The Albanian army has grown to be an army of the masses of the people, comprising in its ranks all and everyone capable of handling weapons, from the very young to the very old, therefore it is to be found everywhere.

Our people's army, which was created by the party in the course of the war, grew, was tempered and strengthened as an invincible strike force, as a revolutionary army emerging from the people to serve the people with boundless devotion. In our country, the Party of Labour of Albania has based the defence of the socialist homeland on the organization and arming of the whole people, on their military training according to the principles of the Marxist-Leninist military art.

The army of socialist Albania, both in its social composition and in the objectives and tasks it sets itself, is an army of profoundly popular and revolutionary character. The social relations of production, the economic and social order of our country, give its army a deeply popular and revolutionary character, making it the army of the people in power, the army of the revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

As in all the other questions of the socialist construction, the Party of Labour of Albania abides by the great Marxist-Leninist principle of self-reliance in the vital question of the defence of the homeland. «The Party has never based the defence of the Homeland on external aid or the various international factors, but has relied mainly on the internal factor, on the strength, patriotism and bravery of our own people, as well as on the all-round preparation and permanent fighting readiness of the whole country for defence.»

A diametrically opposed stand is taken by the bourgeois-revisionist states. The international bourgeoisie, the ideologists of imperialism and social-imperialism endeavour to prove that in their countries, too, the army serves the interests of the defence of the homeland. Following this line of reasoning, the ideologists of American imperialism claim that their armies stand above classes, that their only task is to defend their country and the «free world» from the foreign threat, whereas the ideologists of Soviet social-imperialism loudly claim that their army defends the interests of «socialism». The kind of interests these armies defend emerge from the facts which life provides everyday. The aggressive wars American imperialism has fought after the Second World War in Korea, Vietnam, or the countries of Latin America, the aggressions committed by the armies of Soviet social-imperialism against Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan, as well as the policy of blackmail and intimidation pursued by the two superpowers, are clear testimony to the character of

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their armies, which regardless of all demagogical attempts to present them otherwise are mere tools in the hands of the imperialist and social-imperialist bourgeoisie to oppress the people and to prop up their anti-popular regimes. They are used by the capitalists and revisionists in order to enslave and exploit the peoples, to stamp out any revolutionary movement of national and social liberation, to extend their spheres and zones of influence further. In these countries, the armies are kept in barracks, isolated from the people and dominated by the officer caste, who, for their part, in return for the many services they render the class in power, which maintains them as mere instruments of their policy of internal oppression and foreign expansion, are paid fat salaries and enjoy many privileges.

The Army of socialist Albania is a true people's revolutionary army, because it is led by the Marxist-Leninist Party. With the Party in command and educated by the Party, our army is linked like flesh to bone with the people, always determined to serve the fundamental interests of the people, to live with them, to defend the socialist Homeland at all costs and against all difficulties. The enemies of our country have tried to divest our army of its popular character, to isolate it from the people, to place it above the people, but they have never succeeded in their plans, because in command of the army is the Marxist-Leninist Party, which has created, led and educated it, which is modernizing and revolutionizing it further in order to enable it to carry out its sacred task of the defence of the socialist Homeland ever better.

Being an army of a profoundly popular and revolutionary character, this army places the policy and ideology of the Party above everything in all its activities as is done in all other activities in our country. As Comrade Enver Hoxha pointed out at the 8th Congress of the PLA, the leadership of the Party in all the problems of the socialist construction and defence of the country is a law for us. Like everywhere else, in the army, too, the Party has been and will always be the inspiring soul, the mind which shows it the right road, and a source of strength which makes our popular army invincible. The Party has the great historic merit of having drafted the programme of our popular revolution, built the theoretical foundations and principles of the construction, education and preparation of our popular army, and creatively elaborated and developed our Marxist-Leninist military art, the Military Art of the Popular War. With the wisdom and foresight characterizing it, the Party implemented a series of concrete measures for the all-round strengthening of the army, its equipment with modern weapons, perfecting its structures, and raising its political level and military capability. The experience of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania shows that no army can exist as a genuine revolutionary army capable of carrying out its great mission, both in time of peace and in time of war, if it is not inspired and led by the Marxist-Leninist party. Only a Marxist-Leninist party is in a position to educate the army with the ideology of the working class, with the principles of the proletarian morality, with the laws of the revolution and the sentiments of proletarian internationalism. Only a Marxist-Leninist party is in a position to create the popular military art and equip its army with it, an art in which the strategy and tactics are based on the Marx's-Leninist theory, on the political, ideological and military principles and norms of the proletariat, in conformity with the geographical, economic and other conditions of the country and with its human potential. The leadership of the Party is the only guarantee for the successful fulfilment of the magnificent tasks set for the revolutionization of the army, for the successful development of the class struggle in every army unit and detachment, for the further improvement of the work for the education of the communists, for raising the fighting readiness and preparedness of the entire soldier-people to a higher level, and for combating with success all shortcomings in fulfilling the requirements of the military art of the popular war. The slightest weakening of the leading role of the Party in the armed forces creates the danger of their degeneration and transformation from forces in the service of the revolution into forces in the service of the bourgeois-revisionist counter-revolution.

