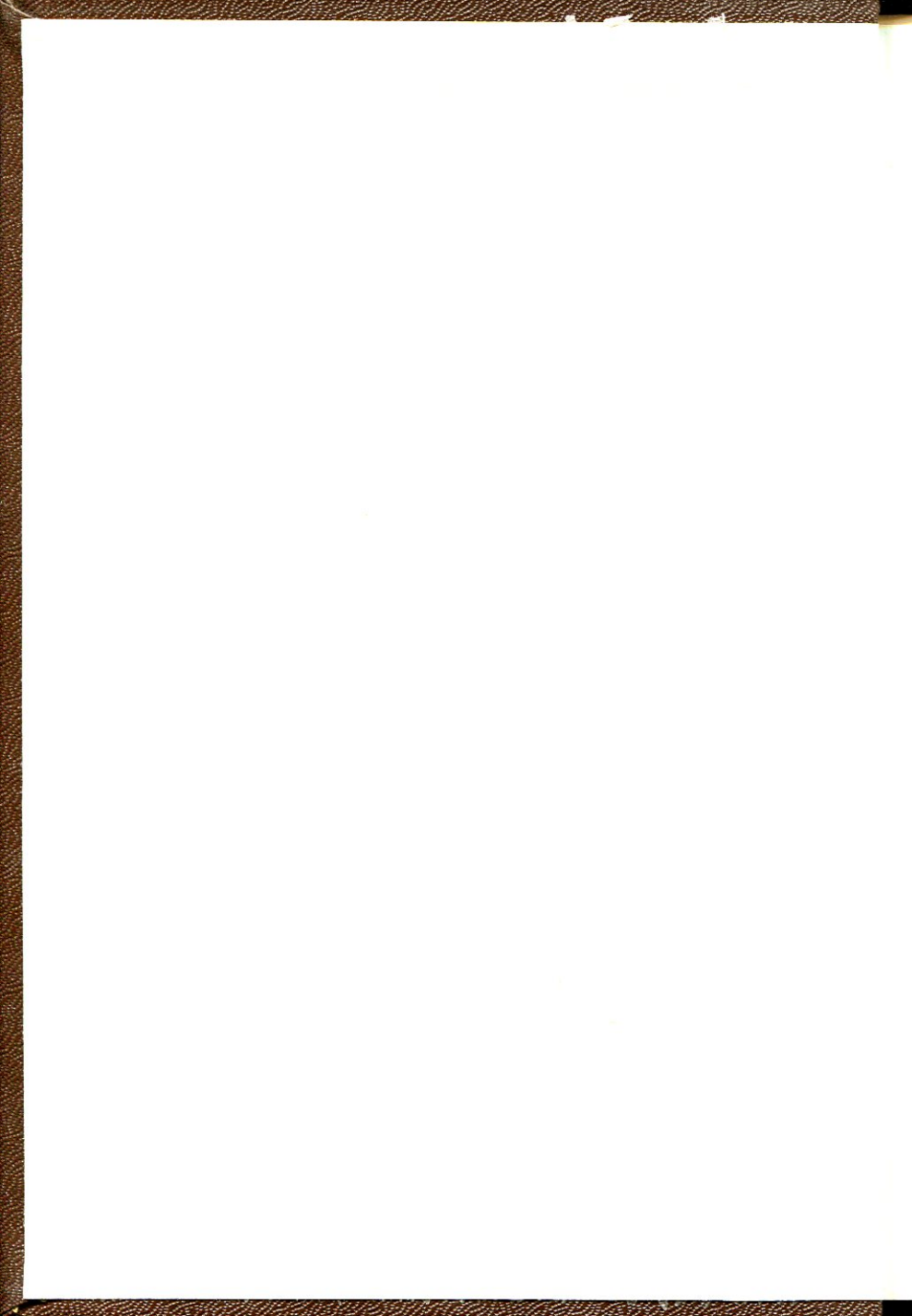
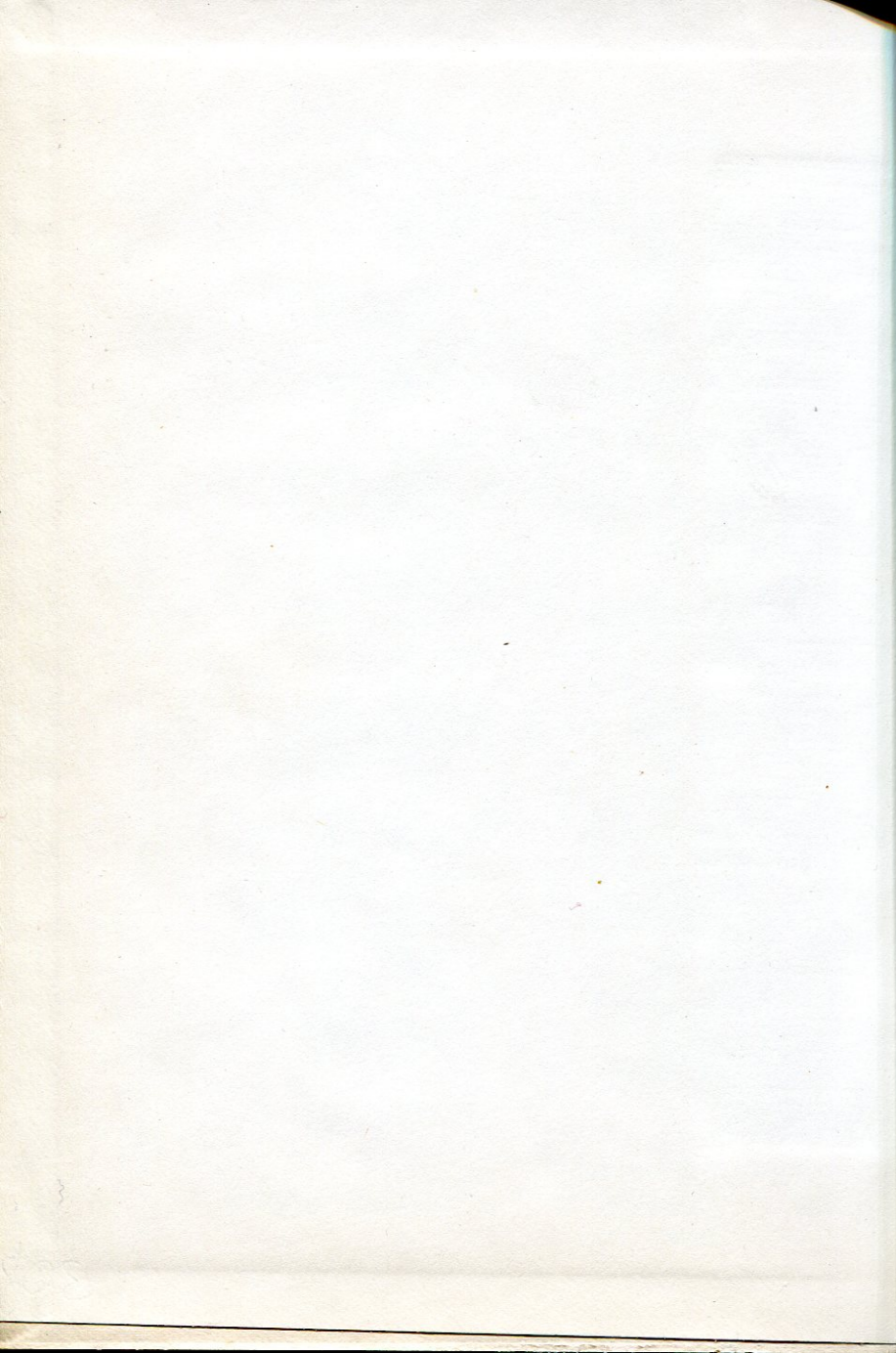
