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# INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY **Albania**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

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Next Review Date: 2008

**SOURCE**

## I. General Military Information

1. The organization of the Albanian infantry is as follows:
  - a. The squad consists of 8-10 riflemen, 6 mortar men with one 82 mm mortar, 6 machine gunners with one "Max" machine gun weighing 68 kilograms, of which 4 kilograms are water. The total strength is 20-22 men.
  - b. The platoon consists of two squads, total strength 40-44 men.
  - c. The company consists of 60 riflemen, 36 mortar men, and 36 machine gunners, six 82 mm mortars, six "Max" machine guns. Total strength is 132 men. [REDACTED] Comment: Evidently the company consists of three platoons.) 25X1A
  - d. The battalion consists of three companies of riflemen, one company of mortars, one company of heavy machine guns, one anti-tank platoon, one platoon of sub-machine gunners, and one platoon of transport. The battalion will number 180 riflemen, 36 mortar men, 36 machine gunners, 12 men with six anti-tank rifles, 12 men with 12 sub-machine guns, 12 men carrying a portable wireless and telephone. The total strength is about 300 men.
  - e. The regiment consists of three battalions. In addition to the strength of three battalions, each regiment includes 100 other men, who man four pieces of mountain artillery and four mortars of 103 or 105 or 107 mm.
2. All the old armament of the Albanian Army consisted of weapons of varying origin (Italian, Greek, British or German). It has been replaced with new and uniform weapons of Russian manufacture.
3. That this rearmament has been completed is confirmed, at least for the units of the Albanian Army in the regions south of Elbasan. The mortars, the machine guns, the anti-tank cannon, and the anti-aircraft guns also are of Soviet manufacture.

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4. The Army rifles rust easily. The slightest moisture will cause rust in the barrel. After five to eight shots these rifles have to be cleaned with oil, because of oxidation. Regulations require the soldier to clean his rifle twice a day.
5. The Army has portable wireless sets only at the battalion bases. Communications between companies are carried by messengers.
6. The Albanian Army is not supplied with a uniform style of clothing. The majority are supplied with Yugoslav uniforms of poor quality; they are badly worn because they have not been replaced for more than a year. Only the officers have uniforms of the same type and of good quality. Old boots of Yugoslav manufacture have been repaired and are used as shoes. The clothing and other articles sent by UNRRA into Albania were never distributed to the people but are being used to fill the needs of the Army; the units of the border-guard are still using UNRRA supplies.
7. The bread ration of the soldier at present is 700 grams of bread and 20 grams of meat per day. The bread is a mixture of corn, barley, rye and potato flour. The ration of 20 grams of meat was established after the "nationalization" of livestock on 11 May 1948. Before relations were broken off between Tito and Hoxha, 1000 grams of bread were given daily. Immediately after the break the ration dropped to 600 grams, but has since been fixed at 700 grams. The enlisted men are becoming dissatisfied, because the officers eat very well.
8. The proportion of Communists in the Albanian Army does not exceed 10 percent. The majority of the officers, however, are members of the Communist Party. There are, however, officers, especially in the lower ranks, who are not Communists.
9. The Army is confined to barrack enclosures, and leave is granted only on Sunday and for two hours only.
10. Fraternizing of soldiers with civilians, particularly near the borders, is forbidden.
11. Despite the terrorism practiced by the convinced Communists in the Army, the majority of the troops succeed in avoiding them; within their barracks they comment adversely on the regime and on their Communist officers. A great effort is being made by the officers to persuade the Army to fight in case of an attack by the "Greek monarcho-fascists".
12. Recently Albanian soldiers have been fleeing into Yugoslavia, which they no longer consider to be a Communist country but rather as friendly to the Western powers. This is the result of the propaganda of the Albanian Government which represents Tito as a traitor sold out to the Anglo-American Imperialists.
13. The Albanian Army does not have its own means of transportation, but it uses the automobiles which were "nationalized" and taken from private citizens. It also uses those furnished by UNRRA which are exploited by a State service under semi-military regulations. There is a great shortage of tires and spare parts.

