

DEC 1951

FBI
FILE
COPY

CLASSIFICATION ~~RESTRICTED~~
~~SECRET~~ INFORMATION
 CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
 INFORMATION FROM
 FOREIGN DOCUMENTS OR RADIO BROADCASTS

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

REPORT

CD NO.

DATE OF INFORMATION 1951

STAT

COUNTRY Albania

SUBJECT Sociological - Religion, persecution

HOW

PUBLISHED Weekly newspaper; in ~~RESTRICTED~~ CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

DATE DIST. 8 Apr 1952

WHERE

PUBLISHED Algiers, Rome

CLASSIFICATION

Control: 1

(Type: F-000)

NO. OF PAGES 2

DATE

PUBLISHED 1 Oct, 27 Dec

LANGUAGE French, Italian

SUPPLEMENT TO
PORT NO.

STAT

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS INFORMATION AFFECTING THE NATIONAL DEFENSE
 OF THE UNITED STATES WITHIN THE MEANING OF ESPIONAGE ACT 50
 U. S. C. § 1 AND 21, AS AMENDED. ITS TRANSMISSION OR THE REVELATION
 OF ITS CONTENTS IN ANY MANNER TO AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON IS PRO-
 HIBITED BY LAW. REPRODUCTION OF THIS FORM IS PROHIBITED

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

SOURCE Newspaper and periodical as indicated.

REPORT FAVORABLE TREATMENT OF SUNNI MOSLEMS,
SEVERE PERSECUTION OF CATHOLICS IN ALBANIA

SAYS 71 PERCENT ARE MOSLEMS -- Algiers, Liberte, 27 Dec 51

Returning from Albania, where he interviewed the Grand Sunnite Mufti, Hafiz Musa Hajj Ali, Ahmet Mahmoudi writes that the People's Republic of Albania guarantees freedom of worship in its Constitution.

Seventy-one percent of the Albanian people are said to belong to the Moslem faith, the majority being Sunnis, while about 10,000 belong to the Bektashi sect which does not exist in North Africa. It is found, however, in Iran, Iraq, and Egypt. The Grand Mufti resides in Tirana. There are also about 100,000 Catholics and 50,000 Greek Orthodox Christians. There is a Sunni cultural center in each village to manage the funds, buildings, and feasts and direct religious matters. It is elected democratically every year, so that it must satisfy the people.

The Mufti said that there are 1,000 mosques in the country. A school has been organized for muftis and imams. The Sunnis have an annual budget of 10 million leks which suffices for administration costs, personnel, and building maintenance. The government supplies 7 million of this total, the other 3 million being derived from property belonging to the cult. Government aid is proportionate to the number of persons in any cult.

RECOUNTS FRESH PERSECUTIONS OF ALBANIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH -- Rome, L'Albanie Libre, 1 Oct 51

The Albanian Catholic Church, one of the smallest Catholic communities subjected to Communist attacks, has been perhaps the heaviest sufferer. The following data is offered as proof of this assertion.

- 1 -

CLASSIFICATION ~~RESTRICTED~~

STATE	☒ NAVY	☒ NSRB	DISTRIBUTION																	
ARMY	☒ AIR	☒ FBI																		

STAT

Of the 120 priests and monks composing the Albanian Catholic clergy, 40 have been hanged or tortured to death and about 30 are in prison or sentenced to hard labor. The rest live miserably, expelled from their monasteries or parish houses, deprived of bread ration coupons, continually humiliated and insulted. The 70-year old archbishop, poet, and man of letters, Mgr Vincenzo Prennushi, died as the result of forced labor in the Maliq swamps. Two bishops, Mgr Frano Gjino and Mgr Gjorj Volaj, were shot after a summary trial. The Provincial of the Albanian Franciscans, Father A. Harapi, author of valuable philosophical works and an eloquent orator, and Dom Andrea Zadeja, writer of dramatic poems, were also shot. Two of the most cultured and distinguished men of letters, Lazar Shantoja and Father B. Palaj, were tortured to death.

Other religious sects such as the Bektashi (Mohammedan reformists) have also suffered but to a lesser degree than the Catholics. The reason is that the USSR and its Satellites cannot tolerate citizens who recognize the moral authority of persons or organizations outside these Communist-dominated areas. All the sees are now vacant, except that of Pulati, where the aged and failing Monsignor Shllaku is braving a new wave of persecution and terror, with the aid of the few surviving priests in other areas.

- E N D -