

## **CALL TO THE ALBANIAN PEASANTRY**

**July 1942**

### **ALBANIAN PEASANTS!**

The flames of war have swept the whole world; millions of people have taken up arms and are locked in a gigantic struggle.

On one side the forces of darkness, the predatory and bloody-handed fascist forces, are attempting to enslave the world, to bleed the peoples white, and on the other side, the forces of progress, the forces of freedom, led by the heroic people of the Soviet Union, with the support of the democratic people of Britain and America and all the enslaved people, are checking the drive of the bloody fascist hordes and are day by day preparing to bury them.

At the time of the greatest blood-letting in human history, the greatest burden of this slaughter, brought about by the will of the fascist gangsters, weighs upon the peasants and the villages. The brunt of every war always falls upon the working people. Every year thousands of peasant families suffer for lack of food and the most basic requirements; misery, suffering and starvation reign in their wretched homes.

Have you, Albanian peasant brothers, ever sought the reason for the poverty, misery, hunger, and gloom, which have been your lot for centuries, and which year by year and day by day are becoming even more terrible?

Peasants of Albania, you who toil to exhaustion the year round, tied all your life to the land drenched with your sweat, who in rain and snow, ragged and always hungry, strive and toil with all your strength; on top of your centuries of oppression and enslavement, bloodthirsty fascism and the traitors of our people, sworn enemies of the workers and peasants, are trying to cast you forever into the most dreadful condition, into the blackest obscurity, into perpetual enslavement.

The Italian fascist invaders<sup>1</sup> fell upon our country like a ravenous beast, they fell upon our fields to enslave us, to plunder us, to bleed us white, to exterminate us. They invaded our plains and our mountains, our hills and valleys, and wherever their filthy jackboots trod, the grass no longer grows; the spectre of war has spread over the whole of our beautiful country. The despicable fascists turned our country into a battlefield, destroyed our towns and villages, they sowed terror and misery; they killed our people with their bombs and destroyed our villages, which became targets for their aircraft; they looted our livestock and our property to feed the executioners of the Albanian people.

#### ALBANIAN PEASANT BROTHERS!

Vile fascism, the invader of our country, and such traitors as Mustafa Kruja and his cronies are endeavour-

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<sup>1</sup> On April 7, 1939, fascist Italy attacked Albania and occupied it in a few days. Despite the betrayal of King Zog and his clique, the Albanian people were not subdued. Groups of patriots fought, arms in hand, against the occupiers right from the first day of aggression.

ing to seize our lands and turn them into the property of the fascist robbers; Mustafa Kruja, the major partner of the rapacious Italian companies, is doing his utmost to lay hands on the wealth of our country; the fascist banks are endeavouring to rob the lands which should rightly be your property, for it is you who sweat to till them: they are trying to turn our villagers into hungry slaves; they are trying to take away everything we have, to suck us dry and starve us to death, to make it easier to oppress us. They are plundering the riches of our soil and our mineral resources to feed their war machine, to feed their bloodthirsty hordes, the oppressors of our country. They have plundered the oil of Kuçova and Patos, they are plundering our mines, taking our maize and wheat, robbing us of our livestock, destroying our forests, and stealing our wool.

Bloodthirsty fascism and the traitors of our people are trying to rob us of our national identity, wipe out our mother tongue, doing their utmost to corrupt our sons, and trying to eliminate our admirable customs; in the place of the hospitality and respect for a guest of our proud people, they are trying to substitute the despicable vices of fascism, with their immorality they are trying to debauch us, to dishonour our mothers and sisters.

Bloodthirsty fascism, the occupier of our country, and his agents, with Mustafa Kruja the traitor at the head, are inflicting deep wounds on our people. They are conscripting the sons of the peasantry and the people, and sending them to be killed for the hangmen Hitler and Mussolini; they are mobilizing the most despised and weak-willed scum of the Albanian people into their militia and police force in order to drive us into the most terrible of wars, a fratricidal war.

The enemy and his despicable tools, with the aid of Mustafa Kruja's traitorous government, *are jailing and murdering the loyal sons of our people. They want us to stain our hands with the blood of the neighbouring peoples who are fighting for their freedom. They are trying to split us into Christians and Muslims.*

### PEASANT BROTHERS OF ALBANIA!

In this sacred war waged by the Albanian people to win lasting freedom you are the most important factor for our victory. The enemy knows that you are the living forces of the country, it knows that the unity of your forces with the entire Albanian people will mean a speedy and terrible death to fascism. This is precisely why the enemy and the traitors have exerted all their efforts to squeeze you dry, to rob you and leave you to die of starvation. *Fascism is endeavouring to seize everything you possess, it has left you without oil, it is trying to take your wheat, maize, oil, wool and livestock.* The traitor Mustafa Kruja is busy organizing the plunder of the peasantry, whose fate is closely linked with the soil of our country. He wants your sweat and blood to keep the thieves of Mussolini and Hitler alive, to maintain their military budget, and this year the traitor Mustafa Kruja is trying to squeeze the last little bit from you. *The enemy is demanding to buy a second portion of your grain with money for which you can buy nothing in return. He has increased your taxes tenfold, has increased the levy on livestock, and is raising them everyday.* Now Mustafa Kruja has dropped all pretence and is wielding the law in order to seize your grain, and is threatening to hang any peasant who tries to keep his grain to feed himself and his children.

