

Albania And Yugoslavia 1945: The Beginning Of Cooperation

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Abstract: *The article, written with the help of archival sources, professional literature and the press, includes research on the beginning of cooperation between Yugoslavia and Albania in the first year after the end of the Second World War. We tried to show the establishment of diplomatic relations between Yugoslavia and Albania, the conclusion of the first agreements, the beginning of concrete cooperation and the scope of Yugoslav assistance to the southern neighbor. It consisted of ideological, political, economic, healthcare, military and cultural aid. This year also marked the beginning of the Yugoslav and Albanian conflicts with Western powers and the Yugoslav commitment to Albania's inclusion in the Paris conference. We are also following the economic development of Albania in the first post-war year, the agrarian reform and the consolidation of the state. The year 1945 ended with the elections for the Constituent Parliament in Albania which were won by the People's Front led by Enver Hoxha. After the elections were over, the West concluded that they were not as demanded, so Albania was forced to link its aspirations with Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union in the coming years.*

Keywords: *Albania, Cooperation, The Period after the World War II, The Soviet Union, Yugoslavia*

I. Introduction

Albania's economic reliance on Yugoslavia took place at a time when the Yugoslav state was recovering from the effects of the war (five years of reconstruction) and working to stabilize it. Relations between the two countries had been burdened by previous protracted conflicts and conditioned by the policies of the great powers on the Balkan Peninsula. Despite this, the Yugoslav Communists established a friendly relationship with the Albanian Communists and sought to help the Albanian state develop and strengthen after World War II. Albania was recovering with unconditional Yugoslav economic aid, especially in agriculture, the joint fight against hunger and the construction of railways and factories. Then, she looked up to Yugoslavia and copied its political system. During that period, there was a conflict these two countries with Western powers and negotiations between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria on the creation of a Balkan federation, in which Albania was to be included. Yugoslavia had good relations with the USSR, modeled on the Soviet state and party system, and Stalin left Albania to Yugoslavia, believing that it was her sphere of interest. In this paper, we try to show an overview of Yugoslav-Albanian cooperation in the first year after the end of the Second World War, when relations were just beginning to rise. Good relations lasted until the middle of 1947, when the Albanian leader Enver Hoxha completely turned to the USSR. This was confirmed after the Resolution of the Inform Bureau, and the cooperation between Yugoslavia and Albania was interrupted until 1955, when the embassies in Belgrade and Tirana were established.

II. Establishing Political Cooperation Between Yugoslavia And Albania

After the end of World War II, Albania began its political development and economic recovery. Enver Hoxha rose to prominence as Albania's political leader, emulating the Yugoslav party system. With the help of Yugoslavia and the friendship that was achieved with it during the war, Albania tried to settle its internal situation and find its foreign policy position. In order to establish friendly relations, in the middle of 1944, Colonel Velimir Stojnic was sent to Albania as an instructor, who was supposed to provide assistance to the Communist Party of Albania (CPA). Along with him, Nijaz Dizdarevic, an instructor of the youth war organization, was sent on the duty of the secretary of the military mission of the People's Liberation Army of Yugoslavia (NOVJ) at the Supreme Headquarters of the People's Liberation Army of Albania [1]. Yugoslavia was the first country to recognize the state of Albania on 28 April 1945 [2] and on 10 November, the Soviet Union did the same [3]. On the occasion of the Yugoslav recognition of the Albanian government, manifestations were organized throughout Albania [4]. Referring later to the significance of that recognition, Major General Bedri Spahiju stated: "Our people will never forget the help given to us during the national liberation struggle by Marshal Tito, the great leader of his heroic army, attacking enemy divisions that would

otherwise fall on our heads; we will never forget material assistance without any interests in the first period of our country's liberation, we will never forget political assistance on all our international issues, as well as the speedy recognition of our government. Our people see in the pacifist role of Yugoslavia a great guarantee for their independence. Because of all that, the name of Tito flies all over the world together with the name of our Enver"[5]. In the article "New proof of brotherhood" in the *Bashkimi* newspaper, Enver Hoxha underlined that "the official note on the recognition of our government will be welcomed without any doubt with great joy by the entire Albanian people" [6]. He then confirmed to the Yugoslav press that "in Yugoslavia, the Albanian people found their sincere and strong friend. (...)This friendship is of vital importance to us and we know how to preserve it." [7].

