Under Minister for Economics and the Ministry of Finance have indicated their intentions of privatizing all former government industries to include those operated by the AAF. The land on which the clothing factory sits is in the middle of Tirana and is therefore very valuable. Everyone wants to take it. If the minister gives in and relinquishes the land, the AAF will never find another location, and all that will happen, suggested Director Mihali, is that the present building will be used as a storage facility. Thus far Director Mihali has been able to resist these initiatives and for the time being continues to have the support of the minister. Director Mihali specifically asked for DA to intercede on behalf of retaining the military industries as through them alone could the armed forces be supported.

**Other Problems:** Director Mihali stated that among other difficulties he faced was the lateness of payments from MOD. Clearly Director Mihali prefers to be paid when he has an order ready to go. The difficulty is that the economic block is notoriously late in meeting their obligations. "When I pound on the Under Minister for the provision of funds, nothing happens. This becomes a real problem when I have to pay the central government who is not interested in reason why they cannot be paid on demand." The seeming motto of the economic block, stated Director Mihali, "Is having other people do things for the military instead of doing them

themselves". When asked who it was who had the authority to represent the interests of the military with the Ministry of Finance, Director Mihali indicated the Under Minister for Economics.

**Comments:** If this were DA's army, DA would immediately discharge Under Minister Shehu and replace him with Director Mihali. At a minimum DA will suggest that the office of the IG take a look at the economic block as it appears not to be supporting the best interests of the AAF.

Tax Legislation: DA has already met with the legal authorities at MOD in an attempt to redress issues relating to taxation of the armed forces. DA doubts that very much has been done in this regard. It is also becoming apparent that there is a struggle developing between the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Defence.

The Minister and Military Industries: Minister Zhulali routinely has dismissed all initiatives relating to getting the military industries onto a footing which could provide a modicum of financial assistance to the AAF. One of the reasons for this has been a desire to distance himself from anything remotely suggestive of having anything to do with a communist system. Part of the problem is that the best documented model of military industries is that of the People's Republic of China. The fact that the minister is at least aware of a Turkish military industrial company provides some hope that he can be persuaded to do more for himself.

**Off-line Comments:** What DA found most interesting were Director Mihali's comments made apropos the general mentality of persons in the logistical system. There was so much concern about being accused of "corruption" that nothing gets done. There is no initiative and when he demonstrated initiative in any form he invariably ends up having to explain it. DA suggested that this is something that can be traced back to the old days. While Director Mihali agreed, he indicated that this is an attitude that must change if the economy is going to move forward. If there is corruption we should deal with corruption, but failing to take the initiative or failing to be innovative simply because it might lead to corruption, is not very far sighted.

When asked under whom he believed the clothing factory should be placed, Director Mihali responded that the factory must come under the Logistics Directorate vice the Under Minister Shehu. In the general scheme of things the recommendations from the logistical block to the minister states that those industries involved with "production", and this includes the clothing factory, should come under Under Minister Shehu. Another hurdle to deal with.

A final oddity is that while bids are tendered to various companies by a board, headed by Under Minister Shehu but with representatives from the Logistics Directorate, the actual signing of the contract is accomplished not by Under Minister Shehu, but by individuals like Director Mihali, and the Elbasan logistics base commander LTC Bardhyl Dyrmishi and Tirana supply base commander Col Astrit Ago. At least one major has been dismissed from the service for irregularities associated with a contract about which he knew essentially nothing but was required by the economic block to sign and which subsequently collapsed. Col Ago indicates that he has signed about 150 of such contracts and has trouble sleeping at night. To DA this makes no sense at all, naively believing that the party which negotiates and enters into a contract should be the same person held accountable for the contract.

RPT# 65

DATE: 28JAN96

**VISIT TO 1<sup>ST</sup> DIVISION - SKODRA**

**Summary:** Defence Advisor (DA) visited the 1<sup>st</sup> Division at Skodra on 25 January. The division is commanded by BG Fiqiri Zena. The purpose of the visit was ostensibly to talk about problems associated with logistics. What it turned out to be was a general tour d'horizon with a division commander and only secondarily discussions about logistics. Visit included a side-trip to the border with Montenegro where flour destined for Tirana had been held up by authorities in Montenegro.

**Details:**

Background: On 25 January DA, accompanied by LTC Haxhi Asllani, visited the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division at Skodra. The division is commanded by BG Fiqiri Zena, a man of imposing (colossal) presence who is originally from a village near Kukes. In previous incarnations, BG Zena has been a reconnaissance officer, briefly a radio intercept specialist, and a training officer. Some years ago Fiqiri Zena, who never became a party member despite having applied several times, wrote Enver Hoxha a letter complaining that the people in his village had nothing other than bread to eat. The up-shot of this correspondence was that he was imprisoned and when released sent to Puka, the Albanian equivalent of Adak or Attu in the Aleutian chain. It is probable that his imprisonment and subsequent reassignment to Puka was instrumental in his appointment under the new order. (LTC Asllani says that in fact someone was sent by Hoxha from Tirana to investigate. This individual found the assertions in fact to be correct, but in the spirit of the times reported otherwise when he returned to Tirana as Mr Hoxha did not want to hear bad news.) BG Zena had been studying English but the series of events which led to his imprisonment distinctly dimmed his appetite for learning.

The Division: 1<sup>st</sup> Division today consists of three (3) brigades, a three (3) battalion infantry brigade, a three (3) battalion artillery brigade and a three (3) battalion tank brigade. 1<sup>st</sup> Division strength is presently slightly less than 2,000 individuals of whom 1,5000 are conscripts. The great majority of NCOs assigned are store keepers. There are two (2) cadre infantry brigades also assigned to the division. The cadre brigades are exactly that, being essentially an administrative headquarters with a responsibility for remaining current data on the whereabouts of individual reservists.

Points of Discussion: Integration with the General Staff: DA asked BG Zena if he had been at all involved in discussions pertaining to the reorganization of the "new" Albanian Armed Forces (AAF). He stated that he had not and he thought that this was unfortunate as, in his opinion, the field commanders should have something to say about the defence of Albania as they are actively involved on a day-to-day basis with the realities of reorganization, and the defence of the nation. The General Staff in Tirana, offered BG Zena, is composed almost entirely of theoreticians vice experienced "field commanders" which has made participation by the field commanders even more important. "The Minister," said BG Zena, "is an incredible man, but we (the uniformed services) have an obligation to advise him on military matters". BG Zena provided no comments vis-à-vis the Chief of Staff and indicated that he know little about Vice Chief of Staff MG Vincani.

Lack of Thought: From BG Zena's point of view, the General Staff in Tirana was simply copying and distributing various manuals without questioning either their content or their applicability to the AAF. As an example, BG Zena indicated that he now had several sergeants acting as platoon commanders as well as officer platoon commanders. BG Zena was uncertain as to what an officer platoon commander did that a sergeant platoon commander did not do and no one in Tirana had seen fit to explain this. From BG Zena's point of view, when a platoon had both an officer and an NCO, he made the officer responsible for all unit activities, to include training, during normal duty hours (see comments). He was similarly uncertain of the role of the artillery LNO in the division's headquarters. BG Zena reasoned that if he had an artillery LNO there was no need for him to have a divarty commander. DA offered that the artillery LNO should be seen as a staff officer who, under the US system, generally comes under the division operations office, and who is responsible for artillery fire support and fire coordination. The divarty commander, on the other hand, is a commander and is responsible to the division commander for command and control of fire support and all artillery units in direct support of the division. (DA will provide the requisite information pertaining to the duties of the arty LNO to the division commander to BG Zena.)

Sociology/JS: DA asked BG Zena about items like entertainment, games and other morale and welfare issues, specifically asking if Tirana provided such support. BG Zena offered that he organized sporting activities within the division, but there was no support from Tirana. "There used to be," he said, "a movie truck which came along once a week but it is no longer available". (Curiously, the individual who seems to have overall responsibility for troop morale and welfare is not the Sociology Chief, but rather the director of the Officers' Club. He seems rather keen to start getting out with the troops, and has asked to see DA.)

Staff Organization & Personnel Assignments: DA spoke briefly with BG Zena about proposed changes to the division logistics organization. BG Zena agreed fully with DA that the division logistics officer should be wholly a staff officer and not also the commander of the division logistics battalion which is the current practice. BG Zena thought that the G1 could do a better job of troops assignments. Instead of leaving an officer to do a particular job for as much as ten years, it would be better to permit the division commander to rotate officers to different jobs within the division, otherwise, in BG Zena's words, an officer become complacent and is longer motivated. Obviously BG Zena would like to have his officers rotate to different divisions, but realized that the current level of infrastructure could not support this.

Montenegro: BG Zena took DA to the border crossing point with Montenegro, some 32kms from Skodra. There was a minor flap at the border which was related to a substantial amount of flour en route to Tirana having been stopped by authorities from Montenegro somewhere close to the border crossing point (NFI).

This is interesting in the context of last week's flour/bread shortage in Tirana. DA asked if a visa was required for Americans who wished to transit Montenegro and was informed that it was not necessary if travelling on a tourist passport. One simply paid 20 German marks. DA met the police officer in charge, a young (25) police lieutenant who spoke Serbian and English. He had been there for two months and was looking for any excuse to practise his English. DA was lectured for a considerable amount of time about how terrible life had been under Hoxha. DA offered that DA was familiar with the experience of the Cambodian Gulag. "Albania," said the young policeman, "was even more terrible".



**Comments:**

General: It is clear that BG Zena's contact in Tirana goes directly from him to the Minister of Defence. The exact role of the Chief of Staff is hard to establish, as noted in previous reporting. "When I was assigned as commandant of the division," said General Zena, "the minister called me into his office and said that I was now the Minister of Defence for Skodra". And so he is. BG Zena, similar to several other division commanders (2<sup>nd</sup> - Kukes, 3<sup>rd</sup> - Burreli, 7<sup>th</sup> - Tirana, Air Command - Tirana) is concerned that the AAF is becoming too conventional too fast and that what is meant by "NATO integration" is being misconstrued. This of course is near and dear to DA who believes the same thing. Also, with a small army, such as the AAF, there is no need to have systematic TO&Es, rather each unit should be organized commensurate with the unit's mission and the terrain. The more amorphous the better. Perhaps this view will eventually prevail, but presently it is not widely accepted. DA intends to press this idea more firmly with MG Adem Copani (military advisor to President Berisha), Col Bektash Kolasi (Chief of Long Range Planning), BG Ali Kocecu (Commandant of the Defence Academy) and BG Luan Hoxha - no relation - (Commandant of the Ground Forces Academy).

Officer & NCO Platoon Commanders: DA suggested to BG Zena that at the outset that there had probably been errors. When the decision was made to reintroduce ranks into the AAF, virtually everyone became an officer vice being given the rank commensurate with their position. Another current problem is that there is no means (and certainly no incentives) whereby a conscript, at the end of his period of service, can become a regular, regardless of the rank/position held, and many conscripts, by the end of their period of service are squad leaders, tank commanders and in some cases platoon commanders. These individuals are surely the basis of an NCO Corps. The decision to provide the conscript NCO with a rank system different from that of regulars will further complicate the process (see Report 64). In DA's opinion a squad leader is a squad leader is a squad leader. Disregarding the basic question of whether or not the Albanians really needed an NCO Corps, in the context of a Western traditional army, the NCO Corps provides technical expertise as their career patterns follow specific general patterns. Ideally when a new officer joins a unit, there is a seasoned NCO there to show him the way. This is not the case in Albania and will not be until there are incentives for regular service.

Sister Unit Relationship: Visits to units like the 1<sup>st</sup> Division underscores the need to expand the parameters of US assistance to the AAF. If each of the five main force divisions could have a sister unit relationship, all manner of questions from the field could be better and more expeditiously resolved (see Report 41 "End of Five Months" para 7b(2), (de), (ii) which is quoted in part:

On a related note, a partnership-type programme might also be useful. Currently, when a division commander has a question about, for example, the role of the squad leader, or some other organizational problem, he has no alternative than to await the visit of another American team, a process which may take several months. If Albanian infantry divisions could have a partnership relationship with a EUCOM-based US infantry brigade, it would permit a division commander to establish a direct dialogue with the brigade through the MLT. It might also be possible for the partnership brigade to dispatch a JCPT which could spend several days with the division.

RPT# 72

DATE: 26FEB96

**TIRANA EXPLOSION**

**Summary:** At approximately 250830 February a violent explosion occurred in Tirana. The site of the explosion is the new Vefa supermarket located near the Tirana International Hotel.<sup>1</sup>

**Details:** At approximately 260830 February a violent explosion occurred in Tirana. The site of the explosion is the new Vefa supermarket located near the Tirana International Hotel. On the DMA 1990 Tirana city map (M907XTIRANE), the Vefa store is located at the intersection of Rruga Bayram Curri and Rruga e Barikadane. The MOD Intelligence Directorate, as of 1030hrs still did not, repeat not, have any definitive information other than the explosion occurred most probably inside the market. There are casualties but the numbers remain unknown. It is thought that the explosion was caused by either a large gas cylinder or by explosives.

**Comments:** Additional comments will be provided as made available.

---

<sup>1</sup> The VEFA organisation was one of the largest 'pyramid' banking companies that collapsed in 1997.

Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

RPT# 73

DATE: 26FEB96

## **NEWS REPORT: US ESTABLISHES BASE IN ALBANIA**

**Summary:** The headlines of an article appearing in the 22 February edition of Koha Jone read: "Albania to establish the first US military base in an east-European country".

**Details:** The 22 February edition of the Albanian daily newspaper, Koha Jone, widely considered to be a "socialist" newspaper, ran an article entitled "Albania to establish the first US military base in an east-European country". The article reads as follows:

### START QUOTE

The first American base charted on military maps of eastern Europe is expected to be established at Biza of Martanesh in the district of Mat, north of Tirana, according to some sources from the Albanian Defence Ministry. This report would confirm that the article which Washington Post carried in November 1995 was true.

On the other hand, this region has always been looked upon as a most strategic one. As soon as the summer sets in, it is planned to be held here military training exercises with the participation of troops from Albania, the US, other member countries of the NATO initiative Partnership for Peace. If an agreement is reached in the near future, this will be the first American base in an ex-communist country.

These were the points that the journalists of Washington Post underlined in their article, which was published the day after the Dayton Agreement of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Prior to this article, it was the Commander-in-Chief of the Albanian Armed Forces, Sali Berisha who stated that "If an accord on Bosnia is agreed upon we can offer NATO and the US our military base for use".

According to military strategists there are a number of factors that Albania may [sic] their choice as a military post and these factors include that Albania is located close to Former Yugoslavia and that their possible choice of a base just 50 kilometers away from the capital, Tirana, and from Albanian's international airport, Rinas.

In the past few days the residents close to the military base noticed that a number of Albanian soldiers have left the base and also that there were a number of visits to the military base by American military helicopters. Presently, much work is being carried out to turn this military base into a modern military facility.

Reliable sources within the Ministry of Defence, also confirmed that talks are being held between our defence ministry and the Pentagon concerning the items of the future agreement, which will be supported by a grant of \$2million, to be spent on this particular military base. This most recent news should also be considered in the view of Berisha's most recent statement that "Albania is soon to become a NATO member".

END QUOTE

**Comments:** Obviously there is some latitude being taken with the facts. The area visited by the Washington Post was a firing range on the coast south of Durrës, and DA knows of only two US military helicopters which have been to Biza in recent days, and that was on 25 February. Be that as it may, Defence Advisor (DA) has asked the public affairs office of the Ministry of Defence for comments. Will provide this when received.

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

RPT# 75

DATE: 27FEB96

**TIRANA EXPLOSION II**

**Summary:** 25 February explosion is said to have been caused by 50 kilos of explosives placed in a light truck parked outside the Vefa store in Tirana (see Report #72 dated 25 February 1996).

**Details:** In a 271000 February 96 conversation with an individual involved in the investigation of the 26 February Vefa explosion, and a subsequent conversation with the acting Intelligence Director, it was stated that the 23 February Vefa explosion was caused by the equivalent of 50 kilos of explosives which had been placed in a light van parked in front of the Vefa supermarket in central Tirana. Although the van was legally parked in front of the building an hour before opening time, a guard employed by Vefa asked the driver to move the van as the guard believed that the van was parked too close to the building. The driver responded that he would be right back. Reportedly the Vefa guard could not subsequently provide an accurate description of the driver. It has also been suggested that the fire inside the Vefa building was caused by gasoline from the van's fuel tank which was blown through the glass windows into the market. Four (4) persons were killed in the blast and between 27 and 29 injured, some seriously. The Vefa company has stated that they will cover the hospitalization off those injured. A former member of the Sigurimi (Secret Police), Mr Ylly Pollovina, who is a sometime journalist, wrote a story following the attempted assassination of the FYROM's president last year in which Mr Pollovina stated that the bombing incident in Skopje would be followed by a bombing incident in Tirana. Reportedly in his story, Mr Pollovina wrote that while it had been a car bomb in Skopje, he suggested that in Tirana it would be a bomb placed in a parked van. Mr Pollovina is being questioned by the authorities.

**Comments:** Defence Advisor's (DA) contact in the ministry is inclined to dismiss the idea that this attack was directed against Vefa because a grocery store was hit vice the Vefa headquarters building. Our Intel Director also states that he believes that the bomb was not directed at the Vefa company but rather has an as yet undetermined political angle. DA, however, continues to hear about unhappiness in the business sector at the extent of Vefa's operation. There is a rumour that two of Mr Pollovina's friends are in Skopje and may be connected with the Skopje explosion. There is also, according to our Intelligence Directorate, an unconfirmed report originating with an Italian radio station, which suggests that an anonymous telephone caller stated that the bombing was the work of former communists. The bottom line is that DA has been provided nothing very solid.

RPT# 77

DATE: 29FEB96

**CONVERSATIONS AT THE NCO ACADEMY**

**Summary:** On 28 February, Defence Advisor (DA) and LTC Haxhi Asllani visited the NCO Academy at its new location. Conversations with the commandant are aptly summed up by a particularly prescient member of his staff who stated that "our approach to the creation of an NCO Corps has been wholly mechanical".

**Details:**

**Background:** When the Defence Advisor is asked by a division commander to explain the difference between the duties of an NCO and an officer (see Report #65) DA is inclined to think that there may be a problem in the integration of NCOs into the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF). On the morning of 28 February, while in search of "the truth", DA visited the NCO Academy at its new location (a former artillery brigade headquarters) in the "souk" (desert wind) district of Tirana. The former NCO Academy is now the home of the Sigint School.

**The Visit:** When DA and LTC Asllani arrived at the NCO Academy the commandant, Col Hysen Hodo, was conducting a meeting. DA was taken in hand by a LTC Pajtim Ribaj, who turns out to be a former history teacher at the Defence College, and by happenstance also a French linguist. LTC Ribaj stated that during a period starting in the Zog era and last to the end of Albania's "Russian" experience in 1966, NCOs were an integral part of the AAF. All traditions died in 1966, when under the tutelage of the People's Republic of China (PRC), the entire social order was disrupted and all ranks were abolished. What has happened since the advent of democracy, said LTC Ribaj, is that the concept of an NCO Corps has been "mechanically" applied to the AAF without there being any philosophical thought given to the socio-economic status of NCOs, which happens to coincide with DA's concern about the creation of an NCO Corps. Complicating the process has been the process of the re-institution of military rank at the start of Albania's "democratic" period when an astonishing percentage of leaders were made "officers" when in fact their assignments and educational levels were more commensurate with that of NCOs.

**The Commandant:** Col Hodo is himself somewhat of an enigma. The word "martinet" seems to be an appropriate descriptive. DA has met him several times and still cannot decide where he fits. Col Hodo took great pride in informing DA on DA's initial visit, that if the mother of a soldier who was attending his NCO Academy died, he would not give that soldier time off to attend his mother's funeral. His particular fetish is cleanliness. To this extent the NCO Academy is spotless, however, one American JCPT member, commenting on his appreciation of Col Hodo, suggested that Colonel Hodo should be made the Minister of Sanitation. Having said that, the colonel is a no nonsense commandant who runs a very "tight ship". Regrettably he is not at the same time interested in listening to any of his subordinates who might be somewhat more aware of the philosophical issues at stake. LTC Ribaj particularly urged DA to speak with a wide range of officers other than solely with the NCO Academy commandant.

**NCOs:** DA expressed DA's concern to the commandant, that the role of the NCO in the new AAF was not wholly understood. The commandant who responded that DA

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

should remember that the AAF does not have very much recent experience with NCOs, but that the AAF's NCO Academy was patterned on the American model. This caused DA to ask how many NCO instructors there were in the Academy at the present time? Col Hodo stated that there were presently none, but that there were plans for 20% of the faculty to be composed of NCOs. DA then asked about the ratio in the American model. Col Hodo responded that the US model was run solely by NCOs. Apropos the role of the NCO, Col Hodo stated that the NCO was in charge of discipline and training. It was for this reason, said Colonel Hodo, that NCOs were in charge of the training of conscripts.

The NCO-Officer Relationship: DA commended Col Hodo on his preparation of NCOs and asked if there was included in the curriculum of any of the service academies any instructional information on the role of the NCO? He stated that there was not. Indeed, while NCOs are being educated apropos their role in the general scheme of things, it does not appear as though there is a similar block of instruction which prepares officers, at any level, for the sudden inclusion of NCOs. As mentioned at the outset, in DA's opinion, when fundamental questions are being asked by one of the more talented general officers, DA believes that it would be useful to start educating the Officers Corps on the role of the NCO as confusion in the Officers Corps will only serve to further complicate the process.

## The NCO Academy and the Recruitment of NCOs:

- In DA's opinion, the source of career NCOs for the AAF has its foundation in the conscript. The difficulty is that because the conscript serves only for a period of one (1) year, the conscript is viewed as not really being a member of the armed forces. Indeed, the idea that somehow a conscript is a human being and should be so treated, remains an idea alien to many officers, Col Hodo among them. (Interestingly DA has been informed by colleague at the Organization for Rehabilitation Through Training (ORT) that a group of young Albanians identified as the "young researchers of social science" have submitted a grant proposal to study "minimal conditions to be established for army conscripts".)
- DA suggested to Col Hodo that perhaps the source of recruitment of a professional NCO Corps lies in identifying talented conscripts and providing them the incentives to stay in. In the AAF today, the overwhelming number of squad leaders, tank commanders and artillery gun commanders, are conscripts. Despite being conscripts, they are, by virtue of their assignment, NCOs. The problem is that the army today, because they serve only for one year, is not prepared to accept the fact that these conscripts are in fact performing all of the duties of NCOs. The fact that were the Albanians to go to war tomorrow, these conscript NCOs would be the backbone of the army, is similarly an alien concept.
- DA suggested to Col Hodo that the only way the AAF was going to establish an NCO Corps which had anything like the number of NCOs needed, would be to designate conscript NCOs as NCOs, provide them insignia of rank, and an additional salary. The NCO Academy, added DA, should concentrate on producing senior NCOs (platoon sergeants and above) while the divisions should be responsible for the education of team leaders and squad leaders. Ultimately the basis for attendance at the NCO Academy should be that all NCO Academy candidates have served in a satisfactory manner as platoon level NCOs.

**Comments:** DA's concern about the plight of the conscripts has been central in DA's reporting to date. Indeed DA's suggestions that emphasis should be placed upon improving infrastructure has been widely ignored in favour of acquisition of technology. The conscripts remain abused, ill paid, ill housed and what talents they could bring to the AAF largely ignored. DA is off to meet Professors Alfred Uci and Edmond Dragoti whose speciality is Albanian society. Perhaps DA will then better understand what is going on.



RPT# 84

DATE: 05APR96

**US SPECIAL FORCES & MORE FROM THE NCO ACADEMY**

**Summary:** There are presently two (2) US Special Forces (USSF) NCOs at the NCO Academy. These two USSF NCOs share many of the Defence Advisor's concerns as they pertain to the integration of NCOs into the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF), particularly as they pertain to the recruiting of a professional NCO Corps. Currently the incentives for service in the AAF are non-existent. Report forwards their impressions after ten days.

**Details:**

Background: Among DA's concerns has been the integration of NCOs into the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF). This was brought to the fore in a conversation with the 1st Division Commander who asked DA to explain the difference between an NCO platoon commander and an officer platoon commander (see Report 65 dated 23 Jan 96). What has happened is that in the AAF's drive towards "professionalism" it was determined that an NCO Corps was necessary. While an NCO Corps is starting to take form, there appears to have been little or no thought given to the social and philosophical ramifications the mission of the NCO Corps. It has been, as stated by an officer at the Albanian NCO Academy, a totally mechanistic response. While at the NCO Academy, future NCOs are instructed apropos their roles and their relationship with the Officers Corps, there is no such parallel course being taught at the service academies to the Officers Corps. Indeed, a majority of the Officers Corps perceive NCOs, not as a "tool", but rather as an individual who will undermine their authority.

View from USSF NCOs: The two USSF NCOs are here for a forty five (45) day period. This report is based on their observations at the end of their second week. They have many of the same concerns as this Defence Advisor (DA). DA provides them below. Nothing particularly new but it is reassuring to note that DA's concerns are shared.

- NCO Academy Instructors: Instructors at the NCO Academy are very knowledgeable and professional in their methods of instruction. There is, however, a need for assistant instructors. Presently the instructor to student ratio is running at about 1:26. This is a particularly glaring shortcoming in such courses as drill and ceremonies and weapons training.
- Lessons Plans: To date the Albanians are happy with the lesson plans used for both the three (3) month and the five (5) month course. In the future it is probable that the length of both of these courses could be reduced without affecting the content of the course without at the same time producing additional NCOs. Having said that, it is recommended that the number of students in any one class be limited due to the paucity of training aids, facilities, and general space. This should especially be considered during the transition from officer to NCO instructors.
- Command & Control: While the commandant (Colonel Hysen Hodo) aspires to have a professional academy, the commandant's staff appear not to have been given a clear explanation of what their individual missions are. There is, for

example, no single point of contact for equipment needs for field training exercises, rather, this is addressed by the individual instructor. Similarly, no one appears to be using the training schedule as a planning vehicle for preparing for field exercises. (Copies of AR 350-10 have been requested and should help in correcting this shortcoming.)

- Master Fitness: The Academy (and indeed the Albanian Armed Forces as a whole) needs a physical fitness programme. It has been recommended to the commandant that an SOP relating to physical fitness be prepared so that other NCOs and officers throughout the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) can be taught master fitness techniques. This information could then be taken by graduating NCOs to their units and the system perpetuated.
- An Advanced NCO Course: If there is to be a professional NCO Corps in the AAF (see comments), it will be necessary to establish an NCO advanced course which will focus on leadership.
- A series of interviews was accomplished with cadre members, NCOs, students and conscripts assigned to the NCO School. The following represents a compilation of problems and recommended solutions:

(1) Recruitment Of An NCO Corps:

Problem: There is obviously a shortage of NCOs throughout the AAF and the prospect of improvement under the current system is unlikely. The current class at the NCO Academy had anticipated a class of 300 candidates. There are sixty two (62) students. This is attributed to a variety of problems but virtually all have their basis in the appalling conditions under which the conscripts exist. There is currently no programme which offers incentives, no NCOs to care for the welfare of the soldier. The oft cited quip that Albanian conscripts are tough and expect nothing better, in DA's opinion, simply does not wash.

Recommendation: "Rotation of conscripts through different jobs during their one year of service. There is a need for more NCOs to look after the welfare of the soldier (conscript) in all units. An intense recruiting programme needs to be developed and implemented. Better treatment of the conscript would also be an incentive to the soldier to stay on active duty and become an NCO."

(2) Transition Of Instructors From Officer To NCO:

Problem: Ultimately, it is the intention of the NCO Academy to transition from officer instructors to NCO instructors. "Currently the most knowledgeable instructors are officers. The classes observed were well prepared and well taught. The officer instructors have a lot of experience."

Recommendation: "There should be an overlap period. The NCO should observe the officer teach the class. Then, the NCO can teach the class under the supervision of the officers. Their critiques will help the NCO become better instructors."

Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

(3) Lack Of "Time-Off":

Problem: Many students have family and other personal problems that need to be taken care of during the five months that they spend at the NCO Academy. They are not given time to take care of such matters.

Recommendations: For a short term solution, workdays could be lengthened in order to compensate for the half day of classes on Saturday. For a longer term solution, "time-off" could be built into the training schedule. Students have complained about not having any time off for five (5) months. (Col Hodo takes special pride in the fact that none of his students gets time-off, "even if they have to attend their mother's funeral".

(4) Lack Of An Evaluation System:

Problem: There is no system of evaluation in place at the Academy. Because of the recruiting problem, it appears that everyone who enters the course will graduate. Not everyone is capable of handling the responsibilities of an NCO.

Recommendations: An examination should be held at the end of each phase of the course. At the end of Phase I, an exam to test "adjustment into the army". At the end of Phase II the student should be tested on his speciality. At the end of Phase III the NCO candidate should be tested on his/her leadership.

(5) General Comments: The AAF is currently attempting to produce an NCO Corps. The recruiting programme is not making the quota for the number of personnel required. The class that ended at the end of 1995 was supposed to be a class of 200 NCO. Ultimately only 90 individuals signed up. The quota for the current class was 300. There are in actually 62 at the present time.

Among the problems associated with recruiting is the contract itself. The recruit signs a contract for fifteen (15) years. That should probably be reduced to no more than five (5) years.

Another problem is incentives. There is nothing that stands out to draw persons in. When in 1995 200 candidates showed up as prospective NCO candidates, only 90 signed on. The main reason was that they were not paid during the course of the five (5) month course. Many of the potential NCO candidates are married with families and need at least a minimal income to get by with.

The next problem is related to living conditions. After a tour of the entire facility, the general living conditions are low, the food is not very good and is usually the same thing day after day. Sleeping facilities, while clean are crowded. The shower and toilets are filthy. (This was brought to the attention of the commandant but nothing has happened.)

An awards system needs to be put in place. As we have seen soldiers will do almost anything to get ribbons, patches and/or tabs for their

uniforms. This would work especially well in assisting conscripts to re-enlist to be NCOs.

Finally, if some or all of these things could be fixed, the best recruiting tool available would work for the Albanian Army. That tool is word of mouth advertising. When a soldier is happy, he will speak well of the military when asked. If conscripts lived in better conditions, they would sign up for more years as an NCO after their mandatory time is served.

Of course, we all know that money is a large problem in the Albanian Army. But if, one at a time, these problems could be solved, the recruiting situation would change drastically.

**Comments:** Recently the AAF has been designing a new system of rank for NCOs. Predictably there are two systems, one for conscripts and the other for regulars. DA has failed, at least to date, in convincing anyone that there is no need to differentiate between conscripts and regulars. Moreover, neither DA, nor our USSF team, has been able to persuade anyone that the conscripts provide the best source of recruiting if there is to be a professional NCO Corps. The ministry's emphasis during the past several years has been on building political relationships, and not on dealing with the real-time problems which face members of the armed forces. "If the conscripts were really unhappy," said one senior Albanian, "they would riot". Seems to DA that this is unlikely, but in the same vein, DA has been made aware of a group, calling themselves the "Young Researchers of Social Sciences" who are applying for a grant to establish minimal conditions for conscripts in the armed forces. From DA's perspective, we already have conscripts who are filling NCO positions. What we should consider doing is making these individuals NCOs and paying them as NCOs. They would, after all, fill the position of NCOs were there to be a call up. At the same time, in keeping with the comments of our USSF team, the NCO Academy should be set aside for senior NCOs. A pre-requisite would be already being a junior NCO. The training of junior NCOs could be accomplished by their parent division, as is the case of officers following the graduation from the Ground Forces Academy.

Next week, DA, accompanied by the USSF personnel, intends to visit both the 8th (Tirana) and 1st (Skodra) Division, in order to meet with the division commanders and their staffs to talk about the integration of NCOs into the AAF.

This entire issue about better conditions for members of the armed forces across the board is of great interest to the personnel of the AAF. There is grumbling. While they see a drastic reduction of the force structure, they have been unable to realize any alteration of their already meagre standard of living. Also the retirement structure is in disarray which leads to even more problems relating to morale and welfare as career officers have no idea of if they will receive any compensation for years of service following separation from the service.

Recommend this report also be read in conjunction with Report #77 - conversations at the NCO Academy - dated 29 February 96.

RPT# 89

DATE: 19APR96

**CONVERSATIONS IN TIRANA & CHANGE**

**Summary:** Report forwards some thoughts pertaining to Albania's drift towards democracy. It is assumed that "democracy" is the solution to all of Albania's problems. Without a modicum of "Rule of Law" the road ahead is going to be difficult. Also, in this the final month prior to the 26 May elections, most of DA's acquaintances are hoping for a coalition government.

**Details:** Defence Advisor (DA) senses a considerable amount of dissatisfaction in Tirana as we go into the final month prior to the elections. The overwhelming number of individuals with whom DA has spoken are united in the desire to see a coalition government replace the present "democratic" one. This implies that many persons, the young in particular, will vote for a party other than either democrats or this socialists (who have recently further been emasculated by the democrats). Unhappiness stems from there being little realization of real changes in people's lives under the democrats, who are seen as being engaged in widespread incidents of nepotism, corruption and self-promotion. Against this background, DA has had a series of conversations with a former professor of philosophy about change.

Professor Alfred Uci (an existentialist - "a natural reaction in the aftermath of Hoxha") is an interesting man. Prof Uci studied aesthetics in Moscow during the period 1948-54. When he returned to Albania he was initially employed as a journalist. "After the death of Stalin," offered Uci, "I thought that Stalinism would perish with Stalin. I thought also that we would build up a "democratic" Albania. But the international community was against Albania and many of our officers returning from Moscow returned imbued with the Stalinist tradition." This point of view ultimately got him fired. Professor Uci, a former minister of culture, is a survivor (DA leaves it up to the reader to decide for himself if the greater man is he who sacrifices himself on behalf of his principles, or the individual who can effect change through surviving). He was discovered by DA in response to DA's wondering if Albanian conscripts have always been abused, or if the present state of affairs, as it relates to the treatment of conscripts, is a new phenomenon.

The President's military advisor, MG Adem Copani persists in saying that Albania must forget the past and start again. Prof Uci's point of view, a view shared by DA, is one can never forget the past, and in any event, the dynamics of the past will never let the past be forgotten. "The past in Albania," said Uci, "was made up of good and bad, but in Albania's case it was overwhelmingly bad." Prof Uci suggests, and again DA has no reason to disagree, that in the transition to "democracy" many of the more capable officers were fired because they were communists. "We were all communists," added Uci, and now many persons, who would have had no difficulties in adjusting to the pluralism of the new political order, and who would have made a major impact of Albania's drift towards democracy, have been discarded. "Perhaps," said Prof Uci, "the democratic regime is better, but in the Albanian context it is likened to a Shakespearian tragedy." Prof Uci stated that Albania must build a higher level of "intellectuality". They (the new leaders) have little realization of the narrowness of their minds and tend to look towards technology as the answer to their problems. "We must be aware of the needs of the people and now, even at the outset, we have a problem. It is essential that we Albanians," continued Prof Uci, "consolidate amongst ourselves. The Hoxha period,

despite appearances to the contrary, produced class traditions marked by extensive in-fighting. The advent of "democracy" has simply been the final phase of this social conflict. If we are to face the political and economic challenges which lie ahead of us, consolidation is essential. We must learn to live as one."