Mustafa Kruja the traitor is trying to feed you on lies and demagogy, speaking of a "Great Albania"<sup>2</sup>, of a "liberated Kosova".

To the devilry of the enemy, and to his oppression we should respond with guns; we should wage our war more and more fiercely, not allowing the enemy a moment's respite to act with a free hand against our people. Every true Albanian should become conscious of his duty to our people. With pride and self-sacrifice, he should speed the day of the liberation of our homeland.

A terrible famine threatens our peasantry, therefore *keep your grain for yourselves and your own families, help your relatives and pay not a single grain in tithes to the greedy government*, for them to speculate with and sell back to you later at ten times the price. *Unite in every village and one village with another to defend by force of arms your grain and produce which the government is seeking to seize from you. The grain which you have harvested with so much toil belongs to you alone and to no one else.* Do not surrender it to anyone, hide it away, *hide your produce, because it belongs to you and your families.* Hide it away, otherwise next winter famine will stalk your homes.

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**2** In order to consolidate their position in the Balkans, the Italian occupiers, leaning on the traitors of the country, aroused the old national feuds and chauvinism of the reactionary classes of the Balkan states towards kindling the hostilities of our people with the Yugoslav and Greek neighbouring people and keeping the former away from the National Liberation War. Italy enlarged its occupied area to set up "Great Albania" which included part of the Albanian land left beyond the state borders by the 1913 London Conference of the Ambassadors of imperialist powers. But our communists and people were not taken in by fascist demagogy. They exposed this policy and pursued the road of war against the fascist occupiers and of collaboration with neighbouring peoples in their liberation struggle against the common enemy, relying on the people's right of self-determination.

*By holding back the grain, by refusing to pay taxes and the livestock levy you are fulfilling part of your duty to your homeland and at the same time saving the grain for your families, who are threatened by famine.* In this way we can help the struggle of the Albanian people; in this way we shall hasten the day of liberation, for we have confidence in our victory, in our united forces, because, as a popular saying goes, where there is unity, there is victory.

#### PEASANTS OF ALBANIA!

In this terrible war, in which the destiny of all mankind is at stake, the Albanian people, with their age-old traditions, with their militant freedom-loving spirit, are following in the footsteps of their forefathers who fought for the freedom of their homeland against invaders and traitors.

The Albanian people have declared merciless war on the sworn enemy of our country.

In town and countryside, the sons of our people are fighting furiously against the hated occupiers and traitors, the pure blood of our sons is flowing in the streets of towns and villages in Albania. They fall as heroes for the freedom of our country, they go to the scaffold with a smile on their lips, for they have fulfilled their duty to their people. They cannot live without freedom, for they cannot see their own people suffer under the foulest yoke our country has ever known. Our people's uprising is gathering momentum day by day, our people are uniting, and building their strength to strike down the enemy and the traitors without mercy. The Albanian people are forming a common front to win their freedom, they are uniting their forces with those of the people of the Soviet Union,

the homeland of the workers and peasants, with those of the democratic British and American people, they are fighting shoulder to shoulder with the other peoples enslaved by fascism; the Albanian people are taking part in the struggle to save mankind from the fascist barbarians. As in the days long ago, when our forefathers, under the banner of Scanderbeg<sup>3</sup>, ceaselessly fought the invaders of our country, so we, their worthy sons, under the banner of Scanderbeg, go into battle against the foul fascist invaders and traitors, for the true liberation of the Albanian people.

PEASANTS, DO NOT PAY THE TITHES, DO NOT GIVE UP A SINGLE GRAIN OF WHEAT, OR STRAND OF WOOL!

DO NOT PAY THE LIVESTOCK LEVY AND TAXES!

AID THE ALBANIAN PEOPLE'S WAR AGAINST THE OCCUPIER, A WAR OF PARTISAN UNITS AND SABOTAGE!

DOWN WITH RAPACIOUS FASCISM, THE MON-GREL MUSTAFA KRUIJA AND THE MILITIA!

DOWN WITH FRATRICIDE AND THE BLIND TOOLS OF FRATRICIDAL WAR!

LONG LIVE THE UNITY OF THE ALBANIAN PEOPLE!

LONG LIVE THE ALBANIAN PEOPLE'S WAR AGAINST THE OCCUPIER!

LONG LIVE FREE ALBANIA!

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**3** Gjergj Kastrioti — Scanderbeg (1408-1468), the Albanian National Hero, fought for 25 consecutive years against the Turkish hordes.

LONG LIVE THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF  
ALBANIA, THE STANDARD-BEARER OF THE FIGHT  
FOR FREEDOM!

The Central Committee of the  
Communist Party of Albania

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## "ZËRI I POPULLIT"<sup>1</sup> FIRST ISSUE EDITORIAL

August 25, 1942

### "ZËRI I POPULLIT"

has one mission, and one purpose: to unite the entire Albanian people around this paper, to unite everyone who is *honest and anti-fascist*, regardless of *religious beliefs, political groups, and various trends*. "Zëri i Popullit" is determined to make war on the occupiers.

Why has "Zëri i Popullit" appeared?