Regarding the establishment of diplomatic relations with Albania, which followed the recognition, Milovan Djilas told the *Bashkimi* paper that "it will had a positive impact on the consolidation of the situation in the Balkans and on resolving and eliminating all misunderstandings in a peaceful way". He stated that it "found a true friend of Yugoslavia in Enver who strives to follow the right path of sincere cooperation and rapprochement in the relations between the Albanian and Yugoslav people and to erase everything that had spoiled those relations in the past". [8]. In his statements for the Yugoslav press, Enver Hoxha pointed out: "Yugoslavia is the first state to recognize us, and which defends our cause with all its soul and body." [9].

Velimir Stojnić was appointed the first Yugoslav ambassador, and the Yugoslav military mission was renamed the Yugoslav Embassy [10]. In the article "New proof of brotherhood" in the *Bashkimi* newspaper, Enver Hoxha underlined that "the official note on the recognition of our government will be welcomed without any doubt with great joy by the entire Albanian people." [11].

There was a presumption that Albania could join the Balkan Federation, whose members would be Yugoslavia and Bulgaria [12]. Yugoslavia supported Albania in foreign policy, represented Albanian interests in 16 countries with which Albania did not had developed diplomatic relations [13] and showed that when it was very important for Albania to participate in the conference on German reparations in December 1945 in Paris. As Albania was prevented from participating as a full member because it was not internationally recognized, all its demands were taken over by the Yugoslav delegation and its representative, Dr Aleš Bebler [14]. Regarding the collection of German reparations, the Yugoslav representatives sent copies of the report on the inspection of companies in Germany to the Albanian embassy in Belgrade, so that the Albanian planning commission could set its reparation requests based on them [15]. It was necessary to show that Albania had made great sacrifices in World War II. That is why the Albanian delegate of the Red Cross, Liman Koba, intervened with the Albanian embassy in Belgrade to send him propaganda material, articles and pictures, especially those related to the suffering and struggle of the Albanian people, because he intended to organize an exhibition with that material in Switzerland [16]. Thanks to Yugoslavia's efforts, Albania received 0.05% from category A (German property outside the territory of the Reich), and 0.35% from category B (German industry, etc.). At the same time, Albania became a member of the Inter-Allied Reparation Agency (IARA) based in Brussels [17].

III. Establishment Of Economic Cooperation Between Yugoslavia And Albania

In order to work more closely, Yugoslavia and Albania signed two agreements. The first agreement, the Treaty on Alliance and Mutual Assistance, from 20 February 1945 took the form of a military alliance for the joint fight against the German occupation forces, which was to be extended in the post-war years [18]. This type of cooperation was stated in the first article of the agreement. The second article referred to the obligations of both sides not to conclude a truce or peace with Germany without a mutual agreement. The third article stated that the two countries would not enter into alliances or blocs with third sides that would be directed against the interests of one of the sides. Article 4 emphasizes the obligation "to provide each other with any assistance for the protection and defense of the independence, sovereignty and borders of states against injury or attack by third states". Article 5 referred to "the development of the closest cultural and economic cooperation". In Article 6, the two states committed themselves to "protecting and respecting the rights of their national minorities". The last article emphasizes that this contract was concluded with an unlimited duration, and it would cease to be valid one year after the termination of one of the contracting sides. The agreement on the Yugoslav side was signed by Josip Broz Tito and Josip Smodlaka, commissioner for External Affairs, and on the Albanian side by Deputy Prime Minister Muslim Peza, Foreign Minister Omer Nishani, Economy Minister Madar Shtila and Social Policy Minister Bedri Spahija. The second agreement (22 February 1945), entitled "Agreement on Economic Cooperation between Yugoslavia and Albania", states the abolition of the "customs border between Yugoslavia and Albania and that the exchange of goods between the two contracting countries is not subject to any obstacles". Also, the other member undertook not to conclude agreements with third countries without consulting each other. The third article referred to the exchange of goods "to the greatest extent" between the two countries. Both countries were equal in rights in all their waters and ports. This agreement was signed on behalf of Yugoslavia by Josip Smodlaka, Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, and Eng. Nikola Petrovic,

Commissioner for Trade and Supply, and General Muslim Peza, Vice President of the Council of Ministers, Omer Nishani, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Medar Stila, Minister of Economy, and General Bedri Spahija, Minister of Social Policy, from the Albanian side [19]. Smodlaka noted in his diary that the purpose of this contract was "to exchange goods (mostly we give Albania grain in exchange for kerosene and wool)". After signing the contract, according to his notes, "they watched Russian films about the battles near Stalingrad and near Leningrad". The next day, "Marshal gave each of them (to the members of the Albanian government) his autographed picture" [20].