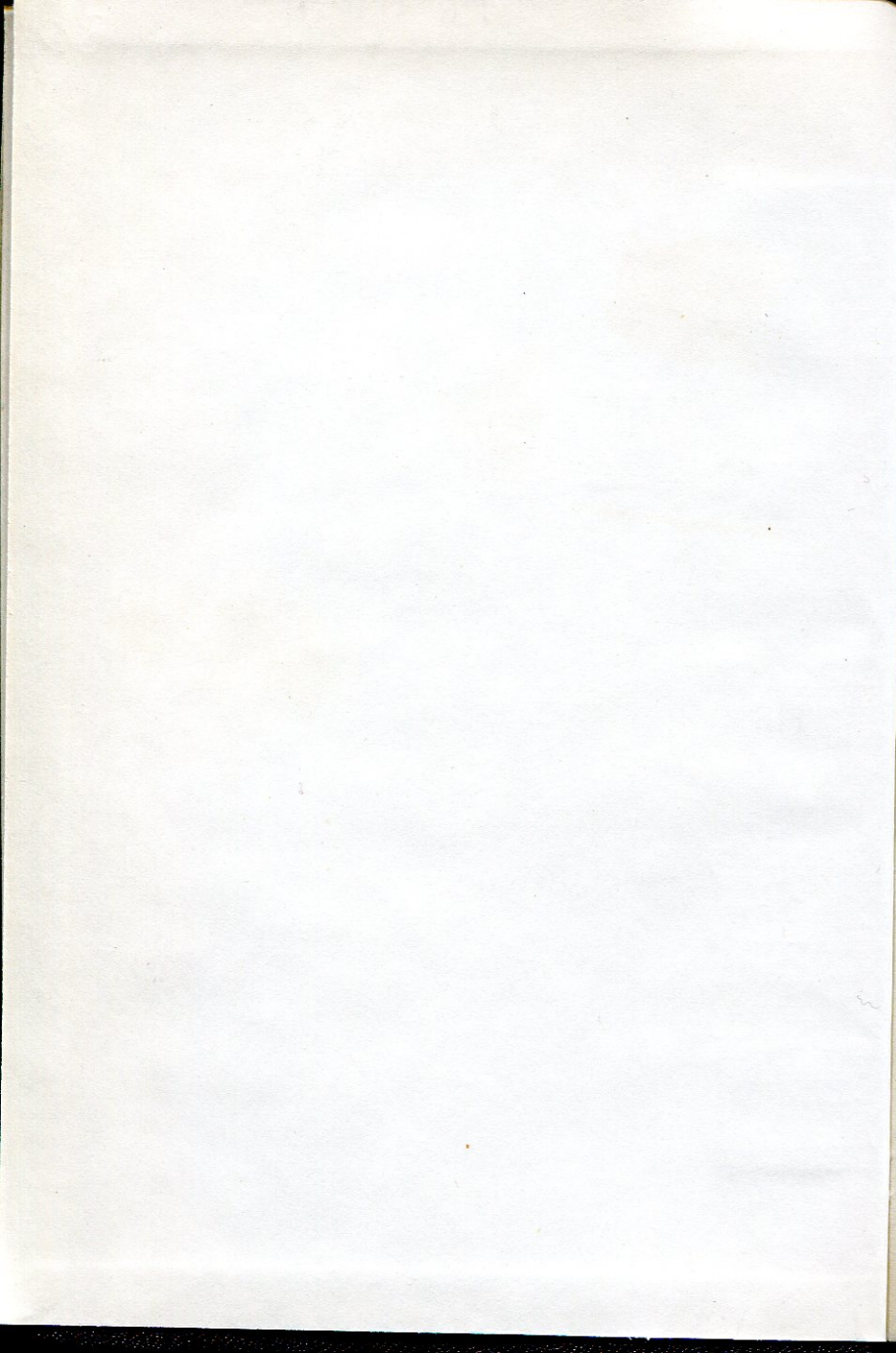