To provide our people with a road to salvation, to show them who has trampled the Albanian people underfoot, who brought these countless woes upon them, desolated our country with smoke and flames in 1939, reduced half of Albania to ruins during an entire year; who has left our people without food, taking all the products of the country and all the grain, who has taken away the olive oil, the wool, and the petroleum that flows like water from our soil, who has left the peasant without bread and salt. All these evils have been brought about solely by the occupier and Italian fascism, and by the war which is nothing but the off-spring of fascism.

By means of "Tomori"<sup>2</sup> and of well-paid hacks, headed by that jackal Hilmi Leka<sup>3</sup>, the Italian fascists are trying

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<sup>1</sup> Organ of the CPA, founded on decision of the CC of the CPA, and directed by comrade Enver Hoxha.

<sup>2</sup> Fascist daily paper (March 1940 — September 1943).

<sup>3</sup> Director of the "Tomori" fascist paper, and minister of culture in the quisling government of Mustafa Kruja.

to convince us that we should be content with our lot, for it is war time, but these well-fed gentlemen forget to say that it is not we who brought the war, but the Duce and the fascist occupier.

The Albanian people sent no special invitation to the hangmen of Rome. Indeed, the occupiers must have very clear memories of how the Albanian people farewelled them in 1920<sup>4</sup>, or have the Duce and the hacks of "Tomori" forgotten these things?

Who spilled our people's blood and drove them into fratricide? The fascist occupiers. Having seized our land and trampled underfoot all the rights which we had won with great bloodshed, they have now armed and mobilized the most degenerate section of our people into their militia, carabinieri, and police force, and set them to track down the sons of this people, the cream of our youth, and the fighters who are shedding their pure blood for one sacred aim: *for an independent, free and democratic Albania.*

Entire towns and villages are red with the blood of our sons; in Shkodra, Durrës, Tirana, Korça and Kruja dozens of boys have fallen as martyrs under the bullets of the enemy and the bloodhounds of the fifth column.

Today, young Albanians in hundreds are languishing in the dungeons of the traitorous executioners of the Albanian people and the Albanian race. Hundreds of the sons of the eagle are exiled among the harsh rocky islands of fascist Italy.

Since fascist Italy first set foot on Albanian soil, our people have not had one day of peace, but they have known how to fight. They have stood like men, and when some have fallen they have understood why. The

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<sup>4</sup> This refers to the war of the Albanian people against the Italian imperialists in Vlorë in 1920. The war ended with the victory of the patriotic forces, which drove the occupier into the sea and liberated the Vlorë city and its hinterland.

victims, the prisoners in the jails, the internees and the partisans in the mountains testify how the people hate fascist Italy.

This newspaper, this true tribune of the Albanian people, will tell our people about these things.

"Zëri i Popullit" will denounce the number one agent of fascism, Mustafa Merlika. "Zëri i Popullit" will denounce the agents of the fratricidal war.

"Zëri i Popullit" will mercilessly denounce the fascist demagogy of "Tomori" and its hacks.

"Zëri i Popullit" will rally all the virile energies of the Albanian people, the energies of all those who have understood once and for all that,

*"Freedom is won,  
It is not donated."*

"Zëri i Popullit" will be a tribune with its columns open to all *the fighters* for freedom without distinction as to class or religion, to all those Albanians who want to help us with deeds, and not with idle talk, in the true liberation of Albania.

"Zëri i Popullit" will be the genuine tribune of the Call to Arms for the *National Liberation War*, in which our war against the bloodthirsty occupiers will be described and read about.

"Zëri i Popullit" will be the tribune where the people will learn the truth as it really is, the naked truth.

"Zëri i Popullit" will tell our people where our friends are, in Albania and abroad.

We know that in their fight for freedom, our people are not alone, but have many strong and resolute friends throughout the world.

All the freedom-loving people of the world, from heroic China to the heroic people of Yugoslavia and France, are with us.

The three great allies are fighting today for one aim: *to crush fascism.*

The Soviet Union, with the Red Army of workers and peasants headed by comrade Stalin, leads the way as the vanguard. Then come the two great democracies<sup>5</sup>: Britain and America, two great powers with colossal economies, which are preparing for a second front in Europe<sup>6</sup>.

Some time ago 28 countries adhered to the "London Pact"<sup>7</sup> which guarantees the people freedom and collective peace, guarantees the people the final wiping out of bloody fascism.

"Zëri i Popullit" will be the tribune of the unity, in which our fight for freedom and the fight of the freedom-loving peoples of Europe will be reflected.

This is the one and only aim we have with "Zëri i Popullit".

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**5** A denomination for Britain and the USA, which were fighting against the fascist states, to make a distinction between their bourgeois democratic order and the fascist political order in Germany, Japan, Italy and elsewhere.

**6** It had been decided that the second front would be opened by Britain and the USA in 1942. But the US and British governments were not as good as their words. They opened this front only in June 1944.

**7** The "London Pact" was signed in May 1942 between the Soviet Union and Great Britain on an alliance in the war against Hitlerite Germany and its satellites in Europe as well as on post-war cooperation and reciprocal aid.

**FACED WITH THE FAILURE OF THEIR PLANS, THE  
LUOGOTENENZA<sup>1</sup> AND THE TRAITORS ENDEAVOUR  
TO FIND A "MODUS VIVENDI"\***

**November 1942**

During these years of the enslavement of our beloved country, the Albanian people have not forgotten the manoeuvres of fascism and its tools, traitors to our country. To every Albanian, from a five-year-old child to the oldest man, the aims of fascism in invading Albania are crystal-clear, but fascism has been trying to fool the people with vile and ridiculous manoeuvres, to throw dust in their eyes in order to achieve its goal more easily. But fascism had to deal with a people who cannot be easily taken in, and the Albanian people smashed these manoeuvres, exposed them one after another, and are showering more and more blows and kicks upon fascism and the traitors.