Therefore, the unceasing strengthening of the leading role of the Party in every section of the army has been and remains one of our fundamental tasks. The ideological-political factor has priority over the military factor, therefore the Party with its policy and ideology directs the entire life — organization, activity and military and technical preparation of the army. Our military men are, in the first place, political men, educated in the spirit of loyalty to the ideals of the Party, and the interests of the people, socialism and communism. They respect and unwaveringly carry out the line of the Party, the laws of the state and the teachings of Comrade Enver Hoxha, being always vigilant and carrying out the class struggle in conformity with the principles. The problems and tasks of the army, the skilful use of weapons and equipment and the application of the rules of the popular military art, are seen by the cadres and soldiers of the Popular Army from the political standpoint, that is from the standpoint of whom this preparation serves.

So, the leadership of the Party, the education of the army with the line of the Party and the principles of Marxism-Leninism, with the documents of the Party and the Works of Comrade Enver Hoxha, and with the qualities and virtues of communist morality, make our Popular Army always clear about the sacred aims which it serves, make it aware of its mission and always ready to carry out its tasks, in the defence of the interests of the people, the Homeland and socialism.
The popular character of the army manifests itself in the further democratization of its life in implementation of the line of the masses. Carrying out the teaching of Comrade Enver Hoxha that "the army must observe the Leninist norms in everything," our Army is characterized by a sound unity of thought and action and a healthy spirit of democratic centralism. The Leninist principles and norms, which cannot exist in any bourgeois-revisionist army, are deeply-rooted in our army and an organic part of it. The line of the masses, rendering of account before the mass of soldiers, and the worker and peasant control have contributed to strengthening the active participation of the rank-and-file in the life of the army units. The hierarchy in our army is a Marxist-Leninist hierarchy of comradely relations between officers and soldiers, totally different from the hierarchy of arrogance in the bourgeois-revisionist armies.

In Albania today the army and the people work and fight together for the cause of the defence of the Homeland on the basis of the correct line and policy of the Party. Guided by the teaching of Comrade Enver Hoxha that "The stronger the people, the stronger is the army, the higher the ideological and political level of the people is the higher the level of the army will be, the stronger the back area is from the ideological, political and economic aspect, the stronger the army will be," our workers, cooperativists and soldiers are educated and trained together, stand guard and defend the Homeland together, working together in a revolutionary spirit.

The army of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania does not form a group of people apart, but consists of the whole people. So, in Albania finds its embodiment Lenin's idea of genius of "making all the soldiers good citizens and all the citizens capable of carrying weapons, soldiers." An important role in applying these teachings is played by the free schools of military training, which serve as basic institutions for raising all the structure of defence to a higher political-military level, and as means for integrating defence with the life and activity of the working masses. At the present time, military men in active service, be they cadres, or rank-and-file, take active part in the political, economic and cultural life of the country. The cadres in active service go among the workers and peasants, inform them about the tasks facing them in the field of defence, carry out the task of training and educating them, and at the same time, are themselves acquainted with the economic and social problems of the latter. On the other hand, the cadres and the specialists from the grass-roots go to military units and detachments and inform the military men about their economic task, hold talks and organize lectures on problems of art, culture and the history of the country. The military units and centres of work and production organize joint activities for the education, tempering and military training of the working people and soldiers. In this manner problems of defence and problems of the economy and culture are taken up in mutual relationship. So, the objective of making soldiers of the entire people has become a reality in Albania, and this has made the army even more popular and more revolutionary, has made it invincible. The arming and training of the entire soldier-people has raised the degree of organization of the army to a higher
level, has turned it into a modern compact army capable of coping with any task. In Albania there is no élite army, no army of the barracks, but an army made up of the entire people. The links of the army with the people rest on the Marxist-Leninist ideology of our Party, on the struggle for a common ideal, the struggle for the construction and defence of socialism. These links are realized through the collaboration between the army and the people in the defence and consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat, in the fulfilment of economic tasks, in the common struggle of the people and the army for the strengthening of defence, for the improvement of the organization of the various structures of the armed forces and in the training which is carried out jointly by the army and the people. In these links, in this organic merger of the army with the people, rests the invincibility of our army. That is why our Party maintains, strengthens and leads the army not as an army of the barracks, with some élite units and a caste of cadres apart from the rank-and-file, but as a component part of the armed people. In struggle against manifestations of officialdom, technocracy and intellectualism, the Albanian army has become an army of the masses of the people, including in its ranks all and everyone who is in a position to carry arms, the very young and the very old, therefore it is to be found everywhere, it is to be found wherever people work and produce material blessings, and wherever they learn. And the citizens keep their rifles besides the lathe, beside the pick-axe, beside the book, working and learning and at the same time training themselves militarily. The work and military training are inseparable in our socialist Homeland.

