

livestock to markets across the Greek border, and border officials in Yugoslavia and Greece complained of Albanians coming across and burglarizing homes.

Foreign Trade Balance and Balance of Payments

After more than a decade of autarky and trade surpluses, the force of Albania's economic collapse pulled the country's foreign-trade balance and balance of payments into the red. Albania's exports slipped more than 50 percent to about US\$120 million in the early 1990s, and the influx of emergency food and commodity aid contributed almost half of a 20 percent increase in imports. In 1991 Albania's external current-accounts deficit, excluding official transfers, widened to more than US\$250 million, which equaled about 30 percent of the country's GDP before the economy seized up. In an effort to narrow the gap, the authorities practically depleted Albania's meager foreign-currency reserves. In the late 1980s, the government began ignoring the constitutional ban on foreign credits, and by mid-1991 the country's total convertible-currency debt was soaring toward US\$400 million. Shortfalls in the output of electric power, minerals, and other goods set off another significant slide in export earnings. Officials hoped remittances from the thousands of Albanians who had fled to Greece and Italy would help return Albania's balance of payments to an even keel, but in the early 1990s these émigrés were mostly sending home hard goods, such as used cars, unavailable in the homeland.

Trade Partners

In the mid-1980s, Albania claimed to be carrying on trade with more than fifty countries although the value of the goods exchanged with most of them was small. Trade with IMF member countries, however, was in some cases substantial (see table 11, Appendix). Neighboring Yugoslavia accounted for about 18 percent of Albania's trade volume; the remainder was divided almost evenly between the communist and capitalist countries. Tiranë's main trading partners in Eastern Europe were Romania, Poland, Bulgaria, and Czechoslovakia. In the late 1970s, Albania's break with China forced its commercial representatives to redouble their efforts to find new trading partners in the free-market world. The value of Albania's trade with the West stood at about US\$200 million by the late 1980s. In 1988 its main Western trading partners were Italy (US\$65 million in trade turnover), West Germany (US\$52 million), Greece (US\$16.4 million), and France (US\$14 million).

Albanian-Yugoslav trade, torpid throughout a decades-long chill in the two countries' relations, revived after Albania's break with

China. The chamber of commerce of each nation opened offices in the other's capital city, and in 1986 a new rail line to Yugoslavia linked Albania with the European rail network for the first time. Albanian imports from Yugoslavia included reinforcing steel, railroad track, steel piping, cables, bricks, pharmaceuticals, electronics, textiles, food, and capital goods. Yugoslavia imported electric power, tobacco, chrome, bitumen, gasoline, natural gas, cognac, and food from Albania. The fallout from the political crisis in Yugoslavia's Kosovo province, populated mainly by ethnic Albanians, had surprisingly little effect on Albanian-Yugoslav trade until the early 1990s, when war erupted between Croatia and Serbia. In 1991 the Albanian government and leaders of the ethnic Albanian community in Kosovo worked toward establishing a joint, Tiranë-based commission to promote stronger economic ties.

After its break with the Soviet Union in 1960, Albania played no part in the activities of Comecon. Trade with the Eastern bloc—with the glaring exception of the Soviet Union, with which Albania maintained no trade relations—increased after Albania broke with China. Generally, Albania supplied its communist-world trading partners with metal ores and agricultural products; it imported machinery, transportation equipment, and some consumer goods. The Albanians obtained rolled steel and coking coal from Poland, pumps from Hungary, trucks and tires from Czechoslovakia, sheet steel from Bulgaria, and textile machinery and fertilizers from East Germany. The Albanians also signed a contract with Hungary to build a pharmaceuticals plant in Tiranë. After a five-year hiatus, China and Albania resumed trade activities in 1983; the new relationship, however, lacked the intimacy of the twelve-year period of close cooperation in the 1960s and early 1970s. Albania carried on a modicum of trade with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) and Cuba.

In the mid-1980s, the growing interest of small import firms in the Albanian market accounted for a sharp increase in trade with Italy and West Germany. Italy was Albania's largest Western trading partner in the late 1980s. Italian exports to Albania accounted for about 20 percent of the West's exports to Albania in 1985, and Italy purchased 16.5 percent of Albania's exports to Western countries. Italy sold Albania metalworking and food-processing machinery, chemicals, iron and steel, metal products, vehicles, and plastics. The Italians imported petroleum products, chrome, copper, nickel and iron ore, and farm products from Albania. In the mid-1980s, West Germany accounted for about 15.5 percent of Western exports to Albania and 15 percent of Western purchases from Albania. Chromium ore and concentrates represented about

50 percent of Albania's exports to West Germany in 1985. The Albanians bought machinery, transportation equipment, and manufactured goods from West Germany. The collapse of Albania's Stalinist economic system opened the door for greater trade with Western Europe. In 1991 Tiranë was negotiating its first economic agreement with the European Community, under which each party would grant the other most-favored-nation status (see Glossary).

For decades Albania was subject to all United States controls on exports to East European nations. The country did not have most-favored-nation treatment and was not eligible for credits or loan guarantees from the Export-Import Bank of the United States (Eximbank). Nevertheless, the volume of United States trade with Albania grew from about US\$1 million in 1973 to over US\$20 million in 1982; it fell, however, to US\$7.7 million in 1986. In 1991 the United States exported coal, wheat, butterfat, powdered milk, and other products to Albania with a total value of about US\$18 million; to the United States, Albania exported primarily spices and fruit preserves worth about US\$3.2 million. In 1991 Albania was attempting to conclude an economic agreement with the United States by which each nation would extend to the other most-favored-nation status.

Albania's trade with developing countries, which was driven mostly by a need to find and nurture political alliances, amounted to only about US\$10 million out of a total trade turnover of US\$513 million reported in 1982. Trade with developing countries was hindered because Albania sold its raw materials to and bought vital manufactured goods from wealthier, industrialized nations. Algeria, Costa Rica, Egypt, Iran, Libya, Mexico, and Turkey had had trade agreements with communist Albania.

Commodity Pattern of Trade

Raw materials, fuels, and capital goods accounted for the bulk of Albania's foreign trade before the communist system fell apart (see table 12; table 13, Appendix). The communist regime strove to increase the value of the country's exports by producing and selling industrial and semifinished products instead of raw materials and foodstuffs. In the late 1980s, raw materials and industrial goods made up about 75 percent of exports, which mainly consisted of petroleum, chromite and chrome products, copper wire, nickel, and electric power. Albania's light industries contributed export earnings from sales of bicycles, textiles, handicrafts, souvenirs, wood products, briar pipes, and rugs. Cognac, cigarettes, fruit, olives, tomatoes, canned sardines, anchovies, and other agricultural products

also accounted for a share of exports. In 1989 Albania imported about US\$245 million in goods from the West, up from US\$165 million in 1988. It imported mainly capital goods, semifinished products, and replacement parts necessary to keep industries, especially export-producing industries, functioning. Imports included locomotives, trailers, machinery, textiles, synthetic fibers, lubricants, dyes, plastics, and certain raw materials. Consumer goods such as components for television sets and equipment to outfit enterprises serving foreign tourists accounted for a smaller percentage of imports.

Activities of Foreign Companies in Albania

Albania's 1976 constitution specifically prohibited joint ventures between Albanian enterprises and foreign firms. However, the severe economic crisis of the early 1990s persuaded the government to create a rudimentary framework for regulating the business activities of foreign firms on Albanian soil. Decrees were issued providing for investment protection and the creation of joint ventures between Albanian and foreign companies. At least in theory, the August 1991 law on economic activity allowed foreign companies to repatriate, in foreign currency, accumulated capital and profits from economic activities. More than two dozen foreign companies had already signed joint-venture contracts by August 1991. Almost half of the joint ventures involved small investments in shoe and textile manufacturing, fishing, retail trade, tourism, and construction. Foreign petroleum companies also signed agreements to explore for petroleum reserves beneath the Adriatic Sea. Other potential investors came from Italy and Greece, the Albanian émigré community in the West, and Kosovo's community of ethnic Albanians.

In October 1991, Albania joined the IMF and afterward worked to secure the IMF standby credit agreement prerequisite to receipt of credits from the World Bank and other international institutions. Albania also became a member of the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency, a part of the World Bank Group; signed bilateral trade accords and foreign-investment protection agreements with Italy, Germany, Greece, and Turkey; and signed an agreement with the Overseas Private Insurance Corporation, which insures foreign investments by United States companies. Greek businessmen also began operating clothing and yarn factories, and Greek firms signed agreements to transport natural gas as well as contracts for road construction, machinery sales, and shipping. Albania also signed import-credit arrangements with Turkey, which agreed to give Albania technical assistance in banking and other areas.

Foreign Assistance

Throughout its modern history, with the exception of the disastrous “self-reliance” period in the 1970s and 1980s, Albania has relied on foreign aid to achieve economic growth. Each interruption of aid has had immediate and dramatic effects. Between 1955 and 1960, foreign assistance augmented Albania’s state budget 233 percent, and industrial output rose by an average of 16.5 percent annually; between 1960 and 1965, aid augmented the budget 130 percent, and yearly industrial output rose only by an average 6.8 percent annually.

The Stalinist economic system’s breakdown left Albania with acute shortages of many of the basic necessities of life, especially food. Having no choice but to turn to the West for aid, Albania’s leaders got responses from the United States, the member states of the European Community, and Turkey; Greece and Italy were particularly forthcoming. Italy, which was interested in providing assistance mainly in order to stem inflows of Albanian job seekers, pledged more than US\$300 million in food, raw materials, and replacement parts alone. Western economists estimated that in 1992 Albania would need some US\$500 million worth of food, basic consumer goods, and materials for its factories. Law-enforcement problems and poor, often predatory, local administrations complicated aid deliveries, and on occasion mobs stormed and looted food warehouses and trucks. In many areas, the local communist bosses controlled the only aid-distribution network. They often stole relief supplies and denied deliveries to ordinary people. In mid-1991 the Italian army launched “Operation Pelican,” sending 750 troops to protect convoys delivering aid from the ports of Vlorë and Durrës to Albania’s twenty-six district centers. Western aid to Albania was also directed at longer-term goals. In July 1991, the European Community enrolled Albania in its program for technical assistance to the former communist countries. Germany granted assistance to improve health services, the drinking-water supply, and student housing.

Prospects for Reform

In 1992, after close to fifty years of communist-imposed isolation following five centuries of Ottoman domination, the Albanian people had little awareness of the outside world and possessed Europe’s least developed trade network. The Albanians faced the daunting task of reviving their moribund factories and workshops and learning the realities of modern capitalism while building a

market economy from scratch. Burgeoning unemployment, falling output, acute food shortages, and widespread lawlessness eroded most grounds for optimism in the prospects for rapid success. Individual Albanian factories could not switch on assembly lines because idled plants, farms, mines, and generators elsewhere in the production chain were not supplying essential inputs. For most enterprises, importing these inputs was impossible because Albania's nascent foreign-exchange market was not yet fully operative. Despite Albania's dire circumstances, World Bank and European Community economists projected that the country's resource base and labor force could provide the basis for an escape from poverty if the government, with the international community's financial help, took urgent steps to establish the institutions and infrastructure needed to support a market economy and stimulate small-scale private entrepreneurship in the farm sector.

The government's immediate objective was to restore a secure food supply for the general population and provide income and employment for rural inhabitants. Albanian leaders turned to the international community for direct food aid and technical and material assistance for the farm sector. Boosting agricultural output was also a prerequisite for resuming industrial production because many factories needed inputs of raw materials produced in the farm sector. Overall resumption of production had to be coordinated between state enterprises so as to create economic demand and establish a smooth flow of supplies. In 1992, despite the country's inability to pay its international creditors, Albania looked to the IMF, World Bank, and individual Western countries to lend the money needed to jump start and stabilize the economy. Over the longer term, the Albanian economy's fate depends on the country's political leadership restoring law and order, attracting private investors from abroad, and obtaining credits and aid from Western governments for the modernization of industry and agriculture. The last task is especially important because the lack of expertise in international trade and poor quality of Albania's exports preclude the country's earning the foreign exchange necessary to improve infrastructure and increase production. Chronic unemployment is almost certain to be a reality in Albania until urbanization significantly slackens population growth.

* * *

Despite Albania's small size and its communist regime's almost pathological yearning for secrecy, a surprising amount of literature is available on the Balkan state's economy. The best descriptions

of Albania's Stalinist system are Adi Schnytzer's *Stalinist Economic Strategy in Practice* and Örjan Sjöberg's *Rural Change and Development in Albania*. Stavro Skendi's *Albania*, Peter R. Prifti's *Socialist Albania since 1944*, and Robert Owen Freedman's *Economic Warfare in the Communist Bloc* offer valuable historical insights into Albania's economic development. Gramoz Pashko, the Albanian economist best known in the West, has also contributed several clearly written, compelling papers on Albania's communist economic system, including "The Albanian Economy at the Beginning of the 1990s." Both the Economist Intelligence Unit and Business International publish regular studies of the Albanian economic situation; the studies are particularly useful to persons exploring the possibility of trading with the country or setting up business operations there. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Chapter 4. Government and Politics



Albanian citizens celebrating victory after announcement that regime would permit multiparty elections, December 1990

ALBANIA WAS THE LAST COUNTRY in Eastern Europe during the early 1990s to undergo a transition from a totalitarian communist regime to an incipient system of democracy. Because Albania was isolated from the outside world and ruled by a highly repressive, Stalinist-type dictatorship for more than four decades, this transition was especially tumultuous and painful, making a gradual approach to reform difficult.

Following the establishment of the People's Republic of Albania in January 1946, Albania became a rigid police state, dominated completely by the communist party and by Marxism-Leninism. Although Albania operated under the facade of constitutional rule, the communist party, led by Enver Hoxha, who was also president of Albania, actually controlled all aspects of the political, social, and economic systems. Hoxha pursued a repressive internal policy, while at the same time implementing a highly isolationist foreign policy. His reliance first on the financial aid and political protection of a sequence of patron states, then insistence on Albania's economic self-reliance and a highly centralized economic system caused Albania to lag far behind its neighbors in terms of economic development.

After Hoxha died in 1985, his hand-picked successor, Ramiz Alia, who became party leader while retaining his post as titular head of state (chairman of the Presidium of the People's Assembly), at first appeared to be carrying on Hoxha's tradition of hard-line policies. But it soon became clear that he was more flexible than his predecessor and was willing to institute badly needed political and economic reforms that attempted to prevent the country from collapsing into anarchy. These reforms, however, were largely cosmetic and insufficient to meet the demands of the growing radical elements in the population. By 1991, popular dissatisfaction with Alia's regime had mounted, causing considerable political instability and social unrest. The civil war in neighboring Yugoslavia (see Glossary) served only to exacerbate the growing political and social tension within Albania. Alia resigned following his party's resounding defeat in the spring 1992 multiparty election, and a new government undertook the task of building democracy in a country that for close to five decades had been isolated from the outside world, dominated by a highly repressive political system, and devoid of free-market, private enterprise.

Origins of the Political System

The communists gained a foothold in Albanian politics during World War II, when they became the founders and leaders of the National Liberation Movement (NLM), which came into existence during the Italian and German occupations. Hoxha, a former schoolteacher who became first secretary of the Albanian Communist Party (ACP) in 1941, was a prominent wartime resistance leader and was largely responsible for the success of the communists in achieving a position of political dominance towards the end of the war.

As leaders of the NLM, the Albanian communists were successful in arousing active opposition to the Italian army and, after September 1943, to the German army. Toward the end of the war, the communists worked unceasingly to ensure that they would exercise political power in liberated Albania. In October 1944, the renamed National Liberation Front transformed itself into the provisional democratic government of Albania, with Hoxha as prime minister. By the time German troops had withdrawn from Albania in November 1944, almost all organized resistance to communism had been crushed.

Albania after World War II

The People's Republic of Albania was proclaimed on January 11, 1946, by a newly elected People's Assembly. The assembly, which was elected in December 1945, initially included both communists and noncommunists. Within a year, however, all noncommunists had been purged from the assembly and were subsequently executed. The communists had a monopoly of power by the end of 1946.

The new regime acted swiftly to consolidate its position by breaking up the power of the middle class and other perceived opponents. The communist party tried before special tribunals those classified as "war criminals," a designation that came to include anyone who was unsympathetic to the new government. Members of the landed aristocracy and tribal chieftains were arrested and sent to labor camps. More than 600 leaders were executed during the new government's first two weeks in power. In an effort to strengthen its grip on the economy, the government promulgated a series of laws providing for strict state regulation of all industrial and commercial enterprises and foreign and domestic trade. The laws legalized the confiscation of property of political opponents in exile and anyone designated an "enemy of the people" and levied a crushing "war-profits tax" against the economically prosperous

members of the population. As part of its program to nationalize industry, the government confiscated all German and Italian assets in Albania and revoked all foreign economic concessions. All means of transportation were also nationalized. As far as the peasantry was concerned, the new government was cautious. The Agrarian Reform Law of 1945 nationalized all forests and pasturelands, but landowners who possessed farm machinery were allowed to keep up to forty hectares for farming (see Communist Albania, ch. 1).

The Hoxha Regime

Hoxha was the most powerful leader in modern Albania, occupying at times the posts of prime minister, minister of defense, and commander in chief of the armed forces, while continuing to serve as first secretary of the ACP. He was head of state from 1944 until 1985. His main rival in the initial period of his rule was the minister of internal affairs and head of the dreaded secret police, Koçi Xoxe. Xoxe was close to the Yugoslavs and was arrested in 1948 as a Titoist (see Glossary) following Albania's break with Yugoslavia. The next most influential political figure was Mehmet Shehu, who became prime minister when Hoxha relinquished this post in July 1954.

Hoxha's efforts to impose a rigid, repressive political and government structure on Albania met with little active resistance until the country's declining standard of living and poor economic performance led to such dissatisfaction that unrest began to spread in 1965-66. In response, the Hoxha government initiated the Cultural and Ideological Revolution in February 1966, which was an attempt to reassert communist party influence on all aspects of life and rekindle revolutionary fervor. By 1973 demands for a relaxation of party controls and for internal reforms were creating considerable pressure on Hoxha. The pressure led him to launch a series of purges of top cultural, military, and economic officials. In 1977, for example, an alleged "Chinese conspiracy" was uncovered, which resulted in the dismissal and arrest of several top military officials.

In keeping with its Stalinist practices, Albania's government pursued a rigorously dogmatic line in domestic policy, instituting highly centralized economic planning and rigid restrictions on educational and cultural development. In 1976 a new constitution was promulgated, the third such constitution since the communists came to power. The 1976 constitution, which changed the official name of the country to the People's Socialist Republic of Albania, was little different from the 1950 version. It paid lip service to such institutions as the Supreme Court and the People's Assembly, but it

affirmed the primary role of the communist party, known as the Albanian Party of Labor (APL) from 1948 until 1991.

Whatever gains the Hoxha leadership achieved in socioeconomic terms were diminished by the sharp repression in all areas of life, and Hoxha's decision to keep Albania isolated retarded the country's technological growth to such an extent that it became economically inferior to all of its neighbors (see *Economic Policy and Performance*, ch. 3).

The early 1980s were marked by further purges in the government and party in preparation for the impending succession to Hoxha, who was in ill health. Although Prime Minister Shehu had been regarded as the second most powerful leader, especially because he had significant support in the police and military, Hoxha decided against naming him as his successor. Instead, Hoxha began a campaign against him, which culminated in Shehu's alleged suicide in December 1981. Hoxha then proceeded to arrest all of Shehu's family and supporters.

Alia Takes Over

Before Hoxha died in April 1985, after more than forty years as the unchallenged leader, he had designated Ramiz Alia as his successor. Alia was born in 1925 and had joined the Albanian communist movement before he was twenty years old. He had risen rapidly under Hoxha's patronage and by 1961 was a full member of the ruling Political Bureau (Politburo) of the APL. Hoxha chose Alia for several reasons. First, Alia had long been a militant follower of Marxism-Leninism (see *Glossary*) and supported Hoxha's policy of national self-reliance. Alia also was favored by Hoxha's wife Nexhmije, who had once been his instructor at the Institute of Marxism-Leninism. Alia's political experience was similar to that of Hoxha; and inasmuch as he appeared to share Hoxha's views on most foreign and domestic issues, he easily accommodated himself to the totalitarian mode of ruling. That he had managed to survive several waves of extensive purges bespoke his political prowess and capacity for survival.

The second-ranking member of the leadership after Hoxha's death was Prime Minister Adil Çarçani, a full member of the Politburo since 1961. Among the fifteen candidate and full members of the party's Politburo in 1985, nine were members of the post-war generation and most had made their political careers after Albanian-Soviet ties were severed in 1961. By late 1986, both the Politburo and the party's other administrative organ, the Secretariat, were dominated by Alia's supporters.

When Alia took over as first secretary of the APL, the country was in grave difficulty. Political apathy and cynicism were pervasive, with large segments of the population having rejected the regime's values. The economy, which suffered from low productivity and permanent shortages of the most basic foodstuffs, showed no sign of improvement. Social controls and self-discipline had eroded. The intelligentsia was beginning to resist strict party controls and to criticize the regime's failure to observe international standards of human rights. Apparently recognizing the depth and extent of the societal malaise, Alia cautiously and slowly began to make changes in the system. His first target was the economic system. In an effort to improve economic efficiency, Alia introduced some economic decentralization and price reform in specific sectors. Although these changes marked a departure from the Hoxha regime, they did not signify a fundamental reform of the economic system.

Alia did not relax censorship, but he did allow public discussions of Albania's societal problems and encouraged debates among writers and artists on cultural issues. In response to international criticism of Albania's record on human rights, the new leadership loosened some political controls and ceased to apply repression on a mass scale. In 1986 and 1989, general amnesties brought about the release of many long-term prisoners. Alia also took steps to establish better ties with the outside world, strengthening relations with Greece, Italy, Turkey, and Yugoslavia. A loosening of restrictions on travel and tourism resulted in a more promising outlook for Albania's tourist trade.

By the late 1980s, Alia was supporting a campaign for more openness in the press and encouraging people to talk freely about Albania's problems. As a result, controversial articles on a range of topics began to appear in the press. Not everyone, however, was happy with Alia's cautious program of reform. The entrenched party bureaucrats were worried that they would lose their powers and privileges and hence resisted many of the changes. Thus Alia's regime was not able, or willing, to attempt changes that would put an end to the repressive elements of the system.

Albania's Communist Party

Albania's communist party, in early 1992, was in a state of transition, and its future remained uncertain. Known from 1941 to 1948 as the Albanian Communist Party, from November 1948 as the Albanian Party of Labor (APL), and from June 1991 as the Socialist Party of Albania (SPA), the communist party was organized along lines similar to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

The 1976 constitution recognized the special status of the APL, which controlled the political, cultural, and economic life in the country. According to Article 3 of the constitution, the party is the "leading political force of the state and of the society." The party was organized on the principle of democratic centralism (see Glossary), under which the minority had to submit to the majority and could not express disagreement after a vote. The highest organ of the party, according to the party statutes, was the party congress, which met for a few days every five years. Delegates to the party congress were elected at party conferences held at the regional, district, and city levels. The party congress examined and approved reports submitted by the Central Committee, discussed general party policies, and elected a Central Committee. The latter was the next highest echelon in the party hierarchy and generally included all key officials in the government, as well as prominent members of the intelligentsia. The Central Committee directed party activities between party congresses and met approximately three times a year.

As in the Soviet Union, the Central Committee elected a Politburo and a Secretariat. The Politburo, which usually included key government ministers and Central Committee secretaries, was the main administrative and policy-making body and convened on a weekly basis. Generally the Central Committee approved Politburo reports and policy decisions with little debate. The Secretariat was responsible for guiding the day-to-day affairs of the party, in particular for organizing the execution of Politburo decisions and for selecting party and government cadres.

The Ninth Party Congress of the APL was convened in November 1986, with 1,628 delegates in attendance. Since 1971, the composition of the party had changed in several respects. The percentage of women had risen from 22 percent in 1971 to 32.2 percent in 1986, while 70 percent of APL members were under the age of forty. The average age of members in the newly elected Central Committee was forty-nine, as compared with an average age of fifty-three in the previous Central Committee. The new Central Committee elected a Politburo of thirteen full and five candidate members. In his speech at the Ninth Party Congress, Alia did not indicate any significant departure from the policies of Hoxha, but he launched a campaign to streamline the party bureaucracy and improve its efficiency. Alia urged that standards of cadre training and performance be raised in an effort to rid the system of bureaucrats who were so concerned with protecting their privileges that they blocked the implementation of new economic policies. The Politburo also instituted a policy whereby cadres in positions



*Speaker at the Tenth Party Congress of the Albanian Party of Labor, June 1991
Courtesy Charles Sudetic*

that were vulnerable to graft and corruption would be rotated on a regular basis.

At the Ninth Plenum of the Central Committee in January 1990, Alia announced further modest reforms. Meetings of all lower-level party organizations would be open to the masses, secretaries of party organizations could serve no longer than five years, one-third of the membership in state organs had to be renewed each legislative term, and at each congress of the APL a third of the delegates would be replaced.

These reforms, however, appeared to be ineffectual after Albania underwent radical changes in its political culture in 1990-91. As was the case in the Soviet Union and in other countries of Eastern Europe, attempts at cautious reform in response to unrest gave rise to widespread manifestations of discontent. On December 11, 1990, student protests triggered the announcement at the Thirteenth Plenum of the Central Committee of the APL that a multiparty system would be introduced in time for the general elections set for February 1991. Following the multiparty election in the spring of 1991, the APL, later the SPA, emerged as the dominant partner in a coalition government (see Reform Politics, this ch.). The SPA was defeated in the spring 1992 general election, receiving only 26 percent of the vote.

The Government Apparatus

The government apparatus, like that of the party, was in a transitional, reformist phase in early 1992. Following the upheavals of 1990 and 1991, which left the economy shattered, much of the country's infrastructure damaged, and parts of the education and welfare systems inoperative, the regime was becoming more democratic and more responsive to the demands of the Albanian people. This shift was reflected, above all, in the introduction of a new electoral system, which for the first time allowed people to choose among several candidates in electing representatives to the legislature. The organs of government described here were provided for in the 1976 constitution. However, changes were introduced in April 1991, when the People's Assembly passed the Law on Major Constitutional Provisions (see Multiparty System, this ch.).

People's Assembly

The supreme organ of the state was, according to the 1976 constitution, the People's Assembly, a unicameral legislative body whose 250 members were elected for four years from a single list of approved candidates. All legislative power was vested in the assembly, which met twice a year for a few days. The People's Assembly had the authority to appoint commissions, to carry out special functions, and to conduct investigations. Between sessions the fifteen-member Presidium of the People's Assembly took charge. Proposals for legislation could be made by the Presidium of the People's Assembly, the Council of Ministers, or members of the assembly itself. In order for a bill to become law, a majority of the People's Assembly had to affirm support for it. Rarely did the assembly express anything other than unanimous approval for a bill. The chairman of the Presidium of the People's Assembly was Alia, who thus merged the functions of party and government leader in one person.