In addition to the above, an agreement was also concluded between the Ministry of Economy of the Democratic Government of Albania (Medar Shtila) and the Yugoslav Ministry of Trade and Supply (Zvonko Pifat). Therefore, Yugoslavia bought from Albania 100,000 kg of "dry, healthy, unwashed wool in fleece", which was to be delivered in November and December 1945 at the price of 1938 [21].

With the agreement on trade exchange from 1945, the total value of deliveries, on both sides, amounted to about 40 million dinars. Under the agreement, Yugoslavia delivered 2,991 tonnes of wheat, 5,717 tonnes of corn, 106 tonnes of beans, 2,000 tonnes of cement and other materials to Albania. We can see that from the protocols that both sides signed on the occasion of concluding the trade agreement. It established that Albania had delivered products to Yugoslavia in the quantities indicated in List no. 1 (99,964 kg of olive oil, 600,000 kg of bitumen and asphalt, 8,023.8 m² of window glass, 48,394 kg of washing soap, 500 pcs. radio „Telefunken“, 4,073 kg of trichlorethylene, 126,050 kg of wool, 500,000 kg of fine dried leather, 1,201,792 kg of salt „Granica“, 237,902 kg of salt „Fob Valona“, 168,476 kg of gas oil, 358,134 kg of oil, 31,547 kg of kerosene for lighting), and that Yugoslavia delivered to Albania the products listed in List no. 2 (2,991,081 kg of wheat, 5,717,652 kg of corn, 106,940 kg of beans, 10,000 kg of crystal sugar, 20,000 sulfuric acid, 10,000 kg of Vitriol, 3,000 kg of aluminum sulfate, 100 kg of printing inks, 2,000,000 boxes of matches, 10,000 kg of printing paper, 100,000 kg of barley for beer, 40,993 kg of barley for seed, 77,620 kg of oats for seed, 10,000 kg of lubricating oil, 747 kg of compressed ammonia, 50 kg of calcium carbonate, 2,000,000 kg of cement, 19,200 kg of iron plates , 200,000 pieces of vineyard shears, 100 kg of nitrosan, 0.10 kg of cauliflower seeds, various medicines (according to the list)). Yugoslavia delivered goods in the amount of 20,169,258.20 dinars to Albania, and Albania delivered goods in the amount of 18,375,256.20 dinars to Yugoslavia. Comparing these values of the products marked in Lists 1 and 2, both sides determined that one balance of 1,794,000 dinars remained in favor of Yugoslavia, which was to be offset by deliveries of products marked in List 4 (salt "Feo border" 1,500,000 kg (714,000 dinars) and bitumen 1,500,000 kg (1,080,000 dinars). That should had been a total of 1,794,000 dinars) by the end of September 1946 at the latest [22]. On that occasion, Enver Hoxha underlined that "friendly Yugoslavia, despite its needs, did not fail to allow us to import wheat, corn, beans, sulfuric acid, cement, fuel oil, carbide, etc. We gave Yugoslavia a certain amount of goods, relatively smaller, such as oil, wool, salt, gasoline, oil, kerosene, etc" [23].

In September 1945, Albania and the Soviet Union signed an agreement under which the Soviets provided grain and technical experts for the oil industry and mining, and Albania was to send tobacco, dried fruit, copper ore and oil to the USSR in return [24]. Soviet aid was 100,000 quintals of grain [25]. Zvonko Pifat reported from Albania that he found out "under discretion" that a Russian ship with 5,000 tons of wheat would arrive in Albania. He reported that compensation for those goods should had been paid in fine leather. He noted that, if Minister Medar Shtila gave an obligation to Moscow, then the planned amount of 2,000 tons of small leather for Yugoslavia could not be delivered [26]. It was agreed with the Soviets to send weapons to Albania for three complete infantry divisions, as well as military instructors. The arrival of several economic experts, engineers for the exploitation of oil resources and for the organization of industrial production had been agreed. The Soviets took it upon themselves to send 5,000 pairs of shoes, the same number of uniforms or cloth needed to make them [27].