Continuing in the same vein, Prof Uci noted that there has always been a tendency in Albania to simply "copy that which is put before us. First we copied the Russians and later the Chinese. We finally ended up spending vast amounts of money unnecessarily for the defence of Albania. Now we copy the Americans, but still no one has bothered to ask if the "American" way has applications for Albania. The fact that we copy is purely a mechanical reaction."

DA asked Uci about conscripts and the army in general. On the subject of conscripts, Uci stated that in the past and today, life in the army remains tough. It is in fact a "risk" to be in the army. It is also an excellent location from which to view the state of our economy as conditions in the army, particularly as it affects the conscripts, is a reflection of the basic essentials that we are without and which you take for granted. In Albania, the army is not a profession and will not become professional until overall conditions improve and soldiers are proud to join and to defend the nation. Today, our history laughs at them.

**Comments:** An acquaintance, who is close to DA, has written an excellent paper on the problems associated with philosophical change in the People's Republic of China (PRC). This paper forms the basis for DA's comments. (DA has been in Asia too long to be unduly worried about plagiarizing from something really good.) In the context of the PRC, DA's acquaintance uses the term "primitive capitalism". DA has been struck since DA's first day in Tirana by how much Tirana resembled mid-1980s Beijing. DA finds the events in the PRC not to be dissimilar from those in Albania; indeed, if the term "primitive capitalism" can be used in conjunction with the PRC, it certainly has a descriptive place in Albania's political lexicon. In Albania's quest towards "democracy", if Albania is to develop properly, Albania too must shift from the practice of "primitive capitalism" to modern capitalism. Modern capitalism is defined by the rule-of-law, which functions within a proper system of laws, and with a population which has cultivated the habits of voluntary compliance of the law.

Hong Kong and Macau, both colonies off the coast of China, and right next to each other, provide an interesting example. Macau, for several hundred years, was a much larger, and wealthier port than Hong Kong. Impressive development occurred in Hong Kong because Britain provided the system of rule-of-law, backed by the parliament in London, and not, it should be emphasized, by the colonial government of Hong Kong. But Macau, because Portugal did not have the same tradition of rule-of-law; even with the same industrious people, same subsidies of raw materials, food stuffs, and additional cheap labour from China, remains today, corrupt, backward, and small.

There is a perception that the problems of primitive capitalism are going to disappear simply by the adoption of democracy. To this extent there seems to be wide spread misunderstanding about the nature of democracy. Democracy is not a religion one can convert into, a disease one can catch, or a panacea that solves all problems. Democracy is, in fact, inefficient in its decision making process, expensive to operate, burdensome, and even painful to the leaders who choose to get involved. It also demands a great deal of discipline and self-restraint from the people. Democracy itself solves no problems, because each problem must still be

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

resolved individually by finding specific solutions appropriate to that problem. Democracy is exactly what Winston Churchill had described: "the worst form of government there is, except for all the others," because democracy, despite all its faults, is still the best means to protect the system of rule-of-law that has already been created. It is also the best means of ensuring that the people engage in self-regulation and in voluntary compliance of the laws.

For democracy to function properly, it must have the fortuitous confluence of two forces, a disciplined leadership capable in constructing a proper system of laws, and the self restraint of the people, capable of cooperating with the government through the ups and downs of this very strenuous process of law enactment and law compliance in their unavoidably difficult inception. If one aspect is missing, this process simply can not be completed.

The Albanian Defence Academy in Tirana, has until recently, actively sought only American and German (West) scholars as visitors to the Academy as, according to one senior academician, "only in America and West Germany is true democracy to be found". The problem in Albania is that in the Albanians are striving to accomplish what America did two hundred years ago, namely to "create" democracy, and it can be argued that perhaps the Albanians should not focus wholly on the Americans and the West Germans for answers pertaining to the creation of a new system, for the Americans who knew how to create the system of rule-of-law, and the system of democracy to protect it, and did so successfully, have been dead for over 200 years. Generations of Americans have benefited greatly from their system: but their system is already in place, and succeeding generations of Americans have no need to create one, and therefore, no need to think clearly about all the difficulties associated with creating a new system.

DA's acquaintance has also noted that Americans are very proud of their democracy, and we like to promote it as the answer to all problems. But America's difficulties in many parts of the world, and their own capital city of Washington DC, demonstrate that today's Americans may not really understand that democracy itself solves no problem, and that many of programmes and endowments in support of democracy are wasteful, and more often than not tangled in bureaucratic red tape, particularly in places where both the leaders and their people have not, and cannot create a system of rule-of-law, or are unprepared to comply with the laws voluntarily. Indeed, knowing how to function within an established system is very different from knowing how to create one. Creating the system is Albania's problem.

RPT# 90  
DATE: 20APR96

### VISIT TO SAZAN ISLAND

**Summary:** A 6<sup>th</sup> Fleet team and members of the General Staff visited Sazan Island off Vlore on 17 April. The purpose of the visit was to determine the suitability of Sazan Island as a training area. In DA's opinion, the navy seems to have been happy with what they found.

**Details:** A 6<sup>th</sup> Fleet team and members of the General Staff, accompanied by both the Defence Advisor and Defence Attaché visited Sazan Island on 17 April. In DA's opinion, the visit was a success. There is sufficient room for small unit operations, special operations type missions and company sized operations. The area could also be used for naval gunfire, possibly for air to ground operations, although DA believes that 6<sup>th</sup> Fleet needs to prioritize their requirements as the island can probably not support everything. The Albanians intend to relocate the overwhelming number of the people (30 families) still living on the island elsewhere. Few appear to wish to remain. There is no fresh water on the island, and while there is an underwater cable which carried electricity from Vlore to the island, the cable is no longer operable. Now there is only generator provided power from 0600-0900 and 1800-2300 daily. Nothing is grown on the island and even bread has to be sent in. There is a school on the island which runs through the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Sazan Island represents, in the most stark terms, the extent of Hoxha stupidity. There are more bunkers and defensive positions on this island than DA has ever seen anywhere else in the world. What exactly was being defended is difficult to determine. DA and group were rewarded with a white knuckle trip in a 45 year old Chinese Red-Flag truck up to the highest point on the island. The road is exactly wide enough for a Chinese truck and features, along the way, innumerable drops into the ocean. With 10 being suicidal on DA's road rating scale, this road is rated as 7.5 going up and 8 coming down, especially on the two hairpin turns when the truck's superstructure actually hangs over the edge. While the Minister gave DA the mission of convincing the Americans to use the island, there was little convincing to be done as it is an extraordinary facility. Although there is only one really decent beach, it is fortunate that 6<sup>th</sup> Fleet got to Sazan before Club Med. At the conference at the end of the visit, the Albanians persistently referred to Sazan Island as a second national training area. The 6<sup>th</sup> Fleet reps carefully avoided any such a characterization. While BG Ismolli, the Operations Director, kept referring to needed improvements of the island's infrastructure, the navy kept saying that essentially there would have to be only minimal improvements and that when the area was actually used for training, the navy would simply bring everything they needed in and remove it when they were done. Perhaps they agreed to disagree until the next round of talks.

**Comments:** Obviously the minister wants the Americans involved no matter what the cost, and similar to Gjadri, while the Americans will get a training area, the only concession made to the Albanians was that perhaps some joint construction exercises could be run in conjunction with training.



RPT# 91

DATE: 27APR96

**THE GERMAN MILITARY CONNECTION**

**Summary:** Defence Advisor (DA) was approached by the assistant German Military Attaché about greater cooperation with the United States. Essentially what the German seem to be seeking is a better coordinated effort.

**Details:** On the evening of 24 April, at a reception given for a visiting German military (political department) delegation, DA was approached by the assistant German Military Attaché accredited to Tirana, although based in Budapest, Air Force Lt-Col Peter Heckner. Lt-Col Heckner was interested in knowing if there could be closer cooperation between his country and the United States within the framework of Albania. Further discussions on 25 April between DA, MLT Chief and Lt-Col Heckner suggested that the Germans saw this "cooperation" mainly in terms of military education (the Germans, of course have a LTC Erk Wechselberg permanently assigned to the Defence Academy in Tirana) and in ensuring that our programmes are not in conflict or excessively duplicative. (As an example, while DA was involved in the reorganisation of the Logistics Directorate, unbeknown to DA, there was a German Army Logistics Team in Tirana.) DA specifically asked if the Germans foresaw getting involved at the NCO Academy. Lt-Col Heckner stated that they did not, but thought only that their representative at the Defence Academy and our NCOs at the NCO Academy might be able to better support the overall mission of "professionalising" the Albanian Armed Forces were there to be better "cooperation". Coincidentally, DA, accompanied by both US Special Forces sergeants, had just the day before discussed the "role of the NCO" with the Tirana based 8<sup>th</sup> Division. It was again noted that while the new NCOs were being taught the mission of the NCO, little is being done to educate the officers apropos the integration of NCOs into the AAF. DA suggested to Lt-Col Heckner that this was an area where we could immediately start to cooperate. Lt-Col Heckner asked if the US was aware of what type of assistance is being provided to the Albanians. DA responded that we were not. Lt-Col Heckner then indicated his willingness to provide to the Americans the US training plan for Albania. This was provided an hour later.

**Comments:** DA spent two weeks with Lt-Col Heckner two years ago when we were both attending the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) international humanitarian law instructor's course in Geneva. While our Defence Attaché has established an excellent working relationship among the attachés in Tirana and concomitantly an exchange of information as it pertains to training being provided the AAF, the German officer (LTC Erk Wechselberg) at the Defence Academy is not an attaché and is accordingly excluded from this circle. DA has proposed to the MLT Chief and to both Lt-Col Heckner and LTC Wechselberg that we should indeed establish better coordination. The MLT Chief will be forwarding a report through his channels. DA intends a further meeting with LTC Wechselberg during the coming week. DA's opinion is that further cooperation with the Germans is in everyone's best interests. All of the information contained above has been provided to Cdr Fox.

RPT# 93  
DATE: 30APR96

## CONVERSATIONS WITH OFFICERS

**Summary:** Defence Advisor (DA) had had a very frank and revealing conversation at the Defence Academy apropos attitudes of segments of the Officer Corps. It is difficult to know the extent to which this mood prevails, but DA believes it to be extensive.

**Details:** DA is finding that the more that DA thinks that he knows, the less he is certain that he knows. On that questionable note, following a ceremony at the NCO Academy to mark the departure of the US Special Forces Team (2 sergeants from the Special Warfare Centre NCO Academy) and the retirement of NCO Commandant Col Hysen Hodo, DA was invited by Col Hodo and several of his officers to "break bread" which surprisingly actually included bread, but also qofta (sausages), cheese and absurd quantities of raki. It was among the most open and frank conversations DA has had, prompted perhaps by the fact that none of the participants had very much to lose.

The Departure Of Colonel Hodo & Ribaj: Col Hysen Hodo, the Commandant of the NCO Academy (see Reports 77 and 84) had his last day at the Academy which he essentially founded. Col Hodo is to be reassigned to the inactive Reserve, ergo retired. Also gone is LTC Pajtim Ribaj, one of the reportedly brightest officers in the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF). LTC Ribaj's sin is that in a former incarnation he was a commissar. The fact that the system made him a commissar and that he was fired for having been a singularly unsuitable commissar, appears to make little difference. For Ribaj, who has a doctorate, the writing was probably on the wall. Recently he was transferred from the Defence University Faculty to the NCO Academy, and effective last week he has been separated from the service. He, like 13 other officers separated from the army at the NCO Academy, will receive \$50 monthly for the next two years in terms of compensation for his years of service. While Col Hodo is inordinately doctrinaire, there is no question that he has done a superb job in the establishment of the NCO Academy. If and when the AAF starts to develop a professional NCO Corps, the AAF will owe Col Hodo a debt of gratitude. (There were a total of 15 officers "fired" in the NCO school massacre. For the most part, according to the 2 SF NCOs who have been at the school for the past 6 weeks, their separation from the service was deserved.)

Regionalism: "The Army," said one officer, "is represented by people from throughout the nation and not solely by Debar province" - meaning Peshkopi from whence has come much of the civilian leadership of the armed forces brought in by the minister (the minister, Vice Minister Lazimi (who is running for parliament from Peshkopi), Under Minister for Economics Bashkim Shehu, Chef du Cabinet Tomorr Shehu and Deputy Director for the International Division Astrit Gjunksi, to name but a few).

Nepotism: DA was asked if DA realised that assignments (to include the staff of the coffee shop in the general headquarters), promotions, etc were made in the Albanian Army based not upon an individual's ability but rather upon his "connections". DA offered only in response that the AAF was working towards the creation of a Western professional army and one of the marks of such an army is that there is a general divergence of personal and professional interests.

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

Distinguished Service In The Old Regime: DA does not remember exactly how, but the conversation got onto DA's former counterpart, now Chief of the Air Services, MG Perlat Sula. One of the officers at this gathering had spent 11 years in prison under the Hoxha regime for having suggested that the United States Army was the best in the world, and Col Hodo took exceptional delight in reminding him that he had served another 7 days in jail courtesy of Col Hodo. (The officer in question was given 2 years credit towards retirement for every year jailed.) This officer immediately branded Sula as one of the officers who had "collaborated" with the old regime and expressed outrage that he could continue to prosper in the new army. DA offered that DA was unable to comment on MG Sula's past, but in DA's opinion was the most widely experienced officer in the AAF today and was genuinely interested in the welfare of his personnel. DA suggested that one had to be careful in the process of reforming an army and need to avoid, as the clichés says, "throwing the baby out with the bath water" as some of these individuals were ultimately able to effect change through having "survived". This brings into question again the issue of is the greater man he who survives and through his survival effects change, or is it the individual who is imprisoned for his beliefs and essentially changes nothing? "They are snakes," responded DA's interrogator. "Right on," said DA, "but did your 11 years of imprisonment change in any degree the army?"

General Conditions: One officer remarked that despite the downsizing of the AAF, there had been perceptual improvement in conditions for members of the AAF. He asked why the United States had not provided additional financial aid to the army. DA responded that perhaps the problem was not an American problem but rather an Albanian dilemma and that the priorities for the armed forces are not established by the United States, but rather by the Defence Ministry.

**Comments:** The case of Pajtim Ribaj will be interesting as an officer has been selected by other officers to take up the dismissal of LTC Ribaj with the minister. The Chief of Personnel at the NCO Academy, who has just returned from language training in the UK, is, like Pajtim Ribaj, a colonel from the Defence College. He too is a PhD, reportedly the only one with a science doctorate. Why he is at the NCO Academy is not immediately clear. He too stated that Ribaj was among the best teachers in the army. DA believes that there continue to be witch hunts to ferret out those whose "biografi" are unsuitable for the present and that some very talented officers are being cast aside for sins that either they did not commit or for being given assignments they could not avoid. It is, of course part of reformation, and is being undertaken in the best interest of the AAF, but in the process the AAF is losing even more of the best and the brightest. DA speculates that this is the mission of the large Counter-Intelligence Directorate (80 people in a ministry of 250) and underscores why the Chief of the general Staff is interested in having this directorate removed from the Defence Ministry and reassigned as a national asset. It is also why the acting director of intelligence should not become the director because it will then be even more difficult to realise the establishment of a functional tactical military intelligence service. DA also notes, and perhaps this is a product of the former police state, that virtually no one speaks well of anyone else. To this extent, Perlat Sula gets better grades than anyone else.

RPT# 95

DATE: 05MAY96

**THE NCO ACADEMY - AFTER ACTION REPORT**

**Summary:** Report address the comments of two US Special Forces (USSF) NCOs who have been at the Albanian NCO Academy (NCOA) for the past 6 weeks (18 Mar-3 May 1996). The NCOA was appreciative of the visit. Most of the instructors were found to be professional and should be commended for their efforts. The major concern is the requirement that the role of the NCO and the NCO's relationship with the Officer Corps needs to be articulated throughout the military educational system.

**Details:** The purpose of this event was to support the development of the Albanian NCO Academy. The event supported one of the most important initiatives in the Albanian military which is the creation of a professional NCO Corps. The SF NCOA team assisted the Albanian NCO Academy by providing them with skills based on a Western model NCO system, and by the providing at the same time an example of the abilities, poise and initiatives of US NCOs.

Observations: Despite the differences between the Albanian and the American NCO system, the Albanian NCO system is headed in the right direction and will probably continue to make strides toward the integration of NCOs into the AAF. There are 2 main problems which need to be resolved:

- Many officers, mainly the older ones who have never worked with NCOs, do not really understand the role of the NCO.
- Another problem is attracting quality conscripts to continue their service as NCOs in the army. The Defence Advisor is well aware of the two main problems and the issue has been addressed on several occasions.

Currently, the NCOA has no formal programme of instruction (POI) to follow. All lessons taught are taught from the instructor's personal notes or from his own experiences. The USSF NCOs stressed the fact that information relating to each class and the key teaching-points of the class, need to be committed to writing and passed on to the next instructor. The USSF NCOs were told that a POI is currently being developed and that all lessons taught will be standardised.

Most of the curriculum being taught at the academy is equivalent to US Skill Level 1 tasks. It was explained that the reason for this was because of the breaks in service some of the students had had and that it was important that everybody be trained at the same level prior to progressing to a higher level. (The progression to a higher level is to be accomplished after the departure of the USSF team.)

In the last day of observance there was a purge of some 15 of the officers in the academy as part of the military draw down (see Report 93). Most of this was beneficial to the well-being of the academy. The period of readjustment following the reassignments will go unobserved. (DA will ask for an appointment later in the month.)

During 2 months of observations, daily improvements could be seen. The students' 2 main concerns were food (common problem in most armies) and time off. Two

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

long weekends were given to the students during our stay and this helped with the morale of the students. One of the other problems that was addressed during the stay was the academy's inability to accommodate other training officers. Currently, the academy is set up to train infantry, artillery, armour and engineers. A successful academy must be willing to accommodate other training officers as well. The Chief of the Military Police made several visits to the academy to coordinate efforts to get his NCOs trained by academy personnel. Other branches should be encouraged to make arrangements with the academy to train their NCOs.

Recommendations (including any suggestions to follow-up or additional topics): The Albanian NCOA is progressing steadily toward an NCOA that is to be modelled after Western standards. The recommendations that could be immediately implemented were. Recommendations that could not be implemented immediately were made note of for future follow-up.

A block of instructions needs to be incorporated as part of the curriculum at the military academy so that the officers are educated and have a better understanding of how to properly utilise NCOs. This in itself is not enough, the older and more senior officers need blocks of instruction on how to utilise the NCO. Initially, an American NCO could give the block of instruction but after a period of time the task should be handed over to an Albanian officer and NCO.

## Follow-Up Recommendations:

- Recommend that follow-up visits be made by the SF NCOA. These visits should consist of two NCOs from the Special Forces NCOA for a period of 45 days, twice a year.
- Periodic visits should be made by the MLT NCO to check on the progression and the development of the Albanian NCOA. These visits should be done at irregular intervals and should last about a week. It should focus on current problems, course progression and future events.
- English courses have been coordinated by US to be given to the academy. The English course should be followed up and would greatly assist in the future exchanges of Albanians coming to the US to observe our NCOAs and to attend schools.

**Comments:** DA has provided the essential points of the after actions report. The 2 team members and DA were in complete agreement of virtually all issues. DA believes that many of the problems encountered, such as a more adequate briefing immediately after arrival, will be corrected by the close state of relations between the DA and the MLT. The German officer assigned to the Defence Academy is going to be brought into the picture and will hopefully start to emphasize the role of the NCO to officers at the Defence Academy. The meeting organised at the Tirana based 8<sup>th</sup> Division was very useful. This can be perpetuated in the future using the MLT NCO whenever possible. Hopefully, the Peace Corps (Report 92) will be able to support English language training at the NCO Academy. From DA's perspective this has been one of our most useful events and the 2 NCOs duly recognised for their contributions. In any future iteration, DA would like to be able to get the team out to the field more for discussion with the deployed units. It should also be noted that the Albanians, despite their own chronic shortages, bent over backwards to help our 2 USSF NCOs to the best of their ability.

RPT# 97

DATE: 11MAY96

**ELECTION ATMOSPHERICS**

**Summary:** Generally it is suggested that what will emerge in the aftermath of the 26 May elections is a coalition government, however the elections are marked by considerable uncertainty. One knowledgeable follower of the election estimates that there will be a 40% to 35% split in favour of the democrats.

**Details:** Report forwards some vignettes relating to the forthcoming elections which hopefully will give some idea of the uncertainty which continues to abound apropos the outcome of the 26 May elections. Despite regulations which forbid officers taking an active part in the elections, a number of officers (DA's assistant, LTC Aslani among them) have been dispatched to the countryside to "talk to their relatives" who are accused of remaining in the "socialist" camp. Vice Minister of Defence Luan Lazimi is running for parliament from Peshkopi. His success is thought to be doubtful. Minister Zhulali is running as a candidate from a constituency outside Peshkopi (Bulqiza/Golaborda). The Minister's chances too are guarded. In this regard, there has suddenly been a great surge of economic attention paid to the Peshkopi region, and military participation is thought to be extensive. Some suggest that it is too little, too late. (In the Albania system, it is not necessary for Minister Zhulali to win a seat in parliament in order to be reappointed as the Defence Minister.) One political pundit is suggesting that the democrats, with a 40% to 35% advantage, will have to do some "horse trading". One of the positions which might reportedly be given as a "reward" is that of Defence Minister. Also the rumour persists that Minister Zhulali may succeed the reportedly ailing Foreign Minister.

The Minister's speeches have been classic Zhulali. He is stating that he has many friends who are socialists and some may be better men than him, but that with the course of "change" so precariously balanced, it is critical that people vote for a party which is actively promoting change and closer cooperation with the "West". Once "democracy" is rooted, then perhaps it is the time to vote for the individual vice the party he represents.

On 09 May, in conjunction with a trip by the International School, DA visited the village of Karpen in Kavaje district. Karpen is a small fishing village @8kms off the main road extending south from Durres. Karpen is some 4kms north of Kavaje. DA thinks that the Democrats may have some problems in Karpen. This is based upon unrealised promises made by the Democrats prior to the last election. Karpen, and indeed many smaller towns and villages like Karpen were promised roads, telephone and a better school. To date none of these have been realised. While during the warmer months there are few problems related to electricity, in the winter time, what light industry there is, and the school visited (sic) a carpenter (distinct from a cabinet maker) who manufactured doors - 3 doors daily which sold for \$75 each - operates at night as only then is there electricity for the saws.

**Comments:** Whether or not it will translate into how people will vote in the polls, many people, especially those outside of the main metropolitan areas, are disappointed with the performance of the Democrats. DA doubts that Vice Minister Lazimi will win a seat as he is not well liked in Peshkopi. DA is inclined to stand by many of the comments made by DA's acquaintance in Report 89 apropos the nature

**Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996**

of democracy and rule of law. LTC Aslani has been placed in a very difficult position having been ordered to "speak" to his relatives apropos the up-coming elections as he is in direct violation of orders which govern the conduct of officers. DA had intended to go to Biza tomorrow. This will not be possible as all the General Headquarter's Chevrolets are running around northern Albania "in support" of the elections.

RPT# 99

DATE: 13MAY 96

**DOWNED WWII AIRCRAFT IN ALBANIA**

**Summary:** The wreckage of a possible American military aircraft, dating back to WWII, is said to be located at Divjake, northwest of Lushnje. Also there are said to be the remains of two aircraft and four graves, possibly British, north-northeast of Biza.

**Details:**

Defence Advisor (DA) has been informed by a member of the British Embassy, that the wreckage of an American military aircraft dating back to WWII, remains in the marsh at Divjake (4100N 1932E). Reportedly the aircraft had landed to pick up survivors from another crash when it was attacked and destroyed. It is possible that this was a seaplane. Apparently the exact type of aircraft has not yet been identified. DA is informed that with some effort the type of aircraft could probably be determined if need be. This report may already be in Embassy channels. On 12 May DA, accompanied by 2<sup>nd</sup> Secretary to the British Embassy in Tirana (Geoffrey Briggs), drove to Biza. DA had no problems getting DA's Renault Sedan to Biza. DA was curious if anyone had been relocated from Biza. To date no one has been, but the villagers seem to prefer to be elsewhere other than Biza as there is work in Biza. While there, DA was informed that on a hill-top north-northeast of the village (4121N 2012E), approximately one hour's walk from the village, there are two crash sites and four graves. DA and Mr Briggs intend to return to Biza on 21 May. DA spoke with Col (Retd) David Smiley, who led the irregulars organised by the Special Operations Executive (SOE) In World War II who were headquartered in Biza. He indicated that there were no crashes during the time he was in the Biza region. It is possible that therefore that these aircraft are not British.

**Comments:** A member of the US Embassy staff accompanied the British Embassy on the trip to Divjake and thus this may already be in the reporting system. DA will pass on whatever else there is from DA's 21 May trip to Biza.



Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

RPT# 100  
DATE: 22MAY96

## **OPENING A DIALOGUE WITH NATO**

**Summary:** Report forwards Albanian response to NATO apropos the establishment of a dialogue with NATO. Of particular interest are the questions contained in Para 17.

**Details:** Response was supposed to have been prepared by the Foreign Ministry. Ultimately, it was done by the Defence Ministry. It was translated and sent to the Albanian LNO at NATO who returned it to have a better English-language translation. Report is the better English language translation.

START TEXT:

Subject: Letter pertaining to an intensive dialogue with NATO

Background: Albania has received NATO's proposal to open an intensive dialogue. Through the medium of this letter, Albania wishes to express Albania's readiness to immediately enter into such a dialogue and to place at NATO's disposal the requisite information so that NATO can be better informed vis-à-vis Albania.

Albanian Security: A Short Historic Overview: At the conclusion of WWII, Albania was incorporated into the Eastern Bloc, and in 1955, into the Warsaw Pact. Albania severed de facto all the links with the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact in 1961 when all Soviet troops and bases were withdrawn from Albania. Following the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, Albania denounced, de jure, the Warsaw Treaty. Since then, Albania has not been a part of any military alliance. After 1968, both the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Treaty were seen as the main threat to the territorial integrity of Albania. In order to counter this perceived threat, extensive fortifications were constructed, and Albanian forces were deployed throughout the country. The extent of Albanian forces was such that by the end of the 1980s, Albania had 22 infantry divisions, albeit the majority were drawn from reserve forces. In the 1970s and 1980s Albania underwent a period of total isolation from the rest of the world. This was accompanied by stagnation, a decrease in production, and a systematic hardening of the society.

Democratic Changes: Albania, too, was swept up in the democratic revolutions which ripped through Central and Eastern Europe in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Early in 1992, Albania's communist regime was toppled and institutional reforms along democratic lines were started. During the past 4 years, the country has undergone a period of massive "transformation" in which the institutions of the past have been replaced with those reflective of democratic institutions.

Central to Albania's democratic revolution has been the establishment of the "rule of law" and the guaranteeing of human rights. Legal reforms, which have been an essential part of Albania's "transformation" have been undertaken, again modelled after the Western democracies. These legal reforms have been fundamental to political, social and economical change.

The first undertaking in the area of legal reform was the abrogation of the communist regime's Constitution, and the adoption and approval of Law No 7491

on 24 April 1991. Law No 7491 defines Albania as a parliamentary republic, and as a democratic and juridical state. The main axiom of the State's organisation is the separation of the powers; legislative power is exercised by the People's Assembly which is composed of 140 deputies. The People's Assembly is elected once every four years; executive power from the Council of Ministers and the President of the republic; and the juridical power from the courts, that are independent and subdue (sic) only to the law. The President of the Republic serves for 5 years, and is elected by Parliament. The law declares that political pluralism must be a fundamental tenet if there is to be democracy and human rights.

By 1996, Parliament had approved more than 400 laws. Prominent among them has been: the role of the Judiciary and of the Constitutional Court; principles of organisation and functioning of local power; legislation relating to human rights; land privatisation and the buying and selling of land; return and compensation of ownership to former owners; privatisation of the stated-owned buildings; encouragement and protection related to a variety of private activities; sanction and protection of the private ownership; and the protection of foreign investments, extensive privatisation etc.

Also, during this same period, the Albanian Parliament has approved a variety of codes relating to customs, trade, civil and penal procedures, work etc.

As a result of the economic reforms undertaken in the past 3 years, Albania has realised an average increase of 10% of the GDP. Compared to 1991 figures, inflation has been reduced by 25% and unemployment by 3%.

On 26 May 1996, Albania will hold free and democratic elections for the People's Assembly (Parliament).

Foreign Policy: Albanian foreign policy has a primary goal, the desire to move Albania rapidly away from its past period of isolation, and to seek integration into Western political and economic organisations, and towards the realisation of a market economy. An example has been Albania's inclusion in the Euro-Atlantic community. Also, Albania is now a member of OSCE and the Council of Europe and has excellent cooperative relations with the European Union (EU), Western European Union and NATO and aspires to be integrated into these organisations.

During the past 4 years, the Balkans have been marred by extensive armed ethnic conflict. Albanian foreign policy has consistently supported the international community's attempts at restricting any spill-over of the conflict, and to simultaneously prevent the conflict from inhibiting the promotion of peace to stability in the region.

Albania continued to pursue a policy marked by "good" relations with all of Albania's neighbours, and seeks the solution of problems and misunderstandings through peaceful means. Within this framework, Albania has recently signed highly important Treaties of Friendship and Cooperation with Italy and Greece.

A major objective of Albanian foreign policy has been the protection of the rights of the Albanians who continue to reside in parts of former-Yugoslavia. This has been achieved through the "sensitising" - by means of extensive dialogue with other countries and internal institutions - of international public opinion concerning the denial of fundamental human rights in Kosovo.

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

Albania believes that the future of the region will be more secured if Albania is integrated into the Euro-Atlantic community. To this end, Albania believes that the intensification of efforts currently being undertaken vis-à-vis the Croat-Bosnian Alliance to bring stability to Bosnia, is fundamental to the establishment of peace and stability in this troubled region of the world. Indeed, the renewal of transatlantic solidarity, and the unified efforts of many European nations, can only have a positive influence on the prospects of regional peace.

**Albania & The Process Of Euro-Atlantic Integration:** Albania considers integration into the Euro-Atlantic community as one of the most positive processes of international relations. Albania has noted that many European countries that had been drawn into the process of integration following the end of WWII, have been able to achieve prosperity and stability and have left behind them the hatred which led to past hostilities.

Albania continues to seek integration into NATO, the EU and the WEU. Albania has noted with pleasure that NATO and EU have common strategic interests. Albania too is for the strengthening of this link and that of the transatlantic partnership, which is the embodiment of NATO. The continuing partnership between North America and Europe, the two most successful centres of democracy and market economy, will continue to have a far reaching impact on regional development. In this regard, Albania believes the involvement of the United States and the American dimension of the Alliance, to be fundamental to the security and stability of Europe.

**Geographical Situation Of Albania:** Albania's position, apropos integration into the structures of the Euro-Atlantic structures, is geo-strategic. From its position, Albania's inclusion into the Alliance would broaden the South-Eastern wing of NATO, which is an important factor for the Alliance, given the traditional insecurity of the region of the world. Albania's geo-strategic position further permits complete control of passage to the Adriatic. The fact that Italy is a NATO member nation, has meant that the Western Adriatic has been the Alliance's "closed" lake. Accordingly, Albania can play an important role in meeting the challenges to security which may originate in the Southern Mediterranean.

**Albanian & Russian Views On NATO Expansion:** At the outset, Albania believes that the Russian "rejection" of NATO expansion is a reflection of "the old mentalities of the Cold War". Albania believes that the enlargement of NATO in no manner threatens any country and has in fact proven its role as a protector of regional peace and stability.

**Albania & Membership In NATO & The EU:** Albania considers the processes of integration into NATO and into the EU as two distinct processes, Albania believes them to be conditioned and influence, one by the other and that having their own inner dynamics, they will develop independently. While Albania will continue to strive for integration into both of these institutions, Albania does not believe that integration into NATO should be a condition for entry into the EU and vice versa.

**Albanian Attitudes Apropos The Form Of European Security & Towards Interaction Between Those Institutions That Comprise The Architecture Of European Security:** Albania will cooperate with all institutions that comprise the architecture of European security - the EU, WEU, NATO, the Organisation of the European Security and Cooperation (OSCE) and other appropriate Transatlantic institutions. Albania maintains that the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) and the

Partnership for Peace (PfP) will continue to play a pivotal role in the realisation of European security, especially as they pertain to the preparedness of potential new members for inclusion into an expanded NATO Alliance and for the strengthening of relations with the countries included under the rubric of PfP.

Albania believes that NATO, the EU, WEU and OSCE have the experience and capabilities necessary to establish a stable and secure Europe. Nevertheless, the experience of armed conflict in Bosnia has demonstrated that while individually, these organisations each have their strong points, it has only been through a coordinated effort that they have collectively started to come to terms with the enormity of the problems facing Bosnia. In the case of Bosnia, 4 years were needed to find a solution to put an end to the hostilities. To this end, perhaps success has only been made possible through "restructuring" commensurate with the realities of political and economic change in the region.

Among the structures of European security, Albania believes that NATO is the premier, and that an expanded NATO would play a crucial role in the framework of European security. Albania reasons that NATO, because of its experience as a consultative mechanism, has already established an enviable reputation as a broker of European security. Additionally, NATO has the requisite political-military capabilities to permit it to be an administering body in times of crisis. This is particularly attractive for the majority of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

Albania believes that the activities of institutions, such as the NACC and PfP, as well as the active participation of member nations in them, argues for NATO expansion and provides concomitantly a measure of increased European security.

The Role Of OSCE: Albania believes that the role of OSCE should also be strengthened. As a matter of course, Albania already observes the principles of OSCE. To this end, Albania will support and will become actively engaged in all of OSCE's efforts in the interest of the security and stability in such fields as: the prevention of the conflicts and the administration of crisis; the furtherance of democracy and of human rights; cooperation in the field of economics, the peaceful resolution of conflicts, and the further development and promotion of better regional political and diplomatic relations. Albania is further committed to the resolution of misunderstandings through peaceful means.

Albania's Preparation For NATO Membership & What Albania, In Terms Of Albania's Geo-Strategic Position, Provides: Albania is ready to open an intensive dialogue with NATO in response to all political, political-military, military, administrative and financial questions.