Council of Ministers and People's Councils

The Council of Ministers, formally approved by the People's Assembly, served as the executive branch of the government, taking charge of activities in the social, economic, and cultural spheres. The APL's Politburo actually chose the Council of Ministers, which in early 1991 consisted of twenty-one members. At the same time, some ministers were members of the Politburo, and all belonged to the APL. This fact enabled the party to exercise strong supervision and direction over the Council of Ministers, and, indeed, the council's main function was to ensure that Politburo decisions were

carried out. The Council of Ministers was headed by a chairman, the de facto prime minister, who was chosen by the party leadership. In January 1982, Adil Çarçani succeeded Mehmet Shehu as prime minister and was, in turn, replaced by Fatos Nano in February 1991.

People's councils, elected for three-year terms, were responsible for government at twenty-six district levels as well as regional and city levels. They maintained order, enforced laws, and were charged with protecting citizens' rights. The councils met twice a year for a few days, and between sessions their work was conducted by executive committees.

Courts

The highest judicial organ was the Supreme Court, whose members were elected to a four-year term by the People's Assembly in a secret ballot. The Supreme Court consisted of a chairman, deputy chairmen, and assistant judges and made its decisions collegially. Officers of courts at the lower levels—district and regional courts—were elected in a similar manner by people's councils. Trials were generally open to the public and were often held in places of employment or in villages in order to make them accessible.

After abolishing the Ministry of Justice in the 1960s, the Albanian leadership placed supervision of the country's legal and judicial system in the hands of the prosecutor general. Then in 1983, the Ministry of Justice's Office of Investigations, charged with investigating criminal cases, was placed under the direct supervision of the Presidium of the People's Assembly, ostensibly to make the legal system more responsive to the needs of the people. Whatever organizational changes occurred, the courts themselves had little independence in practice because of party interference in both the investigative process and court proceedings. In 1990 the Ministry of Justice was reestablished, with a mandate for supervising the courts and coming up with a program of judicial reform. As of early 1992, the creation of such a program was still underway.

Mass Organizations

According to Enver Hoxha, mass organizations were "levers of the party for its ties with the masses," and they carried out political, executive, and organizational work in such a way as to enable party directives to be correctly understood and implemented by the population at large. Because less than 4 percent of Albania's population belonged to the APL as of 1990, the leadership relied heavily on mass organizations to achieve political socialization. They were controlled by APL cadres and used public funds for their

maintenance. However, by early 1992, the importance of these organizations had diminished because a multiparty system had been established and members of the public had the democratic means through which to channel their political expressions.

Democratic Front

Among the most important of Albania's mass organizations was the Democratic Front, which in August 1945 succeeded the National Liberation Front (previously the National Liberation Movement) as the party's most important auxiliary. As the broadest mass organization, the Democratic Front was supposed to give expression to the political views of the population and to carry out mass political education. The main tasks of this organization were to strengthen the political unity between the party and the people and to mobilize the masses in favor of the implementation of the APL's policies. Ideological indoctrination, the spreading of Marxist-Leninist ideas, was another goal of the front. The Democratic Front, as an umbrella organization for cultural, professional, and political groups, was open to all citizens who were at least eighteen years old. It was chaired until December 1990 by Hoxha's widow, Nexhmije, herself a member of the APL Central Committee.

Union of Albanian Working Youth

Described officially as the "greatest revolutionary force of inexhaustible strength" and a "strong fighting reserve of the party," the Union of Albanian Working Youth was another key organization for political socialization and indoctrination. The union operated directly under the APL, with its local organs supervised by the relevant district or city party committees. Founded in 1941, the union was considered one of the most important auxiliaries of the party. Organized in the same way as the party, the union had city and district committees, and higher organs, including the Politburo and Central Committee. It was patterned after the All-Union Lenin Communist Youth League, known as Komsomol, in the Soviet Union. The more than 200,000 members of the union ranged in age from fifteen to twenty-five. The union was responsible for controlling all Pioneer organizations, which embraced children from seven to fourteen years of age; for implementing party directives among youth; and for mobilizing so-called volunteer labor brigades to work on special economic projects. Membership in the union was a prerequisite for those aspiring to a career in the party or state apparatus.

Union of Albanian Women

The Union of Albanian Women was another important mass organization. The union was headed in 1990 by Lumturie Rexha, a member of the Central Committee of the APL. Its tasks included controlling and supervising the political and social activities of the country's women, handling their ideological training, and leading the campaign for the emancipation of women. This campaign, initiated in 1966 by Hoxha, had considerable success in securing equal social and political rights for women. As part of the campaign, women from the cities were dispatched to rural regions to explain to the party's line on the role of women. By the late 1980s, women accounted for 47 percent of the labor force and about 30 percent of deputies to the People's Assembly. Women held responsible jobs at all levels of government and received equal pay in most jobs. Nonetheless, Albanian society remained behind the West in its attitudes toward women and had a long way to go to achieve total equality for women (see *Traditional Social Patterns and Values*, ch. 2; *Women in the Work Force*, ch. 3).

United Trade Unions of Albania

Founded in 1945, the United Trade Unions of Albania had tasks that were similar to those of the Democratic Front, but on a more limited scale. The organization's main goal was to carry out political and ideological education of the work force and to mobilize support for the implementation of the party line. The United Trade Unions of Albania consisted of three general unions: the Union of Workers of Industry and Construction, the Union of Education and Trade Workers, and the Union of Agriculture and Procurements Workers. The unions operated according to the principle that the interests of the workers and the state were one and the same. But toward the end of the 1980s, it became increasingly clear that workers no longer identified with the state. Growing disillusionment with social values was reflected in the significant increase in theft of socialist property, corruption, and violation of labor discipline (see *Trade Unions*, ch. 3).

Mass Media

The mass media had long served as an important instrument for the government's efforts to revolutionize society along communist lines. One of the first acts of the communists when they came to power in 1944 was to seize control of the media, although formal nationalization of media operations did not occur until 1946.

Thereafter the press, radio, and later television were used to justify communist rule and instill Marxist values in the population.

The press, radio, and television were also used to mobilize the population to support and participate in the implementation of regime programs, such as economic plans, antireligious policies, or campaigns to promote literacy. In order to appeal to the sentiments of the masses, much of the media's message had a nationalist content, evoking feelings of loyalty and pride associated with Albanian independence. The media also served to keep party and government officials in check through exposure of corruption and inefficiency.

The media were closely controlled by the party through the exercise of vigorous censorship until 1990, when the leadership began to moderate policies and to gradually allow for the expression of views that ran counter to the official line. Before 1990 all individuals who worked in the mass media, whether editors, film directors, or television and radio producers, were subject to strict party discipline and rigid guidelines.

The most important daily newspaper was *Zëri i Popullit* (Voice of the People), published by the party's Central Committee. As a result of the democratic changes that began in 1990, *Zëri i Popullit* lost its substantial circulation to the new, liberal papers that started to emerge. By 1991 several opposition papers had emerged, including the popular and outspoken *Rilindja Demokratike*. In response to the changing public mood, *Zëri i Popullit* dropped the hammer and sickle insignia from its masthead, along with the Marxist slogan "Proletarians of the World Unite." It then joined with opposition newspapers in the campaign to expose and denounce the corruption and privileges of the ruling elite.

Reform Politics

Albania held out against political reform longer than any other country that had been considered to be in the Soviet Union's sphere of influence, but significant indicators of change in the country's politics began to occur in 1989. Pressure for reform originated from several sources: the intelligentsia and university students, workers, Politburo members antagonistic to Alia, other East European countries, and institutions such as the army and security police. Alia gradually responded to these pressures, but in general the reforms he initiated were too little too late.

Initial Stages

In 1990 Albania had the youngest population in Europe, with the average age at twenty-seven. Albanian youth had been discontented

and restless for some time before the regime began to make changes. Although efforts were made to keep Albania isolated from the rest of the world, television broadcasts from other European countries reached Albanian citizens, and the young could see "bourgeois" lifestyles and the political ferment that was occurring elsewhere in Eastern Europe. In addition, the working class was suffering the dire consequences of Albania's declining economy, and conditions were worsened by a terrible drought in 1989. In October 1989, workers and students in the southern district of Sarandë staged protests against the regime's policy of work incentives, and several protesters were arrested. A more serious protest had occurred in May 1989 at the Enver Hoxha University at Tiranë. At first students were simply demanding better living conditions, but their grievances soon acquired a more political character and were treated as a distinct threat by the regime. Although the protest eventually ended without bloodshed, it caused the regime to reassess its policy toward young people and to consider such measures as improving living standards and educational facilities in order to ease the discontent that had been building up among students (see Education under Communist Rule, ch. 2).

Alia and his colleagues dismissed the Soviet Union's concepts of *glasnost*' (see Glossary) and *perestroika* (see Glossary) as irrelevant to the Albanian experience. Demonstrating his ideological purity, Alia claimed that communism collapsed in Eastern Europe because these states deviated from orthodox Marxism. At the Ninth Plenum of the party's Central Committee in January 1990, however, Alia announced some modest political reforms (see Albania's Communist Party, this ch.). In addition, he presented limited economic reforms that called for some management authority at state farm and enterprise levels and for improvements in wage and price regulations to increase the role of material incentives.

In general, Alia's reforms suggested that the party leadership was nervous and defensive, and Alia seemed anxious to convince the Central Committee that Albania should not follow the path of other East European countries. Albanian leaders seemed to fear that anything but very limited reform could lead to the social and political upheaval that had occurred elsewhere in Eastern Europe. But Alia's half-measures did little to improve the economic situation or to halt the growing discontent with his regime.

Some Albanian intellectuals, such as the sociologist Hamit Beqeja and the writer Ismail Kadare, recommended more radical changes, particularly with regard to democracy and freedom of the press. As their demands grew, these intellectuals increasingly clashed with the conservatives in the party and state bureaucracy. In October

1990, it was announced that Kadare, Albania's most prominent writer, had defected to France. The defection dealt a blow to Albania's image both at home and abroad, especially since the writer had sent a letter to Alia explaining that he had defected because he was disillusioned with the slow pace of democratic change in the country. The official reaction to Kadare's defection was to condemn it as a "grave offense against the patriotic and civil conscience" of Albania, but his work continued to be published within the country.

Human Rights

Albanian citizens had few of the guarantees of human rights and fundamental freedoms that have become standard in Western democracies. A large and very effective security service, whose name was changed in July 1991 from the directorate of State Security (*Drejtorija e Sigurimit te Shtetit—Sigurimi*) to the National Information Service (NIS), helped to support the rule of the communist party by means of consistently violating citizens' rights and freedoms. According to Amnesty International, political prisoners were tortured and beaten by the Sigurimi during investigations, and political detainees lacked adequate legal safeguards during pretrial investigations. Most investigations into political offenses lasted for several months. Such violations were described in Kadare's literary works.

Alia's regime took an important step toward democracy in early May 1990, when it announced its desire to join the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE—see Glossary), while at the same time introducing positive changes in its legal system. A prerequisite for membership in the CSCE is the protection of human rights. The United Nations Human Rights Committee had severely criticized Albania for its human rights abuses in 1989, and in May 1990 the secretary general of the United Nations (UN) visited Albania and discussed the issue of human rights. The results of these efforts were mixed, but in general the leadership became more tolerant of political dissent.

Deputy Prime Minister Manush Myftiu announced in 1991 a long list of legislative changes that were designed to improve Albania's human rights record. Among the reforms were the right to a speedy trial, legal defense, and appeal; the reduction of the number of crimes punishable by death; the right of all nationals to obtain passports for travel abroad; and the removal of loopholes in the definition of crimes against the state. The government also eased its persecution of religious practice and even allowed some religious activity and "religious propaganda" (see Religion, ch.

2). Restrictions on travel were liberalized, and the number of passports issued was increased significantly. In addition, foreign broadcasts, including those from Voice of America, were no longer jammed.

Further Moves Toward Democracy

The communist regime faced perhaps its most severe test in early July 1990, when a demonstration by a group of young people in Tiranë, the nation's capital, led about 5,000 to seek refuge in foreign embassies. To defuse the crisis, in July 1990 the Central Committee held a plenum, which resulted in significant changes in the leadership of party and state. The conservatives in the leadership were pushed out, and Alia's position was strengthened. Alia had already called for privatizing retail trade, and many businesses had begun to operate privately. Then in late July, the Politburo passed a law stating that collective-farm members should be given larger plots of land to farm individually (see *Land Distribution and Agricultural Organization*, ch. 3).

In a September 1990 speech to representatives of Albania's major social and political organizations, Alia discussed the July crisis and called for electoral reform. He noted that a proposed electoral law would allow all voting to take place by secret ballot and that every precinct would have at least two candidates. The electors themselves would have the right to propose candidates and anyone could nominate candidates for the assembly. Alia also criticized the bureaucratic "routine and tranquility" of managers and state organizations that were standing in the way of reform.

Despite Alia's efforts to proceed with change on a limited, cautious basis, reform from above threatened to turn into reform from below, largely because of the increasingly vocal demands of Albania's youth. On December 9, 1990, student demonstrators marched from the Enver Hoxha University at Tiranë through the streets of the capital shouting slogans and demanding an end to dictatorship. By December 11, the number of participants had reached almost 3,000. In an effort to quell the student unrest, which had led to clashes with riot police, Alia met with the students and agreed to take further steps toward democratization. The students informed Alia that they wanted to create an independent political organization of students and youth. Alia's response was that such an organization had to be registered with the Ministry of Justice.

The student unrest was a direct consequence of the radical transformations that were taking place in Eastern Europe and of Alia's own democratic reforms, which spurred the students on to make

more politicized demands. Their protests triggered the announcement on December 11, 1990, at the Thirteenth Plenum of the APL Central Committee, that a multiparty system would be introduced in time for the general elections that were set for February 1991. The day after the announcement, the country's first opposition party, the Albanian Democratic Party (ADP), was formed.

The Thirteenth Plenum of the APL Central Committee also announced an extensive shakeup in the party leadership. Five of the eleven full members of the Politburo and two alternate members were replaced. Among those dismissed was Foto Cami, the leading liberal ideologist in the APL leadership. Cami's ouster came as a surprise because he was on close terms with Alia, but apparently Alia was dissatisfied with his failure to deal with the intellectuals effectively.

The student unrest that began in Tiranë gave rise to widespread riots in four of the largest cities in northern Albania. Violent clashes between demonstrators and security forces took place, resulting in extensive property damage but, surprisingly, no fatalities. Apparently Alia had given the police strict orders to restrain themselves during confrontations with demonstrators. However, Alia issued stern public warnings to the protesters on television, claiming that they had been misled by foreign influences and opportunistic intellectuals.

The crisis was analyzed in the Albanian press in an usually candid manner. On December 17, the Democratic Front's daily newspaper, *Bashkimi*, described what had occurred and then warned that such violence could lead to a conservative backlash, suggesting that conservative forces posed a real threat to the process of democratization in the country. The outspoken nature of the article, the first instance of open criticism of the security agencies, indicated that the government was prepared to allow intellectuals and reformers to express their views in the media. Later that month, the Council of Ministers set up a state commission to draft a law on the media and formally define their rights, thus reducing the APL's direct control over the press. The council also authorized the first opposition newspaper, *Rilindja Demokratike*.

Another important sign of democratization was the publication on December 31 of a draft interim constitution intended to replace the constitution of 1976. The draft completely omitted mention of the APL. It introduced a system with features similar to those of a parliamentary democracy, while at the same time strengthening the role of the president, who would be elected by a new People's Assembly. The president was to assume the duties of commander in chief of the armed forces and chairman of the Defense Council,

positions previously held by the party first secretary. Also on December 31, the government eased restrictions on private trade in the service and light industry sectors, indicating a general trend toward a less centralized economy.

In his traditional New Year's message to the Albanian people, Alia welcomed the changes that had been occurring in the country and claimed that 1991 would be a turning point in terms of the economy. But despite positive signs of change, many Albanians were still trying to leave their country. At the end of 1990, as many as 5,000 Albanians crossed over the mountainous border into Greece. Young people motivated by economic dissatisfaction made up the bulk of the refugees.

Multiparty System

Alia and his political colleagues did not respond to demands by reformers for a multiparty system until the pressure became too great to resist. After the government was finally forced to introduce political pluralism and a multiparty system, several opposition parties were created. The first was the Albanian Democratic Party (ADP), formed on December 12, 1990. One of the founders of the party was the thirty-five-year-old Gramoz Pashko, an economist and a former APL member and son of a former government official. The party's platform called for the protection of human rights, a free-market economy, and good relations with neighboring countries. At the end of 1990, the ADP started organizing rallies in various cities intended to help people overcome their fear of expressing political views after decades of authoritarian control. Thousands of people attended the rallies. The ADP supported the rights of the large Albanian population in Kosovo, a province in the Serbian Republic of Yugoslavia, and advocated a reduction of the length of military service.

By early February 1991, the ADP had an estimated membership of 50,000 and was recognized as an important political force both at home and abroad. The ADP was led by a commission of six men, the most prominent of whom were Sali Berisha, a cardiologist, and Pashko. Berisha, a strong nationalist, vigorously defended the rights of the Albanian residents of Kosovo, and Pashko was an outspoken advocate of economic reform. The party's newspaper, *Rilindja Demokratike*, was outspoken in its political commentary. Its first issue, which appeared on January 5, 1991, criticized the government very aggressively.

The second main opposition party, the Republican Party, headed by Sabri Godo, was founded in January 1991. The Republican Party, which soon had branches in all districts of the country,

advocated a more gradual approach to reform than that espoused by the ADP. Several other opposition parties with reform platforms were formed; they included the Agrarian Party, the Ecology Party, the National Unity Party, and the Social Democratic Party.

Albania held its first multiparty elections since the 1920s in 1991. The elections were for the 250 seats in the unicameral People's Assembly. The first round was held in February, and runoff elections took place on March 31; a final round was held in April. Staff members of the CSCE observed the voting and counting of ballots. They found that the process was orderly, although some complaints of irregularities were reported. The turnout was an extremely high 98.9 percent. The APL emerged as the clear victor, winning some two-thirds of the seats. The margin enabled it to maintain control of the government and choose a president, Ramiz Alia, who had previously been chairman of the Presidium of the earlier People's Assembly.

The ADP captured 30 percent of the seats in the People's Assembly, as opposed to 67.6 percent acquired by the APL. Although the APL bore the burden of being the party responsible for past repression and the severe economic woes of Albania, it nonetheless represented stability amidst chaos to many people. This fact was particularly true in the countryside, where the conservative peasantry showed little inclination for substantial changes in their way of life. Another advantage for the APL was its control of most of the media, particularly the broadcast media, to which the opposition parties had little access. It was therefore able to manipulate radio and television to its advantage.

Although many conservative leaders won election to the People's Assembly, Alia lost his seat. Alia had surprised many people by adopting a new, apparently pragmatic, approach to politics in the months leading up to the election. He had faced a serious challenge in mid-February, when unrest erupted again among students at the Enver Hoxha University at Tiranë. Approximately 700 students went on a hunger strike in support of a demand that Hoxha's name should be removed from the university's official name. The demand was a serious attack on the country's political heritage and one that Alia refused to countenance. He resisted student demands and stressed the necessity of preserving law and order, thereby antagonizing those who had expected him to be more moderate.

In April 1991, Albania's new multiparty legislature passed transitional legislation to enable the country to move ahead with key political and economic reforms. The legislation, the Law on Major Constitutional Provisions, was in effect an interim constitution,

and the 1976 constitution was invalidated. The words “socialist” and “people’s” were dropped from the official title of Albania, so that the country’s name became the Republic of Albania. There were also fundamental changes to the political order. The Republic of Albania was declared to be a parliamentary state providing full rights and freedoms to its citizens and observing separation of powers. The People’s Assembly of at least 140 members elected for a four-year term is the legislature and is headed by a presidency consisting of a chairman and two deputies. The People’s Assembly elects the president of Albania by secret ballot and also elects the members of the Supreme Court. The president is elected for five years and may not serve more than two consecutive terms or fill any other post concurrently. The president does, however, exercise the duties of the People’s Assembly when that body is not in session. The Council of Ministers is the top executive body, and its membership is described in the interim constitution. The law on Major Constitutional Provisions is to operate as Albania’s basic law until adoption of a new constitution, to be drafted by a commission appointed by the People’s Assembly.

Although he lost his seat in the legislature, the People’s Assembly elected Alia president. The constitutional changes of April 1991 made it obligatory that Alia resign from all of his high-level posts in the APL in order to accept this post, and the amendments depoliticized other branches of government, including the ministries of defense, foreign affairs, and public order. The People’s Assembly also gained regulation of the radio, television, and other official news media.

The Coalition Government of 1991

Prime Minister Fatos Nano, a moderate communist, did well in the spring 1991 elections, and he was able to set up a new government to replace the provisional administration that he established in February 1991. His postelection cabinet consisted mostly of new faces and called for radical market reforms in the economy. In outlining his economic program to the People’s Assembly, Nano presented an extremely bleak picture of the economy. He said that the economy was in dire straits because of the inefficiencies of the highly centralized economic system that had existed up to that point, and he advocated extensive privatization as a remedy. He also announced government plans to reform and streamline the armed forces.

Nano’s twenty-five-member cabinet and his progressive economic and political program were approved in early May 1991. But the outlook for his administration was clouded by the fact that a general strike had almost completely paralyzed the country and its economy.

Indeed, the situation became so dire that Nano was ousted and a "government of national salvation" was created, in which the communists were forced to share power with other parties in the executive branch for the first time since the end of World War II. The new government, led by Prime Minister Ylli Bufi, was a coalition of the communists, the ADP, the Republican Party, the Social Democratic party, and the Agrarian Party. It took office in June 1991.

Just days later, also in June 1991, the Tenth Party Congress of the APL took place in Tiranë. Delegates voted to change the name of the party to the Socialist Party of Albania (SPA) and elected a reformist leadership under Nano. Former Politburo member Xhelil Gjoni gave the keynote address to the congress. He openly attacked the late dictator, Hoxha, and even went so far as to criticize Alia. His speech was a milestone for the Albanian communists and signified the end of the Stalinist line pursued by the party until that time. The new program adopted by the party stressed the goal of making a transition to a modern, democratic socialist party.

Alia also gave a speech at the party congress, in which he, too, sanctioned a significant reform of the party. But it appeared as though he were under a political shadow. By July 1991, he had come under severe attack from various political quarters. Serious and highly damaging allegations were made by several of Alia's former associates. One detractor charged that Alia had given orders for police to fire on unarmed demonstrators in February 1991, and others openly questioned his claims to have started the process of democratization in Albania. The campaign against Alia was apparently designed to discredit him and force him to step down.

In response, Alia made a great effort to portray himself as a real reformist. In early August 1991, he addressed the nation on television to talk about the attempted coup in the Soviet Union. He said that Mikhail S. Gorbachev's ouster only encouraged all kinds of dictators and he deplored the actions of the self-declared Soviet State Committee for the State of Emergency. The subsequent defeat of the Soviet coup was described by Alia and others as a victory for the forces of reform.

An earlier sign that the government was making an attempt to break with the nondemocratic traditions of the past was the announcement in early July that the notorious Sigurimi, the Albanian secret police, had been dissolved and replaced by a reformed security organization (see Security Forces, ch. 5). The new institution, the National Information Service (NIS), was to be far more attentive to individual rights than its predecessor had been. The move to disband the Sigurimi and form the NIS coincided with a steep rise in crime and a wave of Albanians fleeing to Italy, an



*The forced return of Albanian refuge-seekers from Italy at the port of Durrës, June 1991
Courtesy Charles Sudetic*

exodus that the NIS was unable to stem. The refugee problem reached epidemic proportions in August 1991, with 15,000 Albanians seeking asylum in Italy; most were later returned to Albania.

In many respects, Alia was a political survivor. He had managed to remain a key political figure throughout several political crises. Although he had some genuine concerns for stability and continuity, he was not inflexible. He changed in response to the circumstances and accommodated the demands of the reformers. Nonetheless, with Albania in the throes of a grave economic crisis, Alia had to face challenges that he could not surmount. After the collapse of the coalition government in December 1991 and the ADP's landslide victory in the spring 1992 general election, he resigned as president on April 3, 1992. On April 9, the People's Assembly elected ADP leader Sali Berisha as Albania's new head of state.

Foreign Policy

Historically, Albania's foreign policy objectives have not been far-reaching. Ideology has not been a driving force in determining Albania's relations with the outside world. Rather, its main concern has been to preserve its territorial integrity and independence. The strategy pursued by Enver Hoxha was to rely on alliances with

communist states that could give Albania large amounts of foreign aid and at the same support his regime. His successor, Alia, modified this strategy by pursuing a more varied foreign policy, reaching out to a number of Albania's neighbors.

Shifting Alliances

Several factors contributed to Albania's foreign policy, but nationalism was probably the single most important factor. Albanian nationalism had developed over years of domination or threat of domination by its more powerful neighbors: Greece, Italy, and Yugoslavia. The partition of Albania in 1912, when Kosovo and other Albanian-inhabited territories were lost, left the country with a deep sense of resentment and hostility to outsiders. Traditional fears of being dismembered or subjugated by foreigners persisted after World War II and were aggravated by Hoxha's paranoia about external enemies.

To offset the influence of Yugoslavia, Hoxha made an effort to improve relations with the Western powers, but was largely unsuccessful. Following the 1946 purge of Sejfulla Maleshova, the leader of the party faction that advocated moderation in foreign and domestic policy, Albania's relations with the West deteriorated, and both the United States and Britain withdrew their foreign envoys from Tiranë. Albania's application to join the UN was also rejected (Albania did join the UN in December 1955). Hoxha made peace with Josip Broz Tito, Yugoslavia's president, and in July 1946 signed the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Aid with Yugoslavia. Yugoslav influence over Albania's party and government increased considerably between 1945 and 1948. Yugoslavia came to dominate political, economic, military, and cultural life in Albania, and plans were even made to merge the two countries.

Yugoslavia's expulsion from the Cominform (see Glossary) in 1948 gave Hoxha an opportunity to reverse this situation, making his country the first in Eastern Europe to condemn Yugoslavia. The treaty of friendship with Yugoslavia was abrogated; Yugoslav advisers were forced out of Albania; and Xoxe, the minister of internal affairs and head of the secret police, was tried and executed, along with hundreds of other "Titoists." As a result of these changes, Albania became a full-fledged member of the Soviet sphere of influence, playing a key role in Stalin's strategy of isolating Yugoslavia. In 1949 Albania joined the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon—see Glossary) and proceeded with a program of rapid, Soviet-style, centralized economic development.