In October 1945, according to a Pifat report, a contract was signed between Jugopetrol and the Albanian Ministry of Economy for the purchase of all surpluses of all oil production in Albania. At that time, the delivery of 400 tons of bitumen and 200 tons of asphalt to Croatia was ready [28]. Also this month, the charge d'affaires of the Albanian embassy briefed the Yugoslav embassy on economic developments. He stated that the Yugoslav Directorate of Monopolies made postage stamps worth one and a half million dinars for the Albanian government. When concluding the contract, the Albanian government was supposed to pay them with stocks of glass, and then they wanted this issue to be resolved, but the compensation to be done later. The Albanian government also asked that, due to the shortage of fodder in Albania, livestock from the Albanian areas be allowed to cross into the Djakovica plain over the winter [29]. Then, the material that was unloaded in Split arrived from the International Red Cross, so the Albanian government wanted to be sent to Albania as soon as possible. The Yugoslav Ministry of Transport informed the Albanian embassy that negotiations were already underway to conclude an agreement according to which a Yugoslav ship was to transport goods from Yugoslav ports to Albania every fortnight. In that way, material from the International Red Cross could be transferred

[30]. In October, it was stated that the biggest difficulty in performing the work was the transport, because the narrow-gauge railway for Struga was poorly functioning. Albanian goods lay in the port cities of Drac, Skadar and Vlora [31]. At the end of October, Pifat asked Spiro Srzentic, Yugoslav military attache and political instructor to the Albanian army, what to do about the balance of trade in supplies of petroleum products and salt, which was in state hands, for which the president of the Economic Council proposed liquidation. He stated that the Yugoslavs could continue the delivery of corn and wheat until the end of the year, at the expense of that calculation. They wanted to deliver other Albanian items (tobacco, soap, oil) for compensation in cement, carbide, safety matches, oats, beans and barley. He asked for an urgent answer because he did not receive any answer to the thirteen dispatches sent until then [32].

In November 1945, Ostojic informed the Yugoslav Ministry of Foreign Affairs that all quantities of articles had been prepared for Albania. Wool and leather were in Skadar, Drac and Tirana, soap in Korca, oil in Vlora. Oil barrels were a special difficulty, because the Albanians wanted to deliver all the quantity [33]. In November, Albanians also demanded that propaganda material, primarily film, be sent to celebrate November 29th [34]. In December 1945, Josip Djerdja, Yugoslav ambassador to Albania, asked the Yugoslav Ministry of Foreign Trade for a capable trade attaché to work with him. He insisted with the Ministry to do everything to send the agreed goods to the Albanians, "because by doing so, we will break the arguments out of the hands of the dissatisfied, who are the most numerous in the economic sector" [35]. In the next report, a few days later, Djerdja again insisted on the orderly shipment of contracted goods to Albania [36].

In addition to the trade agreement, the Yugoslav government provided aid to the Albanian government of 20,000 tons of wheat and corn [37]. Enver Hoxha told the Yugoslav press: "In our renewal and in our recovery, in the most critical moments of winter, when we lacked bread, the allies helped us as they continue to help us, Marshal Tito's Yugoslavia gave us grain" [38].

In the reports until the end of 1945, we see that in the first period of the year, gasoline, petroleum and gas oil were delivered in larger quantities, while in the second period it was salt [40].

Table 1 - Goods delivered to Albania in the first period in 1945.

| | Until 31 August | Arrived in September | Total until 30 October |
|-----------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Salt | 41.436 | | 41.436 |
| Wool | 26.050 | | 26.050 |
| Gasoline | 308.800 | 19.453 | 328.253 |
| Oil | 99.865 | | 99.865 |
| Petroleum | 20.886 | 5.414 | 26.310 |
| Gas oil | 49.581 | 6.730 | 56.311 |
| Olive oil | 50.076 | | 50.076 |

Table 2 - Goods delivered to Albania in the second period in 1945.