**THE NATIONAL
CONFERENCE OF STUDIES
ON THE ANTI-FASCIST
NATIONAL LIBERATION
WAR OF THE ALBANIAN
PEOPLE**








**THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
THE INSTITUTE OF MARXIST-LENINIST STUDIES
TIRANA UNIVERSITY**



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The National Conference of Studies on the Anti-fascist War of the Albanian people, organized by the Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Marxist-Leninist Studies at the Central Committee of the Party of Labour of Albania and the Tirana University, was held in Tirana from 8-11 November 1974.

This volume comprises the main reports presented at this conference.

**OPENING SPEECH BY PROF. ALEKS BUDA,
PRESIDENT OF THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES**

Comrades,

Honoured guests,

Our conference, the National Conference of Studies on the Anti-fascist National Liberation War of the Albanian people for which we have gathered at this solemn moment, starts its proceedings under the emblem of great and glorious events: the 33rd anniversary of the day of the founding of the Communist Party of Albania, and on the eve of the 30th anniversary of the liberation of the country and the triumph of the people's revolution.

This is not and could not be a mere coincidence. The years intervening between the tragic day of April 7, 1939, and the day of rejoicing, November 29, 1944, remain under the star of November 8, 1941, under the emblem of the Communist Party of Albania. Their significance is of such a character as to divide and delimitate periods in the entire historic process, not only on a national plane, but also on an international one; they constitute the climax of the glorious road of a nation with a thousand year old history. The historic experience of an epoch spanning more than thirty years gives history the right to affirm that the epic that began on November 8, 1941, placed our people, small in number but great

in history, in the front ranks of the nations, in struggle, both yesterday and today, against any kind of imperialism, in struggle both yesterday and today, against any kind of revisionism, on the front of battle for the vital and lofty cause of the freedom of nations, for the great cause of the triumph of the revolution and communism.

It is therefore an indescribable joy and as great and signal honour for us that precisely on this historic day, we have amongst us the founder of the Communist Party of Albania and the beloved teacher and leader of our people, comrade Enver Hoxha. To him, and to the members of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Party, the Presidium of the People's Assembly, and the Government, and together with them, to all those present, go our warmest thanks for the honour they do us through their participation in this major event for Albanian science.

* * *

Although it had traversed a difficult road of struggle and effort, of suffering, sacrifice, and defeat — the tragedy of the fascist occupation on April 7, 1939 was the final act — this nation, with inexhaustible energy, rose again, sword in hand, fearless and undaunted, and found in itself the material and moral strength, brought forth from its bosom, from the bosom of the working class, as its most advanced force, the Communist Party of Albania, a leadership such as it had never had in the entire course of its history. The stormy events of the Second World War tested this Party, steeled it, and charged it with the historic mission of forging the destiny of the country and people, not only for the immediate task of the fight against the fascist occupation, but also for the eventual construction of a free, independent, and socialist Albania.

Rallying the soundest and most progressive forces of the nation around the working class and its vanguard, the Communist Party of Albania led the masses forward through the tortuous paths of history, through dramatic crises, followed with trust and affection by the masses in the most difficult conditions of the war, when the ruling classes, those who paraded themselves with the «historic» claim of being the «genuine» leaders of the nation, betrayed the people, and when false friends fought the Party, both from within its ranks and outside them. Making a scientific Marxist-Leninist analysis of the internal and international conditions, which was fully borne out by subsequent events, the Communist Party of Albania, with Enver Hoxha, its founder and leader, at the head, took in its hands the destiny of the war and of the people's revolution, and thereby also the destiny of the country and the nation, and led them to final victory, the liberation of the country from the fascist Italian and German invaders.

Together with the victory over the invaders and their local lackeys, the Communist Party of Albania also carried out the second historic task, which the national bourgeoisie, even through its most advanced representatives, had not been able even to put forward, much less carry out: from the storms of the war people's democratic Albania emerged, accomplishing within a few years a historic process which, under normal conditions, would have required decades and which other nations, more advanced than ours, at that time, have not been able to achieve even now. On November 29, before the Albanian people, reborn in blood and ruins, was opened the road towards new, even more magnificent victories, the road of the construction of socialism and communism.

Because of the very nature of fascism, the Anti-fascist National Liberation War of our people developed in an international framework, in the context of the struggle waged by the mutually supporting forces of

the peoples who had been hit by fascist aggression. Carried out on a world scale, the fascist aggression placed the progressive advance of all mankind in peril. Under these conditions, our Anti-fascist National Liberation War had an international significance; the contribution of the Albanian people to the cause of freedom, to this gigantic clash of forces, such as world history had never known, becomes even more notable if we reckon the very large number, in proportion to their limited forces, of their finest sons and daughters, who made the supreme sacrifice. While contributing to the destruction of universal empires that had pretensions to sealing the fate of the world for thousands of years, the Anti-fascist National Liberation War of our people created a new Albania, free, independent, and sovereign, created the People's Republic of Albania, eliminated, for good and all, from the map of the Balkans and Europe that «weak link», as our country was called in the past, that starting point for aggressions involving not only Albania, but also the Balkans and Europe. With this victory, the ratio of forces on an international scale changed in favour of the revolution and the struggle of the oppressed peoples and precisely at one of its most sensitive spots.

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The epoch of the Anti-fascist National Liberation War of our people is one of the historic periods to which all our social sciences have devoted the greatest attention. Evidence of this is the great amount of work done for the tracking down, collection, processing and publication of documentary material, as well as a series of studies analysing and summing up the experience of its particular aspects.

Proceeding from our Marxist-Leninist methodology, our science studies the period of the National Liberation

War, not only as an event of a merely political and military character, confined within the chronological limits of the years 1939-1944; such a great people's war cannot be understood if it is seen, as it is by most foreign historians, detached from the internal social-economic, political, and cultural processes of the past, of which it is the objective result. Just as it is connected with the past, it is also connected by a thousand threads with the following years; like all great historic events, it can be assessed correctly only if viewed in its many-sided consequences in all fields of the life and creative activity of the people. To tell the truth, we must admit that in this direction our scholars still have an obligation to our people.

For the accomplishment of this very responsible task, the scholar finds invaluable and irreplaceable assistance in the works of comrade Enver Hoxha which, in themselves, are contemporary historical sources, and, most of them, also, historical treatises with penetrating scientific analyses of problems. Next to them stands the all-round treatment of the epoch in question in the History of the PLA, which now is being supplemented with a new monumental work, the History of the Anti-fascist National Liberation War, in two volumes. In the field of historiography, without doubt, another very important contribution is made by the histories of the brigades of our National Liberation Army, with the history of the 1st Shock Brigade taking the main place, together with monographs on the National Liberation War in the former main regions of the country and various treatises on the different aspects of the war. It is in order at this point to emphasize that the monographs on villages, also constitute an irreplaceable source, and these should be generalized if we want to reflect the truly popular character of our war.