Here we shall point out to our people the way in which fascism is trying to enslave us, to have us fight one another, to divide us so that it can dominate and rule us.

Let us start from the very beginning. There is no need to comment on how the Albanian people reacted to

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**1** The administrative apparatus of the Italian occupation regime in Albania, which exercised plenipotentiary power on behalf of Victor Emanuel III and Mussolini.

\* Modus vivendi" (Lat.) — mode of living, here implying a way out.

the Italian invasion, but we need to comment on the coming of the Italians here. After tossing into the sea the dead bodies of their soldiers which had littered the docks and harbours of Durrës, Vlora, and Saranda, after washing away the blood which had stained our shores, the fascists entered our towns with their trumpets and bugles, flying their colourful ribbons, the plumes of the bersaglieri gleamed as once in Caporetto and Guadalajara<sup>2</sup>, and later on in Abyssinia (Ethiopia), Eritrea, Somalia and elsewhere. Their painted emblems, Lictor's fasces, were brought in shiploads, together with ribbons and shiny tin medals, because they imagined they were dealing with the Zulu blacks, who could be deceived with glass beads.

They sent us Count Ciano<sup>3</sup>, dressed up like a cabaret queen; and this dandy, who a year ago was godfather to Zog's child, with his hand on his heart and hair gleaming with brilliantine, tried to convince us that the Italians had come to liberate us from "the tyrants of our people". But the Albanian people did not fall for this and the Pepinos<sup>4</sup> had to change their tune. Like all invaders who aim at enslaving the peoples, but who are still far from achieving their dark aims, the Italian fascists needed time and calm to land their soldiers and ammunitions so that they could quietly fleece our people, rob them of everything they had, and in the end, send them to die for fascism. To achieve this aim, fascism got to work together with its hirelings. They pained our ears with their prattle about Roman civilization (read: fascist civil-

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<sup>2</sup> In March 1937, in Guadalajara of Spain the revolutionary republican troops routed some Italian fascist divisions, which were attacking in the direction of Madrid.

<sup>3</sup> Galeazzo Ciano — minister of foreign affairs of fascist Italy from 1936 to 1943.

<sup>4</sup> Italian fascists.

zation). The opening of dopolavoros\* began. The Albanian Fascist Party<sup>5</sup> forcibly enrolled members without asking their consent; they began to organize the schools in the fascist way, and started to organize the GLA<sup>6</sup>. "Duce", "Count Ciano", "fascism" and "Alala!", bleated the hacks. These rogues started to parade in their black crow uniforms. The building of barracks for the needs of the fascist army, and some buildings for the fascist hierarchy began, as did the organization of systematic robbery. The Italian companies, the banks, the bandits rushed in; the network of leeches was being organized to suck our people dry; Count Ciano paid repeated visits to Jacomoni<sup>7</sup> to collect the profits, and finally, the ex-emperor of Ethiopia, the dwarf Victor Emmanuel, came too. This was the last manoeuvre which fascism resorted to. The Albanian people did not lose their bearings. They had made up their minds, began their resistance and the exposure of fascism. The Albanian Fascist Party became a center of spies. No one but the crows went to their dopolavoros and GLA-s. The Albanian youth, whom the fascists tried to dress up in the fancy uniforms of the Balilas<sup>8</sup> and Avanguardisti<sup>9</sup>, whom they tried to teach

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\* Dopolavoro (It.) — after-work, fascist club to mislead the working people.

**5** It was set up by the Italian fascists in April 1939, immediately following the occupation of Albania. It was a branch of the Italian Fascist Party and acted under its directions.

**6** GLA (Gioventù del Littorio Albanese) — the Albanian Lictor's Youth, fascist youth organization.

**7** Francesco Jacomoni — former plenipotentiary minister of fascist Italy to the Zog government, viceroy of the Italian king till March 1943.

**8** This was the name used by the fascists for the children in their organizations.

**9** The members of the fascist organization for the youth up to 17 years of age were called Avanguardisti.

to march and think "like fascists", expressed their opinion, and expressed it so well in strikes and demonstrations that the Italianization of the schools and the fascist culture became a thing of the past. The people saw that the short period of work, building roads and barracks, when the workers' wages were raised slightly, was just a bubble, because the cost of living went sky-high, banknotes dropped like autumn leaves and all the wealth of our land was being systematically plundered.

Our people stood up and fought the occupier and the traitors in streets, and the visits by Count Ciano and other fascist parasites were ended by the bullet an Albanian lad fired at the dwarf Victor Emmanuel<sup>10</sup>.