Democracy has taken root in Albania, as has adherence to the rule of law and respect for human rights. Additionally, there has been the realisation of civilian control over the military. Albania is committed towards the principles and objectives outlined within the Framework Document of the PfP. Albania is also ready to discuss any obligations that may result from the collective defence, and any and all aspects which may relate to questions of politics, and/or security as they may pertain to Albania's preparation for membership in the Alliance.

Albania expects to play an important role in regional stability. Historically, Albania has never been a cause of armed conflict with any of Albania's neighbours. Albania, if accepted into the Alliance, does not expect to be a passive member, but

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

rather an engaged participant. During the course of the past several years, Albania has demonstrated that Albania can play an important role in the lessening of conflict, and in the promotion of stability. It should be noted that Albania has already made contributions in the interest of the implementation of sanctions and in the maintenance of the embargo against former-Yugoslavia, by making available certain of the nation's facilities.

Within the military realm, general military reforms were carried out between 1992 and 1994. This led to the depoliticalisation of the Armed Forces and the establishment of legal structures common to those of the armed forces of a democratic nation. The Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) are currently under civilian control; the planning and budgetary process is open, and governed by rule of law; the responsibilities of Parliament, the Defence Council, the President of the republic, the Minister of Defence and of the Chief of the General Staff, are established by legal precedent. The army has been consolidated and has been "returned to the barracks". In this regard, the number of brigades has been reduced more than 5-fold, divisions more than 4-fold, the Officer Corps and been reduced 3-fold, active soldiers 2½-fold. The armed forces as a whole (active and reservists) by more than 3-fold. Restructuring of the Armed Forces has followed a Western model. This restructuring includes the Defence Ministry, the General Staff and the tactical divisions and brigades of the AAF. The entire system of military education has likewise been overhauled and is now based upon that of a Western model. Additionally, not only are selected senior civilian leaders are being prepared at the Defence Academy to better perform their duties in the field of defence, but also a Centre of Strategic Studies has been established under the umbrella of the Defence Academy.

A large number of the AAF have been educated in a variety of NATO member schools. The AAF are rapidly becoming familiar with the many of the most advanced NATO armies, particularly as they may relate to training, doctrine and standards of interoperability. Rank has been once again reintroduced into the AAF. Also, under the rubric of "PfP" the AAF have participated in numerous bi-lateral and multi-lateral exercises.

The preparation of Albanian officers to interact with those of other NATO and PfP member nations, has been through Albania's interaction and inclusion in PfP's Planning and Review Process. It is the intention of the AAF to incrementally increase the level of Albanian participation, and by so doing further enhance interoperability.

Albania considers participation in PfP as the main path to be followed in preparation for NATO membership. Under the parameters of the Individual Programme of Partnership for 1996, Albania has as its main aim, the continuing improvement of procedures and the AAF's ability to improve interoperability. To date, the efforts of the AAF have been focused upon NATO procedures, so that the AAF can operate in parallel to NATO forces. Apropos equipment, the immediate priority is for communications equipment in order to improve command and control, and air traffic and air space control.

Security Policy (National Strategy): Albania has published a booklet which describes in considerable detail Albania's policies as they relate to security and international strategy.

An integral part of Albania's security policy is the goal of defending Albania's vital national interests, such as: territorial and national integrity; the free exercise of sovereignty; and the defence of the democratic values and institutions.

The Primary Vital Interests Of Albania At The Present & In The future, Will Be: integration into the political-military structures of the Euro-Atlantic community and NATO, the provision of support for regional and collective security initiatives; the maintenance of the requisite capabilities for national defence; the observation of the obligations that result from the international agreements and the defence of the population.

Albania, has in the past, and will continue in the future, to settle problems through cooperation and through open dialogue. This does not mean, however, that Albania will not maintain a defensive capability in order to defend out vital interests. The level of our military capabilities will be commensurate with the perceived threat.

The primary mission of the AAF is to guarantee the territorial integrity, sovereignty, security and independence of Albania when the nation is threatened by aggression. While Albania desires to settle problems through diplomacy and open dialogue, it must be stressed, that should this fail, it is the stated intention of the AAF to prevail in any conflict into which it may be drawn. During peacetime, Albania will maintain a level of military strength sufficient only to deter any and all potential aggressors; to guarantee the sovereignty of Albania's frontiers, air space and territorial waters; to assist the population and state institutions in the event of natural disasters and industrial accidents. Finally, the AAF will be employed against terrorists or against activities deemed to be against the Constitution.

The Republic of Albania today poses no threat to any country, nor does Albania label any of Albania's neighbours as an enemy. Albania has denounced the use of force in the conduct of international relations and Albania does not seek military superiority over any other country. Albania will never be the first to initiate hostilities.

For the past 4 years, the Balkans have been torn apart by ethnic war. There is an interrelation of security interests between the countries of the Balkans. In this knowledge Albania has supported every effort of the international community to prevent any spill-over of the conflict. Albania has earnestly supported the Dayton Peace Accords, and has placed at the disposal of IFOR whatever facilities might be deemed necessary in support of IFOR activities. Additionally, Albania has offered to provide a company level unit in support of IFOR.

Albanian Attitudes Towards NATO Strategies: Albania supports NATO's current strategies through a programme of all-round reforms, preparation and training, as well as through the Individual Programme of PfP and Planning and Review process of PfP. Albania continues to strive, through modernisaion and westernisation, to make the AAF both attractive and suitable for employment in NATO's new strategies.

Command Authority: Parliament is the principal representative of the people. Parliament can declare war, and/or order a general mobilisation. Parliament has the authority to ratify all military treaties and to approve military agreements. Parliament is responsible for all laws which address defence and the armed forces. Parliament, directly or through the different commissions, exercises control over the Government and the Ministry of Defence. Parliament approves the annual defence

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

budget, which then becomes a public document. Parliament has also approved a separate law, in which the specific responsibilities of the President of the Republic, the Defence Council, the Minister of Defence and the Chief of the General Staff, are stated.

The president of the republic is the Commander of the Albanian Armed Forces and the Chairman of the Defence Council. As the Commander of the AAF, the President approves all Strategic Planning and has the authority to change the level of readiness of the AAF. The President has the authority to order, initiate hostilities in the event of a violation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty.

The Defence Council is the highest state organ with responsibility for the defence of Albania. It is responsible for the organisation, direction and mobilisation of the Armed Forces. The members of the Defence Council are the President, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, the Minister of Defence, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Home Affairs, the Chief of the General Staff and the Chief of National Information Services. The Defence Council is responsible for all Governmental and State decisions, orders and directives which relate to the Armed Forces. The Defence Council additionally establishes the organisation and the structure of the AAF, and recommends to the Government changes to the Defence Budget in time of war.

The Council of Ministers is responsible for the implementation of decisions following the decisions made by the Defence Council.

The Minister of Defence is responsible to the Government and to the Defence Council for the direction and control of the Armed Forces, for the implementation of defence policy as defined by the Defence Council and for the Defence Budget.

The Chief of the General Staff is responsible to the President of the Republic and to the Minister of Defence for the readiness and the training of the Armed Forces, for the planning and direction of all military operations, and for the drafting of military doctrine and strategy.

**Interoperability & Standards:** Interoperability has already started to be achieved in the AAF in the form of Albanian topographic maps, conventional marks, symbols, training, communications procedures, the preparation of the peacekeeping forces, as well as in many other aspects of the military doctrine.

The main objective of the AAF is now to achieve interoperability in the field of communications. This will be partially realised during 1996. Albania is undertaking interoperability in the field of air traffic and air space control. Additionally, Albania is currently involved in translating a wide range of documents and manuals so that the activities of the Albanian Armed Forces can be better integrated into NATO.

**The External Deployment Of Albanian Armed Forces:** There is no legal obstacle to the deployment of Albanian soldiers outside the borders of Albania.

**The Legal Aspects Of Foreign Troops On Albanian Territory, The Establishment Of A NATO Base & Nuclear Weapons:** There is no legal obstacle apropos the presence of foreign troop visits and/or training in Albania. Likewise, there is no law which forbids the establishment of military bases and the presence of nuclear weapons in Albania. All requests must, however, be approved by Parliament. The current

attitude of Albania apropos NATO is extremely positive. To this end, a positive Parliamentary response should be anticipated should there be any request pertaining to the establishment of NATO bases, and or the presence of nuclear weapons on Albanian soil.

Questions Relating To NATO Enlargement:

- What is the current time-line apropos Albania's inclusion into NATO's stated plans for enlargement?
- What is NATO's opinion vis-à-vis the enlargement of NATO's Southern Wing?
- At what level must heavy equipment be standardised? Is the standardisation of the heavy equipment a condition for NATO? Is this something which can be accomplished after having attained membership?
- Are there any plans on the part of the Alliance to financially support standardisation?
- Will enlargement be accompanied by changes in deployment and/or in the location of NATO troops?
- Will new NATO members be integrated into NATO's Early Warning Systems and/or into NATO's Air Defence System? If so, how will this occur and what is expected to be accomplished by nations applying for membership?
- Are changes in the NATO Regional Command Structure liable to change following enlargement? If so what changes are anticipated? Under which Command Structure would Albania fall?
- What will be the future of the WEU? Will it have an independent command structure and authority?
- What will be the effects of the WEU's future development on NATO forces and on NATO's command structure?
- What thoughts are there in NATO apropos relations between NATO and other European security organisations from the perspective of coordination between them for crisis and conflict management? Can any new ideas be expected?
- At what representative level is Albanian NATO staff and command participation anticipated?
- What will be the contribution of NATO in terms of the Alliance's military and civilian budget?
- What is the possibility of Albanian integration into NATO's existing strategic communications structures?
- Can Albania anticipate participating in exercises, involving troops and staffs, outside the scope of peacekeeping, humanitarian and search and rescue type operations? If so, will this take place prior to or after integration?



## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

- What are the military capabilities that NATO expects Albania to possess in terms of both "collective" defence and within the framework of the Alliance's new missions? Is Albania to have this capability at the moment of integration or later?
- In detail, what does Albania need to understand apropos the acceptance of NATO doctrine and standardisation policies?
- At what level is ammunition standardisation sought?
- Albania has been informed that NATO is interested in establishing a base upon which to build those elements of the AAF which are to be integrated into NATO. From what type of unit and from which service is NATO interested in?
- Will Albania have a period during which to adopt STANAG following membership, or is the implementation of STANAG a pre-requisite for membership?
- What will be the role and the military responsibilities of Albania as a member of NATO, and by extension, the benefits?
- MOD - Albania is interested in acquiring additional details apropos those documents which provide the basis for the existing policies of the Alliance. Acceptance of the outlined conditions is required before membership or afterwards?
- What can Albania expect to receive from NATO vis-à-vis intelligence? How is information to be exchanged? What are NATO's intelligence related requests from Albania?
- What must Albania do in order to gain access to the NATO Data System?
- In the study on NATO enlargement (p22) it is stressed that the increase in the military budget will depend on the new member-nation's level of participation. What is understood by this, and what are the details as they relate to levels of participation?
- Paragraph 60 (p20) of the study addresses obligations of new members. What will be the obligations of Albania in supporting, manning and in supporting NATO's new force structures?
- Will the infrastructure required for the deployment of Albania NATO forces be built with national or with NATO funds?
- Are there currently any ideas within NATO about deploying NATO troops in Albania? If so, what will be the composition of such forces?
- Prior to membership, does the Alliance have any special requests concerning in-country infrastructure and aerial port facilities?
- Does NATO anticipate prepositioning either armament and/or munitions in Albania?

- Does NATO foresee the establishment of a Command Post in Albania? If so, at what level and where?
- What are the obligations (Para 47) as they pertain to collective force and common operational planning?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of the three forms under which allies contribute to the collective defence of NATO (Para 42)? Are new member countries free to choose between these three forms? Which form is preferred in terms of collective defence?
- What are some of the approaches to be adopted by the Alliance vis-à-vis assimilating new members (Para 50)?
- Apropos Para 78 of the study: Will NATO or NATO member nations provide funding to assist assimilating new members in achieving interoperability?
- What are some of the details of the Security Investment Programme (Para 64) and will Albania be covered by it?
- What is understood by Para 82 of the study?

**Comments:** Col Kolasi asks if this message can be provided to Col Jeff Spara at NATO. DA will provide same directly with your concurrence.

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

RPT# 101

DATE: 23MAY96

**BIZA IMPRESSIONS**

**Summary:** DA returned to Biza on 21 May and spoke with the village mayor. There appears at this juncture to have been no communications between the army and the villagers, but it is unlikely that anyone will be resettled prior to "Peaceful Eagle". Gen Kosova suggests that they will be moved within four (4) months.

**Details:** DA returned to Biza on 21 May. DA travelled with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Secretary at the British Embassy as all Albanian CUCVs (Chevy Blazers) have been restricted for travel only to Peshkopi. DA met with the mayor who has been in Biza since WWII and whom DA has found to be very helpful. DA is concerned that little or nothing has been done to alert the population of Biza to what is going to occur in the not too distant future. On a positive note, DA noticed that there is a considerable amount of road work being undertaken on the main Biza access route. DA today met with the US engineer team from Heidelberg who have just returned from Biza. They reportedly ran into the Chief of the General Staff (Gen Kosova) en route to Biza. The general stated that a decision has been made and the villagers will be moved within four (4) months.

**Comments:** DA is drafting a note to the minister in which DA will suggest that representatives from AAF Operations Directorate (J3), the Office of the Judge Advocate and the Sociology Division (which is being restructured along German lines) visit Biza to explain the exercise. DA intends also to suggest to the minister that it might be useful if the US Civil Affairs Detachment when they come to Albania be deployed with their Albanian counterpart to Biza. FYI DA is informed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Secretary at the British Embassy, that the WWII aircraft wreckage at Biza (see Report 99) are probably three (3) Lancaster bombers. One is reportedly accessible, the other two are under snow. It is thought that they crashed in poor weather returning from a raid on the Ploesti oil fields.

DA also noted a brown bear estimated to weigh in excess of 250kgs roaming through the woods 15kms east of Biza.

RPT# 102

DATE: 27MAY96

**THE ELECTIONS - FIRST IMPRESSIONS**

**Summary:** A wave of euphoria has engulfed the Defence Ministry in the aftermath of the elections. The charges of parties in the Socialist camp apropos irregularities are being played down in the belief that the realisation of "democracy" is imperative to Albania's further development.

**Details:** It is now noon on Monday 27 May. The exuberance and cacophony outside the Defence Ministry is continuing unabated. A red coffin, designating the death of communism, on top of a car, complete with an exuberant mourner, has just driven by. Occasional rifle shots are heard, horns are blaring, young people are standing on top of cars and hanging out of car windows, waving Albanian flags, the blue flag of the Democratic Party, the occasional European Community flag, and in some instances, an EU flag with an additional star. The American flag, and to a lesser extent the German nation flag, too are being displayed. In the Defence Ministry itself, there is considerable happiness - lots of raki being consumed - most prominently by the Officer Corps who had been, with some justification, concerned about their tenure should the Socialists be brought to power. Individuals assigned to the Defence Ministry from Peshkopi are today returning to Peshkopi where there will be additional festivities continuing through the night.

On Saturday night, "Colonel Bunker" - a movie, as suggested by its title about a colonel ordered to build the bunkers, had its premier in the Palace of Culture, an event attended by the President. While the opening night was a "by invitation only affair" the clear message of the movie was that a return to the past was to be avoided at all cost. It was an extraordinarily provocative film with a beautiful musical score, mainly Frederic Chopin, which, like Jones' book "Biografi" DA recommends for anyone interested in Albania. (DA will try to acquire a video and will provide same to EUCOM.) Ismail Kadare, probably the most famous living Albanian author today, presently a resident of France, was on the radio in Saturday. His message was that while the Democratic Party had its faults and must be totally reformed, the Democratic Party was at the same time essential to the democratisation and westernisation of Albania. To this end, President Berisha has publicly announced his intention to replace everyone in the government (this of course does not rule out various positions being rotated - Minister Zhulali is being touted to become Prime Minister and Vice Minister Luan Lazimi Defence Minister).

**Comments:** There is to be a press conference today which will include the election monitors from the European Union (EU) and the Office of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) will provide their vision of the elections. Obviously there are some difficulties ahead which must now be resolved but DA does not think that anyone has taken the time yet to ponder what comes next.

Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

RPT# 103  
DATE: 29MAY96

## THE ELECTIONS - OSCE STATEMENT

Fm: Denny Lane  
To: Cdr John McClain, ECJ5-5

Phone: 355-42-28451  
Phone: 49-711-680-4508

**Summary:** Report forwards a statement by OSCE election monitors from the Kucova region.

**Details:** Tirana 28 May 1250hrs:

START QUOTE:

This statement expresses the view of two teams in the OSCE election observation delegation to the second multiparty elections in Albania on 26 May 1996.

The elections did not meet international standards for free and fair elections and they did not conform with the requirements of the election law. The election law guarantees transparency in the election process, freedom from intimidation and multi-party representation in the election commissions and these provisions were to a large extent violated.

The key positions in the election commissions at all levels were occupied by the ruling party which did not secure an atmosphere of trust and reliability during the process. Decisions were in many instances taken only by the government appointed chairman and commissions were often not allowed to participate in the process if not outright evicted from the premises. This pattern was also visible in the zone commissions.

The accuracy and proper keeping of the voter registers failed to meet the standards prescribed by law. In many cases the number of ballots cast exceeded the number of signatures on the voters lists. During the count we observed the changing of the registers to make them in line with the number of ballots in the ballot boxes.

Moreover, ballots cast were altered and invalidated. The number of void votes were in a large number of polling stations extremely high, up to 50%. In some cases ballots bundled together inside the boxes indicated that the boxes had been tampered with and the votes added.

The presence of armed police and unauthorised persons around and inside the polling stations, in many cases led to an atmosphere of intimidation and threats. The general pattern of intimidation has a significant impact on the election process. It is our conclusion that the will of the Albanian people was not expressed in a free manner in the elections of 26 May 1996.

END QUOTE

**Comments:** DA is informed that the OSCE statement to be released in Vienna today will be less harsh. The rationale is that while there were instances of

irregularity, irregularities did not occur across the board. Additional comments following in Report 104.

RPT# 104  
DATE: 30MAY96

## THE ELECTIONS - POST-ELECTION ATMOSPHERICS

**Summary:** The Socialist rally was planned for Tuesday (28 May) was broken up by the police and the Socialist leader, Servet Pellumbi, beaten. An OSCE report (see Report 103) which addresses voting irregularities in and around Kucova has raised eyebrows. Several officers have been identified by the Socialist press for having broken regulations and participated in the electoral process. Despite irregularities, the general mood in the ministry is that they are glad that the Democrats "prevailed", but disappointed at the manner in which the election was conducted, believing that the democrats would have won anyway. It is believed that if the elections were to be run again, the DP almost certainly would not win.

**Details:** Perhaps the good news on Tuesday 28 May, was that the weather in Tirana was terrible. The hardest rains started around 1130 which must have some effect on the enthusiasm of anyone planning to participate in the Socialist rally. Reportedly the Socialists had asked for a permit for a rally on Tuesday (28 May). They were informed by the Interior Ministry that they would have to wait for two full days following the elections and were told that they could have their rally on Wednesday 29 May. The Socialists were also reportedly informed by the Interior Ministry that if they persisted in having a rally on Tuesday, it would not be permitted. At around 1130hrs on 28 May, police reinforcements, some in riot gear, started to appear in the Central Square and two (2) armoured trucks were deployed to the parking lot of the Interior Ministry. An afternoon of 28 May newsletter for foreigners distributed in the Tirana Hotel stated that there had been no injuries and no one arrested. Photographs seem to suggest otherwise. DA's language teacher informed DA that one of her friends, a university professor who had all of her life been an ardent anti-communist, too was arrested.

Several army officers and civilian officials, to include the Commander of the Tirana based 8<sup>th</sup> Division and the Deputy Chief of the International Bureau, were named in the Socialist press "Zeri I Populit" (The Voice of the People) for having participated in the electoral process in contravention to published orders to all military personnel.

Mr Luan Lazimi is confirmed as the member for Peshkopi with over 65% of the vote. DA will provide a better CV asap. OSCE monitors describe the district in which Minister Zhulali ran as being without problems.

Reportedly, a young (24) bodyguard of Mr Agnelli, a Socialist leader, was shot and killed on his way home from the Socialist headquarters on the evening of 28 May. A man has subsequently been arrested. The same man was arrested for theft 9 months ago. The killing appears not to have been politically motivated.

Spoke briefly with a Social Democrat running as a candidate for Dures. He stated that while there were some irregularities in Dures, they were minor, and that it was a foregone conclusion that the Democrats would win Dures. This individual also stressed, despite his standing as a Social Democrat, that it was essential that the democrats win.

**Comments:** This morning (30 May) DA asked an Albanian colleague what he thought about the elections. He was euphoric. DA said that the European Union

and OSCE monitors seemed to think that there had been serious irregularities. He responded by saying that the Europeans have always been against Albania, but that America would protect Albania. DA suggested that this may not be the case, and that in any event, events surrounding the elections will do little to enhance Albania's entry into either NATO or the EC. The general mood in the ministry is that they are glad that the democrats "prevailed", but there is general disappointment at the manner in which the election was conducted believing that the Democrats would have won anyway.

DA spoke at some length with a Director of the Defence Academy about the OSCE report from Kucova. "Kucova", said DA's companion, "used to be called Red-City. They cannot win." DA's companion went on to say that the Socialists had extensive financial support, and excellent organisation but that "democracy" would only start to take root when Albanian students started to return from the United States.

DA met briefly with a particularly well informed European Community Monitoring Mission (ECMM) representative who stated that in fact irregularities in the elections were widespread, but that the Italian ambassador, who represents the European Union, decided that there was no future in pursuing the issue and ordered reporting suppressed. In many places, said the ECMM observer, the irregularities were "blatant and childlike". One group of observers who happened to have Albanian speakers in their midst, reported a conversation between an official at the Polling Station and an official from the Democratic Party in which the Polling Station official said that because of the number of observers, it would be hard to meet the desired figures, but that nevertheless, the Democrats could expect to win.

A former minister and professor (philosophy and aesthetics) offered that Albanians only have a shallow grasp of what democracy really is. The problems for Albania are increased by the fact that "tolerance" and an alternative vision was not something that was encouraged during the Hoxha period.



## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

RPT# 105

DAT: 30MAY96

**ASSIGNMENTS**

**Summary:** According to an observer of the recent elections, Albanian Vice Premier Dashmir Shehi is reported to have stated in an interview that Minister Zhulali will not be reappointed as Defence Minister and solely as the Deputy (Member of Parliament) from Bulqiza.

**Comments:** This should be read bearing in mind that rumours in Tirana are rife and that nothing is certain. Clearly Minister Zhulali has been the most successful of President Berisha's ministers and at the same time one of President Berisha's greatest supporters. It is however possible that given the pressure on President Berisha for immediate reform following the alleged excesses of the election that certain key, and in some cases controversial, ministers are to be passed over. The implications for the Defence Ministry, apropos the assignment/reassignment of personnel, DA believes would be extensive.

RPT# 108

DATE: 07JUN96

**3 JUNE LETTER TO MINISTER ZHULALI**

Dear Minister

General: With the elections over and the democrats in firmer control, perhaps it is time to start again from where we left off following the Ministerials. Stuttgart has asked that I establish, in cooperation with the Minister, a set of priorities that the Minister of Defence would like Defence Advisor to concentrate on. As an example they might include continued reorganisation of the staff, and/or continuing interface with Vicenza apropos Peaceful Eagle '96. I understand that, vis-à-vis the reorganisation of the Logistics Directorate, the Chief of the General Staff continues to have some problems with the level of personnel manning for the proposed Armed Forces Support Division. I would like to speak with the Minister before proceeding with the Intelligence Directorate as there are questions/guidance that can only come from the Minister.

Vicenza SOP: We have a complete copy of the US Army Vicenza's Standard Operating Procedures. Many have application to the Albanian Armed Forces. Might recommend a study group to translate and integrate where applicable.

NCOs: It has been noted that few if any NCOs from the NCO Academy have been assigned to either the Navy or Air Force.

Vehicles: I am informed by the MLT that the Navy has a shortage of vehicles assigned. Perhaps, if correct, the influx of additional Chevrolets will correct this problem.

Peaceful Eagle '96: I believe that it would be useful if in the near term a town meeting was organised at Biza. The purpose would be to inform the villagers about the Exercise. It should probably include at a minimum, representatives from the Operations Directorate, the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate and "Sociology". There is to be an American civil affairs unit deployed with Peaceful Eagle. Presently the unit is scheduled to remain at Rinas. Recommend that it might be better deployed to Biza with their Albanian counterparts.

Respectfully

Denny Lane  
Defence Advisor

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

RPT# 109

DATE: 15JUN96

**WEST POINT VISIT TO THE DEFENCE ACADEMIES**

**Summary:** Report forwards observations of a visiting professor from the Military Academy. His greatest criticisms are directed at basic infrastructure and benefits.

**Details:**

General: Comments are those of an instructor from the Department of Philosophy at the United States Military Academy who has been in Albania working at the Albanian Defence Academy during the last week (11-15 June). The purpose of the "event" (AL366) was to teach professionalism and ethics.

Background: The visiting US officer made 4 formal presentations while in Tirana. Each was divided into 2 parts. The first addressed the Honour Code, and the second the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Oath of Commissioning. In all instances the visiting instructor started with an overview of the US view of ethics in the military which focused primarily on the Honour Code at West Point. The code was framed by a general briefing on the Academy - entrance requirements, opportunities for foreign students, a cadet daily schedule, the course of instruction, and the leadership traits the academy attempts to instil. The purpose of this introduction was to establish the role of ethics in our services, and to show that ethics is part and parcel of leadership and service. Nearly all members of the audience had heard of the West Point Honour Code and were keen to know more. The second briefing focused more narrowly on the foundations of democracy - the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Officer's Commissioning Oath, and John Stuart Mill's Principle of Liberty taken from his book "On Liberty".

## Visitor's Observations:

## START QUOTE:

"The Albanians seemed starved for information about democracy and the ethos of the soldier serving a democracy. They are trying to succeed in a poorly resourced army undergoing vast philosophical change. One of the most difficult things for an American visitor to appreciate is the courage it takes for these soldiers to embrace and work out the incredible transformation of their lives, their economy, their government and their profession. In 1990 they would have been jailed for listening to an American radio programme, and now they are trying to imitate us, but they have only a razor-thin understanding of democracy, liberty and the role of an army serving a democracy. I tried to help them understand what we mean by the phrase "the blessings of liberty".

- One consequence of this vast change is a genuine hesitancy to take the initiative. They still doubt whether government can actually reward initiative. For example my Albanian interpreter did a fabulous job. She knew the word metaphysics but she did not know the word delegate. The word was wholly alien to them. My explanation was first met with furrowed brows followed by a sense of wonder that this really be the case, that delegating authority and responsibility for critical tasks could really be essential for the success of an army.

- Another more pressing consequence of this change has been the devaluation of the army officer in Albanian society. Whereas they were at least well-located in Hoxha regime, they now find themselves grossly underpaid and uncertain of their role in the new Albania. Until the Albanian government pays them a living wage, adequately resources their endeavours, and articulates a vision which energises the Officer Corps, morale will remain low. An obvious follow to this point is to say that if the officers are underpaid, then what of the soldiers? Perhaps the most basic point of ethics is respect for the dignity of people. At present Albania does not extend this respect to its military, and, until it does extend this respect for its soldier-citizens of all ranks, there will never be the kind of professionalism we hope for. The cadets I met were bright and talented, but I did not find the kind of youthful enthusiasm you would expect from, say, a midshipman at Annapolis. They are quite simply uncertain about both their individual and collective futures.

END QUOTE.

Visitor Recommendations:

START QUOTE:

- Either myself or someone like me should return to Albania to teach the staffs of both the service academies and the Defence College more about the foundations of democracy because they now only know about democracy in sound-byte fashion. Until they are sure of this grounding, they cannot articulate a vision for the future of the Albanian Army, and they will be condemned to a kind of stuttering imitation which makes no sense to either themselves or the Western world they so much want to be a part of. I propose that they be provided copies of: The Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Oath of Commission, and John Stuart Mill's "On Liberty". These documents and a two-week syllabus should be provided well in advance. The lessons should be conducted in an academic fashion designed not to teach them how to be Americans but rather to give them an entrance to democratic thinking and ideals from which they can develop their own thinking.
- My task here was to talk about professional ethics. At first I was confused by the response I got from my briefings. They seemed curious, even excited, but disbelieving. Then one of them said to me, "I agree with what you say, but how can we talk about liberty and dignity when we are paid so little?" Come to Tirana, go to the Albanian Defence College and visit the hotel where Albanian officers and their families live in single room apartments that are simply appalling. My message to the officers fell on deaf ears because the current arrangements do not dignify them. Nonetheless, they are courteous and gracious. They would not let me pay for the coffee which cost me 30 cents, yet, by comparison, cost them 15 dollars (the ratio explaining the difference between their salary @\$100 a month and my salary of \$5,000 a month). The United States should do what it can to point this out in a manner that does not offend. The officers and soldiers are suffering.

END QUOTE

**Comments:** This Defence Advisor (DA) liked a lot of what this visitor had to say, having said most of it several times already. DA is less certain about his paragraph entitled Visitor Recommendations as DA believes the problem is significantly greater

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

than simply teaching "democracy" at the bottom rungs of an organisation when it is unclear if the top understands that a professional army is identified by a divergence of the personal and professional ethic. To illustrate the divergence of professional and personal interest, if DA was the paymaster of the 43th Chinese Army and DA's son needed a wooden leg and a glass eye and DA failed to obtain both for him while serving as paymaster, DA would be branded as an idiot. If DA was the Finance Officer of any Western "professional" army, such an activity would lead directly to incarceration. The Albanian Army is struggling with modernisation, professionalism, democracy and a host of other "isms" all at the same time, and to simply teach "democracy" is going to change very little. While DA believes that a decent grounding in democracy for new officers is a good idea, unless there is an understanding of what exactly this is all about at the highest levels of the armed forces, which there is currently not, DA wonders about the utility of massive doses of "democracy".

Among the problems at the Staff College, is that they are not intellectually inquisitive. By this DA means that they only bring in "safe" speakers, and no none who questions the direction in which we are going. When an army is in transition, said Clausewitz, then is the time to stimulate it with new ideas pointed towards new horizons. This we do not do, preferring to listen solely to Americans and Germans as, according to the civilian director of the college "only Americans and Germans know about democracy". DA wonders if we would not be far better served by inviting former President Walesa to Tirana to first talk about creating democracy, and then to address the lessons to be gained from having lost it.

DA enjoyed the comment about the interpreter not knowing the word in Albanian for "to delegate". This is something which has been left over from a previous era and until the upper limits of the ministry are themselves prepared to "delegate", it is not likely that the idea of delegating one's authority will have any prospects of taking root anywhere in the system. DA today can identify only one (1) officer who is in fact delegating his authority.

From DA's point of view the greatest problem is one of personal discipline at the highest levels. DA has noted consistently far more unhappiness at the "irregularities" in the recent elections among the uniformed services than among the "civilians in control". Perhaps because they have less to lose. Unless personal discipline is practised at the top, and by those who are empowered by the state to uphold the law (the police who are the prime violators of the law and seem not to be asking how they can serve the people, but rather how the people can serve them), there will never be discipline, and without discipline there will never be "democracy".

RPT# 110

DATE: 18JUN96

**POSSIBLE RESIGNATION OF DEFENCE MINISTER**

**Summary:** Minister of Defence Zhulali may resign for reasons of ill health.

**Details:** Mr Tomorr Shehu, Chef du Cabinet to Minister Zhulali, on 17 June informed LTC Haxhi Asllani, Defence Advisor's (DA) assistant, that for reasons of ill health, Minister Zhulali would be stepping down. It is widely assumed that should this occur, Vice Minister Luan Lazimi would replace the Minister Zhulali as Defence Minister. DA is sceptical apropos Vice Minister Lazimi replacing Minister Zhulali.

**Comments:** Last week, when DA spoke with Minister Zhulali, the minister indicated that "if asked, he would stay on as Defence Minister". This was also the line being taken by Mr Tomorr Shehu, the Minister's Chef du Cabinet (also a maths teacher from Peshkopi. Mr Shehu is considered by many to be second only to the Minister). It has certainly been DA's experience that when Mr Shehu says something will happen, it does. DA is less certain about Vice Minister Lazimi following Minister Zhulali as Defence Minister as DA does not believe Vice Minister Lazimi to have the same degree of personnel rapport with President Berisha that does/did Minister Zhulali. Vice Minister Lazimi is also scheduled to attend the Marshall Centre starting in July for a period of five (5) months.

Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

RPT# 116

DATE: 11Jul96

### **RESIGNATION OF MG PERLAT SULA**

**Summary:** On 5 July 1996, MG Perlat Sula, Chief of Air Services, resigned from the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF).

**Details:** On 5 July 1996, MG Perlat Sula, Chief of the Air Services and former military advisor to the Minister of Defence, resigned from the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF). Reportedly, at a ceremony marking his retirement, the Chief of the General Staff (CoGS) stated that MG Sula was resigning because of reasons related to "family problems". MG Sula is said to have interrupted CoGS saying that "family problems" had nothing to do with his decision to resign and that the reasons for his resignation were contained in a letter sent through the CoGS to the Minister of Defence (and on to the President who personally gave his approval - this all happening in three days). MG Sula asked that the letter be read. It was not.

**Comments:** DA has only just returned and was caught off-guard by Sula's resignation, as were many other officers in the AAF. Sula remains in the eyes of many, DA among them, the most able, intelligent, knowledgeable and experienced (former corps commander and Commandant of the Defence Academy) officer in the AAF. MG Sula was also demonstratively concerned about the welfare of his personnel. DA is also informed that for three (3) months, MG Sula has unsuccessfully been trying to get an appointment to see the minister. In DA's opinion, the departure of Sula will drastically compound the "professionalisation" of the AAF. DA is aware of the "family" problems facing Sula and doubts that they had anything to do with his resignation.

MG Sula is to be replaced by MG Agim Buruti as Chief of the Air Services. MG Buruti has recently returned from the Turkish War College.

RPT# 119

DATE: 16JUL96

**13 JULY MEETING WITH MINDEF**

**Summary:** DA met with Minister Zhulali on the afternoon of 13 July. Among the items discussed were the appointment of Secretary Demi, the differentiation between Chiefs and Indians, unhappiness with the obvious lack of senior US participation at Peaceful Eagle '96, and the visit of the Director of DIA, LTG Hughes.