| | Until 1th November | Arrived in November | Total until 1th December |
|-----------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Salt | 63.000 | 100.000 | 163.000 |
| Wool | 26.050 | | 26.050 |
| Gasoline | 352.876 | | 352.876 |
| Oil | 99.865 | | 99.865 |
| Petroleum | 26.310 | | 26.310 |
| Gas oil | 56.311 | | 56.311 |
| Olive oil | 50.076 | | 50.076 |

Source: AY, 50- 94-195, Izvoz iz Albanije 1945.godine

IV. Yugoslav Assistance In Rebuilding Albania

After the end of the Second World War, the Albanian state started the process of reconstruction with Yugoslav and Soviet help. Already in the middle of 1945, a difference was noticed in relation to the end of the previous year [40]. It was confirmed by Enver Hodza in his speech at the Third Session of the Anti-Fascist Council of the People's Liberation of Albania, and he emphasized that the improvement was achieved thanks to friendship with Yugoslavia: "Our friends never refused what we asked of them. In the difficult moments of last winter, they sent us grain and other products". [41]

Traffic and industrial conditions had improved. The ports of Drac and Vlora had been renovated, as well as power plants and plumbing [42]. New industrial plants were built and repaired destroyed. A distillation plant

was built near Vlora to produce alcohol, sulfur oil, olive oil and refined oil [43]. Petroleum production in Kucova was renewed [44]. A new bridge near Kuca on the river Semana was put into operation, which connected the oil fields of Kucova with central and northern Albania [45]. An Albanian Autonomous Petroleum Company for the distribution and sale of liquid fuels had been established [46].

The Albanian government had taken steps to develop trade. After the Second World War, it was able to trade one of its natural resources, minerals and oil, because there was a shortage of other products [47]. The gold trade passed into the hands of the State Bank at the rate determined by the Ministry of Finance [48].

According to a report by the Yugoslav Ministry of Trade and Industry, Albania could export salt, tobacco, soap, glass, olive oil, livestock, petroleum products, rubber, textile and leather waste, textiles, wool, asphalt and rush. On the other hand, Albania needed raw materials, wheat (from Yugoslavia, ie from Vojvodina and Kosovo, from the USSR could be imported by ship to Vlora and Durres), corn, malting barley, matches, cement, carbit, beans, thick leather, anthracite for cement fabrication, woolen and cotton thread for weaving and knitting, larger quantities of seeds that are processed into oil for the soap industry, cigarette paper and bobbins for cigarette fabrication [49].

A large number of the inhabitants were engaged in agriculture, so it was necessary to improve it. Irrigation canals were built in Elbasan, rice was cultivated and olives were grown [50]. The Agricultural Bureau sent officials with the task of introducing farmers to threshing with the help of machines [51]. The Ministry of Social Assistance distributed 3,157 quintals of grain and 1,389,600 Albanian francs to the population. The First Conference of Livestock Breeders, Pasture Owners and Dairy Producers was held [52].

In order to consolidate the state after the war, agrarian reform was done, which was the most extensive that Albania had ever had. It began in July 1945 in Elbasan, and then continued throughout the country on September 6. To that end, the Government of Albania asked the Yugoslav Government to make available to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Albania 20 surveyors supplied with the necessary instruments [53]. Courses were also organized for technical staff in Ljusnja, as well as 20 groups of technicians to carry out agrarian reform [54]. According to Peter Bartl, those who cultivated their land with modern technology were allowed to keep 40 ha. All other landowners and church institutions that cultivated their own estates could keep 20 ha each. A total of 173,000 hectares of land were confiscated (the total arable land in Albania in 1938 was 292,000 hectares). Of that, 155,000 hectares were allocated to landless peasants (about 70,000 families). The rest was used to form state goods [55]. The maximum allotted land was five hectares for a family of up to six members, and three hectares for each other member. Another 30 acres were to be allocated for the construction of houses [56].

In November 1946, the process of agrarian reform in Albania was completed. Each peasant house that had 5-6 members was supposed to get five hectares of land. Thus, with the agrarian reform, 200,000 people got land [57]. In order to renew agriculture in Albania, seeds had to be procured, so a loan from the State Bank in the amount of 4,000,000 francs was obtained, and "a large amount of seeds was procured from Yugoslavia." Repairs for tillage machines were started. 33,530,000 Albanian francs were earmarked for the improvement of agriculture [58].