Another manoeuvre fascism tried to use to divide our people and to prepare for the war against Greece, was the tool of religion. "Muslims and Christians, Orthodox and Catholics, attack one another!" But, the opposite occurred. "Albanian patriotism is the religion for the Albanian" and "*our faith and religion is the Albanian nation*". The fascists thought that these were only words. Yes, they were nothing but words to the hirelings; *but for the Albanian people they were implanted deep in their hearts and nurtured with the blood of our martyrs of the Albanian renaissance, with the blood of Papa Kristo Negovani, Petro Nini Luarasi, Koto Hoxhi, Naim Frashëri and others*. The war in Greece stripped all the gloss off the fascist emblems and left the plumes of the bersaglieri dropping, but our country footed the bill. Mustafa Merlika, Djevat Kortcha (read: Xhevat Korça, and don't be surprised that His Excellency, the Albanian Minister of

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<sup>10</sup> In May 1941, in Tirana, the Albanian worker Vasil Laçi made an attempt at the life of Victor Emmanuel III who had come to visit Albania.

Education, writes his name in a foreign way. The explanation is clear: to him the Albanian people are savages), or the likes of Irfan Ohri, Ndue Paluca, Filip Fishta, Vangjel Koça and Terenc Toçi, etc., are not the Albanian people. The people could not endure scoundrels on their backs; they began their war, organized their resistance, sharpened their weapons, and the Luogotenenza had to change its tactics, because its first manoeuvre did not go smoothly, the fascist thieves had reckoned without their host, they had forgotten the host who was waiting in the street for the settlement of his bill. *So the Albanian people stood up and said: enough!*

The new manoeuvre is radically different from the first because it is based on fascist terror. The host who said "enough" has ruined the sleep of the fascists and traitors; they have begun to tremble before the Albanian people, and measures have to be taken. Fascism has to use terror, but it cannot forget demagogy either. It needs to use terror, but also to maintain the appearance of the Luogotenenza as the "big-hearted friend of the Albanian people".

As the Duce's henchman, Jacomoni must keep a door open for some other manoeuvre which he thinks may work. *In short, the fascist invaders have understood as perfectly as two and two make four that they are openly at war with the Albanian people, that their position here is becoming critical, that their ammunition stores are insecure, that their army is in danger, that their positions in Greece are shaky, and it is becoming impossible to send aid to the fascist troops in Yugoslavia; in short, all the people of the Balkans, oppressed under fascism, are becoming a terrible threat. The fascist generals have openly admitted that fascism has to fight on the Balkan front, too.*

Albania, therefore, is the nerve centre of this Balkan front, and a remedy must be found for the situation that has been created. Fascism believed that it had found the remedy in bringing to power the greatest blackguard, the worst of thieves, the traitor Mustafa Merlika, the Quisling<sup>11</sup> of our country. Fascism had looked after this old spy, had fattened him on Italian lire in order to use him when the going would become difficult. And this "big shot" of fascism assured Jacomoni that "he could twist the Albanian people around his little finger and that he was so able (sic!) that in a short time even the most humble Albanian would live and breathe fascism." But it turned out that *this hangman did not know the Albanian people well, whereas the Albanian people knew all about this vile agent.*

Mustafa Merlika racked his brains. Both the fascists and he saw that the Communist Party, the party of the people who toil and suffer, was leading the broad masses of our people with a sure hand towards victory, towards liberty and salvation. Fascism and the traitors saw for themselves that the blood of our comrades who had fallen as martyrs for the freedom of the people flowed through towns and villages, and steeled sound Albanian hearts and energies.

They saw that the Communist Party of Albania was in the forefront of the struggle of our people, that at each moment it showed the way with the torch of freedom, and that black crow who bears the name of Mustafa Merlika, set about his traitorous work once more and came out as a nationalist (sic!), as though the people did not recognize this former member of the Durrës govern-

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**11** The word "quisling" has been introduced as a synonym of the word traitor and derives from Quisling — prime minister and chief of the Norwegian fascists, who betrayed his own country into the occupation by Hitlerite Germany in 1940.

ment<sup>12</sup> (sold out to the Italians), as though they did not know the anti-patriot who had fought against the Congress of Lushnja<sup>13</sup>, as though they did not recognize the resident of the town of Zara<sup>14</sup>, who was stuffed with lire by Mussolini, as though they did not know the man who congratulated Mussolini on the "Tirana Pact"<sup>15</sup> concluded between fascist Italy and Zog, the man who prepared the April 7 invasion, the spy who, together with Qazim Koculi<sup>16</sup>, endeavoured to convince the Albanians that "Italy will come to Albania to liberate us."

The traitor Merlika imagined that it was easy to make slaves of the Albanians.

"What do the Albanian people want, these people whom my lackey, Djevat Kortcha, calls 'savage', and what do we want?" Mustafa the traitor asked himself. And, of course, he found the answer himself, with the aid of his

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**12** This government was set up in December 1918 and was made up of Albanians in the service of Italian imperialism.

**13** The Congress of Lushnja, convened on January 28, 1920, repudiated the secret Treaty of London of 1915 for the partition of Albania, demanded its complete independence, declared the deposition of the traitorous Durrës government, and elected the new national government.

**14** Former name of Zadar, town on the Dalmatian coast of the Adriatic, where the fascist group of Albanian exiles, directed and financed by the Italian fascists and headed by Mustafa Kruja, had its quarters.

**15** "The Tirana Pact" was signed in November 1926 in Tirana between fascist Italy and the government of Ahmet Zog. This pact sanctioned the interference of Italy in the internal affairs of Albania. Mustafa Kruja, on behalf of the Albanian fascist group in Zara, sent a special congratulation to Mussolini on this occasion.