Tiranë's close relations with Moscow lasted until 1955, when the post-Stalin leadership began pursuing a policy of rapprochement with Yugoslavia. As part of the de-Stalinization process, Moscow began to pressure Tiranë to moderate its belligerent attitude toward Yugoslavia and relax its internal policies. Hoxha managed to withstand this challenge and to resist the pressure to de-Stalinize, despite the fact that the Soviet Union resorted to punitive economic measures that caused Albania considerable hardship. In 1960 the Soviets attempted to engineer a coup against Hoxha, but were unsuccessful because Hoxha had learned of their plans in advance and had purged all pro-Soviet elements in the party and government.

By 1960 Albania was already looking elsewhere for political support and improving its relations with China. In December 1961, the Soviet Union, while embroiled in a deep rift with China, broke diplomatic relations with Albania, and other East European countries sharply curtailed their contacts with Albania as well. Throughout the 1960s, Albania and China, countries that shared a common bond of alienation from the Soviet Union, responded by maintaining very close domestic and foreign ties. China gave Albania a great deal of economic aid and assistance, while the latter acted as China's representative at international forums from which the Chinese were excluded. Although Tiranë's break with Moscow had been very costly in economic terms, Albania made no effort to reestablish ties with the Soviet Union. In an address to the Fifth Congress of the APL in November 1966, Hoxha made it clear that Albania intended to stay close to China.

The 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, however, marked the beginning of a gradual estrangement between Albania and China, primarily because Hoxha realized that an increased Soviet military threat could not be offset by an alliance with a country that was far away and militarily weak relative to the superpowers. Hoxha sanctioned a cautious opening toward neighboring countries such as Yugoslavia and Greece, although he continued to be concerned about the domestic effects of moving too far from foreign policy that excluded all countries except China.

Another cause of the estrangement was the realization that Chinese aid was not enough to prevent Albania from having serious economic problems. Albania's experience with financial assistance from communist powers from 1945 to 1978 had begun to make it wary of becoming so dependent on any outside entity. A chill in relations with China began to occur following the death of Mao Zedong in September 1976, and in July 1978 China terminated

all economic and military aid to Albania, an action that left Albania without a foreign protector.

In the late 1970s, Albania embarked on a policy of rigid self-reliance. Having broken ties with the two leading communist states, Albania aspired to total economic independence and declared itself the only genuine Marxist-Leninist country in the world. The government was actually forbidden to seek foreign aid and credits or to encourage foreign investment in the country. Hoxha rigidly adhered to Marxism-Leninism, seeing the world as divided into two opposing systems—socialism and capitalism. But he also led Albania in a two-front struggle against both United States “imperialism” and Soviet “social-imperialism.” For example, Albania refused to participate in CSCE talks or sign the Helsinki Accords (see Glossary) in 1975 because the United States and the Soviet Union had initiated the negotiating process.

Changes in the 1980s

Hoxha had basically used the threat of external enemies to justify a repressive internal policy. His primary goal was to stay in power, and an isolationist foreign policy suited this goal. But some members of the APL leadership began to question the efficacy of such a policy, particularly in view of its adverse economic consequences. At the end of the 1970s, Hoxha was pressured into sanctioning a cautious effort to strengthen bilateral relations with Albania’s neighbors, in particular Yugoslavia. Bilateral cultural contacts between the two countries increased, and by 1980 Yugoslavia had replaced China as Albania’s main trading partner. In the early 1980s, however, Yugoslavia’s military suppression of ethnic Albanians demonstrating in the province of Kosovo led to a chill in Albanian-Yugoslav relations. Approximately two million ethnic Albanians lived in Kosovo, and Albania supported Kosovo’s demands that it be granted the status of a republic. Yugoslavia responded by accusing Albania of interfering in its internal affairs, and cultural and economic contacts were severely reduced. Trade between the two countries stagnated.

In the early 1980s, a diplomatic shift toward Italy, Greece, and Turkey occurred. In November 1984, Alia, as Hoxha’s heir apparent, gave a speech in which he expressed an interest in expanding relations with West European countries. He noted that “Albania is a European country and as such it is vitally interested in what is occurring on that continent.” Relations with Italy and Greece became noticeably stronger in the early and mid-1980s. In 1983 Albania signed an agreement with Italy on establishing a maritime link between the ports of Durrës and Trieste. The two countries

also ratified a long-term trade agreement, whereby Albania would send Italy raw materials in exchange for industrial technology. Albania entered into a long-term economic accord with Greece in December 1984, and the two countries also signed a series of agreements on road transportation, cultural exchanges, scientific and technological cooperation, telecommunications, and postal services. Albania's closer relations with Italy and Greece caused Yugoslavia concern, primarily because it appeared preferable to Belgrade to have Albania isolated. But Albania worried that West European countries would allow Yugoslavia to dictate its policies if it failed to develop strong relations with other countries in the region.

Alia's Pragmatism

On succeeding to Hoxha's party leadership post in 1985, Alia reassessed Albania's foreign policy. He realized that it was imperative for Albania to expand its contacts with the outside world if it were to improve its economic situation. He was eager in particular to introduce Western technology, although limited foreign-currency reserves and constitutional bans on foreign loans and credits restricted Albania's ability to import technology.

Alia's public statements indicated that in pursuing his country's foreign policy objectives he would be less rigid than his predecessor and put political and economic concerns ahead of ideological ones. Thus, at the seventy-fifth anniversary of Albania's independence in 1987, Alia stated, "We do not hesitate to cooperate with others and we do not fear their power and wealth. On the contrary, we seek such cooperation because we consider it a factor that will contribute to our internal development."

In February 1988, Albania participated in the Balkan Foreign Ministers Conference, held in Belgrade. The participation was a clear sign of a new flexibility in Albania's foreign policy. During the 1960s and 1970s, Albania had refused all regional attempts to engage in multilateral cooperation, but Alia was determined to end Albania's isolation and return his country to the mainstream of world politics. This new approach entailed an improvement of relations with Yugoslavia. Indeed, Alia apparently realized that Albania had nothing to gain from confrontation with Yugoslavia over the Kosovo issue, and he ceased endorsing Kosovar demands for republic status in his public statements. The government's conciliatory approach to Yugoslavia was expressed fully in a declaration by Minister of Foreign Affairs Reis Malile at the conference. Malile said that the status of Kosovo was an internal Yugoslav problem.

Trade and economic cooperation between Albania and Yugoslavia increased greatly toward the end of the 1980s. But Kosovo again became a source of tension when the Yugoslav government imposed special security measures on the province and dispatched army and militia units in February and March 1989. These actions resulted in violent clashes between Yugoslav security forces and the Albanian inhabitants of Kosovo. Albania denounced Yugoslavia's "chauvinist policy" toward Kosovo and noted that if the oppression continued, it would adversely affect relations between Albania and Yugoslavia. For its part, Yugoslavia threatened to close down Albania's only rail link to the outside world, a move that would have caused great hardship to Albania. In December 1989, a Yugoslav newspaper reported alleged unrest in northern Albania; President Alia denounced this report and similar ones as a foreign "campaign of slander" against Albania. He denied reports of unrest and said that Yugoslavia was trying to stir up trouble to divert attention from ethnic troubles in Kosovo.

By the late 1980s, Albania began to strengthen further its relations with Greece. The substantial Greek minority in Albania motivated Greek concern for better communications with Albania (see Ethnicity, ch. 2). It was especially important for Greece that Albanian nationals who were ethnically Greek should be allowed to practice the Greek Orthodox religion. Greece offered Albania hopes of economic and political ties that would offset the deterioration in relations with Yugoslavia. Albania and Greece had already signed a military protocol on the maintenance and repair of border markers in July 1985. In August 1987, Greece officially lifted its state of war with Albania, which had existed since World War II, when Italy had launched its attack on Greece from Albanian territory. In November 1987, the Greek prime minister visited Tiranë to sign a series of agreements with Albania, including a long-term agreement on economic, industrial, technical, and scientific cooperation. In April 1988, the two countries set up a ferry link between the Greek island of Corfu and the Albanian city of Sarandë. In late 1989, however, their relations began to worsen when some Greek politicians began to express concern about the fate of the Greek minority in Albania, and a war of words began. This hostility marked a sharp departure from the trend over the previous decade.

Albania's relations with both Turkey and Italy improved after the death of Hoxha. In May 1985, Prime Minister Çarçani sent a message to the Italian prime minister, Bettino Craxi, stating that he hoped cooperation between the two countries could be increased. In late 1985, however, there was a slight setback in Italian-Albanian relations when six Albanian citizens sought refuge in the Italian

Embassy in Tiranë and the two countries found it difficult to settle the dilemma. The six were allowed to remain in the embassy until Albania finally gave assurances that they would not be persecuted.

An important step toward ending Albania's isolation and improving its relationships with its neighbors was Tiranë's offer to host the Balkan Foreign Ministers Conference in October 1990. The conference was a follow-up to the Belgrade conference of 1988 and was the first international political gathering to take place in Albania since the communists came to power. The conference came at a good time for the Albanian leadership, which was attempting to project a new image abroad in keeping with the democratic changes beginning to take place within the country. For Albania it was an opportunity to increase its prestige and boost its international image in the hopes of becoming a full-fledged member of the CSCE. In fact, the latter aim was not achieved by the conference, and it was not until June 1991, after a visit by CSCE staff members to observe Albania's first multiparty elections, that Albania was accepted as a full member of the CSCE.

Albania Seeks New Allies

By the mid-1980s, Alia recognized that in order to ameliorate Albania's serious economic problems, trade with the West had to be significantly expanded. The Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) was on the top of the list of potential economic partners. In 1987 Albania established diplomatic relations with West Germany, after first dropping claims for war reparations. Albania hoped to obtain advanced technology from West Germany, along with assistance in improving its agricultural sector and modernizing its transportation system. In November 1987, Albania signed an agreement with West Germany, which enabled it to purchase West German goods at below market prices; and in March 1989, West Germany granted Albania 20 million deutsche marks in non-repayable funds for development projects.

Albania initiated discussions with many private Western firms concerning the acquisition of advanced technology and purchase of modern industrial plants. It also asked for technical assistance in locating and exploiting oil deposits off its coast. But the problems for Albania in pursuing these economic aims were considerable. The main problem was Albania's critical shortage of foreign currency, a factor that caused Albania to resort to barter to pay for imported goods. Tied to this problem was the economy's centralized planning mechanism, which inhibited the production of export commodities because enterprises had no incentive to increase

the country's foreign-exchange earnings. An even greater problem until the 1990s was the provision in the 1976 Albanian constitution prohibiting the government from accepting foreign aid.

In addition to paying more attention to Albania's close neighbors and Western Europe, Alia advocated a reassessment of relations with other East European countries. A more flexible attitude was adopted, and relations with the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria significantly improved in the late 1980s. In June 1989, the East German foreign minister Oskar Fischer visited Albania; he was the first senior official from the Soviet bloc to visit the country since the early 1960s. Alia personally received Fischer, and a number of key agreements were signed that led to expanded cooperation in industry and the training of specialists. By 1990 long-term trade agreements had been signed with most East European states. The Comecon countries were willing to accept Albania's shoddy manufactured goods and its low-quality produce for political reasons. After 1990, however, when these countries were converting to market economies, they no longer had the same willingness, which made it considerably more difficult for Albania to obtain much-needed foreign currency. The Albanian media, nonetheless, greeted the revolutions in Eastern Europe with favor, covering events with an unusual amount of objectivity. The government in Tiranë was among the first to attack Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu and to recognize the new government in Romania. As far as the Soviet Union was concerned, however, Albania continued to be highly critical of its former ally and denounced Gorbachev's policy of *perestroika*. Apparently Albania was also concerned about what it saw as Soviet support for Yugoslavia's handling of the Kosovo issue. Nevertheless, the Soviet Union continued to call for improved relations with Albania.

Albania's attitude toward the United States traditionally had been very hostile. Relations with Washington were broken in 1946, when Albania's communist regime refused to adhere to prewar treaties and obligations. Alia showed a different inclination, however, after a visit to Tiranë in 1989 by some prominent Albanian Americans, who impressed him with their desire to promote the Albanian cause. In mid-February 1990, the Albanian government reversed its long-standing policy of having no relations with the superpowers. A leading Albanian government official announced: "We will have relations with any state that responds to our friendship with friendship." No formal contacts between the United States and Albania existed until 1990, when diplomats began a series of meetings that led to a resumption of relations. On March 15, 1991, a memorandum of understanding was signed in Washington

*Statue of Stalin in
storage in Tiranë
Courtesy Fred Conrad*



reestablishing diplomatic relations between the two countries. United States secretary of state James Baker visited Albania in June 1991, following the CSCE meeting in Berlin at which Albania was granted CSCE membership. During his visit, Baker informed the Albanian government that the United States was prepared to provide Albania with approximately US\$6 million worth of assistance. He announced that the United States welcomed the democratic changes that were taking place in Albania and promised that if Albania took concrete steps toward political and free-market reforms, the United States would be prepared to offer further assistance.

Alia's pragmatism was also reflected in Albania's policy toward China and the Soviet Union. The Albanian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs made an official visit to China in March 1989, and the visit was reciprocated in August 1990. On July 30, 1990, Albania and the Soviet Union signed a protocol normalizing relations, which had been suspended for the previous twenty-nine years. The Soviet-Albanian Friendship Society was reactivated, and Alia met with the Soviet foreign minister, Eduard Shevardnadze, when they were both in New York to visit the United Nations in September 1990. No longer were the United States and the Soviet Union considered to be Albania's most dangerous enemies.

Alia's trip to the UN was the first time that an Albanian head of state had attended an official meeting in the West. The purpose of the trip was to demonstrate to the world that Albania had a

pragmatic and new foreign policy. While at the UN, Alia delivered a major foreign policy address to the General Assembly in which he described the changes that had taken place in Albania's foreign policy and emphasized that his country wanted to play a more active role in world events. In his address, Alia discussed the ongoing efforts of the Albanian leadership to adjust the external and internal politics of Albania to the realities of the postcommunist world.

The internal politics of Albania, driven by a collapsed economy, social instability, and democratic ferment, portend continued changes in the institutions of government in the early to mid-1990s and in the relationship between the country's leaders and its citizens.

* * *

Materials on Albania are not as readily available as those on other countries in Eastern Europe. Nonetheless, a few useful monographs on Albanian politics and government have appeared. *The Albanians: Europe's Forgotten Survivors*, by Anton Logoreci, and *Socialist Albania since 1944*, by Peter R. Prifti, both of which were published during the 1970s, provide useful accounts of political developments in Albania since World War II. *Albania: A Socialist Maverick*, by Elez Biberaj, offers a more up-to-date picture of the political scene in Albania, pointing out the positive and negative aspects of the changes taking place there. Among the more useful articles on Albanian politics is Biberaj's "Albania at the Crossroads," which analyzes political events in 1991 and offers a perspective on what might be expected for Albania's future. Also of value are the regular articles on Albanian politics by Louis Zanga, appearing in the Munich weekly *Report on Eastern Europe*, published by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Chapter 5. National Security



The black, double-headed eagle, a traditional symbol of Albania

ALBANIA BECAME INDEPENDENT in 1912 when the Great Powers of Europe decided that its formation would enhance the balance of power on the continent. Small, weak, and isolated, Albania faced persistent threats of domination, dismemberment, or partition by more powerful neighbors, but struggled to maintain its independence and territorial integrity through successive alliances with Italy, Yugoslavia (see Glossary), the Soviet Union, and China. The Albanian Communist Party (ACP—from 1948 the Albanian Party of Labor) used the perception of a country under siege to mobilize the population, establish political legitimacy, and justify domestic repression. Yet it claimed success in that, under its rule, Albania's allies guaranteed its defense against external threats and were increasingly less able to dominate it or interfere in its internal affairs. After a period of isolation between 1978 and 1985, however, Albania looked to improved relations with its neighbors to enhance its security.

The modern armed forces grew out of the partisan bands of World War II, which fought the Italians and Germans as well as rivals within the resistance. By the time the Germans withdrew their forces from Albania in November 1944, the communist-led National Liberation Front (NLF) held the dominant position among the partisan groups and was able to assume control of the country without fighting any major battles. The armed forces in 1992 were under the control of the Ministry of Defense, and all branches were included within the People's Army. Total active-duty personnel strength was about 48,000 in 1991. Most troops were conscripted, and approximately one-half of the eligible recruits were drafted, usually at age nineteen. The tanks, aircraft, and other weapons and equipment in the inventory of the armed forces were of Soviet or Chinese design and manufacture. The People's Army, consisting of professional officers, conscripted soldiers, mobilized reserves, and citizens with paramilitary training, was organized to mount a limited territorial defense and extended guerrilla warfare against a foreign aggressor and occupation army. However, it remained the weakest army in Europe in early 1992.

Albania lacked the industrial or economic base to maintain its army independently and required external assistance to support its modest armed forces. After World War II, it relied on Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, in turn, for military assistance. When Albania split from the Soviet Union in 1961, China became its main

ally and supplier of military equipment. Chinese assistance was sufficient to maintain equipment previously furnished by the Soviet Union and to replace some of the older weapons as they became obsolete. However, this aid was curtailed in 1978, and Albania lacked a major external patron after that time.

After becoming first secretary of the Albanian Party of Labor and president of Albania when longtime leader Enver Hoxha died in 1985, Ramiz Alia gradually relaxed the Stalinist system of political terror and coercion established and maintained by his predecessor. The impact of changes in the Soviet Union and the subsequent collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, particularly in Romania, combined to increase pressure for internal liberalization in Albania during the late 1980s and early 1990s.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs controlled the police and security forces until it was abolished and replaced by the Ministry of Public Order in April 1991. Although details of the organization of the Ministry of Public Order were not generally known, some observers believed it had the same basic components as its predecessor. They were the National Information Service (successor to the hated Sigurimi, more formally Drejtoria e Sigurimit të Shtetit or Directorate of State Security), the Frontier Guards, and the People's Police.

The security forces traditionally exerted even more rigid controls over the population than those exercised by similar forces in other East European states. However, under Alia they did not enforce the communist order as they had when Hoxha ruled Albania. Alia curtailed some of their more repressive practices, and they ultimately failed to protect the regime when the communist party's monopoly on power was threatened in 1990 and ended in 1991. In large part, that threat came from a crippled economy, shortages of food and medicine, manifestations of new political freedoms (including strikes and massive public demonstrations that occurred with impunity), and calls by the new democratic movement for eliminating repression by the security forces, releasing political prisoners, and establishing respect for human rights.

Development of the Armed Forces

Albania's military heritage antedating World War II is highlighted by the exploits of its fifteenth-century national hero known as Skanderbeg, who gained a brief period of independence for the country during his opposition to the Ottoman Empire (see Glossary). In the seventeenth century, many ethnic Albanians, most notably members of the Köprülü family, served with great distinction in the Ottoman army and administration (see Albanians

under Ottoman Rule, ch. 1). National feelings, aroused late in the nineteenth century, became more intense during the early twentieth century, and fairly sizable armed groups of Albanians rebelled against their Ottoman rulers. However, Albania achieved national independence in 1912 as a result of agreement among the Great Powers of Europe rather than through a major military victory or armed struggle.

Hardy Albanian mountaineers have had a reputation as excellent fighters for nearly 2,000 years. Nevertheless, they rarely fought in an organized manner for an objective beyond the defense of tribal areas against incursions by marauding neighbors. Occasions were few when Albanians rose up against occupying foreign powers. Conquerors generally left the people alone in their isolated mountain homelands, and, because a feudal tribal society persisted, little, if any, sense of national unity or loyalty to an Albanian nation developed (see *Traditional Social Patterns and Values*, ch. 2).

The Romans recruited some of their best soldiers from the regions that later became Albania. The territory of modern Albania was part of the Byzantine Empire, and the Bulgars, Venetians, and Serbs took turns contesting their control of Albania between the tenth and the fourteenth centuries. As the power of the Byzantine Empire waned, the forerunners of modern Albania joined forces with the Serbs and other Balkan peoples to prevent the encroachment of the Ottoman Empire into southeastern Europe. The Ottoman victory over their combined forces at Kosovo Polje in 1389, however, ushered in an era of Ottoman control over the Balkans.

The Albanian hero Skanderbeg, born Gjergj Kastrioti and renamed Skanderbeg after Alexander the Great, was one of the janissaries (see *Glossary*) who became famous fighting for the Ottoman Turks in Serbia and Hungary. He was almost exclusively responsible for the one period of Albanian independence before 1912. Although it endured for twenty-four years, this brief period of independence ended about a decade after his death in 1468. In 1443 Skanderbeg rebelled against his erstwhile masters and established Albania's independence with the assistance of the Italian city-state of Venice. He repulsed several Ottoman attempts to reconquer Albania until his death. The Ottoman Turks soon recaptured most of Albania, seized the Venetian coastal ports in Albania, and even crossed the Italian Alps and raided Venice. The Ottomans retook the last Venetian garrison in Albania at Shkodër in 1479, but the Venetians continued to dispute Ottoman control of Albania and its contiguous waters for at least the next four centuries. Albanian

soldiers continued to serve in the military forces of the Ottoman Empire in the vicinity of the Mediterranean into the nineteenth century.

From Independence to World War II

Organized military action had a negligible effect in Albania's attaining national independence. Some revolutionary activity occurred during the rise of Albanian nationalism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Albanian insurgents and Ottoman forces clashed as early as 1884, but although Albanians resisted Ottoman oppression against themselves, they supported the Ottoman Turks in their hostilities with the Greeks and Slavs.

By 1901 about 8,000 armed Albanians were assembled in Shkodër, but a situation resembling anarchy more than revolution prevailed in the country during the early 1900s. There were incidents of banditry and pillage, arrests, and many futile Ottoman efforts to restore order. Guerrilla activity increased after 1906, and there were several incidents that produced martyrs but were not marked by great numbers of casualties. Although it was disorganized and never assumed the proportions of a serious struggle, the resistance was, nevertheless, instrumental in maintaining the pressure that brought international attention to the aspirations of Albanian nationalists, who proclaimed Albania's independence on November 28, 1912.

Albanian forces played a minor role in the First Balkan War of 1912-13, in which Bulgaria, Serbia, and Greece attempted to eliminate the last vestiges of Ottoman control over the Balkans. At the end of 1912, however, the Ottoman Turks held only the Shkodër garrison, which they did not surrender until April 1913. After the Second Balkan War, when the Great Powers prevailed upon the Montenegrins who had laid siege to Shkodër to withdraw, independent Albania was recognized. However, less than 50 percent of the ethnic Albanians living in the Balkans were included within the boundaries of the new state. Large numbers of Albanians were left in Montenegro, Macedonia, and especially Kosovo (see Glossary), sowing the seeds for potential ethnic conflict in the future (see *Evolution of National Security Policy*, this ch.).

World War I began before Albania could establish a viable government, much less form, train, and equip a military establishment. It was essentially a noncombatant nation that served as a battleground for the belligerents. However, during the war, it was occupied alternately by countries of each alliance. In 1916 it was the scene of fighting between Austro-Hungarian forces and Italian, French, and Greek forces. In 1918 the Austro-Hungarians

were finally driven out of Albania by the Italians and the French. Albania emerged from the war with its territorial integrity intact, although Serbia, Montenegro, Italy, and Greece had sought to partition it. Italy, in particular, had entered the war on the side of the Triple Entente with the aim of acquiring parts of northern Albania (see *World War I and Its Effects on Albania*, ch. 1).

Ahmed Zogu created the first armed national forces of any consequence. He served as minister of internal affairs and minister of war until 1922 and prime minister thereafter, except for a brief period of exile in 1924. Before 1925 these forces consisted of about 5,000 men, who were selected from Zogu's home district to ensure their loyalty to him. In 1925 Albania began drafting men according to a policy of universal conscription that was carried out with Italian assistance and allowed a considerable degree of Italian control. The initial drafts yielded about 5,000 to 6,000 troops per year from the approximately 10,000 men who annually reached the eligible age. The Italians equipped and provided most of the training and tactical guidance to Albanian forces and therefore exercised virtual command over them.

Under pressure from a more proximate Yugoslav threat to its territorial integrity, Albania placed its security in Italian hands in November 1927 when it signed the Second Treaty of Tiranë. The original treaty, signed one year earlier, pledged the parties to mutual respect for the territorial status quo between them. The successor document established a twenty-year alliance and a program of military cooperation between them. Thus, Albania became a virtual protectorate of Italy, with the latter receiving oil rights, permission to build an industrial and military infrastructure, and a high-profile role in Albania's military leadership and domestic political affairs.

At about the same time, the Gendarmerie was formed with British assistance. Although its director was Albanian, a British general served as its inspector general and other British officers filled its staff. It became an effective internal security and police organization. The Gendarmerie had a commandant in each of Albania's ten prefectures, a headquarters in each subprefecture (up to eight in one prefecture), and an office in each of nearly 150 communities. For many years, it had the most complete telephone system in the country. The Italians objected strenuously, but King Zog, as Zogu became in 1928, relied on the Gendarmerie as a personal safeguard against the pervasive Italian influence within his regular armed forces. He kept the force under his direct control and retained its British advisers until 1938. Zog also retained a sizable armed group from his home region as an additional precaution.

World War II

King Zog's effort to reduce Italian control over his armed forces was insufficient to save them from quick humiliation when the Italians attacked on April 7, 1939. Although annual conscription had generated a trained reserve of at least 50,000, the Albanian government lacked the time to mobilize it in defense of the country. The weak Albanian resistance, consisting of a force of 14,000 against the Italian force of 40,000, was overcome within one week, and Italy occupied and annexed the country. Later in 1939, the Italians subsumed some Albanian forces into their units. They gained little, however, from Albanian soldiers, who were unwilling to fight for the occupying power, even against their traditional Greek enemies. They deserted in large numbers.

Benito Mussolini, the Italian fascist premier, and his Axis partners viewed Albania as a strategic path through the Balkans from which to challenge British forces in Egypt and throughout North Africa. Albania served as the bridgehead for Mussolini's invasion of Greece in October 1940, and Italy committed eight of its ten divisions occupying the country.

The Albanian Communist Party and its armed resistance forces were organized by the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in 1941 and subsequently supported and dominated by it. Resistance to the Italian occupation gathered strength slowly around the party-controlled National Liberation Movement (NLM, predecessor of the NLF) and the liberal National Front. Beginning in September 1942, small armed units of the NLF initiated a guerrilla war against superior Italian forces, using the mountainous terrain to their advantage. The National Front, by contrast, avoided combat, having concluded that the Great Powers, not armed struggle, would decide Albania's fate after the war.

After March 1943, the NLM formed its first and second regular battalions, which subsequently became brigades, to operate along with existing smaller and irregular units. Resistance to the occupation grew rapidly as signs of Italian weakness became apparent. At the end of 1942, guerrilla forces numbered no more than 8,000 to 10,000. By the summer of 1943, when the Italian effort collapsed, almost all of the mountainous interior was controlled by resistance units.

The NLM formally established the National Liberation Army (NLA) in July 1943, with Spiro Moisiu as its military chief and Hoxha as its political officer. It had 20,000 regular soldiers and guerrillas in the field by that time. However, the NLA's military activities in 1943 were directed as much against the party's domestic

political opponents, including prewar liberal, nationalist, and monarchist parties, as against the occupation forces.