From the work carried out in an organized form over the thirty years of the people's power, from the results achieved by historians and scholars in other

fields, as well as from the activities of numerous cadres engaged in these studies, the conference aims at making a general synthesis of what has been achieved. Many scholars from the institutes of the Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Marxist-Leninist Studies at the Central Committee of the PLA, the Tirana University, the «V.I. Lenin» Higher Party School, the apparatus of the Central Committee and the apparatus of the party committees, the departments, schools and scientific circles in Tirana and other centres, have been engaged in this conference.

Let this important political and social action become a further encouragement for all the workers of science to study this glorious epoch of our history more deeply and allsidedly, let these studies be of ever greater service in the patriotic and revolutionary education of our people, and in particular, of our youth; let the youth find in these legendary deeds of their fathers, in the great lessons and example they provided for their contemporaries and their successors, a source of inspiration to continue their work for the triumphant construction of socialism under the leadership of our heroic Party!

In declaring open the proceedings of the National Conference of Studies on the National Liberation War of the Albanian people, on behalf of the organizing committee, allow me to express my conviction and belief that our conference, all our studies devoted to the Anti-fascist National Liberation War of the Albanian people, will be a monument of profound gratitude to the finest sons and daughters of our people who laid down their lives for the great cause of the liberation of the country and the triumph of the people's revolution; that they will add to the glory of those who, in the darkest, most difficult and dramatic moments of our national history, never lost their courage and perspective, but sought and found in their class, in their people, the strength to raise their heads and hands high and proudly against the cruel foreign invaders and their traitor lackeys, to smash

the chains of slavery and misery; let them be a monument to our profound love for the heroic Communist Party, today the Party of Labour of Albania, with its founder and leader, comrade Enver Hoxha at its head, the strength, farsightedness, wisdom and organizational ability of which enable it to perform an historic task such as the centuries had never known.

Long live the Party of Labour of Albania!

Long live the Albanian People!

Long live our Marxist-Leninist science!

**THE ANTI-FASCIST NATIONAL LIBERATION WAR —
A GREAT PEOPLE'S REVOLUTION LED BY THE
COMMUNIST PARTY OF ALBANIA**

(Report)

The more time elapses since the years of the National Liberation War, the more gloriously the epic of this titanic clash, which was crowned with the greatest victory of all the liberation wars ever waged by our people, is raised on the pedestal of the centuries-old history of the Albanian people. And this is so because the National Liberation War was not only a life-and-death struggle against the occupiers for the liberation of the country, but also a genuine people's revolution which was organized and led by the Communist Party of Albania.

The Anti-fascist National Liberation War lasted over five years and a half, from the day the fascist Italian army committed its armed aggression against Albania (April 1939) to the day the nazi German army was completely driven from Albanian soil (November 1944). During this period the Albanian people fought and triumphed over two big fascist powers, Italy and Germany, which had successively occupied our country with their troops, as well as over the reactionary organizations and armed forces — the tools of the occupiers.

Though it is an epic in itself and took place in national and international circumstances quite unlike the previous liberation wars, the Anti-fascist National Liberation War cannot be separated from the centuries-long efforts of our people for liberation, independence and progress. It is a link in the historic revolutionary process of national and social liberation which began in the last century with the National Revival, led to the proclamation of national independence in 1912, rose to a higher stage with the June 1924 Revolution and with the democratic and workers' movement of the thirties, and was finally crowned with the victory of November 29, 1944. The Anti-fascist National Liberation War was the highest and the most decisive stage of this process. It was transformed into a broad people's revolution unprecedented in the history of the country. This revolution had its roots deep in the centuries-long struggle of our people for freedom and social justice, and inherited brilliant patriotic and revolutionary traditions, a rich historical experience from the heroic past.

As the highest stage of the popular and revolutionary movements of the country, the people's revolution differed from the previous revolutions not only in that it developed in new internal and external conditions, not only in that it was more organized and more conscious, having a more pronounced mass character, but also in that it had such a revolutionary leadership as the Communist Party of Albania which represented the most progressive class of the country and was guided by Marxist-Leninist science through the complicated situations of the political and social events and phenomena of the Second World War. The Communist Party of Albania gave the Anti-fascist National Liberation War a clear program that responded to the interests of the broadest strata of the people, it employed revolutionary forms and methods of organization that ensured the revolutionary unity of thought and action of the insurgent people and, finally, by its word and example, it

created among the masses that unshakeable confidence in their own strength and in victory, so indispensable in the struggle of a small nation against far bigger and stronger enemy, as the fascist occupiers were. As a result, unlike what had happened with all the people's movements of the past, during the Anti-fascist National Liberation War there took place such important political and social processes which turned this into an anti-imperialist and profoundly democratic people's revolution, and its triumph marked a radical turning point in the history of the country, not only because the national question was finally solved, but also because an overthrow was effected in the existing social relations and the road was opened for the transition to a new and much higher stage, the construction of socialist society.

* * *

The Anti-fascist National Liberation War was transformed into a people's anti-imperialist democratic revolution. The anti-imperialist democratic content of the war was determined, first of all, by the **objective social and political conditions** themselves. In Albania there existed the oppressive political and economic order of the fascist occupation, and also the feudal-bourgeois social relations, which made up the base of support for the occupiers. **In these conditions, two fundamental contradictions emerged:** the contradiction between the people and the occupiers, and the contradiction between the masses of the people and the principal ruling and exploiting classes and strata — the big landowners, tribal chiefs, and the reactionary bourgeoisie. Solving these contradictions was imperative to smash the shackles which prevented the national, social, economic, and cultural development of the country.

The objective conditions, both socio-economic and political, had long since raised the issue of the fulfilment

of the anti-imperialist and democratic tasks of the revolution. After the proclamation of independence and the creation of the Albanian national state in 1912, Albania did not achieve complete independence. It still remained a semi-feudal agrarian country at a time when Europe had long ago eliminated feudalism and the overwhelming majority of its countries had entered the higher stage of capitalist development.