The consistent implementation of the line of the Party in the field of defence has made the entire people soldiers, trained in the Marxist-Leninist military art, armed with modern means of warfare and, under the leadership of the Party, always ready to cope with any eventual aggression, from whatever quarter it may come. This is, in the first place, connected with the fact that in Albania every citizen is trained as a member of the structures of the armed forces of the country. The training of the people is complex, comprising the use of weapons and military equipment, with high efficiency at any time, the application of forms, ways and methods of fighting in conformity with the requirements of the popular military art. The all-round political and military preparation of the staffs is intended to enable our armed forces to deal death blows at and consume in the flames of the popular war any enemy who would dare invade even an inch of our territory, who would dare encroach on the interests of the people, the revolution and socialism. So, preparation and training for defence rests on the preparation and training of the masses of the people in the army. In this manner, in Albania the revolutionary concept of «the soldier people» has become a norm of our morality, has penetrated the consciousness of every citizen. This is why in Albania one sees workers, cooperativists and other working people training and preparing themselves militarily for the defence of the country, in training grounds close to their work places and parallel with their productive activities.

With military training extended to the broad working masses, the cooperativists, and the pupils and students, the defence of the country assumes a broad popular character, with the people being trained in time of peace, so as to be ready to fight in defence of their country in time of war.

The directive of the Party «The defence of the Homeland is a duty above all duties» is becoming more and more a great living reality with us. All our soldier people are clear about it that the socialist Homeland can be defended only with their toil, sweat and blood, only through the all-out mobilization of all the human and material resources of the country. Life and experience have taught the Albanian people to be vigilant, to correctly assess any situation, to see through the flattering words and smiles covering the sinister aims and schemes of the savage enemies of socialism.

In the bourgeois-revisionist armies a deep chasm divides the officers from the rank-and-file, and the army from the people. Whereas in our People's Army the cadres and the rank-and-file work and live in fraternal close relationship. The cadres of our army are the sons and daughters of the working people, and educated in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism. In all their activity they are led by the organs and basic organizations of the Party and are responsible to them for the implementation of the line and directives of the Party to the letter. Being the sons and daughters of the people and having the same ideals as the entire people, the army cadres acquaint the soldier people with all essential military and technical matters. This they carry out on the basis of the requirements of the line of the Party, keeping always close to the soldier-people and considering and treating the rank-and-file as their brothers, encouraging and supporting the positive thought and action of the rank-and-file, so that the latter plays an ever more active role in all problems of military training and combat readiness. Cold official attitudes and stands towards the people and soldiers are alien and unacceptable to the cadres of our army. They work, live and train together with them; and they enjoy no special privileges. This is why the people and the soldiers are attached to and respect the officers. Their relations are characterized by mutual trust, and common determination to carry out all the tasks of military training. Freely in these healthy relations between cadres and soldiers lies one of the outstanding features of the popular character of our army.

Since we are a soldier-people building and defending socialism at the same time, we continuously raise the degree of our combat readiness and training, linking it with the international situation which is turbulent in general, full of upheavals which may lead to the outbreak of a new world war. Besides this, our people never forget that the international bourgeoisie and imperialism never have reconciled themselves to the existence of socialist Albania. In the face of the frenzied armaments race of the superpowers, the exacerbation of the economic and political crisis of the capitalist and revisionist world, the deepening of the inter-imperialist contradictions, our people, besides the work for socialist construction, are increasing their efforts in military training, in order to carry out at all costs and in any circumstances the sacred duty of the defence of the Homeland, being always prepared and vigilant.
In Albania there is no elite army, an army of the barracks, but an army which is made up of the entire people.