Mussolini was overthrown in July 1943, and Italy formally withdrew from Albania in September. Seven German divisions took over the occupation from their Italian allies, however. Four of the divisions, totalling over 40,000 troops, began a winter offensive in November 1943 against the NLA in southern Albania, where most of the armed resistance to the Wehrmacht and support for the communist party was concentrated. They inflicted devastating losses on NLA forces in southern Albania in January 1944. The resistance, however, regrouped and grew as final defeat for the Axis partners appeared certain. By the end of 1944, the NLA probably totaled about 70,000 soldiers organized into several divisions. It fought in major battles for Tiranë and Shkodër and pursued German forces into Kosovo at the end of the war. By its own account, the NLA killed, wounded, or captured 80,000 Italian and German soldiers while suffering about 28,000 casualties.

The communist-controlled NLF and NLA had solidified their hold over the country by the end of October 1944. Some units, including one whose political officer, Ramiz Alia, would eventually succeed Enver Hoxha as leader of Albania, went on to fight the Germans in Albanian-populated regions of Yugoslavia, including Kosovo. Hoxha had risen rapidly from his post as political officer of the NLA to leadership of the communist party, and he headed the communist government that controlled the country at the end of World War II. Albania became the only East European state in which the communists gained power without the support of the Soviet Union's Red Army. They relied instead on advice and substantial assistance from Yugoslav communists and Allied forces in occupied Italy.

Postwar Development

Initially, Albania's postwar military forces were equipped and trained according to Yugoslavia's model. Between 1945 and 1948, Yugoslavia's control over the Albanian armed forces was tighter than Italy's control had been. Not only did the Yugoslavs have military advisers and instructors in regular units, but Yugoslav political officers also established party control over the Albanian military to ensure its reliability and loyalty.

Albania was involved in several skirmishes early in the Cold War. In 1946 Albanian coastal artillery batteries fired on British and Greek ships in the Corfu Channel. Later that year, two British destroyers were damaged by Albanian mines in the channel. Together with Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, Albania aided communist forces in

the civil war in Greece between 1946 and 1948 and allowed them to establish operational bases on its territory.

Yugoslavia used its close alliance with Albania to establish a strong pro-Yugoslav faction within the Albanian Communist Party. Led by Koci Xoxe, the group served Yugoslav interests on the issue of ethnic Albanians in Yugoslavia. It also cultivated pro-Yugoslav elements within the military and security forces to enhance its influence. It sought a close alliance, a virtual union, of communist states in the Balkans, including Albania, under its leadership. However, when Yugoslavia embarked on its separate road to socialism in 1948 and was subsequently expelled from the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform—see Glossary), Albania used the opportunity to escape the overwhelming Yugoslav influence. The nation completely severed its ties with Yugoslavia and aligned itself directly with the Soviet Union.

The shift to Soviet patronage did not substantially change Albania's military organization or equipment because Yugoslav forces had followed the Soviet pattern until 1948. Albania joined the Soviet-led Warsaw Treaty Organization (see Glossary), popularly known as the Warsaw Pact, on May 14, 1955, but did not participate in joint Warsaw Pact military exercises because of its distance from other members of the alliance. Soviet aid to Albania included advisory personnel, a considerable supply of conventional weapons, surplus naval vessels from World War II, and aircraft. Albania provided the Soviet Union with a strategically located base for a submarine flotilla at Sazan Island, near Vlorë, which gave it access to the Mediterranean Sea (see fig. 1). Albania also served as a pressure point for Stalin's campaign against Yugoslavia's independent stance within the communist camp. Albania preferred the Soviet Union to Yugoslavia as an ally because its distance and lack of a common border appeared to limit the extent to which it could interfere in Albania's internal affairs.

Albania's relations with the Soviet Union were strained in 1956 when Nikita Khrushchev improved Soviet relations with Yugoslavia. Hoxha feared that, as part of the rapprochement with Yugoslavia, Khrushchev would allow Tito to reestablish Yugoslavia's earlier influence in Albania. Albanian-Soviet ties deteriorated rapidly in 1961, when Albania joined China in opposing the Soviet de-Stalinization campaign in the communist world (see Albania and the Soviet Union, ch. 1). De-Stalinization was a threat to the political survival of an unreconstructed Stalinist like Hoxha. In response, the Soviet Union cancelled its military aid program to Albania, withdrew its military advisers, and forced Albanian officers studying in Soviet military schools to return home in April 1961.

Albania in turn revoked Soviet access to Sazan Island, and Soviet submarines returned home in June 1961. Albania broke diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union on December 19, 1961; it became an inactive member of the Warsaw Pact but did not formally withdraw from the alliance until 1968.

As tensions grew between Albania and the Soviet Union, Albania sought Chinese patronage. In the 1960s, China succeeded the Soviet Union as Albania's sole patron. Albania provided China with little practical support, but its value as an international political ally was sufficient for the Chinese to continue military assistance. China provided aid in quantities required to maintain the armed forces at about the same levels of personnel and equipment that they had achieved when they were supported by the Soviet Union. The shift to Chinese training and equipment, however, probably caused some deterioration in the tactical and technical proficiency of Albanian military personnel.

Evolution of National Security Policy

Like any country, Albania's national security is largely determined by its geography and neighbors. It shares a 282-kilometer border with Greece to the south and southeast. It has a 287-kilometer border with the Yugoslav republics of Serbia and Montenegro to the north and a 151-kilometer border with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to the east. Albania's other closest neighbor and one-time invader, Italy, is located less than 100 kilometers across the Adriatic Sea to the west. Albania has had longstanding and potentially dangerous territorial and ethnic disputes with Greece and Yugoslavia. It has traditionally feared an accommodation between them in which they would agree to divide Albania. Greece has historical ties with a region of southern Albania known as Northern Epirus among the Greeks and inhabited by ethnic Greeks, with estimates of their number ranging from less than 60,000 to 400,000. Moreover, there is serious potential for conflict with Yugoslavia, or specifically the Yugoslav Republic of Serbia, over Kosovo. Nevertheless, for many years, Albania perceived a seaborne attack by a superpower from the Adriatic Sea as a greater threat than a large-scale ground assault across the rugged terrain of eastern Albania. Any attack on Albania would have proved difficult because more than three-quarters of its territory is hilly or mountainous. The country's small size, however, provides little strategic depth for conventional defensive operations.

In the early years of communist rule, Albania's national security policy emphasized the internal security of the new communist regime and only, secondarily, external threats. Evaluated against this

priority, Albania's national security policy was largely successful until 1990. Because its military forces, however, were incapable of deterring or repulsing external threats, Albania sought to obtain political or military guarantees from its allies or the international community.

Initially, Albania's national security policy focused on extending the authority of the Tosk-dominated communist party from Tiranë and southern Albania into Geg-inhabited northern regions where neither the party nor the NLA enjoyed strong support from the population (see Ethnicity, ch. 2). In some places, the party and NLA faced armed opposition. The government emphasized political indoctrination within the military in an attempt to make the armed forces a pillar of support for the communist system and a unifying force for the people of Albania. In general, however, there were few serious internal or external threats to communist control. In the early years of communist rule, the communist party relied on its close alliance with Yugoslavia for its external security. This alliance was an unnatural one, however, given the history of mutual suspicion and tension between the two neighbors and Yugoslavia's effort to include Albania in an alliance of Balkan states under its control. In 1948 Yugoslavia's expulsion from the Soviet-led communist world ended the alliance.

The Soviet Union assumed the role of Albania's principal benefactor from late 1948. Albania was a founding member of the Warsaw Pact in 1955, and its security was guaranteed against Yugoslav encroachment by its participation in the Soviet-led collective security system until 1961. However, the Soviet Union suspended its military cooperation and security guarantees when Albania supported China in the Sino-Soviet split (see Albania and China, ch. 1).

Albania's military weakness and general ideological compatibility with China led it to accept Chinese sponsorship and military assistance. It did not, however, formally withdraw from the Warsaw Pact until September 13, 1968, after the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia. After the invasion, Albania drew closer to China, seeking protection against a possible attempt by the Soviet Union to retrieve Albania into the East European fold. China subsequently increased its military assistance to Albania. Despite Chinese guarantees of support, Albania apparently doubted the efficacy of a deterrent provided by a distant and relatively weak China against a proximate Soviet threat. Some knowledgeable Western observers believed that, at Chinese insistence, Albania had signed a mutual assistance agreement with Yugoslavia and Romania to be implemented in the event of a Soviet attack on any one of them.

Following China's lead, Albania accused both the United States and the Soviet Union of tacitly collaborating to divide the world into spheres of influence, becoming a vociferous international opponent of the use of military force abroad and the establishment of foreign military bases, particularly by the United States or the Soviet Union. In particular, Albania persistently called for a reduction of United States and Soviet naval forces in the Mediterranean Sea.

During the 1970s, Albania viewed improved relations between the United States and China as detrimental to its interests. This perception increased after the death of Mao Zedong in 1976. In 1978 China ceased its military and economic assistance to Albania as the Asian superpower adopted a less radical stance on the international scene and turned more attention to its domestic affairs. According to some analysts, however, China continued to supply Albania with spare parts for its Chinese-made weapons and equipment during the 1980s.

In the decade between Mao's death and Hoxha's death in 1985, Albania practiced self-reliance and international isolation. After succeeding Hoxha, President Ramiz Alia moved in a new direction, seeking improved relations with Yugoslavia, Greece, and Turkey and even participating in the Balkan Foreign Ministers Conference in 1988. He attempted to moderate the impact of the Kosovo issue on relations with Yugoslavia. Greece downplayed its historical claims to the disputed territory of Northern Epirus during the 1980s, when the two countries improved their bilateral relations. Alia also encouraged Greece and Turkey to withdraw from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and Bulgaria and Romania to withdraw from the Warsaw Pact. In addition, Alia improved relations with Italy and the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany), which may have resulted in some military sales to Albania, including missile and military communications systems.

In 1986 the first deputy minister of people's defense and chief of the general staff summarized Albania's approach to national security when he stated that Albania's security depended on carefully studying the international situation and taking corresponding action. Better ties with its neighbors promised to give Albania time to generate support in the international arena and bring international opprobrium to bear on any potential aggressor while its forces mounted a conventional defense and, then, guerrilla warfare against enemy occupation forces.

In early 1992, the outlook for Albanian national security was mixed. There were important positive developments but also some

negative trends. The Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe—usually referred to as the Conventional Forces in Europe, or CFE, Treaty—was signed in 1990 and promised reductions in the ground and air forces of nearby NATO members Greece and Italy and former Warsaw Pact member Bulgaria. It therefore placed predictable limits on the future size of the military threat to Albania from most of its neighbors. But the CFE Treaty did not affect nonaligned states such as Yugoslavia, and Albania remained militarily, economically, and technologically weak.

In June 1990, seeking to develop closer ties to the rest of Europe, Albania began to participate in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE—see Glossary) as an observer state. It received full membership one year later. Until joining, Albania had been the only state in Europe not a member of CSCE. Membership afforded Albania a degree of protection against external aggression that it probably had not enjoyed previously. It also committed Albania to respect existing international boundaries in Europe and basic human rights and political freedoms at home.

In the early 1990s, Albania sought a broader range of diplomatic relations, reestablishing official ties with the Soviet Union in 1990 and the United States in 1991. It also sought to join the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, a NATO-associated organization in which other former Warsaw Pact countries were already participating.

On the negative side of Albania's national security balance sheet, the improved European security environment undermined the communist regime's ability to mobilize the population by propagandizing external threats. In the early 1990s, the military press cited problems in convincing Albania's youth of the importance of military service and training, given the fact that the Soviet Union was withdrawing its forces from Eastern Europe, that the CFE Treaty promised major reductions in conventional forces, and that most conceivable threats seemed to be receding. The accounts cited instances of "individual and group excesses," unexcused absences, and the failure to perform assigned duties. These problems were ascribed to political liberalization and democratization in the People's Army, factors that supposedly weakened military order and discipline, led to breaches of regulations, and interfered with military training and readiness.

Albania's most sensitive security problem centered on ethnic Albanians living outside the country's borders, including the nearly 2 million living in Kosovo, a province of Yugoslavia's Serbian Republic. The area recognized as Albania by the Great Powers

in 1913 was such that more ethnic Albanians were left outside the new state than included within it. Tension in Kosovo between ethnic Albanians, who made up 90 percent of its approximately 2 million residents, and the dwindling number of Serbs living there was a constant source of potential conflict between Albania and Serbia.

Yugoslavia's Serbian Republic ruled Kosovo harshly until the 1970s when it became an autonomous province, theoretically with almost the same rights as the Serbian Republic itself. In 1981, however, one-quarter of the Yugoslav People's Army (YPA) was deployed in Kosovo in response to unrest, which began with riots in Priština. Yugoslavia asserted more direct control over Kosovo in the late 1980s in response to alleged Albanian separatism, which aimed to push Serbs out of an area they considered to be their ancestral home. In 1989, relying on scarcely veiled threats and actual demonstrations of force, Serbia forced Kosovo to accept legislation that substantially reduced its autonomy and then suspended Kosovo's parliament and government in 1990. Sporadic skirmishes erupted between armed Albanian and Serbian civilians, who were backed by the Serb-dominated YPA. Meanwhile, the Serbs accused Albania of interference in Kosovo and of inciting its Albanian population against Yugoslav rule.

For their part, Kosovars claimed that they were the victims of Serbian nationalism, repression, and discrimination. In 1991 they voted in a referendum to become an independent republic of Yugoslavia, and Albania immediately recognized Kosovo as such. Although President Alia criticized Yugoslav policy in Kosovo, he carefully avoided making claims on its territory. Nevertheless, Serbs believed the vote for republic status was a precursor to demands for complete independence from Yugoslavia and eventual unification with Albania. As Yugoslavia collapsed into a civil war that pitted intensely nationalist Serbia against other ethnic groups of the formerly multinational state, Albania remained circumspect in its pronouncements on and relations with Kosovo in order to avoid a conflict. However, a series of border incidents, involving Serb forces killing ten Albanians along the Albanian-Yugoslav border, occurred in late 1991 and early 1992. Albanians and Europeans were seriously concerned that Serb forces would direct military operations against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo and spark an international conflict with Albania. Albania's armed forces were poorly prepared to fight the larger, better equipped, and combat-experienced Serb forces.

Defense Organization

As chief of both party and state, Enver Hoxha was commander

in chief and had direct authority over the People's Army until his death in 1985. His successor, Ramiz Alia, also had a strong connection to the People's Army through his military career, having reached the rank of lieutenant colonel and political officer in the Fifth Division of the NLA at the age of nineteen. According to the constitution adopted in 1976, the People's Assembly, a unicameral legislative body, had authority to declare mobilization, a state of emergency, or war. This authority devolved to the president when the People's Assembly was not in session, which was more often than not under communist rule, or was unable to meet because of the exigencies of a surprise attack on Albania. Albania's interim constitutional law, published in December 1990 and enacted in April 1991, made the president commander in chief of the People's Army and chairman of the relatively small Defense Council, composed of key party leaders and government officials whose ministries would be critical to directing military operations, production, and communications in wartime (see *Reform Politics*, ch. 4).

The People's Army encompassed ground, air and air defense, and naval forces. It reported to the minister of people's defense, who was a member of the Council of Ministers and was, by law, selected by the People's Assembly. The minister of defense had traditionally been a deputy prime minister and member of the Political Bureau (Politburo) of the party. He exercised day-to-day administrative control and, through the chief of the general staff, operational control over all elements of the military establishment. The chief of the general staff was second in command of the defense establishment. He had traditionally been a candidate member of the Politburo. Each commander of a service branch was also a deputy minister of defense and advised the minister of people's defense on issues relative to his service and coordinated its activities within the ministry. Each represented his service in national defense planning.

The major administrative divisions of the People's Army served all three services. These divisions included the political, personnel, intelligence, and counterintelligence directorates; the military prosecutor's office; and the rear and medical services. The intelligence directorate collected and reported information on foreign armies, especially those of neighboring Yugoslavia and Greece. The military prosecutor's office was responsible for military justice. It organized military courts composed of a chairman, vice chairman, and several assistant judges. The courts heard a variety of cases covered by the military section of the penal code. Military crimes included breaches of military discipline, regulations, and orders as well as political crimes against the state and the socialist order.

Military personnel, reserves, security forces, and local police were subject to the jurisdiction of military courts. The medical service had departments within each of the military branches providing hospital and pharmaceutical services. At the national level, it cooperated closely with the Ministry of Health, using military personnel, facilities, and equipment to improve sanitary and medical conditions throughout the country and to provide emergency medical assistance during natural disasters.

Political Control

The Albanian Party of Labor (APL) had an active and dominant organization within the armed forces until it lost its monopoly on political power in 1991. The postcommunist political complexion of the military was only beginning to evolve in early 1992. The great majority of officers in the armed services were still party members in early 1992 (the party was renamed in June 1991 as the Socialist Party of Albania).

The communist-dominated coalition government, which emerged from the spring 1991 elections, promised a sweeping military reform that included the depoliticization of the armed forces. The Political Directorate of the People's Army, however, continued to exist as part of the Ministry of Defense. The Political Directorate controlled political officers within all services and units of the armed forces. The communist leadership considered the directorate essential to ensure that the armed forces conformed with ideology as interpreted by the party.

The reliability of senior military leaders was assured by their membership in the party. All students over eighteen years of age in military schools were also party members. Younger students were members of the Union of Albanian Working Youth and were organized into the party's youth committee in the army. Political officers indoctrinated conscripts with communist ideology and the party line. Reinforcing the actions of officers and military courts, they helped ensure discipline in military units. They had authority to take action against soldiers whose attitudes or conduct was considered contrary to the efficiency or good order of the armed forces. Probably only a very few of the conscripts were party members, but nearly all were members of the youth organization.

In 1966 Hoxha abolished rank designations and uniforms, condemning them as unhealthy bourgeois class distinctions, in keeping with a similar Chinese move. This measure was intended to make the military more egalitarian by bringing officers closer to the soldiers under their command. It also reinforced party control over the military by reducing the prestige and independence of its

leadership as well as its potential to become a political power center rivaling the party. Military professionalism became a secondary consideration to political reliability in determining promotions.

Since World War II, the abrupt shifts in Albanian foreign policy had resulted in purges of the officer corps. Those officers trained in or closely linked with Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union, or China were purged from the ranks and even executed as traitors when alliances with these countries came to an end.

Fearing a decline in his authority and party control over the People's Army, Hoxha also conducted a major purge of its senior officers during 1974. He dismissed and later executed his longtime ally and minister of defense, Beqir Balluku, as well as the chief of staff and chief of the political directorate. He replaced Balluku with his prime minister, Mehmet Shehu, another close associate of many years who had established the military and security forces in the late 1940s. Shehu was a founder of the guerrilla movement during World War II who attained the rank of lieutenant general. He was its most capable military leader, but he apparently committed suicide after he and party officials tied closely to him were purged in 1981. Prokop Murra, a relatively junior candidate member of the Politburo, succeeded Shehu as minister of defense and became a full member of the Politburo in 1986. Kico Mustaqi became chief of the general staff and first deputy minister of defense, as well as a candidate member of the Politburo, in 1986.

Military influence in politics was restored to its earlier level when Mustaqi became minister of defense and a full member of the Politburo in 1990. This closer integration of the military into the political leadership may have been an effort to ensure the military's loyalty at a time of social unrest at home and communist disintegration in Eastern Europe. In early 1991, however, President Alia replaced Mustaqi with Muhamet Karakaci, a young former officer and deputy chief of the general staff. Alia reportedly feared that Mustaqi was planning a military coup d'état.

In November 1991, the communist-dominated coalition government reintroduced military ranks and Western-style uniforms in place of plain Chinese fatigues. It pledged to emphasize military professionalism, training, and discipline and to eliminate political indoctrination from the military. The Albanian Democratic Party called for reforms in the armed forces to include reductions in military spending, military units, and conscription and the reorganization of unit structures. It proposed and initiated an effort to establish contacts and cooperation with Western military establishments, particularly Turkey's, and to send Albanian officers to study and train in foreign military academies. The chief of staff of the

*Bus driver talking
to soldier at the
terminus
near the port
city of Durrës
Courtesy Charles Sudetic*



People's Army attended the East-West Seminar on Military Doctrines in Vienna for the first time in 1991.

People's Army

In early 1992, the ground, air and air defense, and naval forces of the People's Army numbered about 48,000, approximately half of whom were conscripts. The ground forces were the predominant service, and ground forces commanders exercised broad authority over the air and air defense forces in providing air support to ground forces units. They also had responsibility for the defense of coastal regions and exercised considerable operational control over naval units to accomplish this mission. There was less distinction between Albania's military services than was normally the case in larger Western military establishments. The air and air defense forces and the naval forces were usually treated separately because of their distinctive missions, equipment, and training, but their personnel were frequently referred to as air or naval soldiers. Their organization and logistics differed only insofar as their missions and equipment required. The tactical missions and capabilities of each service were specialized in relation to their weapons, and organizational patterns appeared similar to most other armed forces throughout the world. During the formative years immediately after World War II, force structures for each service were adopted directly from

the Soviet model, although a partial realignment according to the Chinese pattern occurred after 1961.

Ground Forces

In the early 1990s, the ground forces numbered about 35,000, or about three-quarters of all armed forces personnel. Because the strength of the ground forces was sufficient to man only about two divisions, brigades of approximately 3,000 soldiers became the largest army formation. In 1991 four infantry brigades constituted the bulk of combat units in the ground forces. During the 1980s, Albania had reduced the number of infantry brigades from eight to four. It had shifted to fully manned units from its prior reliance on the mobilization of reserve soldiers to flesh out a larger number of units manned at a lower level. Each brigade had three infantry battalions and one lightly equipped artillery battalion. Armored forces consisted of one tank brigade. Artillery forces were increased from one to three regiments during the 1980s, and six battalions of coastal artillery were maintained at strategic points along the Adriatic Sea littoral.

As of the early 1990s, most equipment used by the ground forces was old, and its effectiveness was questionable. In addition, shortages of spare parts for Soviet and Chinese equipment reduced combat readiness. The infantry brigades lacked mechanization, operating only about 130 armored personnel carriers. They included Soviet BTR-40, BTR-50, BTR-152, and BRDM-1 vehicles produced in the 1950s and Chinese Type-531 armored vehicles. Armored forces were equipped with 200 Soviet-made T-34 and T-54 tanks. The T-34 was a World War II model, and the more recent T-54 was introduced during the late 1950s. Soviet and Chinese artillery in the ground forces inventory was towed rather than self-propelled. It included Soviet M-1937 and D-1 howitzers and Chinese Type-66 152mm guns, Chinese Type-59 130mm guns, Soviet M-1931/37 and M-1938 guns of 122mm, and Chinese Type-60 guns of 122mm. The ground forces also operated Chinese Type-63 107mm multiple rocket launchers and a large number of Soviet and Chinese mortars, recoilless rifles, and antitank guns. Organic air defense equipment for protecting ground forces units consisted of several types of Soviet towed antiaircraft guns, including the 23mm ZU-23-2, 37mm M-1939, 57mm S-60, and 85mm KS-12.

The lack of modern equipment was a major deficiency in the ground forces in the early 1990s. The infantry lacked mobility and antitank guided missiles. Moreover, without mobile surface-to-air missiles or radar-controlled antiaircraft guns, army units would

be vulnerable to attack by modern fighter-bombers or ground-attack aircraft. Yet the obsolescent weapons of the ground forces were suited to the relatively low technical skill of the country's soldiers as well as its rugged terrain (see fig. 3). The tactical skill of the officers might make it possible to deploy this older equipment successfully for a short period in a static defensive posture. A defensive operation that prevented an enemy from rapidly neutralizing Albanian opposition would enable Albania to seek international diplomatic or military assistance against an aggressor. Alternatively, it would gain time and retain the military equipment needed to establish a long-term guerrilla force capable of resisting a better armed conventional occupation army. The logistical support required to resupply and maintain such a defense, however, was either lacking or nearly impossible to achieve over much of the terrain.

Air and Air Defense Forces

The air and air defense forces, founded in April 1952, are the most junior of the three services. In 1991 the personnel strength of these forces was about 11,000, the majority of whom consisted of officers assigned to ground-based air defense units. The air force had nearly 100 combat aircraft supplied by China. The main air bases were located near Tiranë, Shijak, Vlorë, Sazan Island, and Kuçovë. The missions of the air force were to repel the enemy at the country's borders and to prevent violations of national airspace. However, the obsolescence of Albania's combat aircraft and probable deficiencies in readiness made it unlikely that the air force could fulfill these missions against the more modern aircraft of neighboring countries. The air force was a source of prestige for the regime, but for practical purposes it served mainly to provide the core for upgrading in the event that a new, technologically advanced foreign sponsor appeared in the future.

After 1970 the air force replaced its entire inventory of Soviet MiG-15 and MiG-17 aircraft acquired during the 1950s with Chinese-produced airplanes. It had one squadron of Chinese J-7s and two squadrons of J-6 fighter-interceptors, with ten to twelve aircraft per squadron. Ground-attack and support aircraft included two squadrons of Chinese J-4s and one squadron of J-2 fighter-bombers. The most modern of these Chinese-built aircraft, the J-7, was designed along the lines of the Soviet MiG-21, which was first introduced in the 1960s. The J-6 fighter-interceptor was the Chinese version of the MiG-19 from the 1950s. These aircraft were limited to daytime operations, lacking the sophisticated radar and avionics required to give them night and all-weather flight capabilities. Military transport aircraft and helicopters consisted of one squadron

of C-5 transports, a Chinese-manufactured Soviet An-2; one squadron of Chinese Li-2 transports; and two squadrons of Chinese Z-5 helicopters. The Z-5 was basically a Soviet Mi-4.

Air defense equipment was primarily Soviet in origin. Four sites equipped with Soviet SA-2 surface-to-air missiles constituted a point air defense system for several strategic locations in Albania. The SA-2 was received initially in 1964 and became obsolete in the 1970s. The Chinese apparently did not upgrade Albania's capability. Until 1976 China supplied most of the spare parts required to maintain the air force's equipment. After 1976, however, the combat readiness of the air force declined because deliveries of spare parts were reduced. The aircraft inventory also shrank after China ceased its arms supply relationship with Albania. Increasingly, older aircraft that could not be repaired left the inventory and were not replaced.

Naval Forces

None of Albania's pre-World War II naval forces survived the occupation of Albania; the new navy was established in August 1945. The naval forces are exclusively coastal defense forces and closely coordinate their operations with the ground forces. Their mission is to provide the initial line of resistance to a seaborne invasion of Albania. Considerably weaker than their potential adversaries, the naval forces are intended to deny an aggressor uninhibited access to the waters adjacent to Albania. They would be largely sacrificed in the effort to defeat at least some of the units of a large, well-equipped opposing naval assault force. They would try to prevent submarines from approaching Albanian coasts and ports, to lay and sweep mines, and to escort convoys. The absence of a shore-based coastal defense force with surface-to-surface missiles, however, is a serious deficiency in the navy's ability to repel a seaborne attack on Albania. Naval forces, together with police patrol boats, are also responsible for preventing smuggling and controlling access to Albanian ports.