V. Establishing Cooperation Between Yugoslavia And Albania At Other Levels

Given the progress of Yugoslav-Albanian relations, attachés for military affairs, trade and cultural cooperation were to be appointed, as well as officials to regulate small-scale border traffic. It was proposed to enable greater admission of Albanian students to Yugoslav universities and schools and to award them scholarships [59]. Yugoslav instructors had been appointed to the Albanian army. Branko Petranović, historian, believed that in this way Josip Broz Tito wanted to prevent the Soviet military penetration into Albania, as well as the practical possession of the entrance to the Adriatic Sea [60]. Yugoslav actors, doctors, surveyors, Serbian and Russian language teachers, lawyers and other experts were temporarily staying in Albania. In September 1945, a session of the initiative committee for the creation of a society for cultural cooperation between Yugoslavia and Albania was held [61]. It was also worked on the dictionary of Serbo-Croatian and Albanian languages, in which the teacher Nikolaj Dismilo from Ulcinj played the biggest role [62]. At the end of 1945, it was insisted that a press attaché be appointed at the Yugoslav embassy to take care of supplying Albania with press and publications from Yugoslavia, as well as the opening of a Yugoslav bookstore in Tirana [63]. In addition to this, it was requested that two Serbian language teachers be sent to hold courses in Tirana and thus work on bringing Yugoslavia and Albania closer together [64].

Medical and health cooperation had been established. The Yugoslav delegate Velimir Stojnić forwarded to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia a request from the Albanian Ministry of Health for assistance of one thousand sera antisenteric 10cc and one thousand antianthrax 10 cc [65]. The Yugoslav government decided to send a medical team to Albania for two months, which would take

the medicine with them [66]. Josip Djerdja considered that they "performed their mission very successfully" and that their experiences were "very interesting and politically useful" [67]. The Albanians asked to be sent a music chapel from Yugoslavia, requested by Josef Lashova, a hotelier and owner of one of the best restaurants in Tirana, which would play Yugoslav hits, as well as a singer to sing Yugoslav songs. That was approved [68].

In March 1945, a group of women from Albania visited Belgrade. They were led by Liri Gega from Argyrokastra. They were welcomed by the Belgrade Committee of the Anti-Fascist Women's Front (AFŽ) [69]. Also, the first international match after the end of the war was held in March, the Red Star football players and the Albanian national team met (Red Star won with 11: 2) [70].

Within the foreign policy of the Balkan countries and their cooperation, youth cooperation („omladinska saradnja“) also took place. From 19 to 22 May 1945, the youth delegations of Yugoslavia, Albania, Bulgaria and Greece worked out a congress platform in Belgrade [71]. In July 1945, the Congress of Anti-Fascist Youth of the Balkan Countries was held in Belgrade. At that time, 50 delegates and 29 observers came from Albania (100 delegates and 54 observers from Bulgaria, one delegate and 29 observers from Greece, 46 delegates from Romania and 90 delegates and 206 observers from Yugoslavia). On that occasion, Josip Broz Tito addressed the youth and called on them to cooperate in the fight for peace [72]. With the aim of developing and strengthening ties among young people, the Balkan Youth Council was created. During its existence in Yugoslavia, there were, among others, 11 delegations of Albanian youth with 278 young people [73]. In December 1945, when the United Alliance of Anti-Fascist Youth of Vojvodina held its first congress, in addition to guests from Greece, Bulgaria, Romania and the USSR, there were also representatives of the youth of Albania [74].

The issue of border relations between Albania and Yugoslavia was very important, so both sides formed delegations, which concluded an agreement on regulating border traffic. The agreement on border traffic between Yugoslavia and Albania meant that citizens of one country could cross the border into the border zone of another country to go to the market for sale or purchase, to go to the mill, to the workshop, processing their two-property estates, processing their employers - double owners, chasing cattle for grazing or wintering, providing professional medical, obstetric, midwifery or veterinary assistance, performing crafts or work, transporting passengers and goods. The border zone meant a 15 km wide belt on both sides along the Yugoslav-Albanian border [75].