**Details:**

**Appointment of State Secretary of Defence:** DA met with Minister Zhulali on 13 July and congratulated him on his reappointment as Defence Minister. Minister Zhulali stated that he had that very morning appointed Mr Leonard Demi as the State Secretary for Defence. DA stated that DA thought that this was a very good appointment given Mr Demi's position as the former Director of the North America and Asia Bureau of the Albanian Foreign Ministry. DA asked the minister if he could explain where Secretary Demi stood apropos his relationship with Vice Minister of Defence Mr Luan Lazimi. Minister Zhulali stated that the assignment was a reflection of the German system, and that it provided for further checks and balanced, but that beyond that he himself was somewhat uncertain.

**Chiefs & Indians:** DA stated that there had been some US voiced unhappiness with the Albanian decision to deploy a platoon from the Albanian peacekeeping company and more importantly the Operations Directorate's Peaceful Eagle '96 (PE'96) Liaison Officer, LTC Vladimir Qirjazi, to Germany two weeks prior to the commencement of the exercise. The minister responded that he had heard about this but failed to see why LTC Qirjazi's sudden deployment should in any manner impact on the conduct of PE'96, when individuals like the Operation Director, BG Ismulli and the Chief of Training, Col Spiro Proko remained. "Supposing", asked the minister, "that MG Nix could not come to the exercise. What would happen then?" DA responded that essentially nothing would happen other than someone else would substitute for MG Nix. The problem associated with LTC Qirjazi, said DA, was that he was an Indian, distinct from being a Chief, and dispatching the Chief Indian prior to a major exercise meant that immediately a lot of the coordination was lost, all the more so in the Albanian system as LTC Qirjazi had no assistant himself.

**Unhappiness Over The Lack Of Senior US Political Presence At PE'96:** The minister articulated once again his irritation with the lack of senior US political representation at the PE'96 opening ceremonies. "You do not understand Albanian customs," said the minister. The analogy was that of the Albanian wedding which must continue at all costs even if there is a murder in the family. DA assumes that part of his irritation stems from his earlier conversations with Secretary Kramer who reportedly stated that the military to military relationship would remain unaffected by alleged "irregularities" associated with the May elections.

**Visit Of DIA Director:** Little was said other than the minister being dissatisfied with his "intelligence" relationship in general with the United States. The minister noted that he had made some specific requests during his October 95 visit to Langley and none had been satisfied.



## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

**Comments:** DA asked the German DA from Budapest accredited to Albania, Col Peter Ruckert, about the State Secretary for Defence. Col Ruckert indicated that in the German system a parliamentarian (and Leonard Demi is a deputy) held this position. Col Ruckert added that in the absence of the minister the State Secretary acts in place of the minister. This of course does nothing to clarify the position of Vice Minister Lazimi who will, in any event, be off to Garmisch in late July for the next five (5) months.

The Use Of Bize: DA will seek an answer, but is puzzled by Bize having been neither offered to the Germans, who are conducting a company sized "in the spirit of "PfP" exercise in Albania in October (it will take place north of Cape Rodonit), nor to the Brits, who are sending in a marine commando officer on Monday (22 July) to look at training sites.

The dispatch of Vladimir Qirjazi to Germany may in retrospect be useful as without it we would not have had the conversation about Chiefs and Indians. This is something that we tend to take for granted; the idea that the lieutenant-colonel could actually be of pivotal importance is something altogether new.

RPT# 122

DATE: 22JUL96

**POSSIBLE US CRASH SITE (CIRCA 43/44) AT VERMOSH**

**Summary:** DA has been informed by the 1<sup>st</sup> Secretary at the British Embassy in Tirana of a crash site in the vicinity of Vermosh (4235N 1942E). British colleagues believe the aircraft to have been American, possible a Lockheed Lightning. British 1<sup>st</sup> Secretary has two boxes of remains.

**Details:** According to information provided by the British Embassy, the aircraft in question was thought to have crashed on a foggy night in December 1943. The wreckage was not discovered until May 1944 when the snow melted. The aircraft is thought to be three hours hard walk from the town of Vermosh (4235N 1942E). The crash site was apparently visited by a former member of the British Embassy. The aircraft was described as having two engines and a double fuselage and had American machine guns. The only twin fuselage, twin engined aircraft at the time was thought to be the American P-38 Lightning. The aircraft, according to a surviving witness, was "milk-white" in colour. Upon impact the aircraft broke into two sections, the cockpit falling 500m further down the mountain. Parts of the wreckage are still held by a number of villagers. There were three (3) bodies found. Two (believed to be passengers) were buried together at one site, and the pilot further down the mountain. The pilot was said to have been wearing a black leather flying jacket with four stars on the shoulders. Locals believe at least one of the passengers to have been a Yugoslav national, possibly a Lt Nincovitch. Some of the items recovered, maps, a knife, a diary, etc, were forwarded to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in London. Recently, a British NGO (identified as Mr Von Weenen), who has the pilot's leather jacket, brought two (2) boxes of remains to the British Embassy. The Brits are inclined to think that the remains may well be American vice British.

**Comments:** DA, who always wanted to go to Vermosh anyway, will do so upon DA's return to Albania on 3 August. DA will be accompanied by DA's assistant and language officer LTC Asllani. Also be advised that a helicopter pilot with a Canadian copper mining company is familiar with the general location of the crash site. DA's former contact for things like this used to be Mr Charles Trowbridge who was the vice director of the PW/MIA shop at DIA.

A visit to Vermosh might provide information sufficient to determine the type of aircraft and hopefully the nationality of occupants.

RPT# 123

DATE: 22JUL96

**WEEK'S ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK ENDING 26 JULY 1996**

**Summary:** Report is the first weekly report. Ideally these reports will address the week that was. This report pertains to the week that is, and specifically addresses the direction in which DA would like to go with army reforms. Peaceful Eagle '96 (PE'96) will be addressed in a subsequent report when comments start coming in. Generally, in the context of PE'96, the Albanians appear to have acquitted themselves well.

**Details:** Since the 1 April South Balkan Ministerial Meeting, the Defence Ministry has essentially ceased to function. What this underscores is the dominant nature of the minister's involvement in the day-to-day activities of the ministry. With Minister Zhulali reconfirmed as Defence Minister (Report 117), Leonard Demi appointed as Secretary of State for Defence (Report 118), and with "Peaceful Eagle '96" behind us, the ministry is starting to look at what lies ahead.

Defence Advisor (DA) has proposed a meeting with Secretary Demi and with Colonel Bektash Kolasi, the Chief of Long Range Planning and to that extent the chief architect of the "new" Albanian Army and DA's main counterpart, if there is such a person following the sudden resignation of MG Perlat Sula (Report 116). From DA's point of view the resignation of MG Perlat Sula will impact directly on the need for "reforms" in the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF), although the Chief of the General Staff was probably glad to see him go. DA believes that Leonard Demi will play a dominant role in the future of the AAF, and, not having the same subject to patron relationship to the minister as did/does Vice Minister Lazimi, may in fact be able to exert greater influence on the minister. The central problem is that while Minister Zhulali remains a remarkable man, he is not immediately oriented towards people, and armies regrettably are composed of just such a commodity. DA wishes to discuss the following items with Secretary Demi, believing Secretary Demi to be a "kindred spirit" and that only with Secretary Demi's involvement can real change start to take place (Under Minister Luan Lazimi is being sent to Garmisch for the next five months):

The Restoring Of Morale To The Army: Minister Zhulali's "hero" is Napoleon. Clausewitz, who was convinced that no theory of war could be taken seriously unless it included the psychology of commanders, remarked that Napoleon's greatest achievement was his restoring the morale of the army in Italy in 1796. What we need to start doing is restoring the morale of the army. Since DA's arrival, the focus of the minister's efforts has been on improving US-Albanian military to military relations, and in this he has been extremely successful. It has been accomplished however at the expense of correcting problems which directly affect the morale and welfare of the men and women of all ranks of the AAF. It is time for a reassessment. For the \$3m programmed to be spent on two (2) TOW missile launchers and 16 missiles, for which there is not the slightest military requirement, the naval base at Shengjin could have been rebuilt. Among problems which are directly affecting morale, and which DA suspects may have led to MG Sula's resignation, is the lack of housing for officers and NCOs, substandard housing, food and general conditions for conscripts, the lack of any discernible retirement system, and a system of retention and promotion based more on "connections" and "political correctness" than on ability.

The "New" Army & The Lack Of A "Threat Assessment": For the most part, Albanian division commanders in the field are first class field soldiers who know their terrain and their capabilities. At no time, as far as this DA can determine, have these officers been summoned to Tirana to present their view of how the country can best be defended. DA believes that the defence of Albania is best undertaken by a small, regular mobile army of between 5-7 brigades, supported by regional/territorial forces. It is also necessary when constructing a new force to undertake a "threat" assessment. This too has not been accomplished to date (see under Intelligence below).

**Intelligence:** The survival of the light army is directly dependent upon the timely acquisition, analysis and dissemination of intelligence. Surprisingly, in spite of the excesses of the infamous Sigurimi (Hoxha's secret police), there is no such thing as tactical intelligence as understood in the west within the AAF. There are three officers assigned to the Operations Directorate who have the responsibility for monitoring "reconnaissance" operations. What tactical intelligence exists beyond these three individuals is subordinated to counter-intelligence (CI) activities. Indeed it is thought that today there are more CI officers in the general headquarters verifying the degree to which an officer might have been a communist in the past, than there were during the earlier regime (see Report 93). DA has recommended to the minister, and in fact the minister has concurred, that prior to creating a true Tactical Military Intelligence Directorate, the dominance of counter-intelligence must be circumscribed. It has further been recommended to the minister by both DA and by the CoGS that the CI Directorate should be removed from the general headquarters and subordinated to national assets. Only when tactical military intelligence is "freed" from being "indentured" to the CI community, and analysts be given the ability to think "freely" can any viable system of tactical intelligence be organised.

**Staff & SOPs:** DA has had a longstanding debate with the minister about the ability of his staff to function. The minister tends to see it in terms of block diagrams. DA sees it in functional terms. For 40 years middle grade officers did not make decisions, knowing that if they did and that if it were the wrong decision, the future might become very uncertain. Suddenly to expect staff officers to do what they had hitherto been afraid to do is going to be fraught with certain alarm. Just prior to the onset of "Peaceful Eagle '96" the senior liaison officer was sent to Germany (see Report 119). When questions were asked, the minister and the CoGS could not understand why, as they and the Operations Director remained. The distinction between chiefs and the Chief Indian is something had never been appreciated until that time. DA has a complete copy of the "Setaf" SOP which DA has proposed to the minister and to the CoGS that we should use as the basis for establishing an SOP for the AAF.

**Comments:** DA realised that this is not really a weekly activity report. The reason, as already mentioned, is that we are just starting once again to function. It is however the basis of where DA hopes to go with the AAF over the course of the coming year. DA also hopes to have "The Albanian Armed Forces": An Assessment at the End of Year One" completed by the weekend.

RPT# 127

DATE: 08AUG96

**BIOGRAPHY - MINISTER OF DEFENCE SAFET ZHULALI**

## Biography

The Honourable Mr Safet Zhulali  
Minister of Defence, Republic of Albania

Minister of Defence Zhulali was born in Struga on 11 March 1944. Following the completion of middle school in 1960, Minister Zhulali was employed as a school teacher in Peshkopi and later in Albania's Dibra District. Minister Zhulali is a 1970 graduate of the University of Tirana where he majored in mathematics. Minister Zhulali returned to Tirana University in 1975 at which time he took an advanced degree in mathematics. Following his graduation from university, Minister Zhulali returned to Peshkopi where he taught mathematics in Peshkopi's middle school system.

From its beginning, Minister Zhulali has been a central figure in the democratisation of Albania. In February 1991, Minister Zhulali was elected as the Chairman of the Democratic Party of Dibra. In the March 1992 general elections, Minister Zhulali was elected as the member of Parliament for the constituency of Golloborda, Zerqan and Bulqiza. In April 1992, Minister Zhulali was appointed as the Minister of Defence of Albania's first democratic government. Minister Zhulali was re-elected to parliament in the May 1996 elections, and on 11 July 1996, was once again appointed as the Minister of Defence.

As Minister of Defence, Minister Zhulali has been responsible for the rehabilitation of the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF). Under his leadership, not only has civilian leadership of the Armed Forces been established, the AAF itself has undergone a massive and much needed structural and philosophical reorganisation. This has included the total revision of all the curricula at the various Service Schools and consolidation of the AAF. Under Minister Zhulali's direction, military to military relations with the West, most notably with the United States and Germany, have achieved levels of cooperation and understanding which four years ago were unthinkable. Also, under Minister Zhulali's leadership, Albania continues to seek integration into NATO and into other Euro-Atlantic strategic alliances.

Minister Zhulali is married to the former Manushaqe Shehu. Mrs Zhulali is a judge. The Zhulalis have three daughters, the twins Ilda and Floreta (18), and Elsa (13). Minister Zhulali's hobbies are chess, mathematics and literature.

RPT# 128  
DATE: 26AUG96

### **BIOGRAPHY - MINISTER ZHULALI (Addendum)**

**Summary:** Report forwards general information provided on the eve of Minister Zhulali's visit to the United States as the personal representative of President Berisha.

#### **Details:**

##### Biographic Information

There are those who underestimate the intelligence and determination of Minister of Defence Safet Zhulali, noting only his background as a provincial high-school maths teacher. The purpose of this paper is to dispel that perception. Safet Zhulali is the consummate politician. Having been through, and somehow survived the ravages of the Hoxha era, Minister Zhulali is determined that nothing like the Hoxha regime ever happen to Albania again. Thus his aversion to the Socialist Party which he does not equate with change. Minister Zhulali doubts that most foreigners have any idea what life was like under Enver Hoxha. Minister Zhulali was at the fore-front of the pro-democracy movement in Peshkopi in 1991/92. To some extent Minister Zhulali reminds one of the classic American southern politician making up for what he lacks in what we in the West would refer to as "sophistication", by an abundance of exceptional intelligence, vision, determination and unbridled energy. He believes in the handshake and in his words, and that the customs of a particular country must be respected. While he is prepared to entertain some criticism, he will demand equal time. What changes have occurred in the Albanian Armed Forces during the course of the past four years, are directly attributable to the efforts of Minister Zhulali. He smokes too much, drinks more than he should, and is in terrible physical condition, suffering also from diabetes. He also works 16 hour days routinely. Delegation of authority is not his strong suit. It should also be noted, as is often the case, that he has not chosen to surround himself by the "best and the brightest", but rather by those over whom he can exert complete control. The Minister has a single-minded devotion to the United States and all that the United States stands for, and finds the present political difficulties that Albania is experiencing with the United States to be perplexing. Minister Zhulali points out that Albania is a new democracy and has a great deal to learn, and that Albania has turned to America to learn. He also notes that Albania has acceded to all of America's requests in the past several years and emphasises particularly access to Gjadri Air Force Base, with no strings attached and essentially at no cost for the Predator Missions.

RPT# 129  
DATE: 27AUG96

## 7 AUGUST MEETING WITH MINISTERS MOISIU & ZHULALI

**Summary:** On 7 August Defence Advisor (DA) met Under Minister for Policy Alfred Moisiu PhD, and twice with Minister of Defence Safet Zhulali. Both expressed dismay over the reaction of the United States towards Albania following the 26 May general elections. DA provides this message as Minister Moisiu's reaction seems to be rather representative of the sentiment of senior Members here in the Defence Ministry.

**Details:** The purpose of DA's meeting with Under Minister for Policy Alfred Moisiu was not related to the elections, but rather to discuss the proposed visit to Albania of US (Retd) Army Colonel Smith in late September. (Minister Moisiu is responsible for veterans. Spiro Moisiu, Minister Moisiu's father was Enver Hoxha's wartime commander.) Colonel Smith served in Albania during WWII and played a central role in the evacuation of a plane load of American medical personnel who crashed near Elbasan late in the war. Colonel Smith has been invited by Minister Moisiu. Colonel Smith hopes to visit those parts of southern Albania (Girokaster, Dukati and Dermi) where he met and finally evacuated the medical personnel. Minister Moisiu asked for DA's impressions of the prevailing attitudes in Washington vis-à-vis Albania in the aftermath of the 26 May elections. DA responded that in DA's opinion, Albania was in trouble due to the "irregularities" associated with the elections. Minister Moisiu said that he found it all rather hard to understand, given that immediately after the elections the US response was, if anything benign. There then followed a request to re-run certain elections. This too was accomplished. Now there are prospects of sanctions and the United States has yet to define what precisely it is that it wishes Albania to do. Minister Moisiu continued by stating that under no circumstances was the Democratic Party going to "surrender" the government and for the United States to ask that this be done was unreasonable, reflecting at the same time a lack of understanding of what life was like in Albania under the communists. Minister Moisiu also noted that Albania acceded to all requests made by the United States in support of regional policy initiatives.

Meetings with Minister Zhulali on 7 August dealt mainly with who should carry President Berisha's message to Washington. DA took the position that this was not Minister Zhulali's war, but rather that of the Foreign Ministry. What had happened in the interim was that the minister had been to see the president and pointed out that he was going to Washington anyway to attend manoeuvres in North Carolina, and that he could at the same time deliver the message. President Berisha agreed. It then became difficult for the minister not to go. In retrospect, from DA's point of view, the minister's going was probably the best course of action.

**Comments:** DA's concern, one shared by the DATT, with the minister going was the possibility of heated discussions should there be a meeting with the NSC. This DA did not believe would do a great deal for the overall relationship which was already under siege. While Minister Zhulali is quite prepared to entertain the opinion of others, he is equally adamant to express his side of the coin. Furthermore, DA rather suspects the NSC has underestimated Minister Zhulali's agility in dealing with verbal confrontation. The tardiness of this report was caused by DA forgetting to take the draft report with me when dispatched rather suddenly to Washington.

RPT# 135  
DATE: 04SEPT96

## MISCELLANY & ATMOSPHERICS

**Summary:** Report addresses a series of conversations. The minister was reportedly reassigned because of his ability in dealing with the "American" connection; he is seen as being the individual most responsible for bringing the Americans to Albania, and, it is suggested, the plan for the defence of the nation has no clothes.

**Details:** This report addresses a series of conversations of interest with a wide variety of individuals:

**The Minister's Reassignment:** It appears that Minister Zhulali was not going to be reappointed as Defence Minister following the May elections. It was because of his success in dealing with the American connection that this decision was reversed.

**Long Live Minister Zhulali:** DA had a minor traffic accident in Kruja on 1 September. An Albanian driver (who was cited, and who had both a permit and insurance), failed to stop at a stop sign in Kruja. The result was that DA was invited to coffee (and lunch on 5 September) with the Deputy Police Chief of Kruja. Interesting man, who formerly was an engineer. He is now responsible for traffic accident investigations, and pointed out that he has never received any formal training in this discipline. DA noted that the good news was that he got to write the book. During the course of conversations he said, "Long live Safet Zhulali". Queried about this outburst, the officer mentioned that Minister Zhulali is credited with bringing the Americans to Albania. In the same vein, some wag from Skodra (who are famous for their black humour) offered, "Long live Minister Zhulali who has replaced "zbor" for Albanians with "zbor" for Americans". In the old days all Albanians engaged in military training which was widely known as "zbor" (training) for a week to ten days annually. "Zbor" caused a lot of heart-burn for the general populace. Today, since he became Defence Minister, Albanians no longer engage in "zbor", their place having been taken by the Americans.

**Mobilisation:** DA continues to doubt that the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) could mobilise even if they had to. This is a bit of a quantum leap of faith into the unknown, but yesterday DA met informally with a battalion commander who indicated that the only way he could mobilise his reserve forces in his region was if he and his deputy went from door to door to ask the whereabouts of specific reservists. He also decried the present chaos which surrounds retirement benefits for officers and laid the blame at the feet of the Defence Ministry. "I have spent many years of my life on Mount Korabi (on the Macedonian border and the highest mountain (2745m) in Albania) and if I retire tomorrow I get nothing." He also stated that the greatest problem facing the AAF was the lack of basic infrastructure.

**The Plan Has No Clothes:** DA was having a conversation with a staff officer about the Chief of the General Staff's (CoGS) plan for the defence of Albania and suggested that there was no plan. The individual in question referred DA to "Security and Defence Policy for the Republic of Albania" dated May 1995. DA stated that DA had read that but that it did not address in any coherent manner how the Chief of the CoGS staff saw the defence of the nation. The officer stated that he had read the classified plan, and it too had no substance.



## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

## Strength Figures:

- The following are strength figures under "consolidation" for the AAF effective 1 September 1996. Note that the AAF no longer carries any territorial forces:

Officers	5,700
NCOs	3,840
Conscripts	14,250 <sup>1</sup>
Civilians	2,375
 TOTAL	 26,165

- Projected personnel strength - wartime

Officers	22,400
NCOs	33,000
Conscripts	176,000
 TOTAL	 231,400 <sup>2</sup>

**Comments:** Report reflects many of DA's suspicions about the AAF. The problem is that while the minister continues to dwell on political relationships, no one is confronting the real problems of the army. DA will continue to pursue organising a meeting of field commanders and the General Staff specifically targeted as addressing in real terms the defence of the nation. DA's end of year one report reflects many of the problems listed above.

---

<sup>1</sup> In October there will be draft which will increase the number of recruits by @10,000. There is no current projected figure.

<sup>2</sup> The Reserve and Territorial Forces were formerly the basis of the defence of Albania. In time of war, reserve forces comprised 73.22% of the officers, 87.88% of the NCOs and 84.1% of the conscripts.

RPT# 139  
DATE: 09AUG96

### CRASH SITE/CONVERSATIONS AT VERMOSH

**Summary:** DA visited Vermosh to investigate a WWII crash site (see Report 122). The nationality of those killed remains unknown but at least one appears to have been a Yugoslav.

**Details:** On 6-7 September, Defence Advisor, accompanied by LTC Asllani, visited the Vermosh valley, specially the village of Velipoja (pop 1,300). Vermosh is itself not a village but rather a region. Purpose of the visit was to put to rest speculation surrounding a World War II airplane crash which claimed three (3) lives (see Report 122).

The drive to the border with Montenegro (2½ hours) is straightforward. The drive from the Montenegro border to Velipoja is of about 3 hours duration, the distance is 70kms. Once one leaves the main road one starts a leisurely climb to a mountain pass at Rrapsh (@1,600m). As soon as one crests the pass, the asphalt road becomes dirt and the road plunges into the valley on the other side. DA during his career has driven many roads in many countries, but nothing quite on a par with this road, not only for its breath-taking beauty, but also for the inherent danger. DA's trip was made all the more exciting by a hail storm of epidemic proportions erupting just as DA and group started down the cliff side, ultimately forcing the group to take refuge in the lee of the cliff. The road is generally wide enough for a single vehicle, but there are ample opportunities to ensure relatively safe passage of a vehicle passing in the opposite direction. An ancient bus connects Velipoja to Skodra three (3) times weekly. The only "incident" on the trip was the suicide of a sheep which threw itself beneath the rear wheels of the CUCV in Tamara. Compensation in the sum of 1,800L was paid, and DA, under protest, took possession of the carcass after it was explained to DA that it was not right that the owner of the former sheep be compensated for the animal and retain at the same time the body of the animal. DA's landlady is enjoying the sheep. DA rates the road at 7.5 on the suicide scale under normal conditions. DA's son gave it an 8.3 but was influenced by the hail storm and sheer drops 1,000m into the valley below.

Velipoja is a Catholic village of picture postcard beauty. The river is blue, the mountains perpetually green, or white, depending on the season, there are no skeletal vehicles and no trash. Most prominent in the village was a large Catholic church being built by funds provided by the American-Albanian communities of Boston and New York. It was decidedly cold, a fact which did not seem to phase the locals. Our host's youngest daughter persisted in wandering around in her bare feet while DA and group took to wearing thermal socks and all manner of parkas. Of additional notable interest in Velipoja is the presence of a woman reputed to be 115 years old. She neither smokes nor drinks. DA suggested that the village should consider bottling the water - sort of an Albanian Vichy. There is currently no telephone service in Velipoja. While there is a primary school in the village, children attend secondary school at Tamara where they board. Upon arrival in Velipoja, DA contacted the hamlet/village chief, Mr Nue Lumaj, who receives a monthly stipend from the government of 1,300L. Mr Lumaj was formerly an agricultural cooperative worker, the main crop in Velipoja being potatoes. The village chief is elected for a period of 2 years and is up for re-election this coming October. (The village is overwhelmingly Democrat although DA was informed that

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

there were four (4) Socialist families in Velipoja.) There are in fact six (6) hamlets in the Vermosh region and the 6 hamlet chiefs elect among themselves the village chief. Ultimately DA and party spent the night in the village chief's house along with his wife and five children. There was ample space.

Mr Lumaj, on learning the purpose of the visit, conducted DA up a dry river bed to the house of Mr Fran Nua Vukaj, aged 74, who appears to be the only person alive in the village who is knowledgeable of the crash.

Mr Vukaj is a former partisan (Skodra Brigade). He said at the outset that the aircraft was American and was a Spitfire (not an auspicious start as we seem to know that the airplane had at least two engines and carried three people which suggests that whatever it was, it was not a Spitfire). Mr Vukaj, who had been to the crash site but had not seen the crash, which occurred in a storm in December 1944, said that the airplane looked like two airplanes joined together. The aircraft impacted 20-40m below a mountain peak (Mali Marlules - 2,188m - 423726N 194200E). DA surmises that it was something like a P38 Lightning. A piece of the wreckage with a visible number has been recovered from Mr Vukaj who also had what he said had been a rubber parachute (DA thinks it was the life raft) and something which could be a telescoping antenna. The item with the serial number could be part of the landing gear. The visible numbers are:

34 R 1937  
B 17197

then a ½" circle with the letters

APC  
19

Apparently all documentation on the bodies recovered is/was either in the hands of a British church-group members (a Mr Von Weenen); has been turned over to the Serbian Embassy in Tirana, as at least one of the victims, and possible two, are thought to have been Yugoslavs, and the diary carried by one of the passengers was, according to Mr Vukaj, written in Cyrillic and/or given to an individual thought to having been living in Trieste and thought now to be dead. The aircraft, said Mr Vujak, had been flying from Italy. While the bodies of the two (2) passengers were recovered the following day, having fallen down the cliff face, the body of the pilot was not recovered for an additional three months. He was still strapped into his seat and looked to be alive. The pilot had four black stars in his uniform. One of the other victims (identified as Lt Nincovitch - who was also the owner of the diary) wore 2 gold stars. DA, following the recommendations of the village chief, opted not to proceed to the crash site, some three to four hours walk, as it had been raining for two days and the trail was treacherous. It is probable that Mr Vukaj has additional remains of the aircraft, but apparently no longer has any documents from the flight.

DA asked Mr Vujak if there was anything that he would like to add, he stated that in fact he was upset with the Defence Ministry. He was eligible for a pension of 1,200L monthly since 1992, having served throughout the war. To date he has received nothing. This will be passed to Under Minister Moisiu who is responsible for veterans' affairs. DA asked, out of curiosity, how payment would generally be made. He indicated that he would be paid in cash. Essentially someone from Skodra would come to the village where the funds would be turned over to the chief of the village.

**Comments:** Details will be provided to the British Embassy. DA intends to return in the spring and will access the crash site. DA notes that the compensation paid for the suicidal sheep is significantly cheaper than purchasing a sheep in the market. DA also had occasion to speak at some length with Mr Lumaj's eldest son who had been a conscript some time ago, in fact LTC Asllani had been his PT instructor. DA asked him what was the worst thing about his military service. He responded the lack of basic infrastructure - warm clothes, running water, decent and adequate rations etc. Nothing has changed. DA has also spoken by telephone with Col (Retd) David Smiley who was the OIC of the British SOE (Special Operations Executive) mission in Albania during the war apropos the possibility of a Yugoslav flight. He too thinks it all rather odd, and can shed no additional light on the subject. Interesting way to see the country though. Finally, while in Velipoja a truck laden with cut lumber passed through. It was stopped by a village official who took the driver to task. Someone, at least, appears to be seriously concerned about deforestation.

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

RPT# 143

DATE: 20SEPT96

**20 SEPTEMBER MEETING WITH MINDEF**

**Summary:** Defence Advisor (DA) had a brief meeting with MinDef on the morning of 20 September. DA was given new directions. This suggests that we are back to work after a five month hiatus. The question of the MLT looms large.

**Details:** DA was summoned to the minister's office for a brief meeting on the morning of 20 September. The minister indicated that DA had been left "independent" for too long. The minister gave DA seven (7) taskings that he would like to have accomplished in the next two (2) months.

The Taskings:

- Prepare a report on the activities, accomplishments and contribution of the DA to date.
- Prepare a paper for the minister which addresses DA's predictions/recommendations of what the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) should look like by the year 2000-2005. This should include force organisation, strengths and equipment. Apropos equipment DA is reminded that it should be NATO compatible.
- A report on DA's perceptions on the AAF's cooperation with other nations in the military field.
- Inform the minister of initiatives the AAF could undertake in terms of equipment and assistance with NATO, Italy, Greece, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, the US and Turkey.
- Comments are required as they pertain to the 1995 "Security and Defence Policy of Republic of Albania". DA happens to be working on this already.
- Similarly the minister wishes comments as they pertain to the military doctrine of the AAF.
- The minister seeks recommendations from DA on military education and career management.

The MLT: The minister then added that there was one more item he wished to discuss and that was his general unhappiness with the MLT. The minister reiterated once again his belief that initially the MLT had been a vehicle through which the Albanians could view the world. Since then, said the minister, he did not believe that Albania had truly benefited by the MLT programme and that, given the size of the Albanian Army, it was difficult to really participate fully in all the events offered under "Pfp". His final comment was that if within the next two (2) months he did not see a change in the direction the MLT was going, he was inclined to withdraw from the programme.

**Comments:**

Taskings: DA has no major problems with any of the taskings. DA intends to stress to the Minister that DA is here as an advisor and not as a "doer" and thus "accomplishments" are hard to cite as change is slow. DA intends to start with item A and finish DA's comments to the pamphlet "Security and Defence Policy of the Republic of Albania". DA will continue to provide information vis-à-vis DA's success, or lack of success with the taskings.

The MLT: DA has been telling the minister that to a large extent the MLT can be tailored to identify specific needs of the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF). Part of the problem to date has been that the AAF, most specifically the General Staff, has not been actively involved in programming MLT events, nor have they to date identified what the "new" Albanian Army is to look like. The minister is not seeing any quantum improvement of the AAF. In any event, we now have the minister's authority to bring the Albanians into the process and anticipate a meeting in the near term which will include the DATT, MLT Chief, Chief G3 Training, Chief Long Range Plans and Colonel Bubesi, the Albanian MLT LNO. DA also met with the MLT Chief and Col Bubesi following DA's meeting with the minister and outlined the minister's concerns suggesting that they think about it over the weekend and revisit the problem during the week. DA also suggested to the minister that he give the new MLT Chief another week to get his feet on the ground, and then he could perhaps have a meeting with the minister to outline how the programme could be better directed towards accomplishing the requirements of the AAF. DA also suggested once again that a training cadre could be established with the 8<sup>th</sup> Division in Tirana so that trainers could be trained. DA anticipates organising a meeting with the Chief of the General Staff (CoGS) and Director of Operations to set things in motion.

Essentially DA believes that the General Staff needs an advisor to a far greater extent than does the minister.

RPT# 148

DATE: 30SEPT96

### THOUGHTS ON THE "NEW" ARMY

**Summary:** Defence Advisor (DA) by the end of November is on tap to provide the minister DA's thoughts apropos the composition and evolution of the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) from the year 2000 to 2005. In essence DA is looking at a small (3 to 5 brigade), mobile regular army augmented by reserves and territorial forces.

**Details:** This message represents Defence Advisor first thoughts on the reformation of the AAF in compliance with the minister's tasking. DA has been giving a considerable amount of thought to the minister's request that DA provide Minister Zhulali DA's vision of what the Albanian Army should look like circa 2000 to 2005. The only restriction placed upon DA in this regard is that the minister does not want DA talking to any of the division commanders on this subject. The views are to be wholly DA's. DA finds this to be a perfectly reasonable request as the minister himself ultimately wishes to review his options. DA will however continue to push for the minister to organise a meeting at the O7-08 level of commanders with the expressed purpose of trying to obtain from officers in the field their perceptions of what the new AAF should look like.

In the most basic terms, there is presently no Albanian Army. What is happening in Albania is that a new army is being made from the ashes of the old. In this regard DA differs from at least one senior Albanian general who maintains that we must forget everything that has been before and start again from scratch. DA does not believe that one can so conveniently forget the past. Better perhaps to learn from the lessons of the past, and be selective in what is discarded. The question which must be answered is the form that the new army must assume. This in turn is a function of the defined threat, and the funds available.

DA believes that at the outset we need to establish a model for the reorganisation of the AAF and identify the "threats" to Albania. This DA believes, despite assurances from CoGS, has not been accomplished to date. DA draws a distinction between being compatible with NATO and assuming a NATO-like organisation. To this extent DA continues to believe that we would be doing the Albanians a disservice were we to further encourage the movement towards the creation of a NATO type army<sup>1</sup> in a country that has no near term possibility of being economically capable of supporting such a force, and whose traditions have been largely alien to the western military tradition. Within the Albanian context, the "rules" are markedly different than those with which we are familiar, and "rules" are of fundamental importance.<sup>2</sup> An understanding of "rules" is of critical importance to the conduct of

---

<sup>1</sup> BEST, Geoffrey, in Ian Clark's "Waging War: A Philosophical Introduction", Clarendon Press, Oxford, (1988), pp11-12. Best writes that the manner in which a nation/society elects to wage war is not only inextricably related to a nation's or a society's actual practice of war; but reflects also the moral view of the nation/society which it represents, and leads to the acceptance of a specific set of understandings about the nature of war.

<sup>2</sup> CLARK, Ian, "Waging War: A Philosophical Introduction", Clarendon Press, Oxford, (1988), p304. Clark writes that "while the experience of war is very different from that of

conflict and not only do "rules" permit the establishment of where, when and why the lines of restraint are to be drawn, "rules" also provide the point from which the philosophy of war begins and more importantly provide the "moral" basis for the rules of war.<sup>3</sup> Other than a relatively brief interlude with the Russians (1950-1962) and a socially more distant interlude with China (1963-1978), there is no tradition of conventional Clausewitzian warfare in Albania.

The current inefficiency of the AAF is curiously beneficial to the reformation of the AAF as long as it does not continue too much further into the future.<sup>4</sup> The AAF today is theoretically both pliant and receptive to innovation. The greatest obstacle to be set aside is the unwillingness of much of the leadership in the ministry today to look selectively towards the past.<sup>5</sup> The issue of economics aside, the formulation, or in the Albanian case, the reformulation of the army, must be "the expression of total national energy".<sup>6</sup>

Discussions are presently on-going in the ministry about the size of the AAF. DA believes that a further force reduction is on the cards. The current defence budget of \$43m is wholly inadequate. Many of the better colonels remain on active duty only because the minister manages to provide them a monthly trip which brings in enough to make life tolerable. Conversations with several NCOs has suggested that a realistic minimum monthly wage would be \$200 vice the \$70 they get today.<sup>7</sup> In order to meet the payroll and provide adequate rations and services for the force, the Ministry of Defence needs \$70m. In order to start making serious improvement related to infrastructures, the AAF needs an annual budget of \$100m.