The first attempt, on a national scale, to bring about a democratic and anti-imperialist change in Albania was the June 1924 Revolution. This revolution, which was carried out under the leadership of the national bourgeoisie, could not find a final solution to the national and social problems, because the democratic-bourgeois regime which came to power was shortlived, mainly because of the intervention of international reaction and the lack of a sound leadership and organization of the democratic revolutionary forces. Under the feudal-bourgeois regime of Zog, our country, far from achieving a greater degree of national independence, was turned into a semi-colony of Italy.

In these conditions not only were the ruling classes of the country unable to lead the struggle against the imperialist threat, but, on the contrary, in many cases they themselves became the instruments of imperialist penetration. The feudal lords, tribal chiefs and most of the rich bourgeoisie, who had always served as instruments of the foreign enslavers, became tools of the new fascist occupiers. The bourgeoisie of the country, for its part, was weak, vacillating, and disorganized.

Thus, the fulfilment of the fundamental anti-imperialist democratic tasks remained always on the order of the day.

The communist groups strove to elaborate a program to fulfil these tasks, but they could not achieve their aims, because they did not possess the maturity and energy necessary to elaborate and carry out a correct revolutionary political line on a scientific basis. The

communist groups often made erroneous and contradictory assessments of the socio-economic situation of the country and the strategic tasks emerging from it. There were opinions to the effect that there was no working class and no bourgeoisie and that, therefore, neither were there the conditions for a revolution, that the communists should carry out only a «socialist revolution», that the peasantry «was not revolutionary», that the fascist danger threatening the country could not force the communist into seeking collaboration with the patriotic nationalists, etc. These opinions gave rise to differences on matters of principle, and strife and dissension among the groups, and did not permit the elaboration of a genuine and correct program of struggle against the anti-popular regime of Zog and against imperialism and fascism. Erroneous assessments of the situation and incorrect views on the political tasks of the movement were apparent also in the stand taken by the communist groups even after the occupation of the country up to the founding of the Party.

The Italian occupation of Albania created conditions which made the need to fulfil the anti-imperialist democratic tasks more acute, urgent, clear. The Italian occupation emphasized and sharpened to the highest degree, in particular, the external contradiction between the Albanian people and Italian fascist imperialism which now no longer represented an enemy that merely threatened our national independence and the Albanian national state, but an invading power which had totally stamped out Albanian national independence and sovereignty, and threatened the Albanian people with extermination.

The contradiction between the people and invading Italian imperialism became the primary one. As a result, first of all, the political and social-economic order of the occupation had to be liquidated, the country had to be liberated: this was an indispensable prerequisite to opening the way for the solution of the other contradiction, i.e., the abolition of the feudal-bourgeois relations.

The big landowners, the tribal chiefs and the reactionary bourgeoisie which, had allowed the transformation of Albania into an Italian semi-colony, after the occupation of the country, became the social base, the tools of the fascist enslavers, who, for their part, became the support for feudal-bourgeois relations and the principal exploiting classes. However, this interconnection did not affect the order of priorities: **«The main objective,»** comrade Enver Hoxha emphasized, **«is the struggle against the occupier and, parallel with this, the struggle against the traitors»¹.**

The order of priorities in the solution of the fundamental contradictions in Albania was also affected by the anti-fascist world war, in the framework of which the anti-fascist liberation war of the Albanian people was being carried out. Even prior to the Second World War, fascism had become the chief enemy of the peoples. With the outbreak of the war, all the world faced a very great danger — fascist enslavement. Germany, Italy and Japan invaded the majority of the countries of Europe, North Africa, and part of Asia. Hitlerite Germany attacked the Soviet Union, the first socialist state. In these circumstances, for all the nations, including our people, the primary task was the struggle to annihilate fascism the greatest common enemy of all mankind.

In accordance with these concrete internal and external conditions, **the chief enemy of our people was the fascist occupier**, against whom the main struggle had to be spearheaded. The struggle against the occupier concerned the broadest strata of the people, for fascism was the greatest oppressor not only of national freedom, but also of democratic freedoms, the supporter of the most reactionary feudal-bourgeois and clerical-medieval forces. These circumstances gave the National Liberation War its pronounced anti-imperialist and profoundly democratic character.

1. Enver Hoxha, Works, vol. 1, p. 443 (Alb. ed.).

This determined also which classes and social strata were to become the motive forces of the National Liberation War.

In the first place, the national and social liberation of the country concerned **the working class and the peasantry** on which the burden of fascist oppression, misery, exploitation and slavery weighed heaviest. Therefore, precisely these classes became the principal motive forces of the war. They set the tone for it, and put their seal upon it with their demands for work, for bread, for freedom and independence, for land and social justice. But the question of national liberation, which stood out as the most imperative task, was an aspiration and demand not only of the working class and the peasantry, but of all the patriotic and progressive forces of the country. Therefore, the issue was raised for the participation «of all the patriotic and anti-fascist forces»¹ of the country, «without distinction as to religion, region, class or political trend»² in the Anti-fascist National Liberation War. Thus, together with the working class and the poor and middle peasantry, the petty-bourgeoisie, the middle bourgeoisie of the cities, and the patriotic intellectuals of different strata also took part in the struggle. The participation of the young people and women of our country was on a particularly broad scale.

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The character of the National Liberation War as a **profoundly popular revolution**, with a general anti-imperialist and democratic tendency, was **reinforced espe-**

1. Resolution of the Meeting of the Communist Groups. PLA, Principal Documents, vol. 1, p. 26 (Alb. ed.).

2. Resolution of the Peza Conference. Documents of the Revolutionary National Liberation Supreme Organs of Power, p. 12 (Alb. ed.).

cially by the fact that it was led by the Communist Party of Albania.