Naval forces are organized into two coastal defense brigades composed of minor surface combatants located at the Durrës and Vlorë naval bases. All combatants are assigned to one of these bases. Other naval facilities are located at Sazan Island, Pasha Liman on the strait of Otranto coast, Sarandë, and Shengjin. The Soviet Union constructed the base at Sazan Island, but it has not been used regularly since Soviet-Albanian relations ruptured in 1961. Naval personnel numbered about 2,000, with roughly one-half being conscripts.

The strength of the naval forces shrank between the mid-1970s and 1991. In particular, old Italian ships of World War II vintage and most of Albania's minesweepers left the inventory. Torpedo boats and coastal patrol craft constituted the bulk of the naval forces. In 1991 Albania had twenty-nine Chinese-built Huchwan hydrofoil torpedo boats, each of which had two 533mm torpedo tubes. Patrol craft included six Chinese-made Shanghai-II fast inshore gunboats and two older Soviet Kronshtadt-class patrol boats. Minesweeping forces consisted of old Soviet-built T-301 and PO-2 boats. The naval forces also had two obsolete Soviet Whiskey-class diesel submarines constructed during the 1950s.

Military Manpower

Traditionally most armed forces conscripts served for two years. Conscripts in the air and air defense and naval forces as well as noncommissioned officers and technical specialists in certain units served three years. In 1991, however, the freely elected, communist-controlled coalition government reduced the basic two-year term of service to eighteen months. This shorter term of service for conscripts and the small size of the People's Army would force Albania to rely on large-scale mobilization to mount a credible defense of the country. Given the small population and economy of Albania, full mobilization would seriously disrupt the civilian production and logistics necessary to sustain military operations. The military reserve training needed to support mobilization plans also imposed a burden on the country's economic activity. In the early 1990s, the population was relatively young, with fully 60 percent under the age of thirty. There were just under 500,000 males between the ages of fifteen and fifty. Of this total number, approximately 75 percent, or nearly 375,000, were physically suited to carry out military duties. More than half of them had had prior military service and participated in reserve military activities on an annual basis. Women were also trained in the reserves and available for mobilization, although in unknown numbers.

In the early 1990s, plans for expanding the existing military establishment during mobilization were unclear to Western observers. Prior to the 1980s, the ground forces maintained a peacetime structure with low personnel strength and low combat readiness. Divisions would be brought to full strength and readiness through the mobilization of reserves. The smaller brigade structure introduced in the 1980s, however, made it unlikely that newly mobilized soldiers could be integrated into existing units in the regular ground forces in wartime. Mobilized troops were more likely to be employed as light infantry, special forces, or guerrillas rather

than in more technically oriented tank, artillery, air and air defense, or naval units. However, the possibility of mobilizing a substantial segment of the population for guerrilla warfare against an aggressor was evident in the large paramilitary training program. The emphasis on paramilitary training increased after the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 demonstrated potential weaknesses in Albania's plans to meet an attack by a large, well-trained aggressor force.

In the late 1980s, even communist-controlled Albanian sources referred to serious problems with the attitudes of young people who were conscripted into the People's Army. They described social malaise, a growth in religious belief, increasing crime, and unwillingness to accept assignments to remote areas of the country. Moreover, the system of social discipline that had enforced obligatory military service under communist rule had completely disappeared by January 1992. Poor food, changing living and working conditions, and low pay led to increasing dereliction of duty, absence without leave, and desertion. More than 500 soldiers were among the thousands of Albanians who fled to Italy and Greece in 1991. The reduction in conscript service to eighteen months in 1991 exacerbated the serious and growing problem of unemployment among the male draft-age population. In early 1992, the problems of manning the People's Army continued to mount.

Conscript Training

Before 1961 military training relied on the Soviet model. Training manuals and materials were translated from Russian into Albanian. But even though China replaced the Soviet Union as Albania's foreign patron, the Chinese apparently made few basic changes in Albania's military training programs. Most conscripts received considerable physical conditioning, drill, and other basic training in school and through the communist youth organization. This foundation allowed the military to move conscripts rapidly into tactical combat training and small unit exercises. Tactical training typically involved preparation for fighting in defensive positions in the mountainous terrain characteristic of the country's interior. It emphasized physical conditioning, employment of light weapons, and the use of minimal amounts of matériel and other support. At least until 1991, the training program also devoted substantial time to political indoctrination conducted by political officers.

Service within the naval forces traditionally has been a specialty, and many conscripts from Vlorë or Durrës were assigned to the naval forces because of their familiarity with small craft and navigation. As a result, they rarely served their term in the military

out of sight of their homes, and because the level of naval deployments and training was low, they remained available for part-time fishing or other work.

In general, the frequent use of conscripts as laborers on economic projects has detracted from military training. They have often been used in the construction of factories, oil refineries, and hydroelectric plants; during harvests; and for land reclamation efforts.

Paramilitary Training

The experience of the resistance to the Italian and German occupations during World War II, in which men, women, and children participated, provided the inspiration for an extensive program of paramilitary training for virtually all segments of the Albanian population. The program, which began at the end of the war, focused on young people from the early 1950s on. Paramilitary training developed to the point that many fifteen- to nineteen-year-old youths could be organized to fight as partisan forces or to operate as auxiliary units during a national emergency. Its main purpose was, however, to provide the armed forces with conscripts in good physical condition and with sufficient basic military training and knowledge to enter a military unit and perform satisfactorily with a minimum of adjustment. The academic year for secondary school and university students traditionally included one month and two months of full-time paramilitary training, respectively. Paramilitary training did not exclude older Albanians, however. Until age fifty, men were obligated to spend twelve days per year in paramilitary training. Women participated for seven days per year until age forty.

Paramilitary training included extensive physical conditioning, close-order drill, hand-to-hand combat, small arms handling, demolition, and tactical exercises applicable to guerrilla operations. It was conducted in secondary schools by military officers assigned to them and also at military units to which the schools were attached for training purposes. Paramilitary programs of the communist youth organizations were similar to those conducted in the secondary schools. Albanian youths carrying rifles and machine guns marched in May Day parades. As many as 200,000 young people participated in paramilitary training each year.

Military Schools

Specialized military schools were essentially scaled-down copies of those in the Soviet Union. Three military schools trained officers for the People's Army or provided advanced professional training for mid-career officers. The Skanderbeg Military School was a

secondary school that prepared students to enter the United Higher Officers' School. Students at Skanderbeg were generally sons of party, government, and military leaders. The United Higher Officers' School, formerly named for Enver Hoxha, was the oldest military education institution in the country. According to the APL, it began operating before German occupation forces left the country in 1944 and initiated a formal curriculum in 1945. Its graduates received a university degree and became commissioned officers. The Military Academy, once named for Mehmet Shehu, was an advanced institution offering training equivalent to that of command and staff schools or war colleges in Western military establishments. It provided specialized officer courses for pilots and those serving in artillery units or aboard ship.

Military Budget and the Economy

Assessments of the impact of defense expenditures on Albania's economy traditionally have been hampered by the lack of government statistics on overall economic performance and the Albanian economy's isolation from the international economy. Albania generally appropriated 1 billion leks (for value of the lek—see Glossary) per year for the military budget, or about 5 percent of an estimated late 1980 gross domestic product (GNP—see Glossary) of 20 billion leks. This figure was a relatively modest burden on the economy compared to that borne by other communist countries. However, the absence of reliable statistics made it difficult to calculate this budget as a percentage of total government spending, a common indicator of the priority accorded defense. It likely represented approximately 10 percent of government expenditures. However, some significant costs were probably hidden in nonmilitary elements of the government budget, thus understating the defense effort as a portion of total spending. The low subsistence wages paid to conscripts also provided a downward bias. Given Albania's low standard of living, per capita military expenditures were high when compared with average family earnings, the bulk of which were required to obtain such basic necessities as food, clothing, and housing.

The Albanian Democratic Party has asserted that large defense expenditures during communist rule impoverished Albania. It cited annual drills for military reservists and live-fire exercises for infantry and artillery units as costing Albania 100 million leks, an amount equal to the yearly municipal budget for Tiranë. Moreover, the new coalition government that took office in June 1991, in a move that probably indicated that the military budget had imposed

a hardship on the civilian economy, announced an immediate 20-percent reduction in defense spending.

Internal Security

During the period of uninterrupted communist rule from 1944 to 1991, the pervasiveness of repression made it difficult for information on internal developments in Albania to reach the outside world. It was the most closed and isolated society in Europe. The few Western observers who visited the country after World War II were not in a position to see or to judge its internal conditions independently, but their statements concerning the police-state atmosphere in the country indicated that public order was rigidly maintained. It was impossible for visitors to move around the country without escorts, and conversation or interaction with ordinary citizens was inhibited. Local police and internal security forces were in evidence everywhere. Albanian sources published little concerning the internal security situation, and reliable information was lacking beyond infrequent officially approved statements and data that generally covered political crimes deemed threatening to the party or state. However, this situation began to change drastically in 1991, in part because of the efforts of the Albanian Democratic Party, which advocated restructuring the security organs and purging officials who had repressed the population under Hoxha and Alia. In early 1992, officials responsible for preventing or investigating crime were disorganized as a result of political changes in the country and were unsure how to operate effectively. Organizational change in the police and security forces, initiated by the communist-dominated coalition government, also inhibited their effectiveness at least for a time.

Domestic Repression under Hoxha and Alia

Enver Hoxha was one of the last Stalinist leaders in Eastern Europe and continued to employ Stalinist techniques for controlling the population long after most other East European countries had shifted from outright terror and repression to more subtle bureaucratic-authoritarian methods. Western observers believed that no other communist country had as extensive a police and security organization relative to its size as the one that operated in Albania.

Hoxha regarded the security police as an elite group, and it underpinned the power of the ACP and then the APL during the period they dominated Albania's one-party political system. The secret police was instrumental in enabling Hoxha and the communist party to consolidate power after 1944 by conducting a campaign of

intimidation and terror against prewar politicians and rival groups. Persecution of these opponents in show trials on charges of treason, conspiracy, subversion, espionage, or anti-Albanian agitation and propaganda became common. From 1948 until the early 1960s, the Ministry of Internal Affairs was involved in the search for real or alleged Yugoslav agents or Titoists in Albania, and the ministry itself was an initial battleground in the purge of Yugoslav influence. Yugoslav control of the Ministry of Internal Affairs ran deep in the years immediately following World War II. Its chief, Koci Xoxe, was part of the pro-Yugoslav faction of the party and a rival to Hoxha. In 1949, however, he was arrested, convicted in a secret trial, and executed.

Hoxha maintained a Stalinist political system even after the communist regimes in the Soviet Union and China had long since moderated their totalitarian or radical excesses. In the last years of Hoxha's life, the Directorate of State Security (*Drejtorija e Sigurimit te Shtetit—Sigurimi*), increased its political power, perhaps to the extent of supplanting party control. After Hoxha's death, the security forces viewed his successor, Ramiz Alia, and his modest reforms with suspicion. In the late 1980s, they reportedly supported a group of conservatives centered around Hoxha's widow, in opposition to Alia.

Under Hoxha the communist regime essentially ignored internationally recognized standards of human rights. According to a landmark Amnesty International report published in 1984, Albania's human rights record was dismal under Hoxha. The regime denied its citizens freedom of expression, religion, movement, and association although the constitution of 1976 ostensibly guaranteed each of these rights. In fact, the constitution effectively circumscribed the exercise of political liberties that the regime interpreted as contrary to the established socialist order. In addition, the regime tried to deny the population access to information other than that disseminated by the government-controlled media. The secret police routinely violated the privacy of persons, homes, and communications and made arbitrary arrests. The courts ensured that verdicts were rendered from the party's political perspective rather than affording due process to the accused, who were occasionally sentenced without even the formality of a trial.

After Hoxha's death, Alia was apparently unable or unwilling to maintain the totalitarian system of terror, coercion, and repression that Hoxha had employed to maintain his grip on the party and the country. Alia relaxed the most overt Stalinist controls over the population and instructed the internal security structure to use more subtle, bureaucratic-authoritarian mechanisms characteristic

of the post-Stalin Soviet Union and East European regimes. He allowed greater contact with the outside world, including eased travel restrictions for Albanians, although the Sigurimi demanded bribes equivalent to six months' salary for the average Albanian to obtain the documents needed for a passport. More foreigners were allowed to visit Albania, and they reported a generally more relaxed atmosphere among the population as well as a less repressive political and antireligious climate. Official sources admitted that social discipline, especially among young Albanians, was breaking down in the late 1980s. The country's youth increasingly refused to accept and even openly rejected the values advanced under the official communist ideology. Moreover, small-scale rebellions were reported more frequently after Hoxha's death. Yet these developments did not alter the regime's exclusive hold on political power after the 1980s.

The dramatic collapse of communist rule in Eastern Europe in 1989 apparently had a devastating effect on the internal social and political situation in Albania despite Alia's efforts to contain it. Massive demonstrations against communist rule followed by liberalization and democratization in Eastern Europe began to affect Albania in 1990. The power of the security police was successfully challenged by massive numbers of largely unorganized demonstrators demanding reforms and democratic elections. Unrest began with demonstrations in Shkodër in January 1990 that forced authorities to declare a state of emergency to quell the protests. Berat workers staged strikes protesting low wages in May. During July 1990, approximately 5,000 Albanians sought refuge on the grounds of foreign embassies in an effort to flee Albania. The security forces reportedly killed hundreds of asylum seekers either in the streets outside foreign compounds or after they were detained, but even such extreme measures did not stanch the unrest.

In September 1990, Alia acceded to the requirements of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, committing Albania to respect the human rights and political freedoms embodied in the 1975 Helsinki Accords. When students organized demonstrations in December 1990, their demands for political pluralism received widespread support (see *Further Moves Toward Democracy*, ch. 4). Attempts by riot police to break up the demonstrations failed, and the party's Central Committee, in an extraordinary meeting called by Alia to discuss the growing unrest, decided not to use further force. The following year, the security forces were not in evidence at large political demonstrations and were unable to stop thousands of refugees from boarding ships bound for Italy or from crossing the border into Greece. However, the security

forces attempted to maintain control by forcing the authorities to give the People's Army control over the ports of Vlorë, Durrës, Shengjin, and Sarandë. The army was ordered to clear the ports of potential refugees and to establish a blockade around them.

Penal Code

Prior to the reforms of the early 1990s, a politically and ideologically oriented penal code facilitated systematic violations of human rights and ensured the communist party control over all aspects of Albania's political, economic, and cultural life. Article 53 of the 1982 code, for example, broadly defined sabotage as "activity or inactivity to weaken or undermine the operations of the state and the Albanian Party of Labor, the socialist economy, and the organization and administration of the state and society"—a crime punishable by at least ten years' imprisonment or by death. The crime of "fascist, anti-democratic, religious, warmongering, and anti-socialist agitation and propaganda," as defined by Article 55, carried a penalty of three to ten years' imprisonment or, in wartime, not less than ten years' imprisonment or death. Article 47 stipulated a penalty of not less than ten years or death for "flight from the state" or for "refusal to return to the fatherland." The penal code listed a total of thirty-four offenses punishable by death, of which twelve were political and eleven were military. Although individuals accused of criminal behavior theoretically had the right to present a defense, they could not avail themselves of the services of a professional attorney; the private practice of law in Albania had been banned in 1967.

In 1990, following serious and widespread public unrest, steps were taken to liberalize the penal code. The number of offenses punishable by death was reduced from thirty-four to eleven, women were exempted from the death penalty, the maximum prison sentence for "anti-socialist agitation and propaganda" was reduced from twenty-five to ten years, the maximum prison sentence for attempts to leave the country illegally also was reduced from twenty-five to ten years, the legal status of lawyers was restored, and the official ban on religious activity was abolished.

Penal System

The communist regime maintained an extensive system of prisons and labor camps, including six institutions for political prisoners, nine for nonpolitical prisoners, and fourteen where political prisoners served their sentences together with regular criminals. Inmates provided the state's vital mining industry with an inexpensive

source of labor. In 1985 there were an estimated 32,000 prisoners in the country.

Conditions in the prisons and labor camps were abysmal. Maltreatment as well as physical and mental torture of political prisoners and other prisoners of conscience were common. Sporadic strikes and rebellions in the labor camps, to which the Sigurimi often responded with military force, resulted in the death of more than 1,000 prisoners as well as the execution of many survivors after they were suppressed.

Many political prisoners were purged party officials and their relatives. Reflecting Hoxha's paranoia, some of them were resentenced without trial for allegedly participating in political conspiracies while in prison. Former inmates reported that they managed to survive their incarceration only through the assistance of relatives who brought them food and money.

Under Alia, several amnesties resulted in the release of nearly 20 percent of the large prison and labor-camp population, although most of those released were prisoners over the age of sixty who had already served long terms. In 1991, for example, the APL attempted to improve its popularity by pushing a sweeping amnesty law for political prisoners through the communist-dominated People's Assembly, and all such prisoners were freed by the middle of the year. The amnesty law provided for the rehabilitation of those incarcerated for political crimes, but not persons convicted of terrorist acts that resulted in deaths or other serious consequences. Specifically, it applied to persons sentenced for agitation and propaganda against the state; participation in illegal political organizations, meetings, or demonstrations; failure to report crimes against the state; slandering or insulting the state; and absence without leave or desertion from military service. It provided for material compensation, including lost wages or pensions, for time spent in prison; for preferential access to housing, education, and employment; and gave compensatory damages to the families of political prisoners who were executed or who died in detention without trial. Finally, it established a commission that included members of the new, independent Association of Former Political Prisoners to investigate atrocities carried out by the state.

Security Forces

Until April 1991, all security and police forces were responsible to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which also exercised authority over the judicial system and the implementation and enforcement of the country's laws. In January 1991, the minister of internal affairs, Simon Stefani, held both high communist party and government

posts as a member of the Politburo and as one of three deputy prime ministers.

Each security or police organization—the Sigurimi, the Frontier Guards, and the People's Police—constituted a separate directorate within the ministry; each had a larger proportion of personnel who were party members than did the armed forces because of the need for political reliability. In the Sigurimi, for example, nearly all serving personnel were believed to be party members. In the Frontier Guards and People's Police, all officers and many other personnel were party members.

The Sigurimi were the security police forces. Organized to protect the party and government system, these forces were responsible for suppressing deviation from communist ideology and for investigating serious crimes on a national scale. Frontier Guards, as their name implied, maintained the security of state borders. The People's Police were the local or municipal police.

In April 1991, shortly after the country's first free elections, the communist-dominated People's Assembly abolished the Ministry of Internal Affairs. It was replaced by a new Ministry of Public Order with authority over the People's Police. In addition, the chairman of a new National Security Committee within the Council of Ministers was given control over the Sigurimi. Both organizations, however, were headed by the same officials who had directed them within the old Ministry of Internal Affairs.

In July 1991, the communist-dominated legislature abolished the Sigurimi and established a new National Information Service (NIS) in its place. It was unclear to Western observers to what extent the new organization would be different from its much-hated predecessor because at least some of its personnel probably had served in the Sigurimi. Only former Sigurimi leaders were excluded from the new NIS. Opponents of the Sigurimi argued that former officers should not be rehired but replaced with new, untainted government employees. The officers, however, argued that the new organization needed experienced investigators who had not violated existing laws or abused their power as Sigurimi officers.

The NIS's stated mission was to enforce the constitution and laws of Albania and the civil rights of its citizens. It was forbidden to conduct unauthorized investigations, and it was required to respect the rights of citizens in every case except instances in which the constitution itself had been violated. Political activities within the NIS were banned.

In 1991 the rate of reported homicides doubled and robberies tripled over the similar period in 1990. Instances of illegal possession and use of firearms were reported. The increase in violent crime



*Albanian riot police maintaining order as
refuge-seekers return from Italy
Courtesy Charles Sudetic*

was viewed so seriously that some citizens believed that social anarchy was overwhelming the state's ability to handle it. The end of the party's monopoly on political power and the curbing of the coercive power of the state's law enforcement mechanism gave many common criminals courage to act. The minister of public order cited a general breakdown in law enforcement and public safety in Albania in 1991. He reported that many crimes were being committed by unemployed individuals, common criminals inadvertently released from prison under political amnesties, and citizens taking revenge on officials of the former communist regime. He blamed many problems of the police on their former cooperation with the Sigurimi in its role of protecting the party and state against the citizens. According to the minister, the police would be depoliticized, and patriotic, legal, and professional training would replace members' former political indoctrination.

When the People's Assembly established the Ministry of Public Order, it placed the Frontier Guards and the Directorate of Prison Administration, both of which had been in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, in the Ministry of People's Defense and the Ministry of Justice, respectively. Shortly thereafter, in an effort to stem the flow of Albanian refugees and growing problems with drug trafficking

through Albanian territory, Italy signed a cooperation agreement with Albania under which it would help train and equip the demoralized police and Frontier Guards. Albania sought similar assistance from Finland and Romania and applied to join the International Police Organization (Interpol). The head of the Directorate of Prison Administration pledged to improve physical conditions in Albania's prisons, to terminate routine detention of minors with adults, and to introduce corrective, educational, and recreational programs.

The Directorate of Law and Order, the Directorate of Criminal Police, and the Directorate of Forces for the Restoration of Order—the latter presumably being special riot control units—remained under the control of the Ministry of Public Order. In defense of his decision not to reorganize, the minister of public order cited difficulties in attempting to restructure the police force when crime was increasing rapidly. He also noted that planned cutbacks would reduce police personnel by 30 percent. Many Albanians, however, blamed years of communist dictatorship and poverty for allowing economic conditions to deteriorate to the point where the system was collapsing in a crime wave and local disorder. Some citizens believed that they needed the right to carry arms as protection against increasing violent crime and social anarchy.

Directorate of State Security

The Directorate of State Security, or Sigurimi, which was abolished in July 1991 and replaced by the NIS, celebrated March 20, 1943, as its founding day. Hoxha typically credited the Sigurimi as having been instrumental in his faction's gaining power in Albania over other partisan groups. The People's Defense Division, formed in 1945 from Hoxha's most reliable resistance fighters, was the precursor to the Sigurimi's 5,000 uniformed internal security force. In 1989 the division was organized into five regiments of mechanized infantry that could be ordered to quell domestic disturbances posing a threat to the party leadership. The Sigurimi had an estimated 10,000 officers, approximately 2,500 of whom were assigned to the People's Army. It was organized with both a national headquarters and district headquarters in each of Albania's twenty-six districts.

The mission of the Sigurimi, and presumably its successor, was to prevent revolution and to suppress opposition to the regime. Although groups of Albanian émigrés sought Western support for their efforts to overthrow the communists in the late 1940s and early 1950s, they quickly ceased to be a credible threat to the communist regime because of the effectiveness of the Sigurimi.

The activities of the Sigurimi were directed more toward political and ideological opposition than crimes against persons or property, unless the latter were sufficiently serious and widespread to threaten the regime. Its activities permeated Albanian society to the extent that every third citizen had either served time in labor camps or been interrogated by Sigurimi officers. Sigurimi personnel were generally career volunteers, recommended by loyal party members and subjected to careful political and psychological screening before they were selected to join the service. They had an elite status and enjoyed many privileges designed to maintain their reliability and dedication to the party.

The Sigurimi was organized into sections covering political control, censorship, public records, prison camps, internal security troops, physical security, counterespionage, and foreign intelligence. The political control section's primary function was monitoring the ideological correctness of party members and other citizens. It was responsible for purging the party, government, military, and its own apparatus of individuals closely associated with Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union, or China after Albania broke from successive alliances with each of those countries. One estimate indicated that at least 170 communist party Politburo or Central Committee members were executed as a result of the Sigurimi's investigations. The political control section was also involved in an extensive program of monitoring private telephone conversations. The censorship section operated within the press, radio, newspapers, and other communications media as well as within cultural societies, schools, and other organizations. The public records section administered government documents and statistics, primarily social and economic statistics that were handled as state secrets. The prison camps section was charged with the political reeducation of inmates and the evaluation of the degree to which they posed a danger to society. Local police supplied guards for fourteen prison camps throughout the country. The physical security section provided guards for important party and government officials and installations. The counterespionage section was responsible for neutralizing foreign intelligence operations in Albania as well as for monitoring domestic movements and parties opposed to Albania's communist party. Finally, the foreign intelligence section maintained personnel abroad and at home to obtain intelligence about foreign capabilities and intentions that affected Albania's national security. Its officers occupied cover positions in Albania's foreign diplomatic missions, trade offices, and cultural centers.

In early 1992, information on the organization, responsibilities, and functions of the NIS was not available in Western publications.

Some Western observers believed, however, that many of the officers and leaders of the NIS had served in the Sigurimi and that the basic structures of the two organizations were similar.

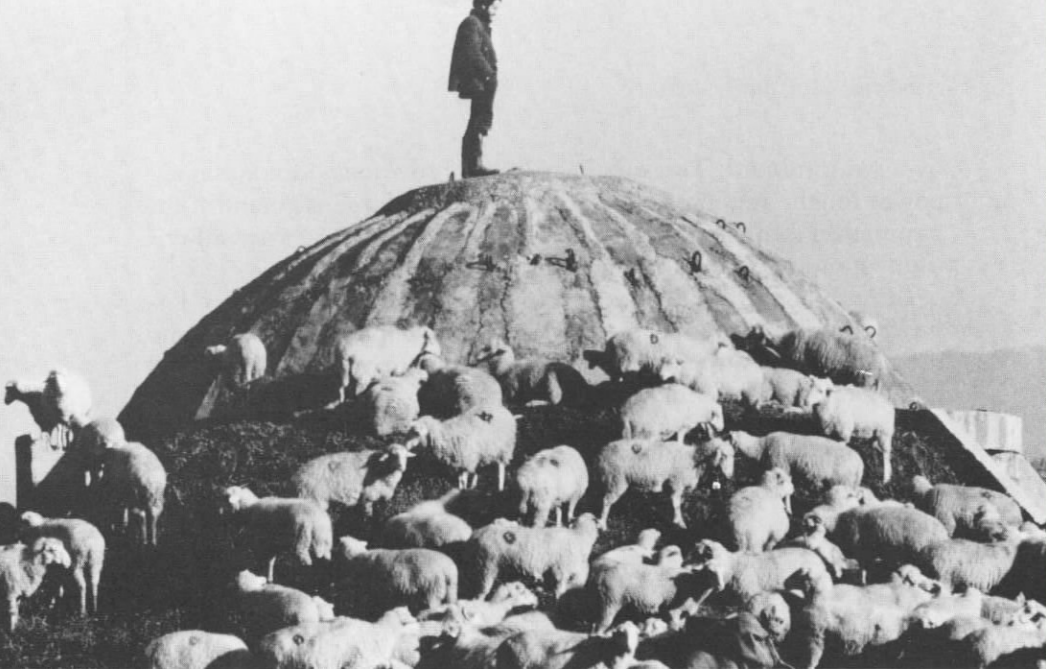
Frontier Guards

In 1989 the Frontier Guards included about 7,000 troops organized into battalion-sized formations. Although organized strictly along military lines, the Frontier Guards were subordinate to the Ministry of Internal Affairs until its abolition in April 1991 when they were subordinated to the Ministry of People's Defense. The mission of the Frontier Guards was to protect state borders and to prevent criminals, smugglers, or other infiltrators from crossing them. In the process, they were also charged with stopping Albanians from leaving the country illegally. They were effective in enforcing its closed borders, although some Albanians still managed to escape. During the period of Albania's greatest isolation from its neighbors, the lack of open border crossing points simplified border control. For example, in 1985 Albania opened its first border crossing point with Greece, fourteen years after it had reestablished diplomatic relations with Athens. In 1990, however the Frontier Guards were increasingly less able to prevent illegal crossings by well-armed citizens, who frequently sought refuge in Greece and Yugoslavia.