DA has raised on several occasions the experiences of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) and more recently initiatives undertaken by the Vietnamese Army to come to terms with a declining defence budget. The AAF had a system of military industries which might have been able to make up some of the shortfall.

---

peace, a state of war need not represent a disruption of the normal order of a society without order, but rather life according to different and alternative rules".

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p78.

<sup>4</sup> Professor Peter Paret writing in "Clausewitz and the State: The Man, His Theories and His Times", Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, (1985), p4, notes within the context of the French and Prussian armies of 1789, that the Prussian Army:

... was the more unified and internally consistent organisation, and therefore less susceptible to change; the French Army was more diverse, less efficient for the moment, but pliant and receptive to innovation.

<sup>5</sup> In the early 1970s there was a debate at the highest levels of the Armed Forces apropos whether or not the country could be defended in its entirety. Many generals elected to write-off the low ground as being indefensible against any modern military forces. These officers chose to make their stand in the mountains. Most were shot and the era of bunker-building began.

<sup>6</sup> CLAUSEWITZ, Carl von, "Machrichten uber Preussen in seiner grossen Katastrophe; Kriegsgeschichtliche Einzelschriften", Vol V, Berlin, (1888), p425, cited in Professor Peter Paret's "Clausewitz and the State: The Man, His Theories and His Times", Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, (1985), p4.

<sup>7</sup> DA bought a month's worth of dog food for DA's puppy several weeks ago. It came to a little less than \$50 which is essentially half of DA's lieutenant-colonel assistant's monthly salary.



## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

They are presently being privatised and in DA's view, are losing an important source of revenue. The reason is related to an unwillingness to copy anything other than a western model, and perhaps an understandable desire not to do anything done by a communist army.

Apropos the threat to Albania, we are faced with the difficulty of separating capabilities from intentions. DA sees no near term threat to Albania. At the same time it has been pointed out to DA that the Yugoslav 2<sup>nd</sup> Army is headquartered at Podgorica, 20kms from the northern Albanian border; 3<sup>rd</sup> Army is in Nis and 52 Corps (subordinate to 3<sup>rd</sup> Army) is in Prishtina. It is also noted that the Greeks continue to maintain the 15<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in Kastoria; and the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in Ioannina. These deployments provide the basis for the Albanian deployment of five division entities (1<sup>st</sup> Division - Skodra, 2<sup>nd</sup> Division - Kukes, 4<sup>th</sup> Division - Korca; 5<sup>th</sup> Division - Gjirokastra and 8<sup>th</sup> Division - Tirana).

A colleague of DA suggested that what perhaps the AAF should do is to scrap what we have and start again from scratch. Clearly errors were made at the outset when ranks were reinstated and a substantial number of individuals were made officers when most probably they should have become NCOs. DA's thought is to detail a salary scale and other incentives for military service and see what can be supported in present terms.

RPT# 150  
DATE: 09OCT96

## CONVERSATIONS IN BELGRADE

**Summary:** A former Albania-based colleague of Defence Advisor (DA), most recently based in Belgrade, reported that the German Military Attaché in Belgrade had voiced his concern at American "influence" in Europe and in Albania in particular, noting that the Europeans needed to become more involved in Europe.

**Details:** Defence Advisor met with a former Tirana based colleague (the former European Community Monitoring Mission Chief) on the evening of 8 October. Colleague departed Tirana some months ago for assignment to Belgrade. Three days after arriving in Belgrade, colleague received a telephone call from the German Military Attaché asking for an appointment. DA's colleague explained that he had only been in Belgrade for three days and therefore knew very little. The German Military Attaché responded that he did not want to talk about Yugoslavia but rather Albania. The meeting took place the following day. The German Military Attaché asked DA's former colleague about the extent of US American influence in Albania. DA's colleague responded that there was only a very limited American military presence (the DATT, DA and MLT). The thrust of the German's message was that the Germans were becoming increasingly concerned at the extent of influence exerted by the Americans in Europe and as a whole, and in Albania in particular.

**Comments:** DA has maintained for some time now, that the German Army is slowly taking over here in Tirana. This process, DA believes, has been speeded up following the United States expressed displeasure following the 26 May elections. The Vice Chief of the General Staff (Armand Vincani) and the newly appointed 32 year-old commander of the Albanian Navy (Admiral Edmund Zhupani) are both products of the German military school system. DA has also noted an increased number of German officers in and around the Defence Ministry. Yesterday, when DA arrived in the office, DA met a German lieutenant-colonel in the parking lot. He explained to DA that he was a military advisor and would be working in the ministry. His responsibility, he said, was to look at the organisation of the brigades and divisions. DA suggested that it might be a good idea if we talked about where we both saw the Albanian Army was going. The lieutenant-colonel agreed. DA made this request known to the minister's Chef du Cabinet but as yet has been told nothing. DA is not surprised that no one on the American side knew about this assignment. It appears also to be news to all of DA's main contacts. DA is assuming that this officer has been seconded to the General Staff where they need all the assistance they can get, particularly as it pertains to the organisation of the General Staff. What concerns DA, and not having spoken with the officer DA's concerns may be premature, is that DA continues to maintain that a conventionally organised force, along either US or German lines, is not something which Albania can afford and which furthermore will not pose any degree of deterrence.

Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

RPT# 151

DATE: 10OCT96

## IMPRESSIONS OF THE SOUTH

**Summary:** Defence Advisor (DA), in conjunction of the recent visit of former Office of Strategic Services (OSS) LTC "Buck" Smith, has twice been south to Gjirokaster and Saranda. Report provides some impressions from the journey.

**Details:** Among the greatest challenges while serving in Albania is driving, especially for extended distances. The distance from Tirana to Gjirokaster (via Durres - Fier - Mallakaster (Mallakaster is an environmental nightmare) - Tepelene) is a mere 225kms. Driving time is 5½ hours. The road is generally some 5m in width with 2m shoulders and improves the closer one gets to Gjirokaster. It is another hour from Gjirokaster (over the mountain) to Saranda (60kms). Compared to other roads in Albania both roads are relatively straightforward. The road from Saranda up the coast (to Tirana via Vlore is 290kms) is spectacular and at times exhilarating! It took DA four hours from Saranda to Llogara which is just on the other side of the pass. Average speed is approximately 25kms per hour. It is another hour from Llogara on to Vlora and Valona. The coastal road in places does not exceed 3m but there are places to pull off. Unless one is especially bold, DA strongly suggests driving this road from south to north as one is then on the inside. Significantly less of a white knuckle trip. On DA's most recent trip there was an excursion to Kuc. The distance to Kuc from the main road is 32kms. Driving time was 1½ hours. Kuc was once the centre of communist activities in Albania and there still remain faded slogans which attest to this fact.

DA and group spent the first night at the Australian-Albanian guest house (\$25 per bed) in Saranda and managed a side trip to the 5<sup>th</sup> Century BC digs at Butrinit (Roman Buthrotum) presently being financed by the British Rothschild family. The second night was spent at a small hotel on the beach in Himare (\$20 per room). The coast of southern Albania is spectacular and remains unspoilt. There are few discarded cars and other refuse which becomes so prevalent as one approaches Tirana. The old naval base at Porto Palermo has been purchased by the Rogner Hotel Group. DA is also informed that a German company intends construction, on a lavish scale, for German holidayers to the immediate south of Saranda.

DA and group visited Dhermi. It transpired that LTC Smith's contact in Dermi was in fact the son of the man who had been among "Buck" Smith's primary points of contact. It was a remarkably emotional reunion, especially for the Albanians. This man's father had been shot two years after Col Smith's visit.

(During the trip we met three families, all of whom had had a close relative shot. One had a sister killed by a German grenade during the war. The other two simply stated that their relatives, in one case a brother and in the other a father, were shot. It was never clear who had done the shooting although it clearly was not the Wehrmacht.)

In Dhermi the group was taken to the house where LTC Smith was stashed and shown, with considerable glee by the Albanians, and embarrassing to "Buck", a bullet hole in the ceiling. This was a story about which we knew nothing but which Col Smith 'fessed up to. He had been cleaning a rifle. Having pulled back the bolt of a rifle, and noting that nothing was ejected from the chamber, he assumed that

the rifle was empty. When he pulled the trigger it became clear that the extractor had malfunctioned and indeed the weapon was loaded. The hole is still in the ceiling. (DA is delighted to note that DA is not the only one whose career has been punctuated by incidents of this nature.) The furnishings of the house were interesting and eclectic. There was an expensive Sony hi-fi system, Meissen-like figurines, Chinese vases, Italian silver and modernistic bedroom furnishing. It was, all in all, suggestive of a reasonably prosperous life. DA also noted that three generations were living under the same roof.

The contact in Dukati also knew of the saga of LTC Smith and the nurses and had been visited by nurse Jensen during her 1995 trip to Albania. This individual, however, was distinctly dissatisfied with the Berisha regime and stated that he would never vote for President Berisha again, but added that he would also never vote for the Socialists. His complaint was that he had two houses in Vlora which had been confiscated during the Hoxha era and which he had tried in vain to have returned to him. He was also on a personal crusade to have the remains of a brother buried in an American military cemetery in Italy returned to him.

**Comments:** DA likes the south but believes that it will shortly become tacky. Nice empty beaches. Driving in Albania requires total concentration. The only time that DA was distracted on the most recent journey south was on a straight stretch of road when there was no on-coming traffic. DA elected to light his pipe. This resulted in the death of a dog which appeared out of nowhere and ambled across the road. Attempts to straddle the animal proved unsuccessful.

RPT# 152

DATE: 12OCT96

**THE WEEK THAT WAS**

**Summary:** It is thought that there will be fewer obvious problems associated with the up-coming elections as certain lessons were learnt from the last exercise; a German Army lieutenant-colonel has been assigned for two months. He will be working in the ministry but attempts by DA to discover where remain unsatisfied (see Report 150). There was a bomb scare on 10 October but there has been no further revelations and/or details. The Brits are becoming increasingly discouraged in trying to forge a relationship with the AAF; and at least Under Minister Moisiu knows what we should be doing apropos morale.

**Details:**

**The Elections:** DA has had several conversations pertaining to the 20 October local elections with individuals who were involved in the 26 May effort, and will be involved in monitoring next weekend. All conversations to date bring to mind Bob Newhart's skit, "the child psychologist" in which the mother is complaining that her child steals. Newhart's psychiatrist tells the distraught mother not to worry as either the child will be caught or become more proficient. All involved in this round, state that the lessons of the last iteration have been taken to heart and that there will not be the same blatant irregularities. The actual counting, they suggest, will be interesting. Generally there is significantly less discussion in the ministry about the 20 October efforts, and the military's participation in Peshkopi/Bulqize is notably less obvious.

**The German Military Advisor:** Report 150 addresses the arrival of a German military advisor. DA has now twice asked the Chef du Cabinet for access. DA understands the officer is posted to the ministry for a period of two months and other than the conversation in the parking lot, DA is unaware of additional details apropos the officer's assignment instruction. What the Chef du Cabinet indicated he was doing, and what the officer himself indicated he was doing, seem to be at a variance. DA will continue to push for a meeting.

**The Bomb Scare:** On the evening of 10 October, at approximately 2030hrs, reportedly someone called in a bomb threat. The bomb was supposed to be located in the park across from the Dajti Hotel which is some 300m from the ministry. Apparently some buildings were evacuated. The word appears not to have reached the Defence Ministry where DA and LTC Asllani were translating a speech for Under Minister Moisiu. Nothing further has been heard of the incident.

**Cancellation Of The British Drill & Ceremonies Team:** For sometime now, DA has been pushing the arrival of a British drill and ceremonies team, believing that it would be good for morale. It has been delayed time and time again. It appears now to be cancelled by the minister. The rationale is that the Albanians are developing their own new drill and ceremonies. DA's concern is that if the Albanians are trying now to look like an army other than one with ties to the Eastern-European camp, it is doubtful that in their new iteration drill and ceremony will be distinctly different from what it was in Hoxha's heyday. Also DA believed that this would have had a long term effect on morale in the guard battalion - foiled again.

British Unhappiness With The Mil-To-Mil Relationship: Recently two British infantry squads under their company commander, a major (Anglian Regiment) came to Albania for "adventure" training. "Adventures" they had - rucksacks, passports and money stolen - but few were related to the "adventure training" that they had in mind. They did manage to climb Mount Korabi on the Macedonian border (2,754m). Their activities had been coordinated with the Foreign Affairs Division who appear to have characteristically told the Operations Directorate nothing. As a consequence, the British are cancelling other planned activities of this nature. DA ultimately had seven Brits camping in DA's house for two nights.

Conversation With Minister Moisiu: A recent conversation with Under Minister Moisiu was interesting. It points out that there is at least one individual in the ministry who understands leadership and how to motivate people - but then Alfred Moisiu was once a professional army officer.

**Comments:** The issue of simple and inexpensive means through which to increase the morale of the army - unit patches, rank for conscripts, letters of appreciation/commendations, visit by the "Sociology Directorate" (now the "Inner-Man Directorate) etc, continues to be something that both the "civilians" in charge of the military as well as "responsible" officers disregard. DA spoke with a former conscript who, when asked about assuming increased responsibility while a conscript said: "What for? I work longer hours and am responsible for a squad and I get nothing in return!" For the geographically minded, apparently Mount Korabi was re-measured and is now reportedly the highest mountain in the Balkans. DA thinks that 200m have been added to the mountain's summit.

Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

RPT# 154

DATE: 18OCT96

## THE 26 FEBRUARY '96 VEFA EXPLOSION REVISITED

**Summary:** At least seven individuals, who have been arrested, have been implicated in the 26 February bombing of the Vefa supermarket in Tirana. Also, according to the Albanian press, Enver Hoxha's son-in-law, the architect Klement Kolaneci, has been implicated.

**Details:** During the Albanian television evening news broadcast on 16 October, it was announced that certain individuals had been arrested and charged with the 26 February Vefa bombing which left four persons dead and 27 persons injured. On the following day, 17 October, the Albanian press carried additional details. A total of 14 persons have been arrested, the names of seven of which have been made public. All individuals arrested belong to a terrorist group identified as the "Albanian Organisation for the Revenge of Justice". This group has been responsible for a series of incidents which have been enumerated by the local press as follows:

- 4 July 1992 - armed robbery of firearms from a warehouse in Linze.
- 29 January 1993 - robbery of \$320,000 from the Savings Bank in Tirana.
- 17 December 1993 - armed robbery of Swissair's Tirana office.
- 8 August 1994 - armed robbery of Malev's (Hungarian Airlines) offices in Tirana (\$24,000 was taken).
- 10 December 1993 and 12 July 1994 - armed robbery of API (Albanian-Italian Petroleum) offices in Vlora (\$45,000 was taken).
- 20 January 1995 - armed robbery of the Vlora Savings Bank (\$18,000 stolen).
- 8 March 1995 - armed robbery resulting in a death at the Gjallica Company's offices in Vlora (\$110,000 taken).
- 13 April 1995 - armed robbery and murder of a VEFA company employee (\$140,000 stolen).
- 31 October 1995 - kidnapping for a ransom of \$200,000.
- 26 February 1996 - bombing of the Tirana VEFA supermarket, 4 persons killed and 27 injured.
- 18 April 1996 - armed robbery of the State Bank of Vlora (\$300,00 taken).
- 26 January 1996 - armed robbery of the VEFA Company's offices in Vlora (\$140,000 taken).
- 26 July 1996 - assassination of prison director Colonel Bujar Kaloshi.

Two sons of a former director of the Sigurimi (Aredin Shyti) have been identified as being involved in the "Albanian Organisation for the Revenge of Justice", Orik and Lert Shyti. Orik Shyti has been identified as the organisation's director. Lert Shyti is identified as a member of the criminal cell of the organisation. The reported goal of the organisation is the destabilisation of the Albanian Government. This is to be brought about by the assassination of selected individual in the Interior Ministry. Other individuals named as members of the organisation are Altin Arapi, Enkelejd Agaj, Nikolin Novruzi, Gentian Caka and Kreshnic Spahiu.

Also arrested appears to have been Enver Hoxha's son-in-law, the architect Klement Kolaneci. (Kolaneci is married to Hoxha's daughter Pranvera, who is also an architect.) Kolaneci, it is reported, knew Aredin Shyti and has been accused of having \$600,000 in a safe in his house in Tirana.

**Comments:** It is difficult to judge the reaction in Tirana to these arrests. This is partially due to the timing. The arrest of Kolaneci seems to be somewhat speculative as it is suggested that while indeed he knew the Shyti family, he knew them in a professional capacity as a well-respected and talented architect, as is his wife Pranvera. As additional details unfold, DA will forward them on.



RPT# 155  
DATE: 19OCT96

## **PONDERINGS**

**Summary:** DA has been giving additional thought to the role of the MLT and continues to believe that ultimately, what is needed by the Albanian Armed Forces, is training vice peacekeeping. "When building a house," said a senior and well respected officer, "you must build the walls before the roof".

### **Details:**

The Military Liaison Team (MLT): DA is led to understand that DA's recent reporting on conversations with the minister vis-à-vis the MLT (Report 143) have not been received altogether too kindly. It is DA's view that DA has an obligation to report as accurately as possible conversations which take place within the ministry. The minister has been unhappy with the MLT for some time and on the subject of exercises, continues to maintain that the only people who benefit from joint exercises are the Americans. It has been DA's position in all conversations with the minister, that the MLT has been of considerable benefit to the Albanian Armed Forces, but the relationship with the MLT has arrived at a point in time when the Albanians must start to play a greater role in deciding what is and what is not needed. This has been suggested to the minister, and DA believes that once the Albanians start to actively influence "events", the minister's unhappiness will be set aside. This should have been emphasised in any reporting subsequent to DA's report of 20 September (Report 143). It is for this reason that in the future, representatives from the AAF's Operations and Long-Range Planning Directorates, as well as the DATT, SAO and MLT Chief, will be brought together for discussions as they may pertain to future "events". Apropos the minister's comments on joint exercises only being of benefit to the USA, DA does not find himself in full agreement with the minister having spoken to various individuals, officers and NCOs alike, who have participated in such exercises. All report benefits although most usually on a personal, vice an institutional basis. DA recently attended the opening ceremonies of the German-Albanian "Mati-96" exercise. DA believes that to some extent the minister's concerns are justified and what we must do in the Defence Ministry is to institutionalise the lessons learnt from joint exercises throughout the AAF. This is going to require the Operations Directorate becoming more involved in disseminating lessons learnt and probably the creation of an Albanian training team. The fundamental problem, of course, is that what the Albanian Armed Forces need is training, and that is something that cannot be undertaken by the MLT programme as presently configured.

The Visitor: Mid-way through the writing of this report, a colonel from the Operations Directorate, indeed the Chief of the Operations Directorate wandered in. He wanted to talk about the army. DA stated at the outset that DA had been tasked by the minister to provide the minister DA's vision of what the AAF should look like circa 2005. DA stated that in general DA saw the AAF as a small, mobile, amorphous regular armed forces, supplemented by reserves and territorials. DA's visitor was in full agreement and was disturbed that in process of reformation, reserves and territorial forces had been wholly removed. His concern was that ultimately it would be the reserves and territorials who would defend the country. DA also addressed DA's persistent recommendation to the minister that the best and the brightest (Report 148) needed to sit down and among themselves decide on

how best to defend the country. DA asked the visitor if this had ever been done. He said that it had not. He then added that he would welcome such a forum as only then would he have the possibility of speaking out about how best to reorganise the AAF. "Now," he said, "I am very restricted in what I can say." This officer went on to say that what the AAF really needed was not more "peacekeeping", but training. DA indicated his agreement but added that this was not possible.

Perhaps We Are Burying The Albanians: A Western military officer suggested to DA the other day that perhaps we are throwing so much at the Albanians that they are simply inundated. He may well be correct. Part of the problem seems to be that as long as the minister insists on doing everything himself, it is unlikely that we are going to work our way out of this problems.

Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

RPT# 156

DATE: 21OCT96

### **MEICO PROBLEMS HIGHLIGHTED**

**Summary:** DA has been provided through the e-mail an item entitled "Albanian Defence Minister accused in \$5m scandal". Military Export Import Company (MEICO) director has stated that the issue, while "difficult, is not a problem".

**Details:** The article which appeared at the following address: <ftp:ubvm.cc.buffalo.edu/albania> under Albanews - Friday 18 October reads: "Albanian Defence Minister accused in \$5m scandal". About \$5m given by two state-owned banks to the Albanian Defence Ministry trading company MEICO has disappeared, Koha Jone reported on 15 October. According to the paper, Defence Minister Safet Zhulali agreed to give the former premises of the Military Studies Institute to the banks as compensation. MEICO failed to return one-year credits of \$3m from the Albanian Savings Bank and \$2m from the National Savings Bank it received in 1993. In a meeting with Zhulali, Finance Minister Ridvan Bode, and National Bank Governor Kritaq Luniku, Albanian President Sali Berisha insisted on a quick solution of the scandal before the elections of 20 October - Dukagjin Goprani.

**Comments:** The Military Import Export Company has had a somewhat troubled past. The Communications Director, Colonel Arjan Sinoimeri has recently been appointed as the MEICO Director. The fact that the story was reported in Koha Jone is also interesting. Koha Jone, while professing to be against everyone, has a distinctly anti-President Berisha flavour. At the same time it is the most widely read newspaper in Albania. While DA has been informed by other journalists that they have been informed that there is no substance to the story, conversations with Col Sinoimeri suggests otherwise.

RPT# 157

DATE: 21OCT96

**CONVERSATIONS**

**Summary:** On 19 October DA had a wide ranging luncheon conversation with MG Adem Copani, Military Advisor to the President and subsequently an evening meeting with MG (Retd) Perlat Sula. DA notes a distinct change in MG Copani's previously rosy prognosis for the future of the AAF.

**Details:** DA lunched with Presidential Military Advisor MG Adem Copani on 19 October.

The Resignation Of MG Perlat Sula: MG Copani indicated his astonishment when presented with a request for retirement pertaining to MG Perlat Sula. Copani and DA remain in complete agreement apropos Sula's leaving the army. The problem, said Copani, was that the request had already been approved by the Minister of Defence, Prime Minister and the Chief of the General Staff (CoGS). MG Copani stated that he kept the papers for a week while attempting to meet with Sula. Ultimately he had little choice other than forwarding the papers to President Berisha for approval.

Assignment Of Secretary Of State For Defence - Leonard Demi: DA asked MG Copani about the assignment of Leonard Demi as the Secretary of State for Defence. MG Copani noted that in an effort to improve the state of relations between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence, a senior individual from the Foreign Ministry should be assigned to the Defence Ministry and similarly a senior officer from the armed forces should be assigned to the Foreign Ministry. As it turned out, only a senior representative from the Foreign Ministry was assigned. MG Copani added that Minister Zhulali wanted to have former Vice Minister Luan Lazimi reassigned to the Defence Ministry following his assignment to the Marshall Centre. Copani thought that this probably would not take place. (Leonard Demi is firmly ensconced in Mr Lazimi's former office.)

Reporting, Organisation & The CoGS: MG Copani indicated that presently the Chief of the General Staff is answerable directly to both the President and to the Defence Minister. What was emphasised was that the CoGS was not required to go through Minister Zhulali when he wanted to meet with the President. This MG Copani thought was incorrect, believing that the CoGS should report to the President through the Minister of Defence. MG Copani was also concerned that field commanders reported directly to the Minister and were not required to report through the established military chain of command. Copani offered that he thought that the chain of command should run from the Defence Minister, through the CoGS to elements of the AAF and that similarly the units of the AAF should report to the Minister through the General Staff. Copani went on to say that six months ago he had provided input apropos the reorganisation of the staff and had drafted a paper which addressed pay scales for all ranks. He has heard nothing apropos either recommendation.

Civil Control Of The Military: MG Copani and DA addressed the issue of civil control of the military. MG Copani did not think that the concept was fully understood as participation by the uniformed services has been marginalised, and this, suggested MG Copani, was attributable directly to the CoGS (see comments). In the same vein

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

DA asked if there was presently a functional promotion system (DA believing that there is not). MG Copani stated that while there is a system it is not enforced. He was distinctly critical of the appointment of 32 year-old Admiral Edmund Zhupani as Commander of the Navy noting that he had punched none of the requisite tickets, and that this represented a clear case of violation of standing orders.

Dinner With MG (Retd) Perlat Sula: Recently retired (July 96 - see Report 116) MG Sula, DA's former counterpart, came for dinner with DA on the evening of 20 October. While DA is not permitted to talk to serving general officers about the future structure of the army, Sula is now retired (5 July 96). DA passed on to MG Sula MG Copani's request that he call Copani. MG Sula has still not told anyone about the basis of his sudden retirement (and DA continues to think that the Chief of the General Staff called his bluff). DA assumes that Sula, ever the professional, will say nothing until he has met with the minister. This is unlikely anytime soon as the minister will not call him, and Sula will not call the minister. Central, however, to Sula's unhappiness with the general state of the armed forces, has been the performance of the CoGS. Sula noted that in one of DA's earliest meetings with the CoGS, one at which Sulk was present, DA had asked the CoGS about the basis of the AAF going from nine (9) divisional entities to five (5) - why not four or six? While DA remembers that the question was never answered, DA was unaware that it may have soured CoGS. (DA remains convinced, and this conviction is supported by most field commanders and by Sula, that the figure of five (5) had no real basis.) Sula too is convinced that the CoGS is not providing the requisite degree of leadership.

**Comments:** DA obviously needs to meet with MG Copani more often. Some months ago DA had suggested to the minister that the army might be well advised to bring Copani back into the General Staff as the Operations Director. This was rejected by the minister, and when DA mentioned this recommendation to Copani at lunch on 19 October, Copani clearly wanted nothing to do with the General Staff. Too bad as Copani is one of the best and the brightest. The whole issue of the application of civilian control of the AAF continues to irk DA. When one is engaged in philosophical change to the extent that is the case in Albania today, DA wonders if pure civilian control of the military (and the Albanian model seems to preclude anyone in real authority who ever had anything to do with the army) is not perhaps something that one works towards and that is achieved as a professional bureaucracy in a "democratic" tradition starts to exert itself. To simply state that civilian control of the military is an essential element at a period in time when democratic institutions are in their earliest stages, may in fact lead to situations like we presently have in Albania in which the uniformed services have been marginalised and morale in the armed forces plummets. Perhaps at some level, it takes a soldier to understand soldiers. Perhaps this is the function of the Chief of the General Staff. If so, the road ahead remains uncertain.

RPT# 158  
DATE: 22OCT96

**MEICO CONTINUED**

**Summary:** Defence Advisor spoke with Colonel Kolasi (Strategic Plans) this morning about the 15 October Koha Jone report (see Report 156) which asserted financial problems associated with the Defence Ministry and the Ministry's Military Export Import Company (MEICO). Col Kolasi, who is involved intimately with the finances of the army, indicates that the money was in fact provided to the Defence Ministry, but that it was provided in the form of a supplement to the defence budget and that the government, distinct from the Defence Ministry, was on the line for repaying the loan.

**Comments:** None.

RPT# 159

DATE: 23OCT96

**22 OCTOBER MEETING WITH MINDEF**

**Summary:** The minister was very happy with the results of the 20 October local elections. He is looking forward to his trip to the United States and hopes that Albania-American elections are now back on track. It is doubtful that he will take time for a physical while in Washington, and delegation of authority continues to be a problem.

**Details:** DA met briefly with Minister Zhulali on 22 October. The primary topic was the recent elections and the minister's obvious elation at the success of the "Democrats". The minister indicated that he was looking forward to his trip to Washington and thought that the relationship with the United States should now be back on track. DA urged the minister to take the necessary time to avail himself of the facilities at Walter Reed for a check-up. DA doubts that he will as the minister kept indicating that he did not have the necessary time. (Quite possibly he may not want to know the real state of his health.) DA suggested that he owed it not only to himself and his family, but also to the armed forces to have a check-up. The minister responded that he had a great deal of work and possibly could not take the time. In that case, suggested DA, perhaps the minister should give more thought to delegating some of his responsibilities. To this the minister stated that the ministry had not yet reached the point at which he could afford to delegate any of his responsibilities. Also of note during the meeting was a brief interruption by the Secretary of State for Defence, Leonard Demi. Mr Demi too was exuberant about the results of the elections and stated as he left that obviously the results of the 20 October elections demonstrate that the May elections were a proper reflection of the desires of the Albanian people".

**Comments:** DA continues to be concerned by the minister not being able to bring himself to acknowledge that there are many in the armed forces who are quite capable of moving the AAF in the correct direction. Continuing to attempt to single-handedly run the entire army results in the staff never being exercised, lessons learnt being integrated into the AAF, and initiative, which is already a problem area, being further stifled. Additionally, until the minister, whom DA parenthetically continues to maintain is an extraordinary man, comes to the realisation the most important member of any armed force are the simple soldiers, the realisation of the "new" Albanian Army will continue to be an illusion.

RPT# 164

DATE: 28OCT96

**MORE CONVERSATIONS**

**Summary:** DA met with Admiral (Commodore) Zhupani, MG Shehi and, at the request of the Director of the European Community Monitoring Mission (ECMM) in Tirana, with two Finnish officers from UNPREDEP's Nordic Battalion based in Skopje who were interested in knowing more about the Albanian Armed Forces and the extent to which they posed a threat to UNPREDEP's mission in FYROM.

**Details:**

General: At DA's brief office call with the Minister on 22 October (Report 159), DA asked for permission to meet with several general officers DA has not yet met. Permission was granted. The officers were Major-General Baki Shehi (Chief of Logistics), Admiral Edmond Zhupani (CNO), MG Agim Buruti (Chief of Air Services) and the Commander of the Korca (4<sup>th</sup>) Division, BG Shkelqim Nure, who has the reputation as being the foremost commander in the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF). MG Buruti, it turns out is presently temporarily hospitalised. DA will visit Korca and environs following the minister's return from Washington.

MG Baki Shehi: MG Shehi returned several months ago from the Turkish War College. He was sent to Turkey in the first place as he had a bad "biografi", meaning that during the course of his career in the past regime, he had been a political officer. ("Biografi" is almost as important today as it was in the past although the skeletons are different.) The plan appears to have been for MG Shehi to retire when he returned from Turkey. Instead, after having sat in "limbo" for two months following his return, he was assigned as the Director of Logistics. MG Shehi is first and foremost an infantryman and has had no experience as a logistician. He has a reputation as a very hard-working officer. He likes his new assignment and the challenges presented. MG Shehi's most consistent theme was the need for the AAF to address the problem of infrastructure and of doing more for the men and women of all ranks in the AAF. MG Shehi's relationship with the Under Minister for Economics (Bashkim Shehu - see Report 14) - like DA's, seems to be "proper and correct", ergo they talk when the need presents itself but no more. DA and MG Shehi discussed everything from trying to vary the menu in the MOD Mess-Hall, even if it means asking the officers to chip in a little, to trying to do something about the barracks, clothing and rations for soldiers outside of Tirana. There was also some discussion about unit morale, rank for conscript NCOs, and the need to change the hat badge of the AAF. DA explained to MG Shehi that earlier this year DA had briefed the MOD and the CoGS on establishing an Army Support Command as a separate entity from the G4 staff. While this was approved by the minister, it too was never implemented. DA will be talking to the MLT to see if we cannot try to organise several "on the job familiarisation" days for MG Shehi, preferably with an operational US unit.

Admiral Zhupani: This was DA's first meeting with Admiral Zhupani. DA found him to be very intelligent but perhaps a little awed to find himself at the age of 32 commanding the Albanian Navy. He is clearly the minister's man. Prior to assuming command of the navy he travelled frequently with the minister. While DA was accompanied by DA's assistant, LTC Asllani, Admiral Zhupani spoke almost entirely in very readily understandable English. When DA entered, DA noticed for



## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

the first time the Albanian Navy's white ensign. DA stated that DA was unaware of the fact that the Albanian Navy had a white ensign. It was, said Admiral Zhupani, something acquired during Albania's "Russian" period. However, added the admiral, there are those who want the flag discarded and for everyone to have the same flag. DA asked if there were any military persons on this committee. The admiral responded that there were not. DA's advice was to keep the flag, pointing out that many navies had a white ensign. This led to a conversation about the importance of symbols to increase troop morale (ribbons, stripes, letters of commendation and the like). Admiral Zhupani indicated that the current three naval districts are going to be reduced to two (2). He anticipated, however, at least four (4) small coast guard stations (a small administrative office, a barracks and transport, for when a ship is away from its main base). We discussed in general the needs of the Albanian Coast Guard and the problems associated with maintaining the old Chinese patrol craft.

UNPREDEP: DA was asked by the Chief of the European Community Monitoring Mission (ECMM) to chat with two officers from the Nordic Battalion in Skopje (Captain Marco Mingolla and Lieutenant Maara Mattila). They were interested in Albanian military deployments on the FYROM border with a view towards stability along the border. DA informed the two officers that in fact the AAF was no longer on the border, their mission having been assumed by the border police who come under the control of the Ministry of the Interior. They also asked about stability in Albania in the context of unhappiness in the armed forces. DA indicated that DA saw no reason for any concern, as civilian control of the military was becoming a fact of life, and the various divisional commanders are responsive directly to the Minister of Defence.

**Comments:** DA is finding that while officers continue to seek out DA for conversations, they prefer to do so when they are alone. DA had invited the MLT Chief for the lunch with LG Shehi but was quietly told that the general would prefer to go it alone. DA believes that many officers are becoming frustrated by their not being permitted that latitude to "fix" even the AAF's most rudimentary shortcomings. It is not that officers are not prepared to accept civilian control over the military, it is rather the condescending attitude that has been taken by many towards the military services. Seit Hassan (another math teacher - albeit not from Peshkopi), who is responsible for the Defence University is frequently cited as a case in point. Admiral Zhupani is not well regarded in the AAF. This is presumably associated with his meteoric rise through the ranks without having had the benefit of significant command. He also has to deal with Admiral Kuchana's popularity. In all probability, command of the navy should have gone to Captain Fila. It is DA's intention to encourage Admiral Zhupani to spend as much time as he can with sailors at the grass-roots level as in this manner, through exhibited leadership, he can perhaps compensate for his age and his general lack of practical experience.

RPT# 165  
DATE: 28OCT96

### **THE SHAPE OF THE ARMY - A GERMAN VIEW**

**Summary:** DA met briefly with LTC Karrer, the newly appointed German officer assigned to the General Staff. LTC Karrer stated that the minister did not like DA's suggestions that the AAF should continue to have "irregular" formations.