As is known, the triumph of the revolution does not depend only on the revolutionary situation brought about by the general crisis of the occupation, or by other political and economic circumstances. The triumph of the revolution also requires the subjective conditions — the readiness and high political consciousness of the masses and their sound leadership and organization. These conditions never prepare themselves spontaneously. It was the Communist Party of Albania which prepared the subjective conditions for the revolution in Albania. In the circumstances of a profoundly revolutionary situation, the Party gave the anti-fascist resistance its organic cohesion, its clear program, its sound organization, its deeply revolutionary spirit, its mass character, its lofty consciousness and its unshakable confidence in victory.

It was the Party, which, in accordance with all the above-mentioned conditions, knew how to work out the strategic objectives and tasks to be achieved by this war, knew how to link the question of national liberation with that of social liberation.

Right from its founding, the Party laid down in clear-cut terms the strategic objective of the war: «To fight for the national independence of the Albanian people and for a people's democratic government in an Albania free from fascism»¹. In the calls it addressed to the people this objective was expressed in the strategic slogans: «Fight for a free, independent, and people's democratic Albania».

The purpose of this definition of the strategic objective was to realize a radical revolutionary overthrow in connection with the national question and the political and social order, i.e., to show the way for the solution of precisely those fundamental contradictions we mentioned above.

1. PLA, Principal Documents, vol. 1, p. 26 (Alb. ed.).

«The question of state power,» Lenin says, «is the principal question of any revolution.»¹ Therefore, the Anti-fascist National Liberation War, too, as a people's revolution, could not fail to raise this question. But in the concrete circumstances in which our war was being waged, the principal question of the revolution could not be this alone, separated from the question of national liberation. Therefore, the strategic objective, too, of the National Liberation War always contained and presented these two major tasks, national liberation and a people's democratic government, as closely linked with one another.

At a time when the solution of the national question presented itself as the first objective on which the carrying out of the other tasks depended, and when all the anti-fascist forces of the country without distinction of class and political allegiance had to take part in the struggle for the solution of this problem, the question of the class character of the political order could not be more accurately defined. The main thing at that stage was that the people's democratic government and people's democratic Albania would be a negation of any previous government and any previous political order, of the occupation or pre-occupation years. To ensure the unity of all the people in a single national liberation front, without excluding from this struggle even those strata of the people who might have some monarchist tendencies or convictions, the Party considered that it should be left to the people themselves to determine the form of the regime after liberation.

The wise and consistent stand on the question of letting the people decide for themselves about the form of the regime after the war (here is meant only the form of the regime, and not the type of state power), on the one hand, gave every patriot and anti-fascist regardless of his political opinions, the opportunity to throw him-

1. V. I. Lenin, Works, vol. 25, p. 432 (Alb. ed.).

self into war against the occupiers and traitors; on the other hand, it barred the way to all claims of Zog and his followers who wanted to proclaim the monarchist Zogite regime as the only lawful regime in Albania, in opposition to the will of the people.

The main objective during the Anti-fascist National Liberation War was to ensure the **triumph of the revolution in the political field**. But this does not mean that the other objective, the solution of the economic-social problems of the revolution, i.e., the destruction of the economic base of the old order, was left aside. Political revolution is not and cannot be an aim in itself. **The seizure of power is the first and indispensable prerequisite for economic-social transformations in the life of the country.**

The profound revolutionary processes that took place during the National Liberation War, such as the emergence of the Communist Party of Albania as the leadership, and the mass participation of the workers, poor peasants, and other oppressed strata in the councils of the Front, in the organs of the state power, and in the partisan and volunteer units of the National Liberation Army, and on the other hand, the collaboration of the exploiting classes with the occupiers, made it possible, among other things, to implement as early as during the period of war, some measures that affected the economic base of foreign capital and the big landowners. But these measures were always taken in the framework of the war against the occupiers and traitors. The 2nd National Liberation Conference at Labinot decided on the confiscation of all property owned by Italian companies in Albania (factories, mines, farms, stores of machinery and building materials, dwelling houses, etc.) as well as the confiscation of the property owned by the people's enemies, the majority of whom were big landowners, tribal chiefs, and village notables. The confiscated property became the people's property and was put into the national liberation fund. The Anti-fascist Committee,

i.e., the Provisional Revolutionary Government, which emerged from the Përmet Congress, issued orders that the land of the traitors should be given to the farmers who tilled it, together with the produce, livestock and farming tools going with it. The farmers were also allowed to work state owned property and to reap the benefit of the produce and other income. The Anti-fascist Committee also undertook the registration of land, as well as the compilation of statistics about the extent of arable land, livestock, the number of landless peasants or peasants with little land, as a first step towards the implementation of the land reform after the war.

These measures testify to the ever greater deepening of the revolutionary character of the Anti-fascist National Liberation War which, while always keeping national liberation as its central task, had made indispensable the destruction of the political rule of the big landowners and the bourgeoisie together with the destruction of the rule of the occupiers, and, at the same time had prepared strong premises for the liquidation of the feudal and capitalist economic base as well as the destruction of the economic base of foreign capital.

In the political and social circumstances of the National Liberation War, however precise and clear the strategic objective laid down by the Party might be, the fate of the people's revolution would also depend on its extension and depth, on the methods and ways through which this objective would be attained, step by step, by the aroused masses. Assessing the problem in this way, in order to achieve national independence and establish democracy, **the Communist Party laid down and fought for the fulfilment of three fundamental tasks:** the uniting of the people in the National Liberation Front, the organization of the general armed uprising of the people and the creation of the regular National Liberation Army, the destruction of the old political power and the

setting up of the new political power of the national liberation councils.

The Party considered these three tasks as three component parts of the revolution, organically linked with one another, as tasks that had to be carried out simultaneously and completely in the course of the war. Failure to fulfil any one of these tasks would mean that the strategic objective, would not be achieved, i.e., the revolution would not triumph.

«The Revolution,» says comrade Enver Hoxha, «is the deed of the masses. Without their conviction, preparation, mobilization, and organization, no revolution can triumph.»¹ It took time for the masses to be convinced by their own experience of the correctness of the political line of the Party, of its ability to lead them in the struggle through which the unity and the organization of the people would be achieved and their resistance transformed into an armed liberation war.

It is a merit acknowledged and confirmed by life that our Communist Party, led by the Central Committee, with comrade Enver Hoxha at its head, knew how to utilize the concrete objective conditions, the situation that arose, the weaknesses of the enemy, and the demands and aspirations of the broad masses of the people.