Personnel for the Frontier Guards generally came from the annual conscription process for military service, but the organization also had career personnel. The Frontier Guards training school was established in 1953 in Tiranë, and its students, as well as conscripted Frontier Guards, were carefully screened to ensure their political reliability.

People's Police

In 1989, the People's Police had five branches: the Police for Economic Objectives, Communications Police, Fire Police, Detention Police, and General Police. The Police for Economic Objectives served as a guard force for state buildings, factories, construction projects, and similar enterprises. The Communications Police guarded Albania's lines of communication, including bridges, railroads, and the telephone and telegraph network. Fire-fighting was also considered a police function and was carried out by the Fire Police. The Detention Police served as prison and labor camp guards. Finally, the General Police corresponded to the local or municipal police in other countries and attended to traffic regulation and criminal investigations.



*On the outskirts of Tiranë, a shepherd uses a bunker to oversee his flock.
Courtesy Fred Conrad*

Although the functions of the General Police overlapped with those of the security police to some extent, the General Police operated at the local rather than the national level. However, the headquarters of the General Police in larger towns had internal security sections that coordinated their activities with those of the security police. They maintained records on political dissidents, Albanians living outside their home districts, and foreign visitors and resident aliens. They also monitored the identification cards that Albanian citizens were required to carry. These cards, which contained family and employment information and were required for travel between cities and villages, constituted an effective control over the movement of the population.

Service in the People's Police was usually a three-year obligation, and individuals who had previously served in the armed services were preferred. After 1989, however, detailed information on the operations, staffing, and training of the People's Police was generally not known outside of Albania.

Auxiliary Police

All able-bodied men were required by a 1948 law to spend two months assisting the local police. They served with the People's Police in their localities, wearing police uniforms that were distinguished

by a red armband. The Auxiliary Police provided additional manpower for the regular police and also gave a large segment of the population familiarity with, and presumably a more sympathetic understanding of, police activities and problems.

In early 1992, the police and internal security forces were losing the tight control they once held over the population. They, and the regime they supported, were beginning to yield to the impact of the popular, revolutionary forces had that toppled the other communist regimes in Eastern Europe in late 1989 and 1990. Although poorer, more isolated, and more repressed than the peoples of the other East European communist countries, Albanians were beginning to assert their civil and human rights.

* * *

Up-to-date English-language sources on Albania's armed forces and its internal security apparatus are scarce because until 1991 Albania was the most isolated and secretive state in Eastern Europe and in-depth research on these subjects was inhibited. Albania's print and broadcast media provided little information on the country's defense capabilities or policies and even less on its internal security forces. *The History of Albania, from its Origins to the Present Day*, by Stefanaq Pollo and Arben Puto, and *The Encyclopedia of Military History*, by R. Ernest Dupuy and Trevor Dupuy, present historical perspectives on Albania's national security evolution. Klaus Lange's "Albanian Security Policies: Concepts, Meaning, and Realisation," is the best, and perhaps only, scholarly article exclusively dedicated to Albania's national security. F. Stephen Larabee and Daniel Nelson address Albania's historical and strategic relationships with its neighbors in the Balkans, and Yugoslavia in particular. Elez Biberaj's *Albania: A Socialist Maverick* provides a valuable description of the political fortunes of party officials in the national security apparatus and the impact of the party's changing foreign policies on national security.

The Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) translations of broadcasts from the official Albanian news agency as well as translations of Yugoslav and Greek broadcasts have been good sources on internal security developments, especially since 1990. FBIS translations of Yugoslav publications on the military and domestic unrest in Albania are worthwhile and probably generally accurate despite Yugoslavia's interest in portraying Albania in an unfavorable light. Louis Zanga, who writes on Albania in *Report on Eastern Europe* for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, occasionally discusses internal security matters. *The Military Balance*, published annually

by the International Institute for Strategic Studies, also provides information on the changing organizational structure, size, and equipment of the armed forces over time. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Appendix

Table

- 1 Metric Conversion Coefficients and Factors
- 2 Population of Largest Cities and Towns, 1987
- 3 Structure of Realized Net Material Product by Sector, Selected Years, 1938-83
- 4 Key Economic Indicators, 1961-88
- 5 Net Material Product by Branch of Origin, 1986, 1988, and 1990
- 6 Structure of Work Force by Sector, Selected Years, 1960-87
- 7 Primary Agricultural Output, Selected Years, 1979-88
- 8 Structure of Industry, Selected Years, 1950-88
- 9 Output of Main Industrial Products, 1980, 1985, and 1988
- 10 Production of Energy and Mineral Ores, Selected Years, 1980-88
- 11 Major Trading Partners, 1982-87
- 12 Major Imports, Selected Years, 1970-88
- 13 Major Exports, Selected Years, 1970-88

Table 1. Metric Conversion Coefficients and Factors

When you know	Multiply by	To find
Millimeters	0.04	inches
Centimeters	0.39	inches
Meters	3.3	feet
Kilometers	0.62	miles
Hectares (10,000 m ²)	2.47	acres
Square kilometers	0.39	square miles
Cubic meters	35.3	cubic feet
Liters	0.26	gallons
Kilograms	2.2	pounds
Metric tons	0.98	long tons
.....	1.1	short tons
.....	2,204	pounds
Degrees Celsius	1.8	degrees Fahrenheit
(Centigrade)	and add 32	

Table 2. Population of Largest Cities and Towns, 1987

City or Town	Population	City or Town	Population
Tiranë	226,000	Berat	40,500
Durrës	78,700	Fier	40,300
Elbasan	78,300	Lushnjë	26,900
Shkodër	76,300	Kavajë	24,200
Vlorë	67,700	Gjirokastër	23,800
Korçë	61,500	Kuçovë	20,600

Source: Based on information from *Vjetari Statistikor i R. P. S. Të Shqipërisë, 1988* (Statistical Yearbook of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania, 1988), Tiranë, 1988, 26-28.

Table 3. Structure of Realized Net Material Product by Sector, Selected Years, 1938-83 (in percentages, using 1981 prices) *

Sector	1938	1950	1960	1970	1980	1983
Agriculture	93.1	73.2	37.6	34.2	32.7	34.1
Industry	3.8	7.0	18.6	28.2	43.6	43.3
Construction	0.8	3.1	6.5	7.1	6.7	7.8
Services	2.3	16.7	37.3	30.5	17.0	14.8
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

* Net material product—see Glossary.

Source: Based on information from Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Profile: Bulgaria, Albania, 1990-91*, London, 1990, 37.

*Table 4. Key Economic Indicators, 1961-88
(in percentage average annual increase)*

	1961-70	1971-80	1981-88
Net material product ¹	7.4	4.6	1.7 ²
Global social product	8.3	5.4	2.2 ²
Net material product per capita	4.4	2.2	- 0.3
Gross industrial production	9.8	7.5	2.8
Industrial labor productivity ³	1.5	1.8	1.3
Gross agricultural production	6.0	3.8	1.5
Agricultural labor productivity ³	1.0	- 0.2	- 2.0
Freight transportation ⁴	9.0	6.7	0.8
Gross investment	8.4	4.9	1.5
Retail sales ⁵	5.7	4.6	3.4

¹ Net material product—see Glossary.

² Estimated.

³ Labor productivity is defined as gross production per employee.

⁴ Domestic transportation by road, rail, and sea as measured in ton-kilometers.

⁵ At current prices.

Sources: Based on information from Per Sandstrom and Örjan Sjöberg, "Albanian Economic Performance: Stagnation in the 1980s," *Soviet Studies* [Glasgow], 43, No. 5, 1991, 937.

*Table 5. Net Material Product by Branch of Origin,
1986, 1988, and 1990
(in millions of leks) **

Branch of Origin	1986	1988	1990
Net industrial production	20,128	20,821	20,033
Net agricultural production	8,828	8,376	8,591
Construction	2,861	2,851	2,820
Transportation	971	991	904
Domestic trade	892	848	788
Foreign trade	727	720	777
Other	355	348	365
TOTAL	34,762	34,955	34,278

* For value of the lek—see Glossary.

Source: Based on information from Anders Aslund and Örjan Sjöberg, "Privatization and Transition to a Market Economy in Albania," *Communist Economics and Economic Transformation* [Abingdon, United Kingdom], 4, No. 1, 1992, 137.

Table 6. *Structure of Work Force by Sector, Selected Years, 1960-87*
(in percentages)

Sector	1960	1970	1980	1985	1987
Agriculture	55.6	52.2	51.4	51.3	52.0
Industry	15.1	19.2	21.8	22.3	22.9
Construction	11.4	9.9	9.1	8.0	7.1
Transportation and communications ..	2.0	2.3	2.5	2.9	2.9
Trade	5.9	5.9	4.8	4.8	4.6
Education and culture	3.4	4.7	4.6	4.5	4.4
Health	2.7	2.6	3.0	2.8	2.9
Other	3.9	3.2	2.8	3.4	3.2
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Based on information from *Vjetari Statistikor i R. P. S. Të Shqipërisë, 1988* (Statistical Yearbook of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania, 1988), Tiranë, 1988, 69.

Table 7. *Primary Agricultural Output, Selected Years, 1979-88*
(in thousands of tons)

Product	1979-81 ¹	1985	1987	1988
Wheat	492	530	565	589
Corn	318	400	320	306
All cereals	916	1,055	1,010	1,024
Potatoes	112	136	135	137
Meat ²	52	54	55	56
Vegetables (including melons)	193	186	188	188
Tomatoes	44	47	48	48
Fruit (excluding melons)	156	193	210	216
Sugar beets	298	320	360	360
Milk	326	342	346	347
Eggs	10	13.2	13.2	14

¹ Annual averages.

² Beef, mutton, and pork.

Source: Based on information from Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Profile: Bulgaria, Albania, 1990-91*, London, 1990, 40.

*Table 8. Structure of Industry,
Selected Years, 1950-88
(in percentages)*

Product	1950	1960	1970	1980	1985	1988
Food	64.1	43.5	30.4	25.6	25.3	24.7
Oil	18.8	15.5	14.9	9.2	5.7	5.2
Light industry	7.8	21.6	19.9	15.5	16.3	16.2
Wood and paper	6.7	11.2	8.0	5.8	5.8	5.1
Building materials	3.3	4.7	5.6	7.9	6.3	5.8
Engineering	3.1	2.9	7.6	12.5	14.7	14.5
Copper	2.2	0.8	5.2	6.4	7.6	8.8
Chromite	2.1	2.0	1.3	1.7	1.7	2.0
Printing	1.6	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.7
Coal	1.4	1.6	1.5	1.3	1.7	1.7
Electric power	0.5	1.1	2.0	3.6	2.9	3.1
Chemicals	0.3	0.6	3.3	4.7	5.5	5.9
Glass and ceramics	—	0.2	0.6	0.8	0.8	0.9
Iron and metallurgy	n.a.	1.3	2.2	3.0	3.4	3.8
Other	1.5	0.2	0.3	1.1	1.2	1.5
TOTAL *	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

—means negligible.

n.a.—not available.

* Figures may not add to 100 percent because of rounding or because of unverified information in source.

Source: Based on information from *Vjetari Statistikor i R.P.S. Të Shqipërisë, 1988* (Statistical Yearbook of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania, 1988), Tiranë, 1988, 82.

Table 9. Output of Main Industrial Products,
1980, 1985, and 1988
(in thousands of tons unless otherwise indicated)

Product	1980	1985	1988
Electric power (in millions of kilowatt-hours)	3,717	3,147	3,984
Blister copper	9.8	11	15
Copper wire and cable	5.7	9.4	116
Carbonic ferrochrome	12.2	11.9	38.7
Metallurgical coke	173	250	291
Rolled wrought steel	96	107	96
Phosphate fertilizer	150	157	165
Ammonium nitrate	109	95	96
Urea	88	78	77
Sulfuric acid	72	73	81
Caustic soda	25	29	31
Soda ash	23	22	22
Machinery and equipment (in millions of leks) *	350	465	496
Spare parts (in millions of leks) *	327	407	493
Cement	826	642	746
Bricks and tiles (in millions of pieces)	294	295	319
Refractory bricks (in millions of pieces)	4.8	28	30
Heavy cloth (in millions of meters)	12.5	12.3	11.3
Knitwear (in millions of pieces)	9.8	11	12.1
Footwear (in thousands of pairs)	4,735	4,800	5,396
Television receivers (in thousands)	21	21.3	16.5
Radio receivers (in thousands)	8	16	25
Cigarettes (in millions of pieces)	4,950	5,348	5,310
Soap and detergent	14.7	18.2	21.5

* For value of the lek—see Glossary.

Source: Based on information from *The Europa World Year Book, 1991*, 1, London, 1991, 301.

Albania: A Country Study

*Table 10. Production of Energy and Mineral Ores,
Selected Years, 1980-88*
(in thousands of tons unless otherwise indicated)

Product	1980	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Energy						
Coal	1,418	2,010	2,100	2,230	2,130	2,184
Crude oil	1,900 *	1,300 *	1,200 *	1,400 *	1,200	1,200 *
Electricity (in giga- watt-hours) . . .	3,717	3,800	3,147	5,070	4,200 *	3,984
Ores						
Chromite	1,004	960	1,111	1,207	1,080	1,109
Copper	769	1,007	989	1,024	1,160	1,087
Ferronickel	597	1,080	905	n.a.	970	1,067

n.a.—not available.

* Estimated.

Sources: Based on information from Per Sandstrom and Örjan Sjöberg, "Albanian Economic Performance: Stagnation in the 1980s," *Soviet Studies* [Glasgow], 43, No. 5, 1991, 941.

Table 11. Major Trading Partners, 1982-87
(in millions of United States dollars)

Country	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
Imports						
Yugoslavia	74	50	43	42	46	37 *
Italy	42	28	27	15	9	26
Bulgaria	23	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Romania	19	27	20	22	23 *	25 *
West Germany	17	17	15	13	21	16
France	16	8	12	15	7	6
Poland	15	15	11	12 *	12 *	13 *
Greece	13	18	10	3	56	14 *
Hungary	12	9	8	10	11	13 *
China	4	7	2	6	13	19 *
United States	3	4	3	4	4	2
Britain	n.a.	n.a.	2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Exports						
Yugoslavia	74	38	46	41	47	49
West Germany	36	22	14	16	18	16
Italy	32	27	22	20	21	34
Romania	27	30	25	27	28 *	31 *
Bulgaria	23	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Poland	18	18	12	13 *	14 *	15 *
United States	17	4	9	12	5	3
Greece	12	8	7	9	6	4 *
Hungary	11	10	8	10	14	13

Table 11.—Continued

Country	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
Exports (continued)						
France	9	15	28	17	6	8
Britain	8	5	6	7	4	4
China	n.a.	4	3	10	9	15

n.a.—not available.

* Estimated.

Source: Based on information from Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Profile: Bulgaria, Albania, 1990-91*, London, 1990, 47; and International Monetary Fund, *Direction of Trade Statistics*, Washington, n.d.

Table 12. Major Imports, Selected Years, 1970-88
(in percentages)

Product	1970	1975	1980	1985	1988
Capital goods	32.8	45.2	21.7	25.1	31.5
Spare parts	7.2	3.8	2.5	5.3	4.8
Fuels and minerals	21.6	21.4	35.8	27.0	23.1
Chemicals	9.4	8.3	14.9	14.1	12.7
Building materials	1.8	0.9	2.6	1.4	0.1
Nonedible agricultural products	14.7	11.3	13.5	12.8	13.5
Foodstuffs	3.4	5.0	4.0	8.3	8.1
Consumer goods	7.7	4.1	5.0	6.0	6.2
TOTAL *	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

* Figures may not add to total because of rounding.

Source: Based on information from Gramoz Pashko, "The Albanian Economy at the Beginning of the 1990s," in Örjan Sjöberg and Michael L. Wyzan (eds.), *Economic Change in the Balkan States: Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, and Yugoslavia*, London, 1991, 137.

*Table 13. Major Exports, Selected Years, 1970-88
(in percentages)*

Product	1970	1975	1980	1985	1988
Fuels	27.4	25.7	29.0	15.1	7.9
Electric power	n.a.	2.9	9.1	7.8	7.3
Minerals and metals	31.1	26.9	24.5	31.5	39.8
Chemicals	1.2	0.3	1.2	0.7	0.8
Building materials	0.1	0.7	1.5	1.0	1.5
Nonedible agricultural products	13.1	9.4	10.4	14.6	16.1
Processed foods	15.1	15.5	8.4	10.8	8.7
Unprocessed foods	4.4	6.3	5.4	8.1	8.2
Consumer goods	7.6	12.3	10.5	10.7	9.7
TOTAL *	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

n.a.—not available.

* Figures may not add to total because of rounding.

Source: Based on information from Gramoz Pashko, "The Albanian Economy at the Beginning of the 1990s," in Örjan Sjöberg and Michael L. Wyzan (eds.), *Economic Change in the Balkan States: Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, and Yugoslavia*, London, 1991, 137.

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Glossary

bajrak—A political union of Geg clans under a single head, the *bajraktar* (*q.v.*). Term literally means “standard” or “banner.”

bajraktar—The hereditary leader of a *bajrak* (*q.v.*). Term literally means “standard bearer.”

Bektashi—An order of dervishes of the Shia branch of the Muslim faith founded, according to tradition, by Hajji Bektash Wali of Khorasan, in present-day Iran, in the thirteenth century and given definitive form by Balim, a sultan of the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century. Bektashis continue to exist in the Balkans, primarily in Albania, where their chief monastery is at Tiranë.

bey—Ruler of a province under the Ottoman Empire.

caliph—Title of honor adopted by the Ottoman sultans in the sixteenth century, after Sultan Selim I conquered Syria and Palestine, made Egypt a satellite of the Ottoman Empire, and was recognized as guardian of the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. Term literally means “successor”; in this context, the successor of the Prophet Muhammad.

Comecon (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance)—A multilateral economic alliance headquartered in Moscow. Albania was effectively expelled from Comecon in 1962 after the rift in relations between Moscow and Tiranë. Members in 1989 were Bulgaria, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, the Soviet Union, and Vietnam. Comecon was created in 1949, ostensibly to promote economic development of member states through cooperation and specialization, but actually to enforce Soviet economic domination of Eastern Europe and to provide a counterweight to the Marshall Plan. Also referred to as CEMA or CMEA.

Cominform (Communist Information Bureau)—An international organization of communist parties, founded and controlled by the Soviet Union in 1947 and dissolved in 1956. The Cominform published propaganda touting international communist solidarity but was primarily a tool of Soviet foreign policy. The Communist Party of Yugoslavia was expelled in June 1948.

Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE)—Further European security through diplomacy, based on respect for human rights, and a wide variety of policies and commitments of its more than fifty Atlantic, European, and

Asian member countries. Founded in August 1975, in Helsinki, when thirty-five nations signed the Final Act, a politically binding declaratory understanding of the democratic principles governing relations among nations, which is better known as the Helsinki Accords (*q.v.*).

Constantinople—Originally a Greek city, Byzantium, it was made the capital of the Byzantine Empire by Constantine the Great and was soon renamed Constantinople in his honor. The city was captured by the Turks in 1453 and became the capital of the Ottoman Empire. The Turks called the city Istanbul, but most of the non-Muslim world knew it as Constantinople until about 1930.

cult of personality—A term coined by Nikita S. Khrushchev at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1956 to describe the rule of Joseph V. Stalin, during which the Soviet people were compelled to deify the dictator. Other communist leaders, particularly Albania's Enver Hoxha, followed Stalin's example and established a cult of personality around themselves.

democratic centralism—A Leninist doctrine requiring discussion of issues until a decision is reached by the party. After a decision is made, discussion concerns only planning and execution. This method of decision making directed lower bodies unconditionally to implement the decisions of higher bodies.

European Community (EC)—The EC comprises three communities: the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the European Economic Community (EEC, also known as the Common Market), and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom). Each community is a legally distinct body, but since 1967 they have shared common governing institutions. The EC forms more than a framework for free trade and economic cooperation: the signatories to the treaties governing the communities have agreed in principle to integrate their economies and ultimately to form a political union. Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and the Federal Republic of Germany (then West Germany) are charter members of the EC. Britain, Denmark, and Ireland joined on January 1, 1973; Greece became a member on January 1, 1981; and Portugal and Spain entered on January 1, 1986. In late 1991, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland applied for membership.

European Currency Unit (ECU)—Instituted in 1979, the ECU is the unit of account of the EC (*q.v.*). The value of the ECU is determined by the value of a basket that includes the currencies of

- all EC member states. In establishing the value of the basket, each member's currency receives a share that reflects the relative strength and importance of the member's economy. In 1987 one ECU was equivalent to about one United States dollar.
- European Economic Community (EEC)—See European Community.
- GDP (gross domestic product)—A measure of the total value of goods and services produced by the domestic economy during a given period, usually one year. Obtained by adding the value contributed by each sector of the economy in the form of profits, compensation to employees, and depreciation (consumption of capital). Only domestic production is included, not income arising from investments and possessions owned abroad, hence the use of the word *domestic* to distinguish GDP from gross national product (GNP—*q. v.*). Real GDP is the value of GDP when inflation has been taken into account.
- glasnost*'—Public discussion of issues; accessibility of information so that the public can become familiar with it and discuss it. The policy in the Soviet Union in the mid- to late 1980's of using the media to make information available on some controversial issues, in order to provoke public discussion, challenge government and party bureaucrats, and mobilize greater support for the policy of *perestroika* (*q. v.*).
- GNP—(gross national product)—GDP (*q. v.*) plus the net income or loss stemming from transactions with foreign countries. GNP is the broadest measurement of the output of goods and services by an economy. It can be calculated at market prices, which include indirect taxes and subsidies. Because indirect taxes and subsidies are only transfer payments, GNP is often calculated at a factor cost, removing indirect taxes and subsidies.
- Helsinki Accords—Signed in August by all the countries of Europe (except Albania) plus Canada and the United States at the conclusion of the first meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Helsinki Accords endorsed general principles of international behavior and measures to enhance security and addressed selected economic, environmental, and humanitarian issues. In essence, the Helsinki Accords confirmed existing, post-World War II national boundaries and obligated signatories to respect basic principles of human rights. Helsinki Watch groups were formed in 1976 to monitor compliance. The term Helsinki Accords is the short form for the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and is also known as the Final Act.
- International Monetary Fund (IMF)—Established along with the

World Bank (*q.v.*) in 1945, the IMF has regulatory surveillance, and financial functions that apply to its more than 150 member countries and is responsible for stabilizing international exchange rates and payments. Its main function is to provide loans to its members (including industrialized and developing countries) when they experience balance of payments difficulties. These loans frequently have conditions that require substantial internal economic adjustments by recipients, most of which are developing countries. Albania joined the IMF in October 1991.

janissaries—Soldiers, usually of non-Turkish origin, who belonged to an elite infantry corps of the Ottoman army. Formed a self-regulating guild, administered by a council of elected unit commanders. From the Turkish *yeniçeri*; literally, new troops.

Kosovo—A province of the Serbian Republic of Yugoslavia that shares a border with Albania and has a population that is about 90 percent Albanian. Serbian nationalists fiercely resist Albanian control of Kosovo, citing Kosovo's history as the center of a medieval Serbian Kingdom that ended in a defeat by the Ottoman Turks at the Battle of Kosovo Polje in 1389. Residents of Kosovo are known as Kosovars.

lek (L)—Albanian national currency unit consisting of 100 qintars. In early 1991, the official exchange rate was L6.75 to US\$1; in September 1991, it was L25 = US\$1; and in March 1993, the exchange rate was L109.62 = US\$1.

machine tractor stations—State organizations that owned the major equipment needed by farmers and obtained the agricultural products from collectivized farms. First developed in the Soviet Union and adopted by Albania during the regime of Enver Hoxha.

Marxism-Leninism/Marxist-Leninist—The ideology of communism, developed by Karl Marx and refined and adapted to social and economic conditions in Russia by Lenin, which guided the communist parties of many countries including Albania and the Soviet Union. Marx talked of the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie as a transitional socialist phase before the achievement of communism. Lenin added the idea of a communist party as the vanguard or leading force in promoting the proletarian revolution and building communism. Stalin and subsequent East European leaders, including Enver Hoxha, contributed their own interpretations of the ideology.

most-favored-nation status—Under the provisions of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), when one country

- accords another most-favored-nation status it agrees to extend to that country the same trade concessions, e.g., lower tariffs or reduced nontariff barriers, which it grants to any other recipients having most-favored-nation status. In June 1992, Albania received most-favored-nation status from the United States.
- net material product—The official measure of the value of goods and services produced in Albania, and in other countries having a planned economy, during a given period, usually a year. It approximates the term gross national product (GNP—*q.v.*) used by economists in the United States and in other countries having a market economy. The measure, developed in the Soviet Union, was based on constant prices, which do not fully account for inflation, and excluded depreciation.
- Ottoman Empire—Formed in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries when Osman I, a Muslim prince, and his successors, known in the West as Ottomans, took over the Byzantine territories of western Anatolia and southeastern Europe and conquered the eastern Anatolian Turkmen principalities. The Ottoman Empire disintegrated at the end of World War I; the center was reorganized as the Republic of Turkey, and the outlying provinces became separate states.
- pasha—Title of honor held by members of the Muslim ruling class in the Ottoman Empire.
- perestroika*—Literally, restructuring. Mikhail S. Gorbachev's campaign in the Soviet Union in the mid- to late 1980s to revitalize the economy, party, and society by adjusting economic, political, and social mechanisms. Announced at the Twenty-Seventh Party Congress in August 1986.
- Shia (from Shiat Ali, the Party of Ali)—A member of the smaller of the two great divisions of Islam. The Shia supported the claims of Ali and his line to presumptive right to the caliphate and leadership of the Muslim community, and on this issue they divided from the Sunni (*q.v.*) in the first great schism within Islam. In 1944, when the communists assumed power in Albania, about 25 percent of the country's Muslims belonged to an offshoot of the Shia branch known as Bektashi (*q.v.*).
- Stalinism/Stalinist—The authoritarian practices, including mass terror, and bureaucratic applications of the principles of Marxism-Leninism (*q.v.*) in the Soviet Union under Joseph V. Stalin and in East European communist countries.
- Sublime Porte (or Porte)—The palace entrance that provided access to the chief minister of the Ottoman Empire, who represented the government and the sultan (*q.v.*). Term came to mean the Ottoman government.

sultan—The supreme ruler of the Ottoman Empire. Officially called the *padishah* (Persian for high king or emperor), the sultan was at the apex of the empire's political, military, judicial, social, and religious hierarchy.