**Details:** DA's brief meeting with LTC Karrer this morning (28 October) was probably one of the most illuminating since DA's arrival 19 months ago. LTC Karrer had looked at portions of DA's report which addresses the AAF at the end of the first year (Report 144). LTC Karrer stated that the minister would not be happy with DA's proposal that the AAF should consist of a small, mobile, well trained regular force supplemented by irregular formations, the focus of the minister's unhappiness being focused on "irregular" formations. DA responded that DA was aware of the minister's sentiments but had to date been provided no guidance other than having been directed to inform the minister how DA viewed the organisation of the new army. DA added that DA did not think that whether or not the minister liked DA's recommendations weighed very heavily in the formulation of DA's recommendations. DA added that given the lack of any near or mid-term threat and the size of the Albanian defence budget, it did not seem to make very much sense, financially or intellectually, to undertake the creation of a NATO style main force army. LTC Karrer stated that the problem with "irregular" formations was that they did not lend themselves to ultimate integration into NATO and other European force structures. DA countered by saying that DA thought that the intent of NATO compatibility was being misread. What was required was the countries aspiring towards membership in NATO be able to communicate and operate with NATO forces, but that the composition and organisation of the forces was not itself central to ultimate integration. We left it at that.

**Comments:** DA does not know if the Germans are going to give the minister what he wants or what they think is best. Perhaps, in this case, they are both the same. Clearly, in the German view, anything "irregular" is out. Perhaps also this is why the minister has never convened the meeting of field commanders that DA has asked for since his arrival. DA intends to continue to urge the creation of a small main force with reserve and territorial appendages.

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

RPT# 167

DATE: 20NOV96

**ALBANIA & THE "TRUE BELIEVER"**

**Summary:** In conjunction with attempting to better understand what is going on in Albania today, DA rediscovered Eric Hoffer's "The True Believer". DA forwards for background information only excerpts from the book as DA believes it is helpful in understanding the intellectual turmoil in Albania.

**Details:**

"The True Believer" by Eric Hoffer, Perennial Library, Harper & Row, New York (1951).

2-7-1: "All mass movements ... breed fanaticism, enthusiasm, fervent hope, hatred and intolerance." (preface, p9)

2-17-2: "(1) frustration of itself, without any proselytising prompting from the outside, can generate most of the characteristics of the true believer. (2) that an effective technique of conversion consists basically in the inculcation and fixation of proclivities and responses indigenous to the frustrated mind." (preface, p10)

2-17-3: Many who join a revolutionary movement do so by the prospects of sudden and often spectacular change in the conditions of their lives. (p13)

2-17-4: The fact that both the French and Russian Revolutions turned into nationalistic movements certainly suggests that "nationalism" is the most "copious and durable" source of mass enthusiasm. It must be tapped if the changes suggested by revolutionary enthusiasm are to be consummated. (p14)

2-17-5: The well adjusted and happy is generally content with the world about him. The frustrated favour radical change and they do not look within themselves to find it. Those who fail invariably blame the world for their failures. (p16)

2-17-6: "Those who are awed by their surroundings do not think of change, no matter how miserable their condition." (p17)

2-17-7: "There is a conservatism of the destitute as profound as the conservatism of the privileged, and the former is as much a factor in the perpetuation of a social order as the latter." (p17)

2-17-8: Faith in the future is a greater motivator than the possession of "instruments of power". (p18)

2-17-9: "Those who would transform a nation ... must know how to kindle and fan an extravagant hope." (p18)

2-17-10: For men to charge off into areas of great change, while they must be discontented, they are not destitute and they must believe in the prospects of the future. It is also helpful if they are ignorant of the difficulties involved in their great undertaking. Experience is a handicap. (p20)

2-17-11: The means of stopping a mass movement is to substitute one movement for another. (p27)

2-17-12: "There is a tendency to judge a race, a nation or any distinct group by its least worthy members ... while unfair ... the character and destiny of a group are often determined by its inferior elements." (p29)

2-17-13: "The discarded and rejected are often the raw material of a nation's future." (p30)

2-17-14: The following are the most frequent "True Believer". The poor, misfits, outcasts, minorities, adolescent youth, ambitious, those in the grip of some obsession, the impotent, the inordinately selfish, the bored and sinners. (p30)

2-17-15: "It is not actual suffering but the taste of better things which excites people to revolt." (p33)

2-17-16: "A rising mass movement preaches immediate hope ... Every established mass movement has its distant hope, its brand of dope to dull the impatience of the masses and reconcile them with their lot in life." (p34, 35)

2-17-17: "Where freedom is real, equality is the passion of the masses. Where equality is real, freedom is the passion of the minority. Equality without freedom creates a more stable social pattern than freedom without equality." (p37)

2-17-18: The attitude towards the family is interesting. In almost all instances it was discredited and disrupted. (p40)

2-17-19: To ripen a person for self-sacrifice there must be identification with a collective whole. (p44)

2-17-20: "A rising mass movement attracts and holds a following not by its doctrine and promises but by the refuge it offers from anxieties, barrenness and meaninglessness of an individual existence ... it frees them from their ineffectual selves - and it does this by enfolding and absorbing them into a closely knit and exultant corporate whole." (p44)

2-17-21: In order to understand the nature of a mass movement it is necessary to recognise that its chief preoccupation is to "foster, perfect and perpetuate a facility for united action and self sacrifice". (p57)

2-17-22: To ripen a person for self-sacrifice he must be stripped of his individual identity and distinctness. He must be identified with the collective whole. (p60)

2-17-23: Not only does a mass movement depict the present as mean and miserable it deliberately makes it so. (p66)

2-17-24: "Craving, not having, is the mother of a reckless giving of oneself." (p73)

2-17-25: "Things which are not" are indeed mightier than "things that are". (p73)

2-17-26: "... In order to be effective a doctrine must not be understood, but it has to be believed in. We can be absolutely certain only about things we do not understand. A doctrine that is understood is shorn of its strength." (p76)

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

2-17-27: "It is the heart which is conscious of God, not the reason ..." (p77)

2-17-28: "If a doctrine is not unintelligible it has to be vague; and if neither unintelligible nor vague, it has to be unverifiable. ... When a movement begins to rationalise its doctrine and make it intelligible, it is a sign that its dynamic span is over; that it is primarily interested in stability." (p77)

2-17-29: An active mass movement rejects the present and concentrates on the future. This is the source from which it derives its strength, for it can proceed recklessly with the present - with wealth, health and lives of its followers. But it must act as though it had read the book of the future to the last word. (p78)

2-17-30: "It is the fanatic and the moderate who are poles apart and never meet ..." The opposite of a religious fanatic is not the fanatical atheist but the gentle cynic who cares not whether there is a God or not. The atheist is a religious person, as he believes in atheism. There also appears to be a thin line between violent extreme nationalism and treason for most of the traitors in WWII came from the extreme right. (p81)

2-17-31: While similar, an army is not a mass movement (at least not within the Western traditional sense). The difference is that the army does come to fulfil a need for a new way of life, it is not a road to salvation. It can be used as a stick to shove something down someone's throat but it is mainly an instrument that can be assembled and taken apart at will. It is a temporary instrument. The mass movement seems like an instrument of eternity, and those who join for life. The ex-soldier is a veteran or a hero. The ex-true believer is a renegade. The army bolsters and expands the present. The mass movement destroys the present. When a mass movement becomes pre-occupied with the present it means that it has arrived. It then becomes an institution, an established church etc. (p83)

2-17-32: To the typical general the mass is what his army would turn into without discipline. (p85)

2-17-33: Unifying agents: Hatred (p85), imitation (p94), persuasion and coercion (p97), leadership (p103), action (p111), suspicion (p114), the effects of unification (p116). (p85)

2-17-34: Hatred united the most heterogeneous elements. Ideally it should be a foreigner. (p86-87)

2-17-35: The unified individual is without a distinct self. While they are easily led they are also easily susceptible to foreign influences. Imitativeness gives a unified group flexibility and adaptability. The rapid change in Japan and Turkey is in stark contrast with China, Iran and other such countries who do not have the same sense of unity. (p96-97)

2-17-36: Apropos propaganda: It cannot on its own force itself into unwilling minds, neither can it inculcate something wholly new ... It succeeds where minds are already open. It justifies the "throbbing fears of the frustrated". (p98)

2-17-37: Goebbels: "A sharp sword must always stand behind propaganda if it is to be really effective."<sup>1</sup>

2-17-38: The most decisive of leaders in mass movements seem to have the following characteristics: audacity, a fanatical faith in a holy cause, an awareness of the importance of a close knit collectivity and above all the ability to evoke loyalty and devotion in a group of lieutenants. (p106)

2-17-39: Charlatanism and a perverse self-confidence go a long way as does imitation. (p107-108)

2-17-40: Action is a unifier. There is less distinctness in a genuine man of action than in a thinker or one in whose creativeness flows in communication with the self. One is never really stripped for action unless one is stripped of a distinct and differentiated self. Active people tend toward uniformity. (p111)

2-17-41: Men of thought seldom work well together. Teamwork is rare in the intellectual but common in the man of action. (p111-112)

2-17-42: Suspicion: There is usually prying and spying, tense watching and an awareness of being watched. The surprising thing is that this pathological mistrust leads not to dissension but to strict conformity. (p114)

2-17-43: The effects of unification: The frustrated individual who is taken into a mass movement finds himself no longer frustrated. Rather he finds a new identity and a new life. He is one of the chosen. While his state of mind is the very opposite of that of the frustrated individual; yet he displays, with increasing intensity, all reactions which are symptomatic of inner tension and insecurity. (p116)

2-17-44: Unification is however more of a process of diminution than it is addition. In order to be assimilated into a collective medium a person must be stripped of his individual distinctiveness ... It is doubtful if the ex-communicated priest, the expelled communist or the renegade chauvinist can ever find peace of mind as an autonomous individual. They cannot stand on their own, but must embrace a new cause and attach themselves to a new group. The true believer is eternally incomplete and eternally insecure. (p117)

2-17-45: "The realisation and perpetuation of a mass movement depends upon force. A full-blown mass movement is a ruthless affair, and its management is in the hands of ruthless fanatics who use words only to give an appearance of spontaneity to a consent obtained by coercion." (p119)

2-17-46: The fanatics can only take over when the established order has been undermined and discredited and the allegiance of the masses has been lost. (p119)

2-17-47: Although not categorical, division between men of words, fanatics and men of action follows more or less the following lines. "Men like Gandhi and Trotsky start out as apparently ineffectual men of words and later display exceptional talents as administrators or generals. A man like Mohammed starts out as a man of words, develops into an implacable fanatic and finally reveals a superb practical sense. A fanatic like Lenin is a master of the spoken word, and unequalled as a man of action. What the classifications attempt is that the readying of the ground for a mass movement is done best by men whose chief claim to excellence is their skill in the use of the spoken or written word; that the hatching of the actual movement requires the temperament and talents of the fanatic; and that the final consolidation of the movement is largely the work of practical men of action." (p120)

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

2-17-48: Then there is the matter of the emergence of an articulate minority often the indirect and unwitting creation of the West. (p120-121)

2-17-49: There is a deep seated craving of self doubt in the minds of most men of words, a craving for recognition. There is insecurity at the core of every intellectual be he "creative or non-creative". (p121)

2-17-50: "Vanity," said Napoleon, "made the revolution; liberty was only a pretext." (p121)

2-17-51: What de Remusat said of Thiers is worth nothing: "He had much more vanity than ambition; and he prefers consideration to obedience, and the appearance of power to power itself. Consult him constantly, then do just as you please. He will take more notice of your deference to him than of your actions."<sup>2</sup>

2-17-52: Thoreau: "I believe that what so saddens the reformer is not his sympathy with his fellows in distress, but, though he be the holiest son of God, is his private ail. Let this be righted ... and he will forsake his generous companions without apology." Hoffer then suggests that when his superior status is noted, the man of words, rationalising to whatever extent necessary, usually sides with the strong against the weak.<sup>3</sup>

2-17-53: "The connection between intellectual theoreticians and revolutionary movements ... were conceived not by men of action but by fault finding intellectuals. The generals, industrialists, landowners and businessmen who are considered pillars of patriotism are latecomers who join the movement after it becomes a going concern." (p126)

2-17-54: "Handfuls of impractical men of words were at the beginning of all nationalist movements ... It is the deep-seated craving of the men of words for an exalted status which makes him oversensitive to any humiliation imposed on the class or community to which he belongs however loosely." (p126)

2-17-55: "When the moment is ripe, only the fanatic can hatch a genuine mass movement. Without him the disaffection engendered by militant men of words remains undirected and can vent itself only in pointless and easily suppressed disorders ... Without him there can be no new beginning." (p130)

2-17-56: "The fanatic knows the innermost craving of the masses in action ... Posterity is king; and woe to those, insider and outside the movement, who hug and hang on to the present." (p131)

2-17-57: The fanatics come generally from the non-creative men of words. (p131)

2-17-58: While the creative man of words' passion is to create the non-creative is to destroy. (p131)

2-17-59: Examples of non-creative men of words are Marat, Robespierre, Lenin, Mussolini, Hitler and other Nazis such as Goebbels, Rosenberg, von Shirach, Funk and Streicher. (p132)

2-17-60: "A movement is pioneered by men of words, materialised by fanatics and consolidated by men of action." It was Hitler's fanaticism and his apparent inability to settle down which brought about his ruin. (p134)

2-17-61: The man of action saves the movement from suicidal dimensions and the recklessness of the fanatics. It is however the end of the "dynamic" phase of the movement. With his arrival the vigour of the movement is embalmed and "sealed in sanctified institutions". A religious movement crystallises in a hierarchy and a ritual; a revolutionary movement, in organs of vigilance and administration; a nationalist movement, in government and patriotic institutions. (p135)

2-17-62: "The genuine man of faith is not a man of faith but a man of law." (p136)

2-17-63: Hitler warned that a movement retains its vigour only so long as it can offer nothing in the present - only "honour and fame in the eyes of posterity", and that when it is invaded by those who want to make the most of the present "the 'mission' of such a movement is done for".<sup>4</sup> (p138)

2-17-64: The active phase of a mass movement is bound to seem unpleasant if not downright evil. The fanatic himself is ruthless, self-righteous, credulous, disputatious, petty and rude and prepared to sacrifice relatives and friends in pursuit of his holy cause. (p138-139)

2-17-65: When a mass movement preserves for generations its pattern shaped in its active years, the result is stagnation. (p139)

2-17-66: The active phase of a mass movement is generally sterile. It is the relaxation of collective discipline and liberation of the individual which may bring on the creative impulse. (p140)

2-17-67: While in a struggle against an aggressor, foreign or domestic, or to renovate a backward society, it is reasonably clear when one has arrived. When the object is the creation of a something like a Communist heaven on earth, there is no automatic end. (p142)

**Comments:** Interesting and provocative reading.

## ENDNOTES

---

<sup>1</sup> The Goebbels Diaries, Garden City: Doubleday & Co Inc, (1948), p100.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by Tocqueville, Alexis de, "Recollections", Macmillan Co, New York, (1896), p331.

<sup>3</sup> Thoreau, Henry, "Walden", Modern Library Ed, Random House, New York, (1973), p70.

<sup>4</sup> Hitler, Adolph, "Mein Kampf", Houghton Mifflin Co, Boston, (1943), p105.



RPT# 168  
DATE: 20NOV96

## **THE BALKANS & THEIR IMPACT ON STABILITY**

**Summary:** Report forwards a speech recently given in Rome by a senior member of the Defence Ministry. Stated views of Kosovo and border delineations DA find to be interesting.

### **Details:**

START QUOTE:

#### **New Challenges of the Balkans and Their Impact on Stability**

... I would like to talk about the situation in the Balkans, and about what has been achieved to date in terms of the strengthening of peace and the prevention of further regional conflicts. What I particularly want to address is the problem of Kosovo, which is already assuming international proportions, and for which a peaceful solution must be found in the near term. Continued unrest in Kosovo threatens both regional and European stability.

I mention this, not only because I am an Albanian, but also because the issue is of pivotal importance. Among the unsolved and widely discussed problems of the Balkans, the issue of Kosovo is the most serious. Indeed it is senseless to talk about the Balkans and about the possibilities of regional peace and stability, without at the outset addressing Kosovo.

The future of the Balkans is already one of the most important issues on the tables of diplomatic negotiators. For many years the Balkans has been identified as a "powder-keg", and while I for one find myself simultaneously agreeing and disagreeing with being so identified, the paradox is a reality.

Nationalist tendencies in the Balkans are, and have been, self-evident. They wax and they wane. The net result has been war and bloodshed often without there being any solid basis. A good example of this is former Yugoslavia and Bosnia.

The problems of the Balkans have their origins in the end of the First World War. The delineation of borders of the nations of the Balkans was undertaken in the offices of several European capitals. Countries were intentionally "created" for the purpose of fulfilling conjectural policies and as a means of "rewarding" wartime allies. History has shown that "compensation" is a temporary solution and seldom cures illness.

Albania is the only country in the world to have around it populations of the same nationality. There are 6.5m Albanians of whom only 3.5m actually live in Albania. Kosovo is 90% Albanian. Their Albanians continue to live under the yoke of Serbia. This is a situation which cannot be found in any other country. Such is the level of oppression of the Kosovars, that it must inevitably lead to bloodshed.

The Bosnian problem is in the process of being resolved, and while there remain issues in need of resolution, most are in the process of resolution. At this juncture,

there is one important and widely known item that I would like to mention that I believe to be out of control.

The appearance before the War Crimes Tribunal of individuals who have been charged with crimes against humanity, is not only a human and moral necessity, it also stands as a lesson for all politicians and soldiers. The civilised world is simply not prepared to condone either "adventurers" in support of ill-conceived nationalism, or the thirst of some leaders who seek to achieve their foolish and pompous dreams regardless of their cost in terms of the stark tragedy of human suffering. There is, I believe, in the closing years of this millennium, a need for another iteration of "Nuremberg" specifically dedicated to the Balkans.

Everybody knows that war is destructive and ruinous for both people and for national economies. But what is also destructive are threats caused by the aura of war, of an unknown future, of fear, and of calamities brought about by anxiety, injustice and humiliation. In desperation, the search for solutions plays directly into the hands of extremists. To me, it is imperative that we look at the issues at hand realistically and seek a solution to contradictions and disagreements through the medium of dialogue. To this end, by the combined implications of Dayton, NATO intervention and the central involvement of the United States, we have been able to bring an end to bloodshed in Bosnia and to make possible a peaceful solution in this troubled region.

In the aftermath of Dayton, the situation appears to be stable. But this is because of the efforts of the United States, Western Europe and the countries of the Balkans, to build on what has been made possible and to thereby create an environment of peace and cooperation. I would like to stress that Albania is fully supportive of these efforts. Albania's policies will continue to be dedicated towards cooperation and stability.

During this past spring, Albania initiated and hosted a conference of the ministers of defence of southern Balkan countries. Among the dignitaries at this conference were both Secretary Perry of the United States, and Minister Corcione of Italy. The South Balkan Ministerial, followed by a meeting of the foreign ministers in Sofia, was a new step towards reinforcing the spirit of cooperation and providing at the same time a means of implanting "safety" measures among Balkan countries. The most important element to emerge from this meeting was the expressed desire that tensions be calmed and conflict prevented.

Under the leadership of NATO, not only have defence policies and budgets been made public, there have additionally been a multitude of high level cultural, economic and military visits between countries of the region. Also, intra-regional joint military exercises, dedicated towards coping with the aftermath of natural disasters, have been developed.

These are all actions and initiatives that need to be supported and encouraged. Dialogue and understanding must be an integral aspect of political activities in the Balkans. Balkan politicians themselves must be made to feel more responsible for their actions.

The past four years have been marked by fundamental change in Albania. Albania has signed and is implementing the European convention pertaining to minorities. The Albanian Armed Forces have also been removed from Albania's border regions. We have established exceptionally good relations with the United States, Germany,

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

Italy and other Western countries. At the same time Albania has placed special emphasis on our relations with other countries of the region. I would be remiss if I did not in this same vein underscore Albania's traditional relations with Turkey which continue to grow daily.

It gives me special pleasure to affirm our highly satisfactory relations with Greece. This fact alone will facilitate our finding solutions to any problems which might exist. Indeed, the reality of there being national minorities in both of our countries, has been a bridge of friendship and cooperation. I should like to add that we also continue to experience very good relations with Slovenia, Croatia, FYROM, Bulgaria and Romania.

I would like to reaffirm our participation in the Partnership for Peace (PfP), and in joint activities organised by NATO with Partnership countries. In this context I am talking about exercises, conferences and workshops. They all play a central role in enhancing regional stability and have contributed to the growth of friendship, understanding and confidence among the armies of the countries of the region. The Armed Forces of many nations, among them Albania, Greece, Turkey, FYROM, Romania, Slovenia and Bulgaria, have participated in joint exercises. Through these exercises we have learnt from one another and have been able to exchange experiences.

I should like now to once again return to the issue of Kosovo. As you already know, many concrete steps have already been undertaken with the goal of improving the stability of the Balkans. There are, however, problems which have not yet been resolved, among them, as I have already noted, is a resolution of the Kosovo problem. There are also incredibly complex problems that relate to the reconstruction of Bosnia, the issue of Eastern Slavonia, and the setting aside of personal hostilities that are a consequence of the four years of internecine war.

If the prospects for resolving problems relating to Bosnian reconstruction, Slavonia, and animosities brought about by war are good, the Kosovo issue, by comparison, remains vague and potentially disruptive.

Kosovo was granted autonomy in 1974. Later, Serbia failed to recognise Kosovo's autonomy, and established a discriminative and oppressive military and political regime. To date, there are three variations on this theme.

- The recognition of Kosovo's independence and the accordance of full autonomy.
- The accordance of limited autonomy, particularly as it relates to human rights.
- The issue of Kosovo is an internal Serbian problem.

I don't want to deal with these themes in detail, but I would like to stress that up until now, the realities of life in the Balkans seem to suggest that there are two additional facts which have to be taken into account:

Fact 1: Given the history of enmity in the Balkans, there is a tendency for conflict to quickly escalate into unnecessary bloodshed, excessive cruelty, and the loss of human life, widespread destruction and unspeakable cruelty. It is also a fact that rectification is a lengthy process and invariably requires the intercession of international organisations, as well as the expenditure of considerable sums of

money. The obvious example which springs to mind is Bosnia and the rest of the former Yugoslavia, where a real drama has been playing for the past four years.

Fact 2: Efforts to apply remedies in a timely manner prevent negative trends and thereby avoid the types of problems indicated above. Such an example can be found in the context of the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia (FYROM), which had the potential of being even more of a problem than Bosnia as it would have drawn the entire region into the conflict. For this reason it is imperative that international organisations move to rapidly defuse tensions in Kosovo.

In reality, the Kosovo problem is well-known on the international stage and the situation is accepted as being explosive. This reality has been reflected in numerous international documents which form the judicial basis of the protection of the rights of the people of Kosovo; such as the resolutions of the European Parliament, OSCE authored documents produced, resolutions pertaining to human rights, and resolutions of the Central Assembly of the United Nations.

Albania has also pointed out that Kosovo is a case in which preventative diplomacy should be applied to preclude a further deterioration of regional stability. Albania hails the opening by the United States of an Information Office in Prishtine and we hope that other organisations will follow suit. I believe this is important as it provides a mechanism through which the situation can be monitored, and at the same time permits concrete measures to be applied to keep the situation under control. The Albanian government is of the opinion that the Kosovo problem has to be resolved through political dialogue between interested parties which include legitimate Albanian representatives in Kosovo, the Belgrade government, and a third experienced and impartial party that has both the capacity and desire to find a solution to the problem. If there is to be any dialogue apropos Kosovo, it is essential that the assistance of the European governments be sought in an effort to obtain the "demilitarisation" of Kosovo, that OSCE "observers" be reinstated, and that peace be established through the creation of an international presence. All these measures must be viewed as preparatory under-pinning to dialogue. It should be noted that the recent dialogue between Kosovars and Belgrade, vis-à-vis education, is a promising sign.

Let me say about my thoughts for the realisation of peace in the Balkans:

- Europe and the United States must not let their attention wander from the Balkans prior to there being definitive solution to all the problems of this region. Problems must be placed on the negotiating table and resolved through a combination of diplomatic, political, economic, coercive and military measures when and where necessary.
- It is necessary to give greater emphasis to economic development. Programmes for the creation of essential infrastructure, especially East-West corridors, and industrial investment, will bring the people closer together through the interlacing of community interests, and through the development. It remains a fact that when there is a sense of well-being and prosperity, people seldom resort to force in resolving difficulties.
- It is imperative that political leaders who continue to cling to old opinions be replaced by new individuals imbued with contemporary Western perceptions of the world. Such demonstrated leadership leads to the further strengthening of democratic institutions.

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

- The relaxation of requirements as they relate to the crossing of international borders in Western Europe has been highly successful. It has proven to be a highly efficient means through which to increase mass communication and to simultaneously reinforce stability. One should have to live in fear of the crossing of international borders. In fact the improved state of relations between Albania, Greece, FYROM, Turkey and Slovenia attests to this fact.
- The step-by-step inclusion of the countries of the Balkans into the security structures of the Euro-Atlantic community would further support regional peace and stability. NATO's history has demonstrated that NATO has been able to not only avoid "collisions" within the fold, but has also arrested the tendency of resolving problems through force. Inclusion within the structures of the Euro-Atlantic community provides for greater security, and at the same time reinforces beneficial cooperation in the field of economics.

Until now, the experience of cooperation within the framework of "PfP" is a good sign. The admission of Albania and Macedonia into the Euro-Atlantic security community, noting that this is not a matter of concern to Moscow, would, I believe, be important in reinforcing peace and stability in the Balkans.

I would like to conclude by saying that the problems of the Balkans are neither genetic nor are they of an epidemic nature. They are political and their solution is through political dialogue.

I should like to reiterate that earlier delineations, as they pertained to the establishment of national border, were careless and did not take into consideration problems related to ethnicity. Rather they were undertaken with a mind to the geopolitical interests of the time. Today they provide the basis for disagreement and have led through the passage of time to conflict. The inequities so caused are political. The solutions too must be political.

**Comments:** DA adds only that in the process of editing speeches here during the past eighteen months, DA has been struck at how often the issue of unjust borders seems to come up and the vision of a greater Albania. DA adds this comment only because it is something that someone should tuck away.

RPT# 169  
DATE: 20NOV96

## THE "NEW" ALBANIAN ARMY - CONTINUED

**Summary:** Report provides thoughts apropos the reformation of the Albanian Armed Forces. This is a companion piece to Report 148 entitled "Thoughts on the New Army".

Since arriving in Albania in May 1995, DA has consistently tried to stress that the minister must face the realities of the defence budget, and that no one is going to suddenly provide the financial support necessary to turn the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) into a modern Western Army. The emphasis, DA has maintained, must be on the Albanians taking care of what there already is before continuing in new directions. DA further believes that Albania should field a small, mobile, main force army within the constraints of their defence budget. In addition to the main forcer army planning must allow for the organisation of reserve and territorial forces. The AAF should be prepared, like the Swiss Army, to undertake "protracted" war should conventional defence be insufficient in protecting the sovereignty of the nation.

### Details:

#### The Basis of the "New" Albanian Armed Forces

"The Albanian hid his crops, paid his taxes with promissory notes, and, if pressed too hard or threatened with military service, he disappeared with his rifle into a refuge more remote where Italian tanks could not go and where Italian infantrymen, with reason, preferred not to pursue him." (British SOE report - late 1944.)

1. Background: In making recommendations as they pertain to the creation of a "new" national army, this former Defence Advisor (DA) believes, one should proceed warily.

"In every age the common interpretation of the world of things is controlled by some scheme of unchallenged and unsuspected presupposition; and the mind of the individual, however little he may think himself to be in sympathy with his contemporaries, is not an insulated compartment, but more like a pool in a continuous medium - the circumambient atmosphere of his place and time."<sup>1</sup>

#### 2. Assumptions:

- Does Albania need an Army? DA is assuming that the ever-evolving unrest in the Balkans and the fact that DA was sent to Albania are compelling evidence that indeed Albania does need an army. From the outset, DA has recommended the creation of a small, mobile, well trained, main force army, commensurate with the defence budget and threat, supplemented by reserves and territorials.

---

<sup>1</sup> CORNFORD, F M, "Thucydides Mythistoricus", Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, (1907), p ix.

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

- In the near to mid-term, there is no discernible external threat to Albania's security.
- The defence budget will continue to be insufficient for undertaking any serious modernisation programmes.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, no nation is willing to provide the extent of military assistance required to transform the AAF, with the possible exception of the Italians. Apropos the Italians, the quid pro quo is probably unacceptable. There are those who suggest that if the goal of the West is the achievement of "stability" in the region, perhaps an ineffective Albanian army is in the region's best interests.
- Unless serious attempts are made to restore the morale of the AAF in terms of salaries, benefits, infrastructure across the board to include housing for all ranks, and to eliminate nepotism and corruption, morale will continue to plummet and the best and brightest will continue to leave the Armed Forces to seek employment elsewhere.

## 3. General Observations:

By the time DA arrived in May 1995, the euphoria of Albania's "democratic" revolution was over. As was the time to dream. The old army had been ruthlessly destroyed. Reality urged that the time had arrived to start on the creation of a new army from the ashes of what had been before.

DA believes that the single most important element in any armed force is the private soldier (conscript). He forms the basis of any army. From today's private soldiers come tomorrow's NCO Corps, but only if the government is prepared to provide them a reasonable standard of housing, clothing, food, salaries and benefits. It should be noted in this context that in the AAF, the Officer Corps is possibly more important than in traditional Western styled armies.

In DA's opinion, war, in the Albanian context, would most likely be fought at the company level. While perhaps overly simplistic, the overall size of the Albanian army is a function of how many companies the AAF can afford to field. DA has used a four platoon (three rifle and one weapons platoon) company and has arbitrarily established a pay scale for all grades (see inclosure).

The Minister's rejection of the concept of attempting to compensate for an inadequate defence budget by the revitalisation of the AAF's defence industries and directing them towards the civilian sector, simply because the best model is that of the PRC, is fiscally unfortunate.

DA is constantly reminded that Albania must forget the past and start again. In DA's opinion it is not possible to forget the past. The nation as a whole would be better served by learning from the errors of the past vice forgetting them.

The survival of the small army is to a great extent related to early warning. This is a function of a functional intelligence service. The creation of a functional intelligence service has been resisted by the Minister since DA's arrival. While the Minister may relish information provided to him through his counter-intelligence service, counter-intelligence alone does not provide the basis for a military

---

<sup>2</sup> DA has also consistently suggested that as the budget increases, so can the expansion and efficiency of the AAF be expanded.

intelligence service. Indeed the prominence of counter-intelligence and the emphasis on "correct" thought makes intelligence analysis impossible.

##### 5. Thoughts:

In his introduction to his series on histories on war and society, Geoffrey Best wrote:

"The idea of war is of itself a matter of giant historical importance: how at particular epochs and in particular societies it is diffused, articulated, coloured and connected. Only by way of matrix of belief about God and man, nature and society, can come full understanding of the causes and courses of wars that have happened."<sup>3</sup>

The mental make-up of man is shaped by, and indeed may be conditioned by the society in which man exists.<sup>4</sup> Likewise the roots of violence do not draw their substance simply from the raw nature of man himself, but rather from man being cast into social relations with others. Commenting on the correlation between war and society, Alexander Atkinson in "Social Order and the General Theory of Strategy", notes that "war is the natural extension of the substance of social life".<sup>5</sup> The establishment of "rules" is of critical importance to the conduct of conflict as not only do "rules" permit the establishment of where, when, and why the lines of restraint are to be drawn, but provide also the point from which the philosophy of war begins and more importantly the "moral" basis for the rules of war.<sup>6</sup> Correspondingly, the manner in which a nation elects to wage war is not only inextricably related to the actual practice of war; but reflects also the moral view of the society which it represents and leads to the acceptance of a particular set of understandings about the nature of war.<sup>7</sup>

The individual who has exercised the greatest influence over "classical" western strategic thought is Carl von Clausewitz (1780-1831) who articulated this thoughts in his treatise "On War". "On War" was not written as an academic undertaking, but rather as a practical guide for his fellow officers. It was an attempt to reconcile why the best trained army in Europe was consistently being emasculated by an apparently undisciplined, poorly led, ill-educated mob, commanded by a Corsican born Frenchman known to the world as Napoleon Bonaparte. It is to Clausewitz (and to his wife Maria's) everlasting credit, that "On War" remains among the most important studies of the "philosophical basis of the conduct of war"<sup>8</sup> in the West.

---

<sup>3</sup> BEST, Geoffrey, in Ian Clark's "Waging War: A Philosophical Introduction", Clarendon Press, Oxford, (1988), pp11-12.

<sup>4</sup> ELLIOT-BATEMAN, Michael, "Defeat in the East: The Mark of Mao Tse-Tung (Zedong) on War", Oxford University Press, London, (1967), pp21-22.

<sup>5</sup> ATKINSON, Alexander, "Social Order and the General Theory of Strategy", Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, (1981), pp18-19.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p78.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, pp4-5.

<sup>8</sup> Professor Peter Paret writing in "Clausewitz and the State: The Man, His Theories and His Times", Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, (1985), p4 notes within the context of the French and Prussian Armies of 1789, that the Prussian Army:



## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

As already noted, an army is more susceptible to change when the army is in a period of transition marked by general inefficiency.<sup>9</sup> It is also worth noting that by not having had any meaningful involvement with Western "Classical"<sup>10</sup> strategic thought, the AAF is in a position to move beyond the confines of the Clausewitzian paradigm.

A senior Thai army officer, a noted specialist on counter-insurgent warfare, offered that the army of a developing nation may be possessed with characteristics long discarded by the armed forces of developed nations - and may accordingly enjoy important advantages and greater "flexibility" when compared to a developed nation.<sup>11</sup> The army of a developing nation is very often of a multidimensional nature. By this it is inferred that such an army engages in all manner of nation-building activities across the entire spectrum. Political participation is virtually taken for granted, thereby making the integration of social conflict into the equation a relatively straightforward task. The army of a developed nation is, for the most part, essentially unidimensional in nature and performs solely a military function; and accordingly finds the integration of political and social necessities difficult and contradictory.

A military culture is basically a development of the assumptions and values peculiar to the society of which it is a part. At the same time, the military segment of the society is often isolated, and its culture is therefore seldom an accurate reflection of society as a whole. This isolation can result in the military retaining certain assumptions and values which may have been discarded by the rest of society; this peculiarity gives the military segment its archaic characteristics.<sup>12</sup> This is obviously a concern of Minister Zhulali. Nevertheless, DA believes that there are certain aspects of the Albanian Armed Forces which should be retained as they move towards reorganisation, and thus DA urges caution in discarding all that came before. Among these traditions are the AAF's ties to the people of Albania, and the view that all Albanians share in the defence of the nation.