It is no accident that only ten months after the founding of the Party, on its initiative, the Peza Conference (September 1942) was called together, at which, in fact, the minimum program of the Party became the program of the National Liberation War. While defining the fulfilment of the above mentioned tasks as an indispensable condition for the achievement of the strategic objective of the National Liberation War, at the same time, this conference laid the political and organizational foundations of the National Liberation Front, the people's

1. Enver Hoxha, Report at the 6th Congress of the PLA. The 6th Congress of the PLA, 1-7 November 1971. Tirana, 1972, p. 235 (Alb. ed.).

state power, the national liberation councils, and the armed uprising.

The Party considered as the only correct solution of each separate task, **that it should be carried out in a revolutionary way**, on the basis of the uncompromising struggle against the principal enemy — the occupiers and their stooges inside the country — without yielding to the difficulties and obstacles that would inevitably emerge on the road of the revolution.

The Party insisted that **the union of the people in the National Liberation Front should be realized through fighting, and only through fighting** against the occupiers and traitors, and only on the basis of the anti-fascist revolutionary program adopted at the Peza Conference. Talks with representatives of different nationalist trends were not excluded, but these talks were aimed only at finding common ground for unity, always on the basis of the war and the program of the National Liberation Front, i.e., of the revolutionary line of the Party.

Through determined revolutionary struggle and work, it was possible to attain the steel unity of the anti-fascist, democratic forces in the National Liberation Front around the Communist Party. The Party kept unaltered its strategic objective of the union the people in the war regardless of class and political opinions, always considering the occupiers as the main enemy and directing the spearhead of the struggle against them, while fighting the «Balli Kombëtar», «Legaliteti» and the other reactionary trends as tools of the fascist occupiers, and not as exploiting classes. It was impossible to step beyond this framework, for otherwise the war and the triumph of the revolutionary forces gathered around the Communist Party would have been endangered.

The profoundly revolutionary solution of the problems of the people's revolution brought about the continued deepening of the class differentiation of the internal socio-political forces. In the Autumn of 1943 such a differentiation reached its climax. At that time, two

groups, irreconcilable mortal enemies, stood face to face.

In the group of the revolutionary forces, the working class, the poor peasantry and the other oppressed strata of town and countryside played the major role. In the opposite group, the major role was played by the big landowners and merchants, tribal chiefs, and rich peasants who «bound themselves hand and foot with the invading enemy against the people»¹ in order to defend the existing feudal-bourgeois order and to guard their wealth, privileges, and political power, which were endangered by the victorious conclusion of the National Liberation War.

The union of the people in the National Liberation Front proved unbreakable in the face of the powerful blows of the enemy. It expanded continuously, admitting to its ranks even those people who had been deceived but who, faced with the triumphant march of the National Liberation War, recognized their error, abandoned the road of treason, and joined the anti-fascist revolutionary forces.

The continuous deepening of the revolutionary character of the National Liberation War and the union of the masses of the people in the Front did not change the broad basis of the political and social forces taking part in this revolution.

It should be pointed out that considering the conditions of our country, the Communist party devoted particular attention to the peasantry, and, thus, in the process of the war, it laid the foundations for the alliance of the peasantry with the working class. The peasantry became the broadest base of the National Liberation Front, the main striking force in the general armed uprising, and the great support of the people's democratic state power born from this struggle. Over the tidal wave of the anti-fascist revolutionary movement, it linked itself with steel bonds with the Communist Party, and through the Party,

1. Enver Hoxha, Report at the 4th Congress of the Democratic Front. Reports and Speeches 1967-1968, p. 165 (Alb. ed.).

with the working class, and fought with determination for the implementation of the revolutionary political line of the Communist Party, thus bearing the main brunt of the war.

This did not happen by accident. The peasantry, which made up the overwhelming majority of the population, harboured in its bosom profoundly patriotic traditions and great revolutionary energies. Only in the program of the Communist Party did it see and feel sure that its burning desires for freedom, land and progress would be fulfilled. That is why, it became so resolute a fighter for the implementation of the program of the Party in the National Liberation War; that is why after the war, too, it continued to march with determination on the road of the Party as a reliable supporter and fiery defender of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It should be emphasized that, although there was a broad base for the socio-political forces of the National Liberation War, and although the peasantry played a decisive role in this war, as its largest forces, **the Party kept intact the leading role of the working class in this struggle.**

The union of the people and their armed struggle created the necessary base and possibilities for the emergence and development of the power of the national liberation councils.

On the question of the state power, comrade Enver Hoxha stressed, **«there cannot be any ambiguity: only the power of the councils and no other power should exist; there is no compromise or duality about this»¹.** It is well-known how strongly the ill-famed Mukje agreement and other deviations were condemned from this determined revolutionary stand. The proclamation of the councils, by the 2nd National Liberation Conference of Labinot in September 1943, as **«the sole power of the**

1. Enver Hoxha, Letter to all regional party committees, October 1. 1943. Works, vol. 1, p. 427 (Alb. ed.).

people in Albania», was the logical result of the line defined by the Party regarding the question of the state power.

In struggle against the enemy, the power of the national liberation councils gained strength and rich experience in matters of government as the only state power of the people in Albania. This rapid progress made on the question of the state power and the triumphant march of the Anti-fascist National Liberation War on all fronts, imposed the necessity of calling the Congress of Përmet which was convened in May 1944. This Congress laid the foundations, according to the will of the people, of the new state of people's democracy; it created the Anti-fascist National Liberation Council, as the first people's assembly, and the sole representative body of the sovereignty of the Albanian people and state, and the Anti-fascist Committee as a provisional government which was transformed into the Democratic Government of Albania at the 2nd Meeting of the Anti-fascist National Liberation Council, held in Berat in October 1944.

Thus in the course of the war and without waiting for its end, the old fascist and landowner-bourgeois state power was demolished and replaced with the new democratic power of the national liberation councils; moreover, when the necessary conditions had been created, the democratic government was formed and the new Albanian state of the people's democracy was set up according to the will of the people.