Sunni (from Sunna, meaning "custom," having connotations of orthodoxy in theory and practice)—A member of the larger of the two great divisions within Islam. The Sunnis supported the traditional (consensual) method of election to the caliphate and accepted the Umayyad line. On this issue, they divided from the Shia (*q.v.*) in the first great schism within Islam. In 1944, when the communists assumed power in Albania, about 75 percent of the country's Muslims were Sunnis.

Titoist—A follower of the political, economic, and social policies associated with Josip Broz Tito, Yugoslav prime minister from 1943 and later president until his death in 1980, whose nationalistic policies and practices were independent of and often in opposition to those of the Soviet Union.

Treaty of San Stefano—A treaty signed by Russia and the Ottoman Empire on March 3, 1878, concluding the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78. If implemented, would have greatly reduced Ottoman holdings in Europe and created a large, independent Bulgarian state under Russian protection. Assigned Albanian-populated lands to Serbia, Montenegro, and Bulgaria. Substantially revised at Congress of Berlin, after strong opposition from Great Britain and Austria-Hungary.

Uniate Church—Any Eastern Christian church that recognizes the supremacy of the pope but preserves the Eastern Rite. Members of the Albanian Uniate Church are concentrated in Sicily and southern Italy, and are descendants of Orthodox Albanians who fled the Ottoman invasions, particularly after the death of Skanderbeg in 1468.

Warsaw Treaty Organization—Formal name for Warsaw Pact. Political-military alliance founded by the Soviet Union in 1955 as a counterweight to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Albania, an original member, stopped participating in Warsaw Pact activities in 1962 and withdrew in 1968. Members in 1991 included Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Soviet Union. Before it was formally dissolved in April 1991, the Warsaw Pact served as the Soviet Union's primary mechanism for keeping political and military control over Eastern Europe.

World Bank—Name used to designate a group of four affiliated international institutions that provide advice on long-term finance and policy issues to developing countries: the International

Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Development Association (IDA), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA). The IBRD, established in 1945, has the primary purpose of providing loans to developing countries for productive projects. The IDA, a legally separate loan fund administered by the staff of the IBRD, was set up in 1960 to furnish credits to the poorest developing countries on much easier terms than those of conventional IBRD loans. The IFC, founded in 1956, supplements the activities of the IBRD through loans and assistance designed specifically to encourage the growth of productive private enterprises in less developed countries. The president and certain senior officers of the IBRD hold the same positions in the IFC. The MIGA, which began operating in June 1988, insures private foreign investment in developing countries against such non-commercial risks as expropriation, civil strife, and inconvertibility. The four institutions are owned by the governments of the countries that subscribe their capital. To participate in the World Bank group, member states must first belong to the IMF (*q.v.*).

Young Turks—A Turkish revolutionary nationalist reform party, officially known as the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), whose leaders led a rebellion against the Ottoman sultan and effectively ruled the Ottoman Empire from 1908 until shortly before World War I.

Yugoslavia—Established in 1918 as the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. The kingdom included the territory of present-day Bosnia and Hercegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia. Between 1929 and 1945, the country was called the kingdom of Yugoslavia (land of the South Slavs). In 1945 Yugoslavia became a federation of six republics under the leadership of Josip Broz Tito. In 1991 Yugoslavia broke apart because of long-standing internal disputes among its republics and weak central government. The secession of Croatia and Slovenia in mid-1991 led to a bloody war between Serbia and Croatia. In the fall of 1991, Bosnia and Hercegovina and Macedonia also seceded from the federation, leaving Serbia (with its provinces, Kosovo and Vojvodina) and Montenegro as the constituent parts of the federation. Under the leadership of President Slobodan Milošević, however, Serbia retained substantial territorial claims in Bosnia and Hercegovina and Croatia at the beginning of 1992.

- Abdül Hamid II (sultan), 19, 20
- abortion, 82, 96
- Ada Air, 152
- ADP. *See* Albanian Democratic Party
- Agip, 143
- Agrarian Party, 188; in coalition government, 190
- Agrarian Reform Law (1945), 40, 85, 107, 173
- agricultural: cooperatives, 117; development, 30; organization, 134–36; reform, 40, 107–8, 134
- agricultural production, 112; under five-year plans, 109, 110, 115; impact of drought on, 115; under privatization, 136; shortfalls, 137
- agricultural products (*see also under individual crops*): fruit, 103; marketing structure for, 136–37; tree crops, 133; vegetables, 103
- agriculture (*see also under farms*), 133–40; collectivization in, 44, 49, 78, 80, 108, 112, 113, 115, 133; control of, 110; decentralized, 116; fertilizers for, 138; feudal, 106; importance of, 103; mechanization of, 138; neglect of, 107; as percentage of net material product, 103; pesticides for, 139; privatization in, xxxvi, 118, 136; seeds for, 139; subsistence, 26, 106; women in, 82, 132; work force in, 103, 130
- Ahmeti, Vilson, xxxvi
- air force, 221–22; aircraft of, 221–22; bases, 221; creation of, 221; matériel, 222; missions of, 221; personnel strength of, 221
- airports, 152; privatization of, 120
- air transportation, 152
- Albania, People's Socialist Republic of, 174
- Academy of Sciences, 45
- Albanian Commercial Bank, 123
- Albanian Communist Party (*see also* Albanian Party of Labor; Socialist Party of Albania), 172, 175, 203; established, 35; pro-Yugoslav faction in, 210; resistance by, to Italian occupation, 208–9; women in, 80
- Albanian Communist Party Secretariat, 176
- Albanian Democratic Party (ADP), xxxv; activities of, 187; call for reforms, 218, 226; in coalition government, 190; in elections of 1991, 188; formed, 186, 187; membership of, 187
- Albanian Democratic Party government, xxxvi, xxxvii, 118
- Albanian language, 70; alphabet for, 19, 20, 71, 88; derivation of, 71; dialects of, 71; influences on, 71; as language of education, 19; legalized, 20; proscribed, 19, 71, 87–88
- Albanian National Bank: founded, 30
- Albanian Orthodox Church, 27, 75; clergy of, purged, 85; number members of, 82
- Albanian Party of Labor (APL) (*see also* Albanian Communist Party; Socialist Party of Albania), xxxv, 174, 175; in armed forces, 217; economic policies of, 104; membership in, 217
- Albanians, ethnic, 214–15; arrival of, in Balkans, 8; deported from Greece, xxxviii; emigration by, xxxv, 12; in Kosovo, 22, 58, 69–70, 194, 206, 214–15; in Macedonia, xxxvii, 22, 69, 206; in Montenegro, 69, 206; percentage of, in population, 66; resistance by, to Ottoman rule, 10, 20
- Alfonso I (king), 12
- Algeria: trade with, 164
- Alia, Ramiz, xxxv, 47; attempts to discredit, 190; background, 209; economy under, 115; meeting of, with students, 185; military career of, 216; opposition of Sigurimi to, 228; as president, 188; resignation of, 191; as successor to Hoxha, 52, 174; visit of, to United Nations, 199–200
- Alia government, 174–75; armed forces under, 204; reforms under, 171, 190, 192, 204, 213, 228–29; repression under, 228–29
- Ali Pasha of Tepelenë, 15; assassinated, 15
- All-Union Lenin Communist Youth League (Komsomol), 180
- American Agricultural School, 90

Albania: A Country Study

- American Junior Red Cross: schools run by, 90
- American Red Cross: hospitals and schools run by, 27
- American Vocational School, 90
- Amnesty International, 184, 228
- Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation, 36
- APL. *See* Albanian Party of Labor
- armed forces, 219–23, 230; administrative divisions of, 216; Chinese influence on, 220; command structure of, 216; conscription in, 207, 219; under constitution of 1976, 216; development of, 204–6; in Greek civil war, 209–10; matériel of, 209; medical service of, 217; missions of, 219; organization of, 219; origins of, 203; personnel strength of, 207, 219; political control in, 217–19; political indoctrination, 212, 217; political officers in, 217; problems in, 214; purges of, 218; ranks of, 218; ranks of, abolished, 49, 217–18; reforms of, 49, 189, 204, 218; Soviet influence on, 220; training, 209; uniforms of, 218; uniforms, abolished, 217–18; Yugoslavia's influence over, 209; under Zogu, 207
- army (People's Army), 220–21; assistance for, 203; commander in chief, 215–16; foreign influences in, 31; matériel, 220–21; number of troops in, 203, 220; organization of, 220; pressure from, for reform, 182; problems in, 220–21; Sigurimi in, 234
- Association of Former Political Prisoners, 231
- austerity program, 49
- Austria-Hungary: occupation by, 23
- autarky, 52, 114–18; implemented, 114
- Auxiliary Police, 237–38; mission of, 238; service in, 237
- Avars: arrival of, in Balkans, 8
- balance of payments, 160, 162
- balance of trade, 162
- Balkan Confederation of Communist Parties, 34
- Balkan Foreign Ministers Conference, 195, 196, 213
- Balkan War, First (1912–13), 4, 16, 21, 206
- Balkan War, Second (1913), 4, 206
- Balli Kombetar (National Union), 35
- Balluku, Beqir, 218
- Balsha family, 10
- Bank for Agricultural Development, 123–24
- banking system, 122–24; nationalization of, 78; reform of, 123; two-tiered, 123
- barbarians, 3; invasions by, 7–8
- Bashkimi*, 186
- Beqeja, Hamit, 183
- Berisha, Sali, 187; as president, xxxvi–xxxvii, 191
- beys, 76, 84; power of, 14–15; revolts by, 9
- birth control, 96
- Bismarck, Otto von, 18
- Bitola: under Ottoman rule, 16
- Bjeshkët e Namuna. *See* North Albanian Alps
- black market, 120, 123, 158, 160
- border problems: with Greece, 18; with Yugoslavia, 215
- borders, 57–59; established, 58–59
- Bosnia and Hercegovina, xxxvii
- Britain: matériel from, 33; military training provided by, 207; plans of, to overthrow communists, 43–44; relations with, 43–44, 192
- budget deficit, 122, 124; as percentage of gross domestic product, 122; reduced, xxxvi
- Bufi, Ylli, 190
- Bufi government, 190; collapse of, xxxv
- Bulatovic, Momir, xxviii
- Bulgaria, 214; emigration to, 16; lands ceded to, 17; occupation by, 23; relations with, xxxviii, 198; trade with, 162, 163
- Bulgarians: geographic distribution of, 69
- Bulgars, 205; arrival of, in Balkans, 8
- Bunë River, 59, 63
- bunkers, 115
- bureaucracy: reform of, 49
- Bushati, Ibrahim, 15
- Bushati, Kara Mahmud, 15
- Bushati, Mustafa Pasha, 15, 16
- Bushati family, 15
- Byzantine Empire, 205
- Byzantines, 8
- Cami, Foto, 186

- Çarçani, Adil, 174, 179, 196
- Catholic Church, Roman: clergy purged, 86; as mediator, 26
- Catholics, Roman: ethnic distribution of, 75; number of, 82
- Ceaușescu, Nicolae, 198
- censorship, 182
- Central Committee, 176; plenums of, 116, 117, 177, 183, 185, 186; privileges of, 79; reforms by, 116-17
- Çermenikë, 60
- Charles I of Anjou, 9
- chemical industry, 146-47; production, 147
- Chevron, 143
- children: custody of, 80
- China, People's Republic of: dependence on, 111-14, 203, 210, 211; economic assistance from, xxxv, 4, 47, 48, 104, 111, 193; military assistance from, 203-4, 211, 212, 220; reduction of aid from, 114, 156, 193-94, 213; relations of, with Soviet Union, 47; relations with, 46-49, 50, 105, 193, 199; technical assistance from, 48; trade with, 114
- Christianity (*see also under individual denominations*), 82-84; arrival of, 7; introduction of, 82; schism in, 82; secret practice of, 13, 84-85, 86-87
- chromite, 31, 103, 140, 144-46; export of, 144-46, 164; income from, 114, 115; problems with, 144; production, 144
- civil war, 33, 36
- clans, 14, 57, 75; blood feuds of, 31, 68, 75, 76; under communists, 67; repression of, 50
- clergy: under communist rule, 78; living conditions of, 77; purged, 85-86
- climate, 64-65, 103; precipitation, 65; regions, 65; temperature, 65; weather patterns, 64-65
- Clitus, 5
- clothing: prices of, 129; subsidies for, 129
- coal, 140; deposits, 142; mines, 143
- Code of Lek, 14, 76
- Cold War, 209
- Comecon. *See* Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
- Cominform. *See* Communist Information Bureau
- Comintern. *See* Communist International
- Committee for the Salvation of Albania: formed, 35
- Committee of Union and Progress. *See* Young Turks
- communications, 150, 151, 155; privatization in, 120; work force in, 130
- Communist Information Bureau (Cominform): Albania excluded from, 42; Yugoslavia expelled from, 40, 109, 192, 210
- Communist International (Comintern), 34
- communist party. *See* Albanian Communist Party; Albanian Party of Labor; Socialist Party of Albania
- communist party congresses, 42, 44, 48, 52, 176, 190, 193; average age in, 176; women in, 176
- Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU): party congresses of, 48
- Communist Party of Yugoslavia, 34
- communists, 34-36; acquisition of power by, 4; clans under, 67; in coalition government, 190; consolidation of power by, 38-40, 209; democratic centralism under, 176; economy under, 39, 122; education under, 91-94; organization of, 175-76; plans to overthrow, 43-44; power shift under, 39; purges by, 38; reforms by, 38-40; reforms of, 176-77; social structure under, 77-82; takeover of government by, 36-38
- Comnenus, Alexius I, 8
- Comnenus, Michael, 9
- Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, 51; desire to join, 184, 229; membership in, 214
- Congress of Berlin: Prizren League memorandum to, 18
- Constantine the Great, 7
- constitution of 1946: adopted, 39; divorce under, 80; marriage under, 80
- constitution of 1976, 173; adopted, 52; armed forces under, 216; communist party under, 176; human rights under, 228
- constitution, draft interim, 186-87
- construction, 149-50; housing, 96, 149, 150; work force in, 130
- consumer cooperatives, 107
- consumer goods: durable, 129; imports of, 165; lack of, 127-28, 156; prices of, 129

Albania: A Country Study

- consumption, 128
Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty (1990), 214
copper, 32, 140, 146; export of, 164; income from, 114
corruption: in customs, 160; in secret police, 229
Costa Rica: trade with, 164
Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon): boycott of, 194; division of labor of, 110; membership in, 44, 192, 197
Council of Ministers, 178-79; economic decision makers in, 118-20; head of, 179; members of, 178; mission of, 178-79, 189
courts, 179; military, 217
CPSU. *See* Communist Party of the Soviet Union
Craxi, Bettino, 196
crime, 232-33
Croatia: relations with, xxxviii
Croats: arrival of, in Balkans, 8
Cuba: trade with, 163
Cultural and Ideological Revolution, 49-50, 112, 173; inefficiency of, 113; religion under, 86; resistance to, 113; women under, 132
currency, xxxvi, 124; devaluation of, 124; exchange, 124; exchange rate, 124; problems with, 104; reform, 108, 118; shortage of foreign, 197; speculation in, 122-23; unbacked, 124
current accounts: deficit, 162; as percentage of gross domestic product, 162
Czechoslovakia: relations with, 198; Soviet invasion of, 193, 212, 224; trade agreement with, 44; trade with, 162, 163

debt: external, 160
Decree on Religious Communities (1949), 85
Defense Council, 216
defense organization, 215-27
defense spending: reductions in, 227
Democratic Front, 39, 180
Denimex, 142
de-Stalinization: opposition to, 46, 193, 210
developing countries: trade with, 164

devshirme, 12
diet, 96, 129
Dimitrov, Georgi, 41
Diocletian, 7
Directorate of Criminal Police, 234
Directorate of Forces for the Restoration of Order, 234
Directorate of Law and Order, 234
Directorate of Prison Administration, 233, 234
Directorate of State Security (Drejtorija e Sigurimit te Shtetit—Sigurimi), 184, 227, 232, 234-36; activities of, 235; bribes demanded by, 229; dissolved, 190, 204, 232, 234; mission of, 232, 235; personnel in, 234, 235; opposition of, to Alia, 228; organization of, 232, 235; People's Defense Division, 234; pressure from, for reform, 182
divorce, 76; laws regulating, 80; rate, 80
Djilas, Milovan, 42
drainage, 63-64; projects, 103
Drejtorija e Sigurimit te Shtetit. *See* Directorate of State Security
Drini Engineering Works, 147
Drini i Bardhë River, 63
Drini i Zi, 63
Drin River, 64
drought, 115, 117, 143, 183
drug trafficking, 233
Durrës: naval base, 222; port of, 152, 230; shipyards, 147; urban dwellers in, 74
Dušan, Stefan, 9

East Germany. *See* German Democratic Republic
East-West Seminar on Military Doctrines, 219
Ecology Party, 188
economic: activity, 116; development, 111; performance, 105-18; planning (*see also under individual five-year plans*), 108; policy, 105-18; statistics, 105
economic austerity program, 111
economic enterprises, 121-22; under communists, 121; management of, 121; privatization of, 118; under recovery program, 122; steering councils for, 121-22
Economic Planning Commission, 39, 108

- economic reform, xxxv, 112, 116; under coalition government, 118; program for, 122; prospects for, 166-67; resistance to, 117; "shock therapy" program for, xxxvi
- economic system, 118-26; changes in, 175
- economic system, Stalinist, xxxv, 103, 107-8; adjustments to, 112; collapse of, 104, 105, 115, 118; decentralized, 112; implemented, 44, 109; reforms of, 116
- economy: centralized, xxxv, 173; under communists, 39; control over, by Italy, 105; control over, by Yugoslavia, 41-42; decentralized, 117, 175; impact of China on, 114; impact of Soviet Union on, 49; planned, 39; reform of, 49, 104, 171; under Zog, 32
- education (*see also* schools), 87-94; adult, 93; under communists, 45, 91-94; elementary, 92; languages for, 19, 87-88; literacy, 92; objectives of, 91-92; postsecondary, 90-91; program of, 92-93; rates of, 27; reform of, 49; restrictions on, 173; secondary, 92, 93; subsidies for, 129; women working in, 132; work force in, 130
- Education Reform Law (1946), 92
- education system: development of, 90; elementary, 88; Italian control of, 91; reorganization of, 90, 93
- Egypt: emigration to, 12, 16; trade with, 164
- Elbasan, 74
- Elbasan Steel Combine, 146, 150
- elections: of 1991, xxxv, 177, 186, 188; of 1992, xxxvi
- electoral system, 178; reform of, 185
- electric power: blackouts, 144; capacity, 143; development of, 103, 116; export of, 164; under five-year plans, 109, 116; generation, 103, 115, 142, 143; income from, 114; privatization of, 120; in rural areas, 144; shortages of, 117; stations, 113; transmission, 143
- elite class: living conditions of, 77
- emigration: destinations for, xxxv, 12, 16, 117, 187, 190-91; to escape Ottoman empire, 16; to escape revolution of 1991, 103, 117, 187, 190-91, 229, 233
- employment reform, 112
- energy resources, 140-46
- engineering, 147
- Enver Hoxha Auto and Tractor Plant, 147
- Enver Hoxha University, 45; founded, 92
- environmental problems, 150
- Epirus, Despotate of, 9
- Epirus, Northern, 213; dispute over, xxxviii
- ethnic groups (*see also* under *individual groups*), 66-68
- Europe: integration with, xxxvii; relations with, 43-44; trade with, 114
- Europe, Eastern: assistance from, 111; exports to, 144; revolutions of 1989 in, 185, 229
- European Community (EC), 121, 140, 167; assistance from, 166
- European Currency Unit, 124
- Eximbank. *See* Export-Import Bank of the United States
- Export-Import Bank of the United States (Eximbank), 164
- exports (*see also* under *individual products*): of agricultural products, 133; decline in, 162; of electric power, 143; increase in, xxxvi, 114; to West, 114
- families: authority in, 76; importance of, 76; size of, 75
- farms, collective, 108, 113, 134
- farms, private: average size of, 135
- farms, state, 134; food processing under, 149; organization of, 135-36; work force on, 135-36
- Federal Republic of Germany. *See* Germany, Federal Republic of
- Finland: assistance from, 234
- Fischer, Oskar, 198
- fishing, 139-40
- Fishta, Gjergj, 27
- five-year plans: First (1951-55), 44, 109-10; Second (1956-60), 110; Third (1961-64), 48, 74, 111; Fourth (1966-70), 113; Fifth (1971-75), 114; Seventh (1981-85), 115; Eighth (1986-90), 116, 137
- flag, 9
- food: aid, 167; distribution system, 158; household spending on, 133; as percentage of trade, 158; production, 115; shortages, 156, 158, 167, 175
- food processing, 148-49; privatization in,

- xxxvi, 148; production, 148-49; quality of, 148; workers in, 148
- foreign assistance, 166; from China, xxxv, 4, 47, 48, 104, 111, 193, 203-4, 211, 212, 220; European Community, 166; from Finland, 234; from Germany, 96, 197; from Greece, 166; humanitarian, 104; from Italy, 94, 96, 104, 166, 234; problems in pursuing, 197-98; reliance on, 57; from Romania, 234; from the Soviet Union, xxxv, 4, 45, 46, 47, 104, 109, 110, 111, 203, 210, 220, 224; from Switzerland, 96; from Turkey, 166; from the United States, 96, 108, 166; volume of, 166; from Yugoslavia, xxxv, 4, 33, 41, 104, 203, 212
- foreign companies: activities of, 165
- foreign debt: increase in, 104, 117
- foreign investment: in energy, 142; in industry, 104
- foreign policy, 191-200; under Berisha, xxxvii; under Hoxha, 191-92, 194
- foreign relations: with Bosnia and Herzegovina, xxxvii; with Britain, 43-44, 192; with Bulgaria, xxxviii, 198; with China, 46-49, 50, 105, 193, 199; with Croatia, xxxviii; with Czechoslovakia, 198; with East Germany, 198; economic, 159-67; with Greece, xxxviii, 50, 175, 193, 194-95, 196, 213; with Italy, xxxviii, 175, 194-95, 196-97; with Macedonia, xxxvii; with Romania, xxxviii, 198, 212; with Slovenia, xxxviii; with the Soviet Union, 44-46, 198, 199, 211, 214; with Turkey, xxxvii, 175, 194, 196, 213; with the United States, 43-44, 192, 198-99, 214; with the West, 192, 195; with West Germany, 197; with Yugoslavia, 50, 175, 192, 193, 195, 213
- forestry: privatization of, 120
- forests, 139; destruction of, 139; nationalized, 40, 107, 173
- France: occupation by, 58; trade negotiations with, 50; trade with, 162
- Frasheri, Abdul, 17; exiled, 19
- Frasheri, Mehdi, 32
- Frasheri, Midhat, 35
- Frasheri, Naim, 19
- Frasheri, Sami, 19
- Frontier Guards, 204, 232, 233, 236; mission of, 232, 236; organization of, 236
- Garibaldi International Brigade, 34
- gas, natural, 140; production, 143; reserves, 142, 143
- GDP. *See* gross domestic product
- Gegs (highlanders), 9, 14; characteristics of, 68; under Hoxha, 67; marriage traditions of, 76; percentage of, in population, 66; political power of, 39; religion of, 75; tribal society of, 77; women, 68
- Gendarmerie: formed, 207; mission of, 207; organization of, 207
- Genius (king), 6
- Geraldine Apponyi (queen), 33
- German Democratic Republic (East Germany): relations with, 198; trade with, 163
- Germany: investment from, 165; occupation by, 36, 91, 209
- Germany, Federal Republic of (West Germany): diplomatic relations with, 197; economic assistance from, 96, 197; trade with, 144, 162, 163-64, 197
- Gjoni, Xhelil, 190
- glasnost*, 183
- Glaucius (king), 5
- Godó, Sabri, 187
- Gorbachev, Mikhail S., xxxv, 190
- Goths: arrival of, in Balkans, 8
- government: apparatus, 178-79; borrowing, 30; interwar, 28; local, 125; revenues, 124-25; spending, 124-25, 226; trade monopoly, 159
- government, coalition (1991-92), 118, 177, 189-91; military under, 226-27
- Government Party, 28
- Great Powers: partition by, 21, 23, 192, 206-7; as protectors, 21, 23
- Greece, 214; Albanians deported from, xxxviii; assistance from, 166; attempts by, to appropriate land, 16, 37, 47, 207; border with, 58, 211; border problems with, 18; civil war in, 43, 210; economic relations with, 195; emigration to, xxxv, 12, 117, 187, 224, 229; ferry service to, 196; investment from, 165; Italian attempt to invade, 33; occupation by, 23, 58, 192; problems with, 211; relations with, xxxviii, 50, 175, 193, 194-95, 196, 213; support by, for revolts, 23; suppression of Albanian culture by, 19, 20; trade agreement with, 31