**16** Extraordinary commissar of Mustafa Kruja in the battle against the Vlorë population in 1943. Following the defeat of the Italian and Albanian fascists in this battle, Qazim Koculi was in his turn shot by the fascists.

other lackey, a certain Kotte<sup>17</sup>, who at one time didn't have two leks to buy himself a packet of cigarettes, and now has money and shares to gamble with:

*"The Albanian people want freedom; they want to wipe us from the face of the earth, and the Albanian people are led by an iron hand, by the Communist Party of Albania, which gives us not a moment's respite, but attacks us and exposes us. The Communist Party is bringing about the genuine unification of all political trends in the country which hate us, and soon a tempest will be stirred up and crash upon our heads. Whereas, the traitor continues, we want to live while the people suffer, rot, and die so that we can satisfy our greed. Fascism, with which we have linked ourselves closely, must triumph and the Italian occupier must strike deep roots in Albania, or we are doomed. To be able to achieve this, we must use terror against the communists, and for the time being demagoguery towards all the other political trends which are uniting against us."*

So the traitor came out in the mask of nationalism, while the Luogotenenza rubbed its hands, for its tool, the traitor Mustafa Kruja and his cronies, had everything lined up.

The manoeuvre began, but it ended in fiasco.

And the traitors bleated: "We are fighting for a free independent Albania in the framework (read: under the yoke) of the fascist empire (read: ex-empire); take no notice of the communists, for they have sold out, and we have not, because they destroy the family, and we build it, because they destroy the honour of women, and we preserve it (an example is Kolë Bibë Mirakaj, the moralist

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<sup>17</sup> Kostandin Kotte, member of the Mustafa Kruja cabinet and director of the paper "Roja Kombëtare" (the "National Guardian").

and minister of that vile place, the fascist headquarters (fascio), a name which our people apply to another place\* . . . Kolë Biba, who knows very well, and has taught the people how much fascism defends the honour of women). We are a nationalist government (sic!) which together with the Duce will make a happy Albania. And here is proof of this. We are giving you back your original flag, over which you are organizing demonstrations and being killed in the streets. Is it worth doing all this for a scrap of flag? Nothing like this has ever happened under fascist regime. Although at one time we raised the fascist emblem with so much pomp close to the eagle, and now throw it into the rubbish bin, this does not matter to us. What matters to us is that the Albanian people stay quiet, content with things as they are, so that fascism can plunder at its leisure, destroy the Albanian youth, and send the people to die for the hangmen Mussolini and Hitler." However, these tricks did not work. The Albanian people did not swallow the business of the original flag, *for they know that they themselves with bloodshed and sacrifice will raise the banner of Scanderbeg high in a free Albania, without fascists and without traitors. The propaganda against the communists did not work because the people are well aware of who the communists are, that they are their own sons, their honest and courageous sons, who are fighting and dying for one thing only, for the salvation of the Albanian people from the clutches of the enemy.* The fascist occupiers and the traitors endeavoured to mobilize the people and send them to fight and die in Libya and on the Russian front on Mussolini's behalf. The people vividly recall the frequent visits and fiery speeches of Mustafa the traitor

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\* The word "fascio" was used at that time in Albania to refer to the toilet.

in the barracks, at banquets, in the mountains of Albania, speeches in which the "glorious" army of the Duce fought so "valiantly" against the Greeks that the bersaglieri lost their plumes. The people have read the articles by those hirelings of "Tomori", articles which are served up as letters allegedly written by Albanian soldiers who fell on the sands of Libya cheering for the Duce, by Albanian soldiers "who fought with such zeal against the Bolsheviks". These speeches and these articles bear the traitors' brand, and though the enemy signed them with names, like Fetah Baruti\*, the powder was damp and did not ignite, because our people cannot be deceived with such nonsense. The Albanian will lay down his life for the freedom of Albania, but not for Hitler or Mussolini. When this mobilization for the slaughter failed, the fascists and the traitors produced other slogans, "the Serb and Greek spectre", "Great Albania" and the "Albanian militia".

The question of "Great Albania" is the question of suffering Albania, the suffering of our brothers in Kosova. This fascist "Great Albania" is a bitter trick played at the expense of our people and the people of Kosova (when we speak of "Great Albania", we have to exclude part of Kosova and Çamëria, not because there are no Albanians there, but that is of no account, since Nedich<sup>18</sup>, who has occupied that part of Kosova, is a fascist, too; similarly, the fascist government of Athens is the servant of fascism). The speeches and visits began, experts began to come stealthily to wretched Kosova in order to plunder and bleed it, as if it had not already been plundered and bled by the

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\*Baruti (Alb.) — powder.

**18** Premier of the Serbian collaborationist government in 1941-1944.

Belarukos<sup>19</sup> and Stoiadinoviches<sup>20</sup>. The jackals of fascism and the hireling hacks, such as Hilmi Lekaxhi\* and Vangjel Koça, trumpeted that this year we should have plenty of bread, that the wheat of Kosova would fill Albania (read: the fascists hierarchy would fill their pockets; and proof of this are the demonstrations for bread in Vlorë, Elbasan, Korça, and Gjirokastra; and at what time? At threshing time!). The traitors cried that we would have ample bread, but instead the forcible seizure of the wheat, wool, and livestock of our people began. . . . The Albanian people could not endure this villainy; they took up arms to defend their homeland, to defend the land which others were seeking to seize, to defend the wheat others were trying to steal, to defend the honour of their families, the honour of the Albanian women. The blood of the brave patriots, and fighters for freedom, whom the fascist occupiers and the traitors had labelled "sold out", flowed in the streets of towns and villages, and our mountains were swarming with the units of partisans<sup>21</sup> and volunteer fighters for freedom.