DA does not believe the prospects of anyone attacking Albania in the near to mid-term to be realistic. Everyone in the region has enough on their collective plates without further adventurism. The problem faced by Albania is essentially one of devising a form of defence which is commensurate with their defence budget of \$43m. There is little to suggest that there will be a significantly larger amount of the national budget allocated to defence in the years to come. This essentially means that the AAF maybe called to defend the country as they are. Sort of a "come as you are" war scenario. Should, of course, Albania be integrated into NATO, the scenario becomes somewhat different, but the prospects of NATO integration DA assumes to be at best distant. In any event defence of the nation will remain an Albanian problem.

---

... was more unified and internally consistent organisation, and therefore less susceptible to change; the French army was more diverse, less efficient for the moment, but pliant and receptive to innovation.

<sup>9</sup> HANDEL, Michael, introduction in "Clausewitz and Modern Strategy", Frank Cass, (1966), p11.

<sup>10</sup> ATKINSON, Alexander, "Social Order ...", p ix.

<sup>11</sup> BOOMRANRONG, MG Prasert, conversation with - Appendix B.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p24.

To DA the only solution is for Albania to devise a sufficiently miasmic form of defence which makes the long-term prospect of attack against Albania unacceptable. In DA's opinion the main force units of the AAF, even if a call-up of reserve forces were possible, do not present a serious obstacle to anyone.

Given the nature of Albania's terrain, prepared defensive positions and equipment already on hand, DA wonders if the notion that holds that "protracted guerrilla warfare" is only an auxiliary form of battle, is valid within the context of Albania given the general lack of alternatives.<sup>13</sup> The idea of defending the nation in any manner which paralleled that of what was before, continues to be rejected by the minister out of hand, primarily because that is what was done before. One Albanian officer wryly remarked, in this context, that while Hoxha may have been many things, he was not stupid.

The protraction of any conflict causes excessive strain on the social fabric of any nation who becomes engaged in such a form of conflict on the home front, as we discovered in Vietnam. In a protracted war scenario, while the occupying army is the focus of the guerrilla's activities, what is being indirectly attacked are the social resources of the aggressor. Indeed, guerrilla type operations in the field assume the relative insecurity of social resources of the opponent. This suggests that anyone who comes face to face with an insurgent pattern of strategy, can no longer assume the stability and support of their own social base and/or resources. Simply put, to assume the relative security of one's social resources in a war against an opponent whose operations and pattern of strategy entirely depend upon the reverse, is very often fatal.<sup>14</sup>

The Swiss Army too is undergoing a period of reflection. DA has obtained a copy of the 27 January 1995 "Excerpt from the Federal Council's Report to the Federal Assembly on the Swiss Army Model for the Nineties" (ARMY 95). DA has taken this manual and has edited it as best as possible for the AAF as DA has found the similarities striking (see subsequent report).

**Comments:** Strictly from a weaponry available point of view, DA believes that the AAF's inventory of weaponry is such, that if properly deployed, the AAF should be able to discourage any nation from seriously contemplating military action against Albania. All that is lacking is any meaningful system of air-defence and early warning. The problems with the AAF are however not related to equipment. They continue to be related to morale, brought about by a lack of basic infrastructure, the marginalisation of the uniformed services, and a pervasive belief that someone else will provide for their defence. To put their faith in the organisation of conventional battalions is absurd!

---

<sup>13</sup> ATKINSON, Alexander, re cit, p121.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, p62.

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

**APPENDIX**

C = Conscripts; N = NCOs; O = Officers

Annual salary costs of an infantry company

<b>Rank</b>	<b>C1</b>	<b>C2</b>	<b>C3</b>	<b>C4</b>	<b>C5</b>	<b>O1</b>	<b>O2</b>	<b>O3</b>	<b>Total</b>
Squad	8	1	1						10
Platoon	24	3	3	1		1			32
Company*	101	12	13	4	1	4	1	1	137

\* The company is organised with three (3) rifle platoons and one (1) weapons platoon. Company headquarters consist of a company commander (O3), executive officer (O2), company sergeant major (NCO5), company supply sergeant (NCO3), three drivers and two runners/radio operators.

Pay &amp; Allowances

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Month ('000)</b>	<b>Year ('000)</b>	<b>Times</b>	<b>Total ('000 Lec)</b>
<b>Officers:</b>				
O3	35	420	x1	420
O2	30	360	x1	360
O2	25	300	x4	1,200
<b>Officer TOTAL</b>				<b>1,980</b>
<b>Conscripts:</b>				
C5	10	120	x1	120
C4	8	96	x4	384
C3	6	72	x13	936
C2	4	48	x12	576
C1	2	24	x101	2,424
<b>Conscript TOTAL</b>				<b>4,440</b>
<b>Regular NCOs:</b>				
NCO5	30	360	x1	360
NCO4	27.5	330	x4	1,320
NCO3	25	330	x13	3,900
NCO2	20	240	x12	2,880
<b>NCO TOTAL</b>				<b>8,460</b>
<b>Officer/Conscript Coy:</b>				
<b>Conscript TOTAL</b>				<b>4,400</b>
<b>Officer TOTAL</b>				<b>1,980</b>
<b>Company TOTAL</b>				<b>6,420</b>
<b>Officer/NCO/Conscript Coy:</b>				
<b>Conscript TOTAL</b>				<b>4,440</b>
<b>NCO TOTAL</b>				<b>8,460</b>
<b>Officer TOTAL</b>				<b>1,980</b>
<b>Company TOTAL</b>				<b>14,880</b>

RPT# 170  
DATE: 21NOV96

## **ALBANIAN VERSION OF THE SWISS ARMY FOR THE NINETIES**

**Summary:** Report provides an edited for the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) version of a 27 January 1992 booklet produced by the Swiss Government entitled "Excerpt from the Federal Council's Report to the Federal Assembly on the Swiss Army Model for the Nineties (Army 95)".

### **Details:**

General: The reformation of the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) will continue to be fluid. Planning will be directed towards the mid-term with the emphasis on flexibility. This will permit the structure of the AAF to be modified in response to real-time political changes and/or increased in the defence budget. Another fundamental issue which must be faced by the AAF is the manner in which national defence policy might be altered should Albania be integrated into NATO, particularly as it would affect the structure of the AAF and/or operational concepts.

## **SECTION I - GENERAL ASSESSMENT**

### **1. Principles and Objectives**

- a. National defence is one of the central tasks of the Republic of Albania. Given the present state of flux of the security-political environment, a mission-capable army remains essential for the maintenance of national sovereignty and independence.
- b. The AAF will remain purely a defensive force posing no threat to anyone in the region. The AAF possesses neither weapons of mass destruction nor long-range offensive weapons.
- c. For political and military reasons, the principles of a militia army and universal service should be maintained. In this manner the AAF will remain rooted in the population and continue to promote national cohesion. The AAF will remain subject to civilian political leadership and to democratic control.
- d. A reduction in army manpower by roughly two-thirds during the course of the past five years, and a reduction in the length of compulsory military service to a period of one year, is a reflection of the extent of political, environmental and demographic change.
- e. The central mission of the AAF will be to continue to maintain a state of readiness commensurate with the AAF's ability to defend the territorial integrity of Albania. The AAF will be prepared to accomplish other missions in compliance with the lawful orders of the Commander in Chief. It is accordingly essential that the new AAF be able to perform a multiplicity of missions, to include peacekeeping and disaster relief type operations. The coming years will probably determine whether today's positive developments in Eastern Europe and the Balkans will continue. It is in Albania's interest to support the peace process to the best of our ability.
- f. The AAF has in the past played a central role in support of civil defence and disaster relief in cooperation with civil authority. This is a particularly important mission for the AAF, given Albania's susceptibility to natural disasters. The command structure and organisation of the AAF makes it an excellent entity for such operations.

g. The AAF may additionally be required to assist in the maintenance of constitutional order at home in instances of instability.

## **2. Situation & Assignments**

History is unpredictable. We are taught that change is both constant and often surprising. Albania, in the past, has been insufficiently prepared for war. This error must not be repeated. Developments in the world today are even less certain than before. The survival of Albania could ultimately depend on decisions being made now pertaining to the organisation of the AAF. Accordingly we must proceed with caution. The Balkans today continues to be marked by deep-seated tensions which threaten regional security. To assume that Albania would not be affected by any regional escalation of violence could have grave consequences. While it is difficult to predict in detail when and where "flashpoints" may occur, there are scenarios which may call for the use of armed force.

## **3. Conceptual Consequences**

a. The necessity of the AAF being multi-faceted and the simultaneous reduction of force levels, requires the realisation of new operational concepts. In the past the mission of the AAF was one exclusively geared to war. To this must now be added the accomplishment of missions related to peacekeeping.

b. The conduct of operational missions must be responsive to the realities of the regional political-military environment. In this regard, the control, surveillance and protection of our airspace must be given a high degree of priority. The inability to protect one's airspace lessens one's ability to perform on the ground. The AAF must be able to respond in a timely, effective, and appropriate manner to provocations of any kind, ranging from border violations to the occupation of parts of our territory, to airborne attacks and ground attack directed against the nation. The AAF must have the ability of concentrating force in response to a threat before the initiation of combat, and by the use of mobility and concentration of fire-power, be able to bring the enemy to decisive battle.

c. A prerequisite for this comprehensive operational concept is a corresponding army structure. Several parallel measures are demanded, such as a permanent command and control structure, and a responsive reserve and territorial force structure.

## **4. Structural Consequences**

a. The structure of the AAF will be determined by the extent of the defence budget and/or the threat. These parameters will impact directly upon the structure of strategic,<sup>1</sup> and tactical formations,<sup>2</sup> as well as the infrastructure related to territorial organisations.<sup>3</sup> Consideration should be given to the creation of a separate Disaster Relief Regiment.

b. Peacekeeping elements should be maintained separate from the main force, reserve and territorial forces.

---

<sup>1</sup> Strategic forces, with their increased mobility, are not dedicated to the defence of any specific terrain. They perform, as the name implies, a strategic mission.

<sup>2</sup> Tactical units have area specific missions.

<sup>3</sup> Territorial forces are responsible for intelligence gathering, administrative and logistics support and in certain cases, the defence of key terrain.

c. The new structure of the AAF must integrate the principle of "dynamic area defence".<sup>4</sup> "Dynamic area defence" (DAD) allowed for increased operational flexibility. The objective of creating a modern, mobile army can only be realised by optimising existing resources and by undertaking individual and mission-essential measures to close existing gaps. For financial reasons improvement can only be undertaken in instalments.

### **5. Consequences For Training**

a. In the area of training, diversity must be taken into account. The variety of training options must be expanded. As the importance of technology grows, the demands of "quality" increase simultaneously. Training must be professionalised. This can be accomplished specifically by a thoroughly trained staff of instructors, by increasing the duration of preparatory courses for cadres, and by modernising equipment dedicated to training. This too can only be accomplished on a step-by-step basis.

b. Future training will increasingly take changes in lifestyle and social and economical developments into account. The primary objective of military training will remain the achievement of military competence.

### **6. Main Points In Future Legislative Planning**

a. While today the AAF must make use of what is in the inventory, operational planning must take into account equipment modernisation.

b. The procurement of a new combat aircraft, related early warning radars, and an anti-aircraft capability is essential for maintaining our sovereignty in the air and for air defence. This must have a top priority. Without an adequate system of air defence, the flexibility of ground forces under the concept of DAD is seriously jeopardised. On the global stage, despite the trend towards overall disarmament, air forces are being upgraded. The Albanian air services are woefully outdated. The modernisation of Albanian air services will greatly enhance the image of our army abroad and thus increase its capacity for stabilising and deterrence.

c. Existing command and control system and related intelligence collection activities also remain seriously outdated. The abandonment of a combat disposition which covered the entire country must be compensated for by closing any resulting "gaps" with long-range artillery fire and by increasing combat mobility. Combat mobility can be improved, when the budget so permits, through the procurement of newer infantry fighting vehicles, and in the future by helicopter assets.

d. Military basing must be reallocated in such a way that functions related to basic billeting, command and control, logistics and training are maximised. An extensive programme of building will nevertheless be essential.

### **7. Financial Parameters**

The defence of Albania against foreign aggression requires the expenditure of considerable funds. At the present time, funds which have been dedicated to defence are minimal. We must nevertheless remember that national defence is a

---

<sup>4</sup> DAD has its basis in five differing elements. Through the interaction of command and control, which turns strategic objectives into operational and tactical missions. By defending our airspace, air defence forces permit the deployment of mobile ground forces. Strategic force units, not being tied to any specific terrain, must be able to concentrate their combat power in response to a threat and directed by the Command-in-Chief. Strategic forces must also be able to interact with tactical forces, be they mobile or dedicate to stationary defence. Specially designated "fortress units" have the responsibility of defending important Alpine transit routes and cover the flanks. Finally, the logistic troops will ensure that the army is provisioned. Logistic troops also perform territorial related tasks.

matter which ultimately involves the very existence of our people and country. Furthermore, possible long-term developments need to be taken into account, as the army itself requires considerable time to adjust. A certain continuity in the allocation of funds is indispensable. Too great a fluctuation in either direction complicates planning and procurement and causes problems related to implementation.

### **8. The People & The AAF**

If the army is to fulfil its mission, it must have the support of the people. The Council of Ministers is aware of the fact that resolve of the public as a whole to defend Albania has diminished lately for a variety of reasons. This applies especially to the younger generation. Planned and on-going changes to the AAF, to include the integration of peace-related functions, military reforms, and the AAF's preparedness for further dynamic changes, should help to restore resolve as it relates to the defence of the nation, and at the same time to be a motivating factor for today's youth.

### **9. Basic Considerations**

- a. The Significance of the Army Model
  - The New Army Model provides long-term guidelines for the reorganisation of the AAF. It allows, at the same time, sufficient flexibility so that new ideas and concepts can be integrated into the AAF as applicable. The New Army Model is the result of in-depth studies and a planning process that will continue into the future.
  - The New Army Model is based on the premise that national defence is a national responsibility. Concepts incorporated into the New Army Model have also been constructed in such a way that they will satisfy the security policy demands of European integration.
- b. Security and NATO/European Solidarity
  - Albania's security is increasingly linked to that of Europe. Security is indivisible. Security is increasingly only attainable through responsible cooperation between different nations. This is why in Europe efforts are currently underway to create a reliable security order that would ultimately include a defence structure dedicated towards a common defence.
  - A decision cannot be made at this time apropos the viability of a common defence. The structures for such a policy do not presently exist. It is assumed that they will slowly and cautiously be developed. Albania will continue to contribute towards the realisation of this process, in the field of peace-promoting measures, and in the fight against organised crime and terrorism.
  - Some doubt exists whether or not a small nation is capable, on its own, of providing finance sufficient for combating a well armed and prepared opponent. The option of becoming part of a security alliance in order to eliminate the threat of conflict does not necessarily save money, as Albania would still be obliged to contribute to the financial and military well-being of the alliance. One clear advantage of cooperation within the framework of an alliance would be increased access to military technology.
  - For all the reasons cited above, the New Army Model is primarily directed at the maintenance of autonomous security and a national defence policy. This does not in any way prevent the joining of an alliance, and/or of contributing to a comprehensive system of European security, should the people of Albania make the political decision to do so.
- c. Integration and the New Army Model

- In view of the possibility of integration into NATO or other defence arrangements of the Euro-Atlantic community, the New Army Model's additional capabilities will strengthen the AAF's capabilities as they pertain to peacekeeping and related missions. Also, the modernisation of air force and increased mobility of the AAF's ground forces, would enable Albania to more fully participate in a common European defence structure.
- "Euro-compatibility" will enable Albania to closely follow further developments from a security-policy point of view, and focus national efforts on resolving the political and economic difficulties involved in integration.

## 10. Opportunities & Dangers

### a. Appraisal of the Current Situation

We are living in a period of continual and dynamic change. The Cold War is over. A stable new European security order while feasible, has yet to become a reality. We are living in a transitional period of instability which even in a best case scenario could last for years. It must be realised that during such a period, the pendulum may swing in both positive and negative directions. Short-term swings of the pendulum, however, cannot form a basis for our security policy. They cannot be used as a point of reference for planning our militia army. We must rather orientate our security policy and army according to those parameters in the security-policy environment which are constant.

### b. Albanian Security Policy in General

In the field of security policy, we are confronted by three clearly identifiable dangers and two significant challenges; the dangers lie in the consequences of the disintegration of the former Soviet Union, continuing instability in the Balkans, and in an area which will be referred to under the rubric of "new security-policy risks". Challenges lie in actively supporting the establishment of democracy and in our participation in the security structures of the Euro-Atlantic community.

### c. Consequences for the AAF

Given the rapidly changing security environment in the Balkans, the AAF must be prepared to face a multitude of missions.

- The primary mission of the AAF will continue to be war prevention through the provision of a meaningful defensive capability.
- The AAF must additionally be capable of preventing the spread of conflicts onto Albanian territory.
- The AAF must have the capacity for protecting Albania's airspace under all conditions.
- The AAF must be prepared to assist Albania's border guards in controlling the movement of refugees should the need arise, and/or in the event of sudden migratory movements. The AAF must additionally be prepared to provide rapid and effective humanitarian aid in support of civil authorities, should the need arise.
- The AAF must be capable of supporting Albania's foreign policy as it relates to peacekeeping and to measures dedicated to the promotion of peace, with personnel, material and expertise. This is especially applicable in the areas of inspection, observation, verification, in humanitarian operations of all kinds, and in peacekeeping and peace-making activities within the context of the UN or elsewhere.
- The AAF must be capable of assisting domestic civilian agencies in the event of technological or natural disasters quickly and effectively. The AAF should



Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

also have the capabilities for providing disaster related assistance outside the borders of Albania.

- In order to fulfil all these missions, the AAF must be capable of maintaining equipment and readiness levels that will permit political authorities a sufficient degree of freedom of action in terms of timeliness.

## **SECTION II - THE AAF'S SECURITY-POLICY MISSIONS**

### **11. The Role Of The Army Within Our Security-Policy Strategy**

The AAF is fundamental to Albania's national defence. Albania's national defence is a reflection of a comprehensive assessment of the regional security environment seen from the military point of view. The objectives of Albania's security policy, and resulting strategies, have been developed by a comparative analysis of both the opportunities and dangers.

### **12. General Defence & The AAF**

The term "general defence means" is used for the realisation of strategy relating to Albania's security-policy strategy. Included under this rubric are the following:

foreign policy  
 army  
 civil defence  
 economic and foreign trade policy  
 national economic defence  
 national security  
 information.

All general defence means will be involved in fulfilling the tasks which the four strategic elements entail (peace promotion, safeguarding our means of existence, war prevention and defence). It is therefore inevitable that civil and military means be closely coordinated.

Albania's general defence coordination primarily involves the following entities:

- common and coordinated use of the existing infrastructure in both normal and exceptional situations;
- mutually balanced use of available means in time of crises, in the event of natural disasters, and in wartime.

Coordination will be necessary in the field of airspace surveillance and management, in the overall control of Albanian airspace, in the maintenance of air sovereignty (Air Services), early warning (AAF, civil defence, information services), assistance to the civilian population (AAF, civil defence), protection of infrastructure (AAF, national police), police duties (AAF, national police, civil defence), disaster relief and rescue (AAF, civil defence), and in the management of private resources (all partners of the general defence).

The AAF's personnel and material strength gives the AAF capabilities not found in other governmental organisations. It becomes necessary to determine whether further synergetic effects can be attained by merging individual domains, like the AAF and civil defence, into a single ministry.

### **13. The Mission Of The AAF**

- a. The AAF contributes to the promotion of peace by:

- Providing, in collaboration with civil authorities, personnel for the implementation of confidence-building measures, arms control, verification and international peacekeeping operations;
- b. The AAF contributes to the prevention of war and/or defends the nation by:
  - Repeatedly demonstrating its resolve and capacity to defend the country;
  - Preventing a military power vacuum on Albanian territory;
  - The protection of Albanian airspace;
  - Defending Albanian territory in depth.
- c. The AAF helps to safeguard the basic needs of the nation by:
  - Providing specially trained units for disaster relief;
  - Deploying troops in coordination with the relevant civil authorities at home or possibly abroad as necessary;
  - Guarding vital or sensitive installations and facilities.

#### **14. Mission Analysis**

The missions of the AAF differ both in character and in importance. The sequence in which these tasks are likely to be fulfilled, and their probability, are inversely proportional to the challenges they pose to the AAF. Undeniably, war prevention and defence will continue to form the primary tasks of the AAF. It must be stressed that the various tasks should not be regarded as mutually exclusive options, as the AAF may have to undertake several missions simultaneously. The AAF is obliged to plan the deployment of its means in a modular manner if it is to meet all requirements. The AAF's phased progress will determine the future operational concepts of the AAF, as well as its organisation, structure, training and equipment.

- a. **Readiness:** A prerequisite for the accomplishment of all aspects of the AAF's missions is the maintenance of an appropriate level of readiness. The ability to adjust to new situations as they develop presupposes that the necessary expenditures in personnel and material have been made, and that sufficient time has been set aside for training.
- b. **Contributions Towards The Promotion Of Peace:** Mission orientated elements of the AAF, organised and equipped to meet the special requirements of deployment abroad under the auspices of the UN or other international organisations, must be maintained.
- c. **The Safeguarding Of Basic Civilian Needs:** Should there be a requirement that elements of the AAF be called upon to safeguard portions of the civilian community, such elements are to be subordinated to civil authorities. Missions could conceivably be in one of two areas: assistance, search and rescue following a natural disaster, and/or the provision of protection in the event of violence below the threshold of war.
- d. **The Prevention Of War:** The task of preventing an outbreak of war is partially a function of a nation's military capabilities. Clearly this is a primary responsibility of the AAF. The ability to employ ground forces supported by the air force, air defence, and logistics units in effective combined operations, is in itself a deterrent.
- e. **Defence:** An attack from the air can occur with almost no warning. If the population of Albania is to be protected and counter-measures undertaken in a timely manner, there must be an integrated and efficient means of early warning. The necessity of being capable of engaging a potential enemy starting at our national borders, using a system of defence in depth, requires that army manpower figures remain relatively high. At the same time we recognise the importance of force concentrations in response to given situations as they may develop.

### SECTION III - THE CONCEPT OF COMPREHENSIVE OPERATIONS

#### 15. The Concept Of Comprehensive Operations

Previous operational concepts for the defence of Albania have been abandoned. They are being replaced by a "comprehensive operational concept" in which national defence only figures as only one - though admittedly the most important - of several missions which the AAF must be able to perform.

The manner of employment of the AAF is directly predicated upon the AAF's mission. The "comprehensive operational concept" entails redefining the principles of command and control in such a way that the army is able to participate in peacekeeping operations, safeguard our way of life, and provide for a realistic defence of the nation.

#### 16. The AAF's Degrees Of Response

Depending on the situation, various levels of military response are envisaged. The AAF should be an entity endowed with sufficient flexibility so that it can perform a wide variety of missions in response to directives from political decision-makers. Flexibility and graduated responses are essential when dangers and crises having differing characteristics must be confronted simultaneously.

- a. The Control Of Air Space: The Civil Air Traffic Control Organisation and the Albanian Air Defence Forces must collaborate in guaranteeing control over Albania's airspace at all times. This involves the implementation of internationally accepted air traffic regulations and preventing the abuse of Albanian airspace. The implementation of measures to maintain control of Albanian air space is particularly important during periods of high tensions. Under certain conditions such measures may determine whether or not our country is drawn into a conflict. This is a task that only Air Defence Forces can properly fulfil.
- b. Command & Staff: Omitted.
- c. Command, Staff & Immediate Means: Omitted.
- d. Alert Procedures: Alert procedures, which cause a step-by-step increase in general readiness, are a necessity for an orderly and rapid partial and/or general mobilisation of the AAF. These procedures must have been prepared in detail in advance, and will support the requisite level of actual mobilisation. Involved will be the deployment of additional individuals in administrative and command positions; the call-up of special formations, primarily for the protection of nationally vital facilities, and airspace control; logistical units, particularly those concerned with ensuring the preparation of equipment for operational use and its delivery through the respective administrative agencies; activities in the area of armament and construction; the issue of certain decrees; the allocation of credits; etc.
- e. Partial Mobilisations: The creation of a flexible system of partial mobilisations will enable the AAF to adjust appropriately to various scenarios, and to confront them without having to immediately mobilise the entire army. Such a mechanism maximises freedom of action by political decision-makers. In all instances of partial mobilisation, only those individuals specifically required will be called upon.
- f. General Mobilisation: The issue of general mobilisation for war constitutes the final and most comprehensive military response which the national command authorities can undertake. A general mobilisation is only appropriate when it becomes evident that Albania must be defended against an external military power and to guarantee Albania's independence.

### **17. Contributing To The Promotion of Peace**

Deployment Options: The integration of elements of the AAF into activities underwritten by NATO or the UN, dedicated to détente, conflict prevention and peacekeeping, will serve as evidence of Albania's resolve to further develop and strengthen Albania's policy of regional solidarity. As the security of Albania is tied to that of other nations, such a policy will also serve Albania's interests.

### **18. Safeguarding The Sanctity Of The Nation**

Deployment Options: In the event of natural and/or technological disasters, and those situations caused by warfare, the AAF will assist in the protection of the population and of essential installations. Such operations will not solely be limited to emergencies in Albania; elements of the AAF must also be prepared to engage in disaster relief activities beyond the borders of Albania.

### **19. War Prevention: Wider Meaning Of Dissuasion**

War Prevention, through the means of Albania's defensive capabilities, will continue to be the ultimate goal of the Armed forces. Albania must be prepared to assist in preventing any outbreak of hostilities. This can be accomplished by assisting in stabilising the power balance in Europe. Should that fail, measures directed towards "war prevention" must be in place in order to prevent Albania from being brought into any conflict.

The deterrence offered any potential enemy by the AAF has its basis in the AAF's recognised ability to defend the country. It must be demonstrated that the AAF is capable of defending the nation against a technologically superior enemy. For such an activity, the AAF requires sufficient manpower and the realisation of the appropriate equipment and infrastructural levels. During the conduct of operations the AAF must have the flexibility to operate in conjunction with the armed forces of Albania's neighbours.

By convincingly demonstrating resolve and expertise, the AAF will contribute to stability in the European environment.

### **20. Defence Warfare**

#### **a. Basic Considerations:**

A range of various types and intensity levels of warfare will have to be considered in defence planning. This will involve the planning for both small and large scale border violations, the occupation of Albanian territory, attacks from the air, and outright invasion. All require the appropriate level of response. Though the possibility of an invasion at this time is remote, it cannot be excluded and it is therefore prudent that we prepare ourselves to deal with such an eventuality.

In order to compensate for the reduction in military manpower, it becomes necessary that a ratio be established between the area to be defended, time and means available, and resources. This ratio forms the basis of a "comprehensive defence" contingency.

Albania, while a "Partnership for Peace" (PfP) member country, is not a member of any formal defence relationship. Accordingly the defence of Albania remains fully an Albanian problem. This obliges Albania to devise her own combat doctrine to meet foreign military threats. In addition to being responsive to strategic and tactical missions, and to threat analysis, doctrine must also incorporate advances in military technology and the principles of warfare of specific foreign powers, as far

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

as they are applicable to Albania's topography. Established doctrine must allow for the eventual alignment with neighbouring states in the context of a European security agreement.

The AAF is a defensive army. This fact, coupled with Albania's renunciation of weapons of mass destruction, and an entirely national logistics base, requires that the AAF undertake a "non-offensive defence".

Accordingly, the AAF must prepare for defence on its own territory based primarily on its own resources. The advantages of terrain can thus be used to the full. Here the AAF has a decisive advantage over armies which have to fight on foreign territory. Additionally, troop combat performance can be significantly improved by the presence of infrastructure, such as permanent weapon positions, man-made obstacles, mines and prepared demolition targets. Under these conditions, troops enjoy better protection from enemy fire and from air attacks.

Because of the limited operational depth of Albanian territory, it is essential that the enemy be brought to battle as close to the border as operationally possible. The mountainous terrain along Albania's borders supports defensive warfare. Of course, there remains the requirement for the maintenance of forces capable of conducting counter-attacks and reinforcing other elements who might be under attack.

Elements of the civilian population will inevitably be affected by combat operations in the event of warfare on Albanian soil. Though the combat deployment of the army will primarily serve to create ideal conditions for defensive warfare, it will also seek to avoid any embroilment of civilians in its operations. The army will take all possible measures to limit collateral damage and to reduce where- and whenever possible its impact on the civilian population.

b. Dynamic Area Defence:

"Dynamic area defence" is a promising concept for a militia army operating in favourable terrain. The basis tenet of this new doctrine is to be capable of projecting a concentration of force where and when necessary with a corresponding loss of protective strength in less threatened parts of the country.

Combat doctrine is directed at stopping the penetration of enemy units as rapidly as possible. This is to be accomplished either by a concentration of forces, or by forcing them out of the country or defeating them. Should the AAF fail in preventing the occupation of a part of the nation, the ability of the AAF to conduct sustained guerrilla warfare against an aggressor provides political authorities time to seek an alliance with another power, and/or to engage in protracted warfare until national sovereignty is once again restored.

c. Deployment Principles Of "Dynamic Area Defence":

The doctrine of "dynamic area defence" involves the following deployment principles which determine the conduct of warfare:

- Intelligence collection and reconnaissance operations will provide early warning apropos the main thrust of the enemy.
- Air defence will provide protection against air attacks and minimise/prevent the achievement of air superiority by the enemy, to the extent that command and control of ground forces is maintained.
- Heavy weapons fire will be used to disrupt enemy attacks onto Albanian territory and destroy the momentum of attack. The capacity to rapidly

concentrate artillery fire is essential. Pre-planned fire is to be utilised in support of armoured counter attacks and to maintain control of areas which are either not occupied, or sparsely occupied by ground forces.

- Troops (non-mobile) dedicated to static defence will occupy positions located on key terrain features in order to prevent enemy penetrations.
- At the operational level, armoured formations with corresponding fire support attachments will conduct counter-attacks in order to prevent enemy penetration, and/or to engage enemy forces which have been airlifted/parachuted into rear areas, from reaching their objectives.
- Troops deployed for territorial defensive duties will guard areas not occupied by combat troops and will protect infrastructure and vital objects.
- The vulnerability of Albania will be reduced by undertaking such precautionary measures as lowering the water level of artificial lakes, deactivating power plants, and preparing bridges and passes for demolition.

The concept of "dynamic area defence" requires that the concept of "comprehensive area coverage", which called for the defence of the entire territory of Albania be abandoned and replaced by "threat-responsive force concentrations". The advantage of "dynamic area defence" is the fact that it enables the defender, despite being outnumbered, to achieve local pockets of superiority and confront the enemy by a combination of mobile and static combat formations.

d. Military Resistance In Occupied Areas:

Despite the AAF's determination, the possibility cannot be excluded that an opponent could occupy parts of Albania.

In such a case, scattered elements of the army would be in a position to offer resistance and thus prevent complete subjugation by a foreign power. By so doing they would also internationally underscore Albania's resolve to survive and fight for the liberation of the nation. In such instances, the AAF's objective would be to continually harass the occupying power and force him to expend great quantities of his resources in terms of lives and equipment.

e. Interaction Of Command & Forces:

The concept of "dynamic area defence" will be based on five different criteria - command and control; air-defence forces, mobile ground forces, static combat forces, and logistical units. Only the coordinated interaction of all five elements will enable "dynamic area defence" to have an optimum effect.

The most essential principles of deployment are as follows:

- Command and Control: At all levels, command entails the translation of the government's strategic aims and purposes into operational and tactical activities. Here surveillance and intelligence play an important role. They enable army commanders to perceive threats and cause the evolution of force deployments and concentrations early. The Chief of the General Staff (CoGS) can in this manner assess his operational options in a timely manner, define the appropriate combat contingency, and undertake the requisite decisions prior to undertaking combat operations. On the modern battlefield, electronic warfare (EW) will play an increasingly important role.
- Effective combat reconnaissance depends on the creation of a functionally efficient intelligence service which has made the transition to a war-time footing.

f. Air Defence Forces:

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

Command and control airspace, and the intelligence flow from combat areas, are of great importance in any situation involving military conflict. The priority given to our sovereignty and our resolve to defend the nation becomes especially implicit in our efforts to achieve and maintain air sovereignty and to effectively protect our airspace.

g. Mobile Ground Forces:

Mobile ground forces constitute the greatest part of Albania's combat forces; their training and equipment enable them to conduct mobile defensive operations. In this manner the preconditions for the concentration of forces and for the capacity to oppose an enemy force of the appropriate strengths are created. In doing so, the majority of field and special purpose units will be able to rely on existing combat infrastructure as well as on some permanent protective fortifications. In places where fortifications are too few or altogether lacking, the conditions for combat will have to be improved by the construction of additional fortification. This should be undertaken in peacetime whenever possible. In the event of war, combat force deployments must be identified early on, in order to allow for the staggering of the time available for the construction of additional fortifications. This can be facilitated by the improved mobility of our infantry units. It should have the added effect of enhancing our ability to create and shift force concentrations.

h. Combat Troops In Static Positions:

Currently we envisage the deployment of only a few combat forces in static positions. The fortress brigades, placed in blocking positions at the strategic Alpine crossing points, belong to that category.

i. Logistics:

The AAF's logistic services guarantee the support of the army.

- Support, to include medical services, will be based in existing installations. They will form the support basis of the mobile forces who can accordingly be provisioned regardless of their area of deployment.
- Apropos the undertaking of territorial tasks, our logistical services will serve to relieve combat troops of the duties associated with medical evacuation and services, protection and guard duties, assistance and relief work. Vis-à-vis the meeting of basic civilian needs, the logistic services will be responsible for medical services, disaster relief and support to civilian authorities. Territorial organisations will be organised according to district boundaries, and will guarantee collaboration with the civilian authorities especially in the field of coordinated services.

## SECTION IV - STRUCTURE OF THE ARMY

### 21. Organisation Of The Army

The AAF will consist of the General Staff, 3 infantry brigades (with 2 mountain infantry battalions), 1 armoured brigade, 1 special forces brigade, 3 territorial brigades, air defence forces and naval forces.

### 22. Army Staff & Troops

In addition to actual army command and staff functions, the General Staff will integrate the activities of special staffs for such activities as disaster relief and assistance.

Army troops may be divided into the following categories.