- Greek language, 71; as language of education, 88
- Greeks, 68–69; internal exile of, 69; as percentage of population, 68–69; population of, 68–69, 211; schools for, 90
- Grey, Edward, 21
- gross domestic product (GDP), 122, 162; per capita, 103; industry's share of, 140; military appropriations, 226
- Gusinja: armed resistance in, 18
- Gypsies: geographic distribution of, 69
- Hamilton Oil, 143
- health: improvements in, 94
- health care, 94–96; under communists, 45; inoculation programs, 94; subsidies for, 129
- health care professionals: number of, 45, 94; training for, 45; women as, 132
- health facilities, 45; number of, 94; shortages in, 96; sponsored by Red Cross, 27
- Helsinki Accords, 194, 229
- Helsinki Conference, 51
- Higher Agricultural Institute, 92
- Higher Pedagogic Institute, 92
- Higher Polytechnic Institute, 92
- highlanders (*see also* Gegs), 14, 26; culture of, 74–75; as fighters, 205
- housing, 96–98; construction, 96, 149, 150; cost of, 129; crowding in, 96; destroyed, 98; privatization of, xxxvi, 120; in rural areas, 98; in urban areas, 98
- Hoxha, Enver, xxxv, 3; attempted coup against, 193; background of, 34, 67, 90, 208, 209; as commander in chief, 215–16; death of, 52; positions of, 36, 37; reaction of, to Khrushchev, 46; rise to power by, 4, 39; succession to, 51–52, 174
- Hoxha, Nexhmije, 174, 180
- Hoxha government, xxxv, 173–74; brutality of, 3, 171, 227–28; campaign against religion, 50, 85–87; economy under, 107–8; foreign relations under, 192; isolation under, xxxv, 4, 38, 50, 57, 166–67, 171, 213
- human rights, 184–85, 228; abuses, 175, 230; attempts to improve, 184
- Hungary: trade agreement with, 44; trade with, 163
- Huns: arrival of, in Balkans, 8
- identification cards, 237
- Illyrians, 3, 4–7; conquered, 5; emigration of, 8; industry of, 5; intermarriage of, 8; trade by, 5
- Illyrian Wars (229 B.C., 219 B.C.), 6
- IMF. *See* International Monetary Fund
- imports: from China, 114; from the West, 165
- income, hard-currency: sources of, 114
- independence: declared, 16, 172, 203, 204, 205; international support for, 21, 206
- industrial development: under Hoxha, 107
- industrial output: decline in, 117; under five-year plans, 109, 110, 113, 114; per capita, 106; as percentage of national income, 106
- industry, 140–50; foreign investment in, 104; as percentage of gross domestic product, 140; inefficiencies in, 140; investment in, 140; light, 147–48, 164; nationalization of, 39, 78, 173; privatization of, 120; women in, 132; under Zog, 32
- inflation, xxxvi, 117, 124
- infrastructure: development of, 106
- intellectuals, 183
- intelligentsia: pressure from, for reform, 182; privileges of, 78; purges of, 78; resistance by, 175
- internal security, 227–38
- International Control Commission, 22
- International Court of Justice, 43
- International Monetary Fund (IMF), xxxvi; economic counseling by, 121; membership in, 123, 165; standby credit agreement with, 123, 165
- International Permanent Court of Justice, 90
- International Police organization (Interpol), 234
- Interpol. *See* International Police organization
- investment: under communist system, 122–23; in energy sector, 142; foreign, 165
- Ionian Sea, 59
- Iran: trade with, 164
- irrigation, 40, 134; projects, 64
- Islam: conversion to, 3, 9, 12, 13, 82, 84; ethnic distribution of, 75; reform in, 27
- Islam, Bektashi, 9, 13–14; number of

Albania: A Country Study

- adherents to, 82; women in, 14
Islam, Sunni, 9; number of adherents to, 82
isolationism, 4, 38, 50, 57, 191-92, 194, 213; effects of, xxxv, 166-67; end of, 197
Italian language: education in, 91
Italy, 211; annexation of Albania by, 32-33, 208-9; assistance from, 94, 96, 104, 166, 234; attack on Greece by, 33; economic control by, 31, 105, 106, 203; education under, 90-91; emigration to, xxxv, 12, 16, 84, 117, 190-91, 224, 229; improvements initiated by, 30; investment from, 165; matériel from, 30; occupation by, 4, 23, 29-30, 32-33, 58, 90-91, 207, 208-9; as predator, 24, 25, 192, 207; as protector, 4; relations with, 175, 194-95, 196-97; resistance against, 35, 208-9; support by, for revolts, 23; trade negotiations with, 50; trade with, 162, 163; withdrawal, 209
- Janina, 15; armed resistance in, 18; under Ottoman rule, 16
janissaries, 13, 205
Jews: geographic distribution of, 69
Julius Caesar, 6
Justinian, 7
- Kadare, Ismail, 78, 183-84; defection of, 184
Karakaci, Muhamet, 218
Kastrioti, Gjergj (*see also* Skanderbeg), 10, 205
Kastrioti, Gjon, 10
Kastrioti family, 10; flag, 9
Kelmendi, Ali, 34
Khrushchev, Nikita, 210; fall of, from power, 49
Klissura, Ali, 35
Komsomol. *See* All-Union Lenin Communist Youth League
Köprülü family, 13, 204
Korea, Democratic People's Republic of (North Korea): trade with, 163
Kosovo: Albanian control over, 33; Albanian demographics in, 69; Albanian ties to, 22; Albanians in, 22, 69, 206, 214-15; autonomy revoked, 69, 215; black market in, 160; border with, 58; ceded to Yugoslavia, 40; disputes over, 22, 192; independence of, xxxvii; under Ottoman rule, 16; Serb ties to, 22; suppression of, 194, 196
Kosovo Polje, battle of (1389), 22, 205
Kupi, Abaz, 36
kuvend (fealty ceremony), 7
- Lake Ohrid, 60, 63
Lake Prespa, 60; drainage of, 64
Lake Prespa e Vogël, 60
Lake Scutari, 59
land, 133-34; arable, 133; area, 22, 27; distribution of, 134-36; irrigated, 64, 134; ownership, 26, 134-35; privatization of, 133; reclamation, 60, 112, 134; reform, 40, 85, 107-8, 134, 135
language (*see also under individual languages*), 57, 70-71; prohibitions against, 71
Law on Major Constitutional Provisions (1991) (interim constitution), 178, 188-89
lawyers, 230
League of Nations: recognition of Albania by, 25
Legality (resistance group), 36
Leo the Isaurian, 7
Libya: trade with, 164
literacy rate, 26, 45, 87, 93; education to improve, 92; of women, 50
literature, 27
livestock: collectivized, 115, 133, 137; quality of, 137; smuggling of, 138
living standards, 128-29; decline in, 129; in urban areas, 129
looting, 104-5, 117, 128, 158, 166, 167
lowlands: social leadership in, 75-76
- Macedonia, Republic of: Albanian minority in, xxxvii, 22, 206; border with, 58, 211; recognition of, xxxvii; relations with, xxxvii
Macedonians: geographic distribution of, 69
Mahmud II (sultan), 15
Maleshova, Sejfulla, 192
Malile, Reis, 195
Mal Korab range, 60
manufacturing, 146-49; chemical,

- 146-47; construction, 149-50; engineering, 147; food processing, 148-49
- Mao Zedong, 213
- Markagjoni, Gjon, 25
- marriage: laws regulating, 80; rate, 80; traditions, 76
- mass organizations, 179-81; goals of, 179
- matériel: air force, 222; armed forces, 209; army, 220-21; from Britain, 223; from China, 220-22; from Italy, 30; from the Soviet Union, 220-22; from the United States, 33
- media, 181-82; censorship of, 182; nationalization of, 181; openness in, 175, 186; regulation of, 189
- Mehmed II (sultan), 10, 12
- Meksi, Aleksander, xxxvi
- Mexico: trade with, 164
- middle ages, 8-9
- Military Academy, 226
- military: budget, 226-27; economy, 226-27; schools, 225-26; service, 224
- military personnel, 223-26; conscripts, 219, 222, 223, 224-25; desertion by, 224; as laborers, 225; mobilization plans, 223-24; term of service, 223; women as, 223
- military training, 224, 225; of civilians, 225; of conscripts, 224-25
- minerals: deposits of, 103, 144; exploration for, 106
- mining, 144; nationalization of, 78; privatization of, 120; working conditions in, 146
- Ministry of Construction, 150
- Ministry of Defense, 216
- Ministry of Domestic Trade, 156
- Ministry of Education, 156
- Ministry of Finance, 118-20; economic decision makers in, 118; inspectors, 120
- Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations, 160
- Ministry of Foreign Trade, 159
- Ministry of Health, 156
- Ministry of Internal Affairs, 204, 228, 231; abolished, 232; organization of, 231-32
- Ministry of Justice, 233; eliminated, 49; Office of Investigations, 179; reestablished, 179
- Ministry of People's Defense, 233
- Ministry of Public Order, 204, 232, 233, 234
- Ministry of the Communal Economy, 156
- Mirditë Republic, 26
- Moisiu, Spiro, 208
- Montenegrans: geographic distribution of, 69
- Montenegro: Albanians in, 106; attempts by, to appropriate land, 16, 207; border with, 57, 211; lands ceded by, 22; lands ceded to, 17, 18; occupation by, 23; support by, for revolts, 23; relations with, xxxviii
- Mother Teresa, 87
- Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency, 165
- Murad II (sultan), 10, 12
- Murra, Prokop, 218
- Muslim aristocracy, 76-77, 84
- Muslims (*see also* Islam): number of, 82
- Mussolini, Benito, 4, 30, 31, 208, 209
- Mustaqi, Kico, 218
- Myftiu, Manush, 184
- Nano, Fatos, xxxvii, 179, 189
- National Assembly, 24, 25
- National Bank of Albania, 1123
- National Information Service (NIS), 235-36; created, 190, 204, 232; mission of, 232
- nationalism: emergence of, 4, 16, 17-21, 206
- nationalist movement: impediments to, 19
- nationalization: of banks, 78; of forests, 40, 107, 173; of industry, 39, 78, 173; of media, 181; of mining, 78; of public utilities, 107; of trade, 78; of transportation, 39, 78, 107, 173
- National Land Commission, 135
- National Liberation Army (NLA), 35; battles, 209; formed, 208; troop strength, 209
- National Liberation Front (NLF), 36, 172, 180, 203, 208
- National Liberation Movement (NLM), 35, 172, 208
- National Lycée of Korçë, 88
- National Privatization Agency: created, 120
- National Union. *See* Balli Kombetar
- National Unity Party, 188
- NATO. *See* North Atlantic Treaty Organization
- natural resources, 140-46
- navy, 222-23; bases of, 222; conscripts

Albania: A Country Study

- in, 222; mission of, 222; personnel strength of, 222; organization of, 222; origins of, 222; problems in, 222; service in, 224-25; ships, 223
- Near East Foundation, 90
- Nendori*, 86
- net material product: agriculture as percentage of, 103
- NIS. *See* National Information Service
- NLA. *See* National Liberation Army
- NLF. *See* National Liberation Front
- NLM. *See* National Liberation Movement
- Noli, Fan S., 27; resignation of, 28
- Noli government, 28-29, 34; overthrown, 29
- Normans, 8
- north: bey's in, 76; culture in, 74; family in, 75
- North Albanian Alps (Bjeshkët e Namuna), 59
- North Atlantic Cooperation Council: participation in, xxxvii, 214
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), 213; membership in, xxxvii
- North Korea. *See* Korea, People's Democratic Republic of

- Occidental Petroleum, 143
- oil (*see also* petroleum), 31, 103, 115
- OMONIA (Unity), xxxviii
- Opposition Party of Democrats, 28
- Organization of the Islamic Conference: membership in, xxxvii
- Orthodox Church. *See* Albanian Orthodox Church
- Ottoman Empire, 3-4; bondsmen, 12-13; conquest by, 9-12, 205; defeat of, 4; expansion of, 9-10; independence from, 204, 205
- Ottoman rule, 9-24; reforms under, 16; resistance to, 10-12, 21; revolts against, 9, 205; social organization under, 76; suppression of Albanian culture under, 19, 20; suppression of Albanian language under, 71; taxes under, 14

- Paris: as headquarters for exiles, 34
- Paris Peace Conference: delegation to, 24; division of Albania in, 25
- parliament: created, 25
- Pasha, Reshid, 15-16
- Pasha, Turgut (dervish), 18
- Pasha Liman: naval base, 222
- pashas, 84
- Pashko, Gramoz, 187
- Pashko, Vaso, 85
- pastureland, 138; grazing fees for, 138; nationalized, 40, 107, 173
- peaceful coexistence: opposition to, 46
- peasants, 14; benefits for, 107; income of, 80; living conditions of, 77; oppression of, 116; revolts by, 28
- penal code, 230
- penal system, 230-31
- People's Army. *See* armed forces; army
- People's Assembly, 172, 178; armed forces under, 216; elections for, xxxv, 39, 188; mission of, 178, 189; presidium of, 178; size of, 178
- people's councils, 179
- People's Police, 204, 232, 236-37; branches of, 236; mission of, 232, 237; service obligation in, 237
- People's Republic of China. *See* China, People's Republic of
- People's Socialist Republic of Albania. *See* Albania, People's Socialist Republic of
- perestroika*, 183, 198
- petroleum (*see also* oil), 140, 142; export of, 164; reserves, 142; refineries, 142; work force in, 142
- Petroleum and Gas Directorate, 142
- Philby, Kim, 43-44
- Philip II, 5
- Plav: armed resistance in, 18
- Poland: trade agreement with, 44; trade with, 162
- Political Bureau (Politburo), 42, 176; privileges of, 79; women in, 82
- political parties (*see also under individual parties*): emergence of, 27
- political repression: under Hoxha, xxxv
- political protests, 186; by students, 183; by workers, 183, 229
- Pompey, 6
- Popular Party, 27
- population, 22, 26, 45, 57, 66, 130; age distribution in, 66, 130, 182, 223; density, 66; ethnic distribution in, 66; losses in World War II, 37, 66; percentage of Greeks in, 68; settlement patterns, 74; workers as percentage of, 79
- population statistics: birth rate, 26, 66,

- 103; death rate, 66; fertility rate, 66; growth rate, 66; infant mortality rate, 26, 45, 94–96; life expectancy, 26, 66; maternal mortality rate, 96; sex ratio, 66, 130, 223
- ports: privatization of, 120
- president, 189; as commander in chief, 216
- Prevesa: armed resistance in, 18
- prices, 126–28; controls on, 156, 158, 160; controls on, removed, 126–27, 175; lowered, 126; of necessities, 128
- prisoners: amnesties for, 231; number of, 231; political, 230, 231
- prisons, 230–31; conditions in, 231
- privatization, 103; of agriculture, 118, 120; disputes under, 136; of communications, 120; of economic enterprises, 118; of food industry, xxxvi, 148; of forests, 120; of housing, xxvi, 120; of industry, 120; of land, 133; of mining, 120; progress of, 120–21, 185; of trade, 158, 187; of transportation, 120
- Prizren: armed resistance in, 18
- Prizren League, 4; abolished, 19, 20; armed resistance by, 18, 20; formed, 16, 17, 20; goals of, 17; leaders of, deported, 19; memorandum by, sent to Congress of Berlin, 18
- Progressive Party, 27
- propaganda, 155, 182
- property: ownership of, 120–21; private, 120–21; reforms, 120
- purges, 43, 46, 51, 114, 172, 173, 174, 192, 228
- radio, 155; regulation of, 189
- railroads, 152; damage to, 152; privatization of, 120; shipping on, 152
- reforms: under Alia, 182–91; electoral, 185; initial stages, 182–84; under Ottomans, 16; political, 183; pressure for, 182; sources of, 182
- religion (*see also under individual sects*), 57, 82–87; abolished, 50, 85–87; punishment for practicing, 86–87; revival of, 87, 230; secret practice of, 13, 84–85, 86–87
- repression, 227–231
- Republican Party, 187–88; in coalition government, 190
- Republic of Macedonia. *See* Macedonia, Republic of
- resistance, 21; by communists, 34; by intelligentsia, 175; against Italy, 35; against Montenegro, 25; by Prizren League, 18; against Serbia, 25; under Skanderbeg, 10–12; to Young Turks, 20–21
- revolts, 23; anticommunist, 117, 173; by peasants, 28
- Rexha, Lumturie, 181
- Rilindja *Demokratike*, 182, 186, 187
- rivers, 59, 63; channels of, 64; flooding of, 63; navigability of, 63
- roads, 59, 150, 151–52; absence of, 106; construction of, 151; maintenance of, 151; network of, 151; privatization of, 120; traffic on, 151
- Roman Catholic Church. *See* Catholic Church, Roman
- Romania: assistance from, 234; emigration to, 12, 16; military relations with, 212; relations with, xxxviii, 198; trade agreement with, 44; trade with, 162
- Roman rule, 3; soldiers under, 205
- Rumelia, 16; under Ottoman rule, 16
- rural areas: development in, 74; electricity in, 144; housing in, 98; travel restrictions in, 115
- Russo-Turkish War (1877–78), 17, 84
- Rustemi, Avni, 28
- Sarandë: naval base, 222; port of, 152, 230
- savings, 125–26; rate, 125
- Savings Bank, 123
- Sazan Island: dismantling of Soviet naval station, 48, 211; naval base, 222; Soviet naval installation on, 44, 210
- schools: American, 88–90; collapse of, 94; elementary, 88; enrollment, 93–94; foreign-language, 90; languages in, 19, 41, 87; number of, 45; primary, 92; reorganized, 93; secondary, 92; sponsored by foreign occupying powers, 88; sponsored by Red Cross, 27; teacher-training, 84, 92; trade, 92; vocational, 92
- secret police, 227–28, 228
- security forces, 231–38; organization of, 232

Albania: A Country Study

- security police. *See* Directorate of State Security
- security policy, 211–15; focus of, 212; success of, 212
- Selami, Eduard, xxxvii
- self-reliance, 51
- Seman River, 64
- Serbia: attempts by, to appropriate land, 16, 207; border with, 57, 211; lands ceded by, 22; lands ceded to, 17; occupation by, 23, 58; problems with, 211; support by, for revolts, 23
- Serbo-Croatian language: taught in Albanian schools, 41
- Serbs: arrival of, in Balkans, 8; geographic distribution of, 69; massacre by, 25; ties of, to Kosovo, 22
- Shehu, Mehmet, 173; background of, 34, 90; death of, 52, 174; as defense minister, 218; as prime minister, 45, 179; reaction of, to Khrushchev, 46; rise to power by, 4
- Shëngjin: naval base, 222; port of, 152, 230
- Shevardnadze, Eduard A., 199
- Shkodër, 15, 74; armed resistance in, 18; under Ottoman rule, 16; riots in, 117
- Şigurimi. *See* Directorate of State Security
- Skander (prince), 33
- Skanderbeg (*see also* Kastrioti, Gjergji), 3, 9, 10, 204, 205; resistance under, 10–12
- Skanderbeg Military School, 225–26
- Skanderbeg SS Division, 36
- Slovenia: relations with, xxxviii
- smuggling, 160–62
- Social Democratic Party, 188; in coalition government, 190
- Socialist Party of Albania (SPA) (*see also* Albanian Communist Party; Albanian Party of Labor), 175–76, 190, 217
- social insurance, 98–99; child care, 99, 129; disability benefits, 98; expenditures for, 98; maternity benefits, 98–99; retirement benefits, 98
- social system, 74–82; classes in, 77–78, 79; under communist rule, 77–82; positions under, 78; traditional patterns in, 74–77
- Society for the Economic Development of Albania, 30, 31
- Society for the Printing of Albanian Writings, 19
- south: culture in, 74
- Soviet-Albanian Friendship Society, 199
- Soviet Union: assistance from, xxxv, 4, 45, 47, 104, 109, 110, 111, 210; assistance from, cut off, 156, 201; attempted coup in, 190; Czechoslovakia invaded by, 193, 212, 224; dependence on, 109–11, 212; dismantling of Sazan Island naval station, 48; espionage by, 193; impact of, on economy, 49, 105; military assistance from, 203, 220, 224; naval installation of, on Sazan Island, 44; as protector, 42, 203, 210; relations of, with China, 47; relations with, 44–46, 198, 199, 211, 214; trade agreement with, 44; trade with, 110, 159
- SPA. *See* Socialist Party of Albania
- Spanish Civil War, 34
- Spiru, Nako, 41; death of, 42
- Stalin, Joseph, 3
- State Bank of Albania, 123; exchange rates set by, 124; speculation by, 122–23
- Stefani, Simon, 231
- Strait of Otranto, 58
- strikes, 133, 143, 148, 229
- student demonstrations, xxxv, 177, 183, 229; causes of, 185–86; in Kosovo, 69; in Tiranë, 185, 188
- students: Alia's meeting with, 185; as party members, 217; pressure from, for reform, 182; women as, 80, 94
- Sublime Porte, 14; reforms under, 16
- subsidies, 129; elimination of, 124
- Supreme Court, 179, 189
- Switzerland: assistance from, 96
- Tamerlane, 10
- tanzimat* (reforms), 16
- taxes: array of, 125; collection of, 124; income, eliminated, 112, 124; under Ottoman rule, 14; on profits, 125; on war profits, 107
- teachers: number of, 45, 94; training for, 88, 92
- telephone: calls, 155; density, 155; network, 150
- television, 155; regulation of, 189
- terrorism, 20
- Teuta (queen), 6
- Thanë reservoir, 64
- Thopia, Karl, 10

- Thracians, 5
- Tiranë: as capital city, 25; location of, 57; riots in, 117; urban dwellers in, 74
- Tiranë Textile Combine, 148
- Tito, Josip Broz, 35, 41, 192
- topography, 59-63; central uplands, 60; coastal belt, 59-60; elevation, 140-42; mountains, 59-63
- Toptani, Esad Pasha, 22
- Toptani family, 75
- Tosks (lowlanders), 9, 14; characteristics of, 68; emigration by, 16; families of, 75; feudal society of, 77; under Hoxha, 67; marriage traditions of, 76; percentage of, in population, 66; political power of, 39; religion of, 75; social organization of, 76-77
- tourism, 158-59; volume of, 159
- trade (*see also* exports; imports; balance of trade): with China, 114; collectives in, 156; commodity pattern of, 164-65; with developing countries, 164; food as percentage of, 158; government monopoly on, 159-60; liberalization of, 118, 127; nationalization of, 78; partners, 162-64; privatized, 158, 187; retail, 156; with the Soviet Union, 110; supply networks, 156; with the West, 159, 197; women in, 132; work force in, 130
- trade agreements: with Czechoslovakia, 44; with France, 50; with Greece, 31; with Hungary, 44; with Italy, 50; with Poland, 44; with Romania, 44; with the Soviet Union, 44; with Yugoslavia, 31
- trade unions, 127, 132-33, 181
- transportation, 150-51; air, 152; borrowing for, 30; under five-year plans, 109; hijacking in, 152; nationalization of, 39, 78, 173; privatization of, 120; problems with, 74; public, 129, 150-51; railroads, 150, 152; roads, 150, 151-52; water, 152; work force in, 130
- travel: passes, 150; restrictions, 185
- Treaty of Bucharest (1913), 22
- Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Aid with Yugoslavia (1946), 192
- Treaty of Kuchuk-Kainarji (1774), 84
- Treaty of London (1913), 21; (1915), 23
- Treaty of San Stefano (1878): opposition to, 17-18; signed, 17
- Treaty of Tiranë, First (1926), 30, 31, 207; Second (1926), 30, 207
- Turkey: assistance from, 166; investment from, 165; relations with, xxxvii, 175, 194, 196, 213; trade with, 164
- Turkish language, 71; as language of education, 88
- unemployment, 94, 117, 130-32, 167
- Uniate Church, 12, 84
- UNICEF. *See* United Nations Children's Fund
- Union for Human Rights, xxxviii
- Union of Agriculture and Procurements Workers, 181
- Union of Albanian Women, 181
- Union of Albanian Working Youth, 180, 217
- Union of Education and Trade Workers, 181
- Union of Workers of Industry and Construction, 181
- United Higher Officers' School, 226
- United Nations: admission to, 43, 192; Alia's visit to, 199-200
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 96
- United Nations Human Rights Committee, 184
- United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration: aid from, 41, 108
- United States: assistance from, 96, 108, 166; emigration to, 16; matériel from, 33; plans of, to overthrow communists, 43-44; relations with, 43-44, 192, 198-99, 214; schools run by, 88-90; support by, 25; trade with, 164
- United Trade Unions of Albania, 181
- Unity. *See* OMONIA
- universities: education in foreign, 90-91; scholarships for, 90-91
- University of Pristina, 70
- University of Tiranë Hospital, 96
- urban areas: housing in, 98; living standards in, 129; populations in, 74
- Venetians, 8, 205
- Verlaci, Shefqet Bey, 27, 28, 31; death sentence on, 29; as prime minister, 28, 33

Albania: A Country Study

- Via Egnatia, 7, 10
Victor Emmanuel III (king), 32, 33
Vjosë-Levan-Fier irrigation canal, 64
Vjosë River, 64
Vlachs: geographic distribution of, 69
Vlorë: naval base, 222; port of, 152, 230; urban dwellers in, 74
Vrioni family, 75
- wages, 112, 117, 125-28; average, 126, 127, 128-29; decline in, 126, 127; egalitarian structure of, 127; modification of, 127
Warsaw Pact. *See* Warsaw Treaty Organization
Warsaw Treaty Organization (Warsaw Pact), 213; membership in, 46, 210, 211, 212
water transportation, 152-55; ferry service, 152, 196; merchant fleet, 152
West Germany. *See* Germany, Federal Republic of
Wilhelm of Wied (prince), 22-23; exiled, 23
Wilson, Woodrow, 25
women: in agriculture, 82; in armed forces, 223; in Bektashi Islam, 14; in communist party, 80, 82; in Geg clans, 68; education of, 80, 94; literacy of, 50; maternity leave for, 98-99; offenses against, 76; in politics, 176; rights of, 50, 80, 181; roles of, 76; in work force, 80, 132
workers: conditions for, 130; freedoms of, 117; living conditions of, 77; management of enterprises by, 121; moonlighting by, 113; as percentage of population, 79; pressure from, for reform, 182; productivity, 130; protests, 183; public service details, 130
work force: in agriculture, 103, 130, 135-36; in communications, 130; in construction, 130; in education, 130; in energy sector, 142; size of, 130; in trade, 130; women in, 80, 130, 132
Wörner, Manfred, xxxvii
World Bank: counseling from, 121, 140, 167; membership in, 165
World War I, 23-24, 206-7
World War II, 208-9; losses from, 37, 66, 98
Xoxe, Koçi, 38, 39, 173, 210, 228; executed, 43, 192
Young Turks (Committee of Union and Progress): education under, 88; goals of, 20; rebellion by, 20; resistance to, 20-21; rule by, 20
Ypi, Xhafer, 28
Yugoslavia: assistance from, xxxv, 4, 41, 104; border problems with, 215; control by, 24, 105, 108-9, 203, 228; dependence on, 108-9, 212; economic agreements with, 108; economic control by, 41-42; economic policies of, 46; expelled by Cominform, 40, 109, 192, 210; exports to, 144; investment by, 41; Kosovo under, 194, 2115; lands acquired by, 30, 40; lands desired by, 37; military assistance from, 33, 203, 212; mistrust of, 46; as predator, 25-26, 192; problems with, 211; rail line to, 152, 163; relations with, 50, 175, 192, 193, 195, 213; technical agreements with, 108; tensions with, 40, 42; trade agreement with, 31; trade with, 162-63, 196; treaty with, 108; Zogu exiled to, 28
Yugoslav People's Army, 215
- Zëri i Popullit*, 116, 182
Zhulali, Safet, xxxvii
Zog (king) (*see also* Ahmed Bey Zogu), 24, 75, 77; ascension of, 31; assassination attempt on, 31; clans under, 67; economy under, 32; industry under, 32; overthrown, 4, 24; in plans to overthrow communists, 43-44
Zogolli family, 75
Zogu, Ahmed Bey (*see also* Zog), 24; armed forces under, 207; assassination attempt on, 28; background of, 27-28, 75; death sentence on, 29; economy under, 106; exiled to Yugoslavia, 28; opposition to, 28; overthrow of Noli by, 29; as president, 29; repression by, 28, 29; social structure under, 77

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