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**19** Bands of the "Belaruko", Yugoslav terrorist committee, created in Yugoslavia during the reign of King Alexander Karađorđević.

**20** Milan Stoiadinovich, prime minister of Yugoslavia during 1935-1939, a rabid chauvinist. In March 1937 he signed an agreement on "neutrality" with the Italian fascist government which gave Italy a free hand to act against Albania.

\* Intentional alteration of Hilmi Leka's name (the lek is Albania's monetary unit, whence *Lekaxhi*, venal).

**21** Parallel with the union of the people in the National Liberation Front and with the setting up of the councils took place the extension and strengthening of the partisan armed warfare. The guerrilla units constituted the first stage of this war. The partisan movement assumed a wide extension and a higher degree with the setting up of the partisan units (detachments). Communists from towns, communist youth and sympathizers of the movement, tested in guerrilla warfare, were assigned to form the

The enemy felt the force of our people. He saw that his efforts had failed, that measures had to be taken, but at the same time the Luogotenenza had to deceive the people, saying "the Italians have nothing against you. They like you, so manage your own affairs among yourselves, and we will even change the name of the Albanian Fascist Party and call it the National Fascist (sic!) Party of Albania." "Forget the main enemy," the Luogotenenza went on, "and seize each other by the throat; Mustafa Kruja and company are precisely for this purpose." And Mustafa Merlika and company carried out the boss' plan. He began to mobilize the Albanian fascist militia, he mobilized the most degenerate hooligans, vagabonds and thieves as policemen and spies, and set them to fratricide. The traitor is shedding our people's blood, killing our sons and dishonouring our families. He has thrown into jail hundreds of patriots whose only crime is that they want a free Albania. But the Albanian people do not tremble and fear neither prison nor internment, neither bullets nor the noose; in the hearts of our people there is nothing but hatred for fascists and traitors; hatred and revenge. The Albanian people are united to a man against the occupier, the National Liberation Front has been created<sup>22</sup> and is being steeled in battle.

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partisan units. With them as a nucleus, the units grew in numbers, drawing from the peasantry mainly. The countryside became the basis and the main source for them. The commander and the political commissar were at the head of the partisan unit.

**22** On September 16, 1942, at Peza, in the vicinity of Tirana, was held a conference with the participation of nationalists of various trends, besides the communists. The CPA, which was the organizer of the conference, was the sole political party to attend it. The conference elected the National Liberation General Council and adopted unanimously the platform of the National Liberation War as elaborated by the CPA. It laid the foundations of the National Liberation Front.

The fascists, with Jacomoni, Merlika, Kolë Biba and their like, are becoming panic-stricken. Conference after conference is being held at the Luogotenenza to find another prescription, a way out, a "modus vivendi".

In order to confuse the simpletons who still have hopes of some sort of compromise with the occupiers, the Luogotenenza has sent its spies, Terenc Toçi, Kolë Biba and others, General Gabrielli<sup>23</sup> and Del Monte<sup>24</sup>, to talk to these elements and sound them out, while encouraging their day dreams.

The spy Terenc Toçi, "broken-hearted" as though he has to bear all the woes of the Albanian people on his shoulders, is wailing, high and low, and spreading what Jacomoni taught him. This agent of the Luogotenenza whispers that "it can't go on like this", that "this Mustafa Merlika is not taking a correct stand", "this and that are not right", that "the Luogotenenza wishes Albania well", that "we should fix something up", that "it is true that the fascist symbol is not for the Albanians", that "we must change this and that". In short, Terenc Toçi means: "Let whoever is fool enough (for the whole world knows that Terenc Toçi is the most villainous spy to come out of Calabria<sup>25</sup>) come and open his heart to me, and tomorrow I'll send him to *the cooler* (i.e. to prison), while the others, who find my work to their taste, will be introduced to another spy, to Papalilo, who will give them a wage and put them to work." But Jacomoni, Terenc Toçi and Mustafa Merlika

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**23** Chief of the military cabinet attached to the fascist vice-regency in Tirana.

**24** Italian fascist, an agent of the SIM (Italian military intelligence).

**25** A province in South Italy inhabited also by Albanians emigrated from Albania since the 15th and 16th centuries to escape Turkish persecutions and massacres. Terenc Toçi, a Calabrian of Albanian extraction, was an Italian fascist hierarch.

and your like, you are deceiving yourselves. The people know who their enemies are.

The tricks of the Luogotenenza are not succeeding. *The fascist occupier is our enemy and you are its foul tools. Your crimes weigh heavy upon you all, on you as well as on Jacomoni. The Albanian people will not compromise with you. Our dealings with you will be settled with guns, and our guns will triumph.* Your manoeuvres to split us up have not succeeded. No one can ever destroy our people's National Liberation Front, nobody can ever make the Albanian youth swerve from the glorious road of the fight for freedom. Nor can your threats against the Albanian teachers ever intimidate them, for they are not afraid of you. They know their duty towards the homeland and the people. The martyrs of our people, who have shed their blood for freedom, have taught them their duty, and they do not wait to be taught it by the Italians and agents of the Italians. The Albanian youth scornfully reject all your efforts, such as the leaflet you allegedly issued "clandestinamente"\*, the garbage entitled "The Echo of Truth"<sup>26</sup>, "press organ of active groups of Albanian (sic!) national (sic!) youth."