## II. Local Military Information

- 1a. A division of the Albanian Army is based in Korce. This division consists of three infantry regiments and one artillery regiment. The Commander is

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Colonel Netzil Meltsani; the Commissar is Elaftherios Kasnetsis, who has the rank of Lt. Colonel and who is the liaison of the Albanian Government with the Headquarters of the Greek guerrillas.

15. The regiments and units belonging to the division at Korce are the following:
  - a. 26 Infantry Regiment, based at Pogradets and designated as military unit no. 571.
  - b. 14 Infantry Regiment, permanently based at Korce; designated as military unit 570.
  - c. 9 Infantry Regiment, permanently based at Korce; designated as military unit 569.
  - d. Regiment of mountain artillery, permanently based at Korce.
  - e. Unit of engineers.
  - f. Transportation unit based in the brewery at Korce (outside the city of Korce on the road towards the village of Boria).
16. All the strength of the division at Korce, except 26 Regiment, has been spread along the Greek-Albanian border from Leskoviki to Lake Prespa to reinforce the Greek-Albanian border but has been moved towards the Albanian-Yugoslav border to reinforce the Albanian border guard there. These movements were made after the Greek Army began its attack against the guerrillas, particularly during the month of August.
17. The 9 Infantry Regiment has been spread out in the Sinitza-Erseka sector and has its base in the village of Flioki. The 9 Regiment consists of three battalions, 25, 38 and 75. The regimental commander is Lt. Colonel Muharem Brodani; the Commissar is Major P. Themelko, brother of General Hristo Themelko. The 38 Battalion is commanded by Major Midat Kodin (or Kontis), and its Commissar is Musa Rapo. The battalion is encamped on the heights of the village of Darda.
18. The base of the regiment of mountain artillery at Korce until 30 September 1948 was at the village of Bobositsa.
19. Fortifications are being constructed all along the Greek-Albanian border. The work is being done by the troops spread along the border. These fortifications consist of trenches and dugouts covered with tree trunks. These tree trunks are placed in layers crosswise; the number of layers depends on the thickness of the trees, i.e. 2 to 4 layers. In places which can be seen from Greek guard-posts occupied by Greek national forces, the work is carried on at night, by moonlight when there is any; in other places which cannot be seen by the Greek troops the work is done in the daytime.
20. Fortifications are also being constructed in the pass of Tsakoni. This work is being done by the "volunteer labor" of hundreds of Northern Epirotes from Korce. Headquarters of those working on the fortifications of Tsakoni is the village of Zimblak.
21. Ammunition dumps are located at:
  - a. Church of Agia Triada (outside Korce, near the barracks).
  - b. Church of Agios Athanasios (on the height above Korce).
  - c. House below the Korce brewery, to the left as one goes up to the village of Byria.
  - d. Church of Agios Petros in the village of Darda. This is the regimental ammunition store.

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- e. House located above the village of Darda, on the road toward the village of Bobuitsa.
- f. At a distance of 50-100 meters from the last house in the city of Korce and on the right of the highway to Viglista is a gasoline dump. It is below the hill called Malli i Thate" (sic).
- g. To the right of the village of Vitkuki and at a distance of five or six kilometers is an ammunition dump and also a hospital for Greek guerrillas.
- 22. The military hospital of Korce is located on the road to Pogradetz, to the left as one goes from Korce towards the sugar refinery.
- 23. The hospital built by the Italians and used by the Italian troops during the occupation, and located to the right as one goes up towards the village of Boria and below the Korce brewery, is now used as a civilian hospital.
- 24. In the civilian hospital above Korce, near the Korce gymnasium, Greek guerrillas receive treatment.
- 25. Anti-aircraft guns are located as follows:
  - a. Outside the Korce barracks on the road to Erseka and in an apple orchard, there are four anti-aircraft cannon.
  - b. On the hill of the Church of Prophet Elias (above Korce), there is one anti-aircraft cannon.
  - c. On the hill called Malli i Thate", there is one anti-aircraft cannon.
- 26. In the city of Elbasan a regiment of field artillery is based.