The struggle of the insurgent Albanian people, which was being waged for the liberation of the country as well as for the destruction of the old political order and for the setting up of the new power, led also to the creation of a people's armed force organized as an army, ranging from the first guerrilla units and volunteer partisan detachments, up to the regular National Liberation Army.

Its fundamental feature, that which made it a new army of the people's revolution, lay in the fact that the CPA secured the political and military leadership in it.

The fighters of the National Liberation Army, in which the workers, the most revolutionary section of the youth of towns, took part on a wide scale, as well as an overwhelming majority of the peasants, especially the poor peasants, were inspired by the Party with a fighting spirit. They were imbued with revolutionary feelings, tempered with the virtues of proletarian morality and the best national traditions, and made conscious of the necessity of dedicating themselves wholly and solely to serving the interests of the people and the homeland. Created on these foundations, the National Liberation Army assisted the people of the liberated areas to set up and defend the new political power, and took part, together with the people and their power, in solving problems of an economic, social and cultural character. These new features of the army of the insurgent people constituted the soundest guarantee that it would remain unswervingly loyal to the revolution and its objectives, as defined by the Party.

This was the kind of army, with over 70,000 fighters, strongly supported by the people, led by the CPA and by the General Staff with comrade Enver at the head, which successfully carried out its historic mission. It drove the occupation forces from Albanian soil, destroyed the old political order as well as the reactionary organizations and forces which had made common cause with the enemy, and became the reliable defender of the new state power that was being set up.

From one stage to another, the people's revolution was constantly deepened and tempered through innumerable tests and perils, such as the terror in the cities, the large-scale military operations carried out one after another in strength by the joint German-quisling forces, the brutal attempts of the Anglo-Americans at intervening in order to rescue the Zogist-Ballist reactionary forces and the landowner-bourgeois order from demise, as well as through many other political, economic and military difficulties. The unity of the people in the National Liberation Front, the power of the nation-

nal liberation councils and the National Liberation Army, under the wise and bold leadership of the CPA, proved unbreakable and fully capable of ensuring the final victory over the internal and external enemies.

How did the CPA manage to emerge as the sole leader of the insurgent people in the National Liberation War?

To lead the masses of the people is the ardent desire of any party of the working class, since leadership by such a party, which ensures the hegemonous role of the working class in revolution, is a law for the victory of the revolution. But not every workers' party achieves this end.

Both objective and subjective factors played a part in ensuring the leading role of our Party in the war.

One important factor which helped the CPA to become the leadership and to achieve this relatively quickly, was the revolutionary situation in Albania. The absence of other political parties in the country can be mentioned as a favourable circumstance. Owing to its weakness and incapability, the Albanian bourgeoisie was unable to create a political party of its own which could have played any significant role, and even less, a leading role in the war against fascism. But neither the general crisis of fascism and the revolutionary situation in the country, nor any other circumstances, made, or could have made the CPA automatically the leader of the Anti-fascist War.

The Party became the leadership owing to its correct Marxist-Leninist political line and its ability to implement this line, basing itself on the Marxist-Leninist theory, the objective conditions, the revolutionary situation, and on its own revolutionary experience and that of the masses of the people.

The Party, as comrade Enver says, «gave the insurgent people a clear program of action and showed them

the only correct way to put it into practice»¹. This program responded very well to the general demand of the masses for the liberation of the homeland, to the burning desires of the common townspeople and peasants for freedom, bread, land, democracy and progress, to the interests of the people and of the revolution on a national and international scale.

However, to work out a correct line is only one aspect of the job. No matter how correct the political line of a party of the working class is, it remains lifeless unless the party is itself determined to implement it and is capable of implementing it.

The CPA was created as a party of action, to defend the interests of the people and of the homeland through war, and not as a party of idle talk and sterile debates in parliaments clubs, or wordy newspapers. Our Party was not created by breaking away from some social-democrat party. Social-democratic traditions had been almost non-existent in the Albanian workers' movement. Right from the beginning, the CPA was created as a revolutionary party of the working class, as a party of the new type, built on Marxist-Leninist ideological and organizational foundations, as a party free of the mentality and methods of parliamentarianism and legal activity. It was born in the conditions of underground activity and fascist terror. «The role of the Party in this war», comrade Enver Hoxha stressed, «should be one of inspiration and leadership, not with words and debates, but with concrete deeds, by merging with the masses, with their practical life.»¹

It was precisely the revolutionary activity of the Party, the courage, justice, honesty, and example of the vanguard fighter, of the communist, that convinced the

1. Enver Hoxha, Speech on the 25th anniversary of Liberation. Speeches 1969-1970, p. 82 (Alb. ed.).

2. Enver Hoxha, Report at the Meeting of the CC of the CPA, February 1943. Works, vol. 1, p. 230 (Alb. ed.)

masses, through their own experience, of the correctness of the political line of the Party, so that they embraced this line and recognized the Party as their only rightful leadership.

But how was it possible for a new, small Party, without much revolutionary experience, to work out such a correct line and put it into practice with such determination?

First of all, it relied strongly on the ideology of the working class and on the revolutionary experience of its own people, and it remained loyal to the principles of Marxism-Leninism and implemented them creatively.

In this an important role was played by its proletarian organization, and the revolutionary implementation with unswerving strictness of the Leninist proletarian norms in its structure and entire inner life, especially the steel unity in the party ranks both in working out and in implementing its revolutionary political line. Our Party had to fight between two fires, against both the external enemy and the enemy inside the Party, against any manifestation of sectarianism and opportunism.

This resolute, principled and all-sided struggle of the Party enabled its members, regardless of their social status, which was mainly peasant and petty-bourgeois (due to the objective social conditions of the country), to become tempered and imbued with a profound proletarian consciousness, to work and fight like genuine vanguard proletarians, very closely linked with the masses of the people, and to become ardent champions of the people's interests.

These were some of the circumstances and characteristics which made our Party, although very small in numbers (only 200 at its creation, and only 2,800 at the end of the war), such a mighty force as to be capable of organizing and leading an entire people in war against savage and powerful enemies, and of ensuring such decisive and vital victories within the space of three years.

An important role in transforming the Anti-fascist National