The people realized at once that this smelt of treachery and Italian lire, and put it where such paper belongs. . . in the fascio.

Here is how this abortive work was brought forth from the mind of Jacomoni the diplomat (sic!). The fascists saw with alarm that the Albanian youth, who follow the glorious traditions of our people, are in the forefront of the war against the invader. The youth had to be split. But how? In the chambers of the Luogotenenza

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\* "Clandestinamente" (It.) — secretly.

<sup>26</sup> A fascist magazine, began publication at the end of October 1942 and put out only a few issues.

emerged a certain Del Monte (an Italian spy), who, at a time when his fellow countrymen were "scoring success after success in the war against the Greeks", pilfered the funds assigned for the Albanian refugees suffering from the war, and pocketed them.

Kolë Bibë Mirakaj (the moralist of fascism), Ndue Paluca, Vangjel Koça and Filip Fishta, as well as some three or four degenerate students attending the "universities" of the "Via Veneto" in Rome, had a tête-à-tête and formed a group of nationalist youths (sic!) in order to use the manoeuvre of division, and they named the group BRUFSSH<sup>27</sup>, which in their fascist language means: Banditi Rinnegati dell'Unione Fascista Skipetara, which reads in translation: traitorous thieves of the Albanian fascist union. These youth, with the lure of the Luogotenenza, issued that leaflet. These "pure-bred nationalists" (as you know yourselves) have directed their struggle against: 1) communists, 2) nationalists, who sympathize with the communists, and 3) nationalists who wait and see (dear reader, you must have understood at once who these beauties are, but hold on, there is something else). The paper in question analyses the situation so masterfully and with such telling arguments that it makes you want to vomit, and you can search till you are blue in the face but you will not find a single word about Mussolini, Count Ciano, fascism, the meetings of fascist party cells, as Kolë Biba (the moralist of fascism) calls them; not a single Word about Victor, Rome, or Caesar, and finally, not even the least mention of Terenc Toçi, who at a meeting, without anyone asking him, but in order to secure his position somewhat, said, "I have never been a spy". On the contrary, there you will see that "this pure-bred (sic!) nationalist youth", together with the "genuine nationalists",

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**27** Union of Albanian University Fascist Youth (UAUFY).

who have got down to creative activity (read: together with the traitors who have got down to destructive activity in our country), emerge with the flag of Scanderbeg (the axes, as we have already told you, have been removed, in order to deceive us). How smart this "pure-bred nationalist youth" is! And just as valiant as it is smart; it can even question the government, and pose not just one question, but two.

1. "Where are the monuments to the heroes of our nation?!" It is good that they put the exclamation mark, for this relieves the people of the necessity to rack their brains and find an answer. How you surprise us, you rotten scum!

2. "Why do the organs of government not visit the cellars of certain hoarders who have stored up food to last them ten years?" (We need to note here something which the "pure-bred nationalist youth" forgot). The people should not get the idea that the word "hoarders" refers to "genuine nationalists" such as Mustafa Merlika and his brethren, Jacomoni and his clique, Terenc Toçi and Roko, Jonuz Shijaku, Gulielm Luka and others! No, the hoarders are Meti, who owns a small café and has "hoarded" a pound of coffee; Osman, who has "hoarded" ten pounds of beans at home to keep the children alive; Smail, who has a tiny restaurant in the old market, and has "hoarded" a few gallons of olive oil for a rainy day! These are the hoarders whom Merlika's government is tracking down and condemning for speculation. These are the hoarders who the "pure-bred nationalist youth" so courageously ask the government to hunt down. These are the "speculators" about whom "Tomori" writes article after article. It is they who live off the people, "they are the ones to blame," these "scoundrels" of shopkeepers, restaurant owners, coffee house proprietors, porters and carters, and not the fascists, not the likes of Merlika and others.

See how low the fascists have fallen! All their manoeuvres are proving ineffective; lacking new ones, they are obliged to start again with the old ones; to use them over again to brainwash the masses, but no one listens to them. Now, it is our turn to give them a piece of advice and assure the fascists and the traitors that, if they take our advice, the entire people will certainly believe them one hundred per cent.

They should tell our people about the sufferings and misery of the Italian people, who for twenty years have been preyed on by fascism; they should tell them about the crimes of the fascist clique, its villainy, the dishonour brought upon the Italian people by those bandits, the Duce, Ciano, etc. They should tell the people about the innumerable crimes they are committing throughout Europe with their boss Hitler, the arch-hangman, at the head.

Let Jacomoni and his friends tell about the intrigues, thefts, and murders they are committing at the expense of our people, let them tell about the crimes they plot in the chambers of the Luogotenenza. Let Mustafa Merlika and his running dogs tell about the treachery, thefts, and cruelty they have inflicted on the Albanian people, let Merlika tell us about the lire he has received from the Duce for his work of betrayal, about the income he receives from his Italian partners in the general plunder of the people. Let the "famous moralist of fascism", Kolë Biba, who howls like a stray dog that communism "destroys the family", and about "how well he protects the honour of the family", give examples to support his argument.

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