VI. A Brief Overview Of The Continuation Of Cooperation In The Coming Years

Yugoslav-Albanian economic cooperation was on the rise. In February 1946, at the Fifth Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Albania (CC CPA), it was decided that Albania would definitely turn to Yugoslavia. The Ministry of Foreign Trade of Yugoslavia appointed Hugo Havliček, an official of the Ministry of Trade and Supply, as its trade envoy in Tirana. The highlight of the cooperation between Yugoslavia and Albania was Enver Hoxha's visit to Yugoslavia in mid-1946. A treaty on economic co-operation, payments and loans was signed, followed by a Friendship and Assistance Treaty in Tirana. This Treaty envisaged that the Yugoslavia grants a loan to Albania for the procurement of materials and tools for the construction of its industry, as well as assistance in all branches of the economy by sending Yugoslav experts and drafting projects. In addition to assistance coming to Albania under the signed agreement, Yugoslavia extended its assistance to other areas. In October 1946, after the floods in Albania, aid of 52 million dinars was collected in Yugoslavia [77].

In spite of the economic improvement of the Albanian state made possible by Yugoslav assistance, mistrust and reservations were evident in the Albanian leadership. Yugoslav failure to fully implement the plan was particularly emphasized, while ignoring irregularities and deficiencies that led to the non-implementation of the trade agreement. Albanian leaders feared Yugoslavia's aspirations to annex Albania to its federation. That was the reason why the Albanian leader expressed his desire for direct co-operation with the USSR. The crisis in Yugoslav-Albanian relations was particularly felt after Enver Hoxha's visit to Moscow in mid-1947 without first consulting with the Yugoslav authorities. Despite of such mistrustful atmosphere, the mutual economic and other relations of Yugoslavia and Albania continued. However, decline was felt in all fields.

The co-operation between Yugoslavia and Albania, although emphasized and reconfirmed at the Eighth Plenum in February 1948, was declining. The official separation came after the publication of the Informbiro Resolution in June 1948. Albania agreed to this resolution and terminated all treaties with Yugoslavia except the Friendship Treaty, which Yugoslavia terminated on 12 November 1949 [77]. The relations were normalized after 1955, with the establishment of embassies in Belgrade and Tirana [78].

VII. Conclusion

During the Second World War, relations were established between the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and the Communist Party of Albania, which gained a new dimension after the war's end. A mood of brotherhood, friendship and cooperation was created. They were connected by the fact that in 1945, both

Albania and Yugoslavia had to go through a difficult process of rebuilding the country. Although it didn't recover quickly, the Yugoslav state began providing assistance to Albania. It consisted of ideological, political, economic, healthcare, military and cultural aid. The economic assistance that Yugoslavia gave to Albania was very significant, above all assistance in supplying nourishment to the Albanian population.

With the goal to form closer co-operation, Yugoslavia and Albania signed two treaties 1945, one in the form of a military alliance for the joint fight against the German occupation forces, which was to be extended in the post-war years, and the other constituting a treaty on economic cooperation between Yugoslavia and Albania. With the Trade Agreement, the total value of mutual deliveries amounted to about 40 million dinars. Under that agreement, Yugoslavia shipped 2,991 tons of wheat, 5,717 tons of corn, 106 tons of beans, 2,000 tons of cement and other material to Albania. We can see this from the Protocol signed by both parties when establishing the Trade agreement. In addition to the contractual claims, Albania also received out-of-agreement assistance from Yugoslavia. Relations with Albania were also developing on other levels. The Yugoslav state spread propaganda in Albania through press, publications and with the opening of a Yugoslav book store in Tirana. Also, Serbian language courses were organized in Albania and Yugoslav teachers were sent. It was suggested that Albanian students should be admitted to Yugoslav universities and schools with Yugoslav scholarships. Albanian youth was also spending time in Yugoslavia, for example as participants in the Balkan Countries Anti-Fascist Youth Congress. Medical and healthcare co-operation was established; medicines were sent from Yugoslavia to Albania and one medical team spent a month in Albania. The issue that was very important to regulate was the issue of border relations, so an agreement was arranged to manage border traffic.

The established Yugoslav-Albanian co-operation contributed to Albania's economic and political recovery. A war-destroyed economy was restored and plans were made for further developments. A very extensive agrarian reform begun. The year 1945 ended with the elections for the Constituent Parliament in Albania which were won by the People's Front led by Enver Hoxha. The condition for recognizing Albania set by the Western powers was that the elections be free with the participation of all anti-fascist forces. After the elections were over, the West concluded that they were not as demanded, so Albania was forced to link its aspirations with Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union in the coming years.

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