- a. Command and Support Troops: Command and support forces will run the command facilities of the army, and maintain the necessary communications. They will additionally be responsible for preparing and conducting mobilisation. Engineer regiments will be tasked to prepare specific sites for demolition and in the construction of additional fortifications as needed.
- b. Combat Units: The armoured brigade must be capable of independent warfare. While they will generally remain subordinate to their parent senior headquarters, they may also be employed as reinforcing elements within a concentration sector.
- c. Alert Formations: One rotational battalion of the AAF should be on "ready" status at all times. The "ready" battalion should be able to respond to any eventuality which may occur within the space of several hours. The mission of the "ready" battalion will generally be in support of protection, guard duties and/or disaster relief operations.
- d. Logistic Units: Medical units of the AAF are responsible for providing the AAF with medical service, and in coordination with civilian authorities, for providing medical services to the civilian population. Medical units of the AAF are also responsible for detection and decontamination activities in the event of chemical-biological warfare.
- e. The Chief of Logistics, in coordination with the Railway Authority of Albania, will guarantee the continued functioning of Albania's railway system.

### **23. The Field Army**

- a. According to the peacetime structure, the CoGS will have command and support means at his disposal, three infantry brigades, one armoured brigade, one special forces brigade, three territorial brigades, air-defence and naval forces. Each brigade level commander will be responsible for maintaining his unit at a state of high unit readiness.
- b. Before partial or total mobilisation, brigade commanders may be given specific assignment by the CoGS in his Area of Operations (AO).
- c. Following mobilisation, the brigade commander assumes command of all operations in an AO as designated by the CoGS. Brigade commanders should be capable of conducting limited independent operations.

## **SECTION V - TRAINING**

### **24. Peacekeeping**

Individuals and units designated for peacekeeping duties will be given mission and area specific training prior to deployment, which will include at a minimum the following:

- a. Unarmed United Nations Observer duties;
- b. Meeting mission specific objectives - engineering, medical service, transportation, repair and assistance;
- c. Security and control functions organised at the company and at the battalion level if and when applicable.

### **25. Support To Civil Authority**

- a. Units selected for missions in support of civil authorities will receive mission oriented training prior to their deployment.
- b. Units designated for disaster relief type operations must be capable of providing ad hoc assistance both within national boundaries and in neighbouring countries.



## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

c. A prerequisite for deployment in support of disaster operations will be the successful completion of basic training and of courses specifically dedicated to disaster relief operations.

## **26. The Prevention Of Conflict & Defensive Warfare**

The training of the AF must ensure that the AAF is capable of undertaking missions below the threshold of war. The deployment of "alert" units, which are maintained at a high state of readiness, are essential if deployment is to be timely. Additionally the AAF must be capable of conducting combined arms operations within Albania's national borders.

## **27. Training Requirements Of The "New" Army**

a. The training of the AAF will be dedicated primarily towards war prevention through the AAF's ability to conduct defensive warfare. Units which do not have specific combat missions - medical, logistics, search and rescue, communications etc - must nevertheless retain the ability to undertake combat operations.

b. The main objective of military training and education is to instruct trainees about the transition from civilian to military life and how to function in the high stress, life threatening environment of military conflict.

c. Training is dedicated to imparting military discipline, weapons and equipment training and familiarisation, and to operational doctrine as required by military conflict.

## **28. Training Staff**

a. Objectives: In order to meet the demands for greater expertise in the wide range of activities in which the AAF is to participate, permanent training facilities must be established. In support of the establishment of permanent training facilities the following must be accomplished:

- Augmenting, on a step-by-step basis, the number of training instructors.
- Making the position of a military trainer more agreeable.
- Establishing a system of personnel counselling and career planning.
- Expanding the roles and functions of military trainers.

b. Categories of Training Staffs: There are three different categories of trainers:

- Instructors are assigned training responsibilities in the fields of education, operations, combat and tactical operations and for the provision of technological expertise.
- Full and/or part-time training specialists for technical instruction such as civil servants on contract to the Army.
- Civilian specialists and lecturers who have a particular expertise and are designated as instructors during their period of military service.
- Instructors are responsible for training in schools and at specialised courses. They can be supported by other specialists when necessary.
- Unit commanders will be responsible for courses taught within the framework of the organisation. They too may also be assisted by members of the training staff.

c. Training: Instructors and full-time teachers with a specific skill will be trained at the Military Leadership Academy and the Central School for Instructors. If and when applicable, specific portions of certain parts of their training may be completed at civilian institutions.

**SECTION VI - MATERIAL PROVISIONS FOR THE NEW ARMY****29. Principles**

a. The AAF will continue to be equipped with their current materiel. Equipment modernisation remains an absolute necessity. The AAF will undertake equipment upgrade within the limits of established modernisation cycles and budget restrictions.

b. The AAF's equipment will have to be modernised gradually with the achievement of NATO comparability as a fundamental goal. It is not possible to simultaneously re-equip the entire AAF with new major weapon systems.

**30. Armament Policy**

a. The armament policy of the AAF is based on the current Directives for Armament Policy issued by the Minister of Defence. They define the basic priorities for weapons procurement.

b. Policies relating to armament modernisation call for providing the army with the most effective NATO compatible equipment in sufficient numbers for deployment and training. Material readiness for deployment is primarily to be guaranteed by having sufficient stocks.

c. The military budget no longer allows for any growth in military expenditure. This will impede the acquisition of modern weapons systems as rising prices in the personnel and maintenance sector must have fiscal priority.

d. Furthermore, it must be emphasised that every change-over from one system to another (usually to a more complex system) incurs a disproportionate expenditure of scarce funds. This will further limit our options and will allow fewer systems than needed to be purchased. The disadvantage of smaller numbers can only partly be compensated for by better performance.

e. Modern, NATO compatible equipment, available on the international market, is likely to be increasingly of greater procurement interest. This means that both civil and military Albanian enterprises will be increasingly obliged to consider international cooperation.

f. It is important for Albania to retain a degree of domestic arms production potential so that even during a crisis, a degree of autonomy in replacement and repair is guaranteed. The maintenance of such a capacity however must also be economically acceptable.

g. The development of complex weapons systems would overtax the resources of a small nation. Domestic development is primarily worthwhile in those areas where the technology involved has general applicability and can be sold on the civilian market. Furthermore military hardware increasingly has applications for civilian products (eg computers and intelligent communication systems); in these areas procurement will have to be sought on the civilian market and possibly adjusted to the given infrastructure.

h. As overseas procurement grows in importance, Albania must maintain a domestic basis for the growth requirements by combining national armament factories with industrial production as far as that is possible and financially reasonable. Additionally, indirect participation should be sought in the form of compensatory trade agreements where direct participation is impossible or pointless.

i. The following priority list provides a valuable basis for assessment:

- Requirement;
- Economy of utilisation;
- Maintenance of domestic industrial potential;
- Regional political considerations;

Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

- In addition to procurement costs, secondary expenses arising throughout the period of service will require greater attention in the future for assessing the economy of complex systems.

### **31. Long-Term Acquisition Plans**

- a. Objectives: Operational concepts and structures for the development of a new AAF are to be spread over the course of the next 10 years (1997-2007).
- b. Included will be the replacement of obsolete equipment, the procurement of infrastructure to support modern training, and the acquisition of material for undertaking new missions.
- c. The defence budget limits selectivity and requires that acquisitions be accomplished on an established timetable which is dependent upon both the extent of the defence budget and the nature of the threat.

### **32. Armament Priorities**

- a. The Albanian air defence force is obsolete. The acquisition of a modern air defence force is essential to the protection of our airspace. A modern air defence force would additionally assist in guaranteeing tactical and strategic mobility on the ground.
- b. Similarly the AAF's command and control means, intelligence acquisition, communications and electronic warfare are obsolete.
- c. The acquisition of modern, long range artillery is also a critical need. This has been brought about by the abandonment of the combat concept which called for "comprehensive area coverage" and results in gaps which must be covered by accurate long-range artillery fire. Current systems in the AAF's inventory are not capable of providing this support.
- d. Mobility, both on the ground and in the air, remains a serious shortcoming.
- e. A modern approach to military training, to including extensive training aid, especially simulators, is essential if there is to be effective training.

### **33. Instalments**

By the year 2005 the AAF hopes to achieve the following:

- a. Purchase modern combat aircraft for the defence of our airspace and corresponding air-defence equipment;
- b. Procurement of state of the art equipment for command and control, communications, intelligence acquisition and electronic warfare.
- c. The acquisition of improved artillery fire control systems.
- d. Implementation of a programme to provide greater mobility to infantry units, both ground and air.
- e. Upgrading or replacement of the AAF's main battle tanks.
- f. All equipment required for peacekeeping operations and disaster relief type missions.
- g. Procurement of training equipment, especially simulators and items specifically geared to modernising training and supported infrastructure.

The following items, of lesser importance, are to be acquired/upgraded at a later date.

- h. Procurement of long range artillery.
- i. Continuation of the enhanced ground mobility programme.
- j. Continuation of the enhanced air mobility programme.
- k. Procurement of additional combat aircraft.

The various instalments will need to be continually evaluated and adjusted to the changing conditions of Albania's security-policy environment.

## **ANNEX 1**

### **Security Policy Objectives**

The following represent the security goals of our nations:

- Peace, freedom and independence;
- Maintenance of freedom of action;
- Protection of the population and its basic needs;
- Territorial defence;
- Contributions to regional stability.

### **Defence & The Prevention of War**

A European system of security can only be realised if all the states of Europe contribute their fair share. Albania must demonstrate, in a credible manner to all potential aggressors, that an attempt to attack Albania, or disregard Albania's territorial rights, would be foolish. The Albanian Armed Forces form the main instrument through which this is accomplished. What is entailed is the maintenance of an appropriate level of combat power. This requires that we must organise and equip our army in such a way that the army provides a realistic deterrent.

Should conflict break out once again in the region despite our best efforts to prevent such an occurrence, it must be readily apparent to the belligerents that they may not make use of either Albanian airspace or territory. Albania will defend itself against all and any aggressor.

The AAF is an instrument of war. It is our nation's only means of effectively countering foreign aggression. With its mission of national defence, the AAF is designed solely for combat within our territorial borders.

The AAF must also make an important contribution to the protection and preservation of our basic needs and way of life. There will be incidents which will exceed the capabilities of civilian authorities. Major disasters caused by nature and/or man, may require the deployment of the army, its associated heavy equipment, and means of command and control. While the AAF's responsibility will lie mainly with disasters which have occurred within the boundaries of Albania, under certain conditions, the AAF can anticipate being deployed beyond Albania's national borders.

The organisation of territorial forces guarantees close ties between army and civil authorities concerned with general defence. During emergencies, territorial forces may assist the army in lessening the effects of disasters and in maintaining public services and functions.

The AAF also has a special role should a major sudden stream of refugees become a problem. The army could well be used in support of civil authorities.

**Structure & Readiness**

The form of defence best adapted to Albania at the present time is the system of militia. The current system of general conscription for men and voluntary service for women will enable us to maintain a strong and effective army, without placing undue burdens on the citizenry as a whole, or on the national economy and/or budget. The militia system permits us to make the best use of our people's strengths and their abilities. In a changed international environment, more and more attention is being given to the militia armies.

Albanian soldiers are an integral part of Albanian society. The solidarity between the population and the army and their mutual trust are of inestimable value. The AAF's position in societal structures is especially solid if the army is reflective of society as a whole.

Defence equipment, buildings and training must be kept up-to-date. Effectiveness and economic efficiency are central to our policy of national defence. The maintenance of a degree of domestic armament-manufacturing capacity is important; it guarantees a minimum autonomy regarding replacement of armaments and repairs in the case of an emergency, and it provides through exports, certain economic gains. Arms exports should not, however, undermine foreign policy initiatives.

Finally, a well trained and efficient intelligence service is essential given regional uncertainties. Likewise, the system of mobilisation must be commensurate with political and military realities.

**Comments:** To follow.

RPT# 171

DATE: 08DEC96

**THE FINAL DAYS - I**

**Summary:** During Defence Advisor's (DA) final weeks in Tirana, DA had an unprecedented number of office calls, many from officers who simply wanted to say good-bye and who seem to regret DA's departure. The following represents the gist of conversations.

**Details:** Director of the Defence Academy Mr Seit Hassan is a very pleasant man. Prior to assuming his present position he taught mathematics in Skodra. Mr Hassan came by to talk about getting some additional speakers for next year's programme. DA had earlier recommended two French academics - Professor Alexander Adler and MG (Retd) Henri Eyraud - but until recently the minister was not ready to have other than American and German lecturers, as only "Americans and Germans understand democracy". Mr Hassan wanted DA's assistance in speaking with the French Military Attaché about getting the proposed lecturers. Last year's senior seminar had a total of 30 individuals of whom 25 were civilians and included three of the minister's secretaries/typists. DA had met Mr Hassan and tried to explain the Defence College was a military institution and as such was dedicated to first teaching members of the armed forces and secondarily civilians. DA had recommended that any future course should run 75% military and 25% civilians and that any civilians who attended the course should be senior decision-makers. DA asked Mr Hassan why there was such a large number of civilians attending the course. Mr Hassan responded that it was incumbent upon civilians to teach the military about democracy. (DA has always wondered what maths teachers know about democracy that has escaped infantry officers.) Remembering our former conversation, DA asked Mr Hassan about the make-up of the coming War College class. Mr Hassan indicated that it too would be 75% civilian and 25% military. Mr Hassan indicated that they hoped to stress operations research and strategic analysis (ORSA) in the next course. DA responded that the American Armed Forces had been through ORSA during the Vietnam War, and perhaps it had been a mistake. Mr Hassan replied that Albania wanted to make the same mistakes as had been made by the United States. DA offered that perhaps it would be wiser to learn from our errors in lieu of repeating them. The minister requires that anyone meeting DA must report the conversation to the minister. Mr Hassan is one person who does. It was a "Double Whammy Day" for Mr Hassan. In addition to having been taken to task by DA, Mr Hassan was significantly more abused by the minister for having spoken to DA without the minister's permission.

RPT# 172

DATE: 08DEC96

**THE FINAL DAYS - II**

**Summary:** Defence Advisor (DA) met twice with MG (Retd) Perlat Sula prior to departure. MG Sula took a bus to Durres to see DA off. The reasons cited for his resignation include the improper diversion of funds and facilities, a continuing lack of basic infrastructure which in some cases endangered the lives of his personnel, and philosophical disagreements apropos the direction being taken by the armed forces

**Details:** On DA's last evening in Tirana, DA and son paid a final call on MG (Retd) Perlat Sula at his residence. Surprisingly MG Sula's wife, who holds the rank of colonel - the only female colonel in the AAF - is still on the faculty of the Defence College where she teaches history, but both believe this employment will be terminated in the near term. One of MG Sula's three daughters, who had been a lieutenant in the AAF was removed from active duty when the general tended his resignation last summer.

DA has never asked Perlat Sula for the reasons behind his resignation but has always assumed that they were related to questions of impropriety. MG Sula asked if DA knew that BG Binaj, the former Chief of the Air Force, who is now out of the air force and in the United States, went without pay for several months and was forced to work as a mechanic. DA did not. Sula cited a litany of reasons for his unhappiness, for the most part related to corruption, nepotism, and the garnering of personal "power". Included were problems associated with what he saw as the authorised diversion of housing established for members of the armed forces to the civilian sector. (It should be noted that one of the few benefits of military service in Albania is the provision of a house or apartment which becomes the property of the individual concerned for perpetuity.) Also cited was the failure of the General Staff to address problems related to safety such as the provision of explosive charges for aircraft ejection seats. Then there was the diversion of material purchased for new uniforms for the army, increasingly substandard food for conscripts, often vermin infected. There were also problems associated with MG Sula's relationship with the Chief of the General Staff (CoGS). While DA has always found CoGS Kosovo to be pleasant, DA has been disappointed that he was unwilling to take any demonstrable stand against the minister. Sula suggested that the reason was not that he did not, but that he could not. There were also problems between Sula and CoGS Kosovo apropos the direction in which the AAF was moving, Sula believing that the AAF must out of necessity retain the territorial and reserve structure of the armed forces which had been before. DA asked Sula if in writing his letter of resignation he had perhaps assumed that it would not be accepted, but that through it, certain corrections could be made. Sula responded that he had indeed miscalculated the effect that his resignation would have. His bluff was called and he, and in DA's opinion the AAF as a whole, lost.

**Comments:** DA has been somewhat wary of visiting DA's former counterpart given the atmosphere in the ministry. The minister has consistently been asking LTC Asllani if DA was meeting with Sula. Truthfully, LTC Asllani has been telling the minister that DA has not been but that DA did intend to say farewell to Sula. The minister has never been able to understand DA's friendship with Perlat Sula and DA's expressed disappointment that the minister was not prepared to speak to Sula

prior to accepting his letter of resignation. Sula has indicated that he is being followed and that his telephone is being tapped. He also indicated that other generals, even those who live in his housing complex, are avoiding him. To date he has remained quiet and spends his day writing. Eventually, DA believes, he is going to start speaking out.

The allegations of Perlat Sula cause one to wonder what exactly is the function of the office of the Inspector General (IG). Former Deputy Minister of Defence Luan Lazimi was the IG when DA arrived. Following his appointment as deputy minister, his place was taken by Mr Atnan Beli - another maths teacher - whom DA has always found to be exceedingly pleasant. As far as DA has been able to ascertain, the IG "inspects" only those he is ordered to inspect and generals and special "friends" of the minister seem to not be subject to inspection.



RPT# 173  
DATE: 08DEC96

### THE FINAL DAYS - III

**Summary:** Report provides Defence Advisor's (DA) perception of DA's Kafka-like relationship with Minister Zhulali during DA's last week in the ministry.

**Details:** DA had informed Minister Zhulali, through LTC Asllani in mid-November, as DA has not seen the minister since the minister's return from Washington until DA's "reception" on 26 November, that DA would be leaving Albania on 3 December.

DA had been informed that the minister had proposed a coffee or a small dinner prior to DA's departure. However, on the morning of 25 November, DA was informed that the minister wished to have a reception for DA. The reception was planned for the following morning. Upon being so informed, DA visited Mr Tomorr Shehu, the minister's Chef du Cabinet, and informed him that in the light of the minister having asked that DA be recalled, a reception was inappropriate and would be embarrassing to all concerned and accordingly DA had no intention of attending such an affair. Several hours later DA was informed that if DA did not attend, DA would be expelled from Albania within the next 24 hours. Following conversations with the Embassy and EUCOM, it was decided best that DA attend the planned reception.

Anticipating that DA would be expected to say something, DA spent a sleepless night trying to come up with some comments that would do nothing to further irritate the minister. The reception was held in the Chief of the General Staff's conference room at 0900 on 26 November. It was attended by several general officers from the staff and members of the MLT. The minister listed a variety of DA's accomplishments and then turned the floor over to DA. DA thanked the minister, the staff, and LTC Asllani, for having so well provided for DA during DA's time in Albania and stated that DA was leaving behind many friends. DA concluded by saying that shortly after DA arrived, DA was asked to address a battalion of infantry on a field exercise near Fiere. DA stated that what he said then held true today, namely that the most important member of any army was the private soldier and that whatever transformation occurred apropos the Albanian Army, the army must emerge from its period of transformation as an Albanian Army. The minister stood up and said that he disagreed with DA's perceptions that there has been no changes in the Albanian Army since DA's arrival. This surprises DA as DA had never said that there had been no changes in the army. All that DA can assume, and members of the MLT bear this out, was that the minister's interpreter, LTC Binaj, mistranslated DA's remarks and represented DA as having said that there had been no changes in the Albanian Army since DA's arrival. When DA finally managed to get a word in edgewise to the extent that DA had never said what the minister understood DA to have said, the damage was done. Returning to DA's office after the reception, the MLT Liaison Officer, Col Akil Bubesi, dropped by to say how much he had enjoyed the reception and that he thought it had gone very well. This was followed by LTC Asllani being called into the minister's office and Asllani being informed that DA's dinner with the minister set for that night (about which DA knew nothing) was cancelled. The minister appears also to have called in Cdr Denny Fox and expressed his unhappiness with DA's remarks to Cdr Fox. This is already a matter of record.

DA had started moving items out of his office in early November following notification that DA was to be replaced. Accordingly, on the following day, Wednesday 27 November at around 1100hrs, while DA was trying to finish up various items in DA's office, LTC Asllani was again called in by the minister and informed that DA was to hand in the key to his office and his ministry identification card by 1300 the same day. It took DA about half an hour to accomplish the minister's request. Having a great deal of work still to accomplish, DA took the C2 Corps provided computer with him to his quarters with the intention of finishing what remained undone at home. DA also cut into four pieces DA's ministry pass. This DA did for reasons related to DA's personal security. LTC Asllani was subsequently again summoned into the minister's office and was ordered to have DA return the computer to the office and to tape DA's badge back together. LTC Asllani was also told that he would remain with me until I left Albania. (As has been reported in earlier messages, LTC Asllani was supposed to depart Tirana for a ten day holiday with his wife on the morning of 30 November. LTC Asllani informed the minister of this but was told nevertheless to forgo the trip and seek redress with Under-Minister Moisiu.) Later DA was informed that the minister intended to have me out of the ministry immediately after the 24 November reception. For reasons which remain unclear, DA got a 24 hours reprieve.

Apropos the computer and the DA's pass, DA dutifully taped DA's old pass together, but informed LTC Asllani that the computer belonged to C2 Corps and not to the ministry. LTC Asllani had informed the minister that DA had in any event purged the computer. This in fact was not true. The minister's concern was that I would be able to sit at home and pass information to the United States and to Stuttgart. The fact that there was no international telephone service out of DA's residence appears not to have registered. In any event, DA purged the computer and turned it over to Cdr Fox.

DA was escorted to the post at Durres by LTC Haxhi Asllani and family and by DA's driver Bashkim. DA was also met at the port by LTC Dhimitr Binaj, the minister's interpreter and Chief of the International Division, Col Saimi Kodra, the acting Chief of Intelligence, and by the Chief of Protocol. All seem to have been genuinely embarrassed by what was happening and Col Kodra, who was the official spokesman of the group, to DA's surprise, said exactly that. Just prior to sailing, DA was summoned to the reception area. MG Perlat Sula had taken the shuttle bus to Durres from Tirana specifically to say farewell. LTC Asllani gave him a ride back to Tirana. Sula was a wonderful officer who like so many others deserved better.

When the Durres ferry finally left for Ancona, DA's feelings were somewhat akin to those when lift-off was achieved following service in Vietnam.

**Comments:** In fact, DA is of the opinion that since DA's arrival there has been change. Regrettably however, beginning in December 1995, it has been increasingly negative. Central has been an overall deterioration of morale which can be tied directly to issue of corruption, nepotism and the centralisation of power.

To this day, DA remains mystified by what suddenly brought on the minister's anti-DA sentiment. DA continues to believe that the failure of the United States to "finance" his army is involved in DA's departure and that somehow he identified a defence advisor with bags of money. LTC Asllani remarked that when DA was going through a rough period of relations with the minister following DA's involvement in the episode of LTC Asllani's house, the minister stated that for "political reasons

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

Albania needed an American defence advisor". Apparently this is no longer the case.

There were many events at the end which were unnecessary. Those which upset DA the most were as follows: at the end of the reception, DA was given, as a token of the minister's appreciation a small brass plate with the minister's card on it. There is an established "line of gifts" in the ministry in which the small brass plate ranks as the lowest. DA believes this was done by the minister to add further embarrassment. (DA had already informed the Chef du Cabinet that DA wished nothing from the minister other than being able to depart.) Following DA's eviction from the ministry, the Military Police guards were informed that if DA and/or his son attempted to enter the ministry, they were to be arrested. It turned out that Peter Thomas was in school at the time of DA's being evicted and was not aware of what had transpired. He was unnecessarily chased out of the ministry parking lot. As a note, the guards asked LTC Asllani to ask DA not to come back as they had their orders. It turned out that whenever we drove by the ministry the guards would wave.

Some comments seem to be in order apropos statements made by the minister following DA's speech. DA had thanked LTC Asllani for having tolerated DA's idiosyncrasies for as long as he had. The minister then asked what DA thought would be a fitting follow-on tour for LTC Asllani. DA responded that he should be the next Albanian Military Attaché in Washington. This seems to have caught the minister somewhat off guard. He did say that this was possible but that he must first go to Peshkopi as a battalion commander so that he could be promoted to colonel. Command of a battalion in the AAF is not a much sought after assignment. Also, of course, the minister has a long track record of promoting whom he wants whenever he wants without regard to their qualifications. What the minister did say that was noteworthy, was that the army would have new uniforms, that participation in the English language programmes would be expanded, that there would be a pay increase and that funds had been put aside for correcting problems relating to infrastructure. Nothing was said about the training of the army which essentially ceased earlier this year. DA has heard the infrastructure speech before but continues to believe that it has no substance.

RPT# 175  
DATE: 09DEC96

## PLANNING OF A REALISTIC DEFENCE

**Summary:** Report forwards an article by a senior Albanian officer which addresses the planning and deployment of forces commensurate with a realistic defence.

**Details:** Start text:

The Albanian Army  
& The Planning & Deployment of Forces  
Commensurate with a Realistic Defence

The principle of the defence, which has always been the corner stone of Albanian military doctrine, will continue to remain paramount in the minds of Albanian military planners, even as the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) continue along the path of radical transformation from a highly politicised Maoist revolutionary army, to an army in the Western "democratic" style, in which there is clear and distinct imposition of civilian control.

In the framework, it is essential that the AAF maintain a state of readiness responsive to the security environment and to the direction of the minister of defence. The maintenance of an effective state of defensive readiness is an undertaking without which the stated defence policy and security objectives of Albania cannot be realised.

The size and organisation of the AAF must be a reflection of the immediate security environment. More importantly, during this time of relative peace in and around Albania, the size and organisation of the AAF should be commensurate with the defence budget. To attempt to maintain the AAF at force levels beyond the capability of the budget can only reduce the overall effectiveness of the AAF and lead to problems associated with morale.

Central to the AAF's strategic concepts for the defence of the nation has been the use of "active" forces in the earliest stages of conflict. Because it has been beyond the capabilities of "active" forces to perform this mission, an extensive system of "territorial" and "reserve" forces was established. Albanian doctrine, relating to the defence of the nation, has accordingly been foreseen as emphasising positional defence, supported by an extensive counter-attacking capability. In the past, it has been our intention not to leave a single inch of Albanian territory undefended.

Such an objective has been conditioned by the geography of Albania, and by the absence of space in which to permit the planning of defence in depth. It therefore became necessary to "build an elaborate and dynamic defence" which had its basis in the assumed operational flexibility of ground forces supported by air and naval forces when possible.

This concept is not something startlingly new. It is used by countless other armies. The difference is that the space available to Albanian planners does not permit us to move any distance from our borders. Accordingly we undertook the construction of defensive belts on and in close proximity to the border. At the same time we concentrated "ready" forces and equipment as close to the border as possible,

## Once Upon An Army - The Crisis in the Albanian Army, 1995-1996

believing that this was the most efficient means of maintaining the territorial integrity of Albania. At the same time, there was a requirement to field operational forces and a strategic reserve. This was essential if the armed forces were to have a sufficiency of assets to perform missions related to support, to be able to reinforce troops in contact, and/or to provide rear area security against airborne and/or airmobile operations. These forces were organised with an eye towards mobility and with the ability to conduct autonomous action.

Of special importance was the ability of active duty forces to be able to shift from a peacetime to a wartime footing. Given the geographic dispersion of active duty forces and Albania's poor road network, it is essential that the personnel strength levels of deployed units are such that they can perform their mission until such a time as reinforcements, either drawn from "active" or reserve forces, can be brought forward. To this extent it is imperative that operational planners base their recommendations on realistic parameters, realising that timely reinforcement of deployed units is at best difficult.

The question of the ratio of "active" to reserve forces is an important one. If we are to look at other armies, it is interesting to note that the ratio of active duty forces to reservists, varies depending on the army in question, from 20% to 85%. Today it is no longer necessary, nor possible to blanket Albania's border region with combat forces and/or fortifications. In those areas in which the threat is low, the make-up of forces will be composed of active duty forces supplemented by an extensive number of mobilised reservists. Due to the complexity of this undertaking, planners must initiate extensive training and tailor troop formations for the mission to be undertaken.

Problems associated with demographics, especially in some parts of Albania, and the reality of the AAF's economic restraints, dictate that a ratio between active duty and reserve forces be established for the organisation of main force and subordinate units. This must be accomplished while there is a peacetime environment. Another problem which must be faced pertains to the timely mobilisation of reserve and territorial forces. In my opinion it is necessary that we be able to undertake a significant level of mobilisation within 2 to 3 days. If mobilisation is to be undertaken in this manner, it is imperative that the general and unit staffs, local mobilisation boards, and most importantly the population itself, familiarise themselves with existing legislation for mobilisation.

Up until the present time, the AAF has emphasised positional active defence. Manoeuvre defence is a concept which was never foreseen as an option, although it is widely used in other armies. Albania's mountains create a natural barrier and favour a strategy of positional active defence. I think that time has come for the division and General Staff to plan for two types of defence. This is particularly important when in all likelihood, should there be military conflict, multi-divisional operations are likely. Equally possible, given the material superiority of Albania's potential enemies, it is probable that some units may be forced to give ground. By organising mobile forces deployed as a reserve, we will have the possibility of counter-attacking to regain lost terrain.

The concept of defence has been treated only as a temporary measure, and has had its basis only at the company level. This is no longer appropriate. Planning must be undertaken which draws second echelon and operational forces into the strategic equation.

Tactical success by means of tactical defensive activities is still the best means for achieving operational and strategic objectives. Within the context of the planning of tactical defensive operations, is that of preparing contingency plans in the event of enemy airborne and/or airmobile operations either in the immediate battle area, or in rear areas. It is in this area that territorial forces play a critical role, and for this reason steps must be undertaken to improve the structure, organisation, training, mobility and armament of territorial forces. In this framework, particularly in border areas where the deployment of main force "active" units are not anticipated, there exists a requirement for the employment of guerrilla-like forces, drawn from the commando brigade and supplemented by territorial forces, with the mission of intelligence collection and the interdiction of enemy elements. It is my opinion that a well trained squad of territorials offer the same advantages as a squad of conscripts as in both cases the same tactics and techniques are used. An advantage of using territorial forces in this regard, is that territorial forces are more familiar with possible axes of advantage that might be employed by the enemy, and with the terrain to be defended. In order to be successful, the AAF must make the maximum use of terrain and existing fortifications. By so doing we increase our defensive abilities, and will be able to deploy our "active" forces more economically.

In conclusion, I want to stress that the problems associated with planning and utilisation forces are far more complex than what I have discussed above. The efficacy of the defence of the nation depends on the vision of unit commander at all levels. Modern defensive warfare requires extensive preparation of potential battlefields by army combat engineers, functional communications and timely supply activities.

I believe in the principle of "the most difficult situation". That is preparing for the worst case scenario. Periods of transitions are always tinged with optimism. At the same time we assume extraordinary responsibilities for results. This requires special attention at all levels of the armed forces. Surely the point is not to throw out everything from the past simply because it is associated with the past, but to study the new parameters and realities of defence and to apply those measures which are best suited to Albania. It is equally important that cadres and staffs are integrated into this process and are permitted to participate in debates related to national defence. There is all manner of experience within the ranks of the armed forces which should not be allowed to lie fallow.

**Comments:** The item cited above was written and published by Perlat Sula some time prior to his departure from the scene. Sula believed emphatically that the army should be involved in the process of change and that it was erroneous to throw out everything willy-nilly simply because it was associated with what had gone before. He also believed that the Albanian Army could not simply become overnight a different army, and that whatever emerged must be reflective of Albanian values. It is one of the more regrettable parts of the Zhulali legacy that philosophical discussion, as it related to the defence of the nation, was never permitted.

RPT# 176  
DATE: 10DEC96

## **THE DEFENCE ADVISOR - SOME THOUGHTS**

**Summary:** Report forwards some thoughts following 19 months in Albania as the Defence Advisor. Perhaps the most central is that the Defence Advisor needs to be integrated into the country team and, in the case of Albania, EUCOM.

### **Details:**

**Relationship With The Embassy:** One hour after this Defence Advisor (DA) arrived in Tirana, DA was taken to a meeting with the Ambassador and the Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM). The DCM made it very clear that the Embassy would have preferred that I not be assigned to the Defence Ministry. DA found this a less than auspicious note upon which to begin such an assignment. Subsequently, on at least one other occasion, the DCM tried to have DA removed. The arrival of Cdr Fox in Albania in late 1995 significantly changed DA's relationship with the Embassy. In DA's opinion it would be difficult to have had a better relationship than that which existed between DA and Cdr Fox. It is interesting to note that until the assignment of Ambassador Leno, the only contact DA had with the Embassy, other than with Cdr Fox, was initiated by DA.

**Relationship With EUCOM:** DA's relationship with J5-EUCOM was excellent from the start. DA believes, however, that DA funding should have permitted the advisor to participate in "country-planning" conferences at EUCOM and in Washington when required. DA, working directly in the ministry, probably knew more about the Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) than anyone else, but had little opportunity for input.

**Status:** DA's last several weeks were somewhat uneasy. Ultimately DA knew considerably more about the general state of play in the AAF than DA felt comfortable with, and while DA had assurances from the Department of Defense (DOD) that should there be an "incident" DOD would intervene on DA's behalf, the fact that DA was performing his mission on a tourist passport was not terribly reassuring.

**Taskings:** On several occasions DA was asked to undertake taskings for the defence minister which were probably beyond the scope of the assignment. DA did in fact undertake the reorganisation of the Logistics Directorate for the minister (DA was not a logistician but used the services of an MLT officer who was). This is a mission which could have probably been done more effectively by an MLT or by a series of MLT events. On the other hand, the fact that DA was used as a translator for speeches was probably useful as the English version of whatever was going to be said at a particular conference was of significantly more utility than the original Albanian language version.

**Contacts:** The minister, throughout the period of DA's assignment, tried to limit DA's contact with other members of the ministerial staff. It is DA's opinion that it is unwise to change anything unless one understands how it worked in its original form, and this information could only be gained through contact with the requisite staff directorate. The minister further maintained that he "knew everything anyway". DA's experience in Albania suggests that people only told the minister

what the minister wanted to hear, and to this extent DA believes that he continues to be totally out of touch with sentiment at the grass roots level.



**Disclaimer**

The views expressed are those of the  
Author and not necessarily those of the  
UK Ministry of Defence

ISBN 1-904423-03-5

**Published By:**

**Defence Academy of the**  
**United Kingdom**

**Conflict Studies Research Centre**

Hag Road  
Camberley  
Surrey  
GU15 4PQ  
England

Telephone: (44) 1276 412995

Fax: (44) 1276 686880

E-mail: [csrc@defenceacademy.mod.uk](mailto:csrc@defenceacademy.mod.uk)

<http://www.csrc.ac.uk>

**ISBN 1-904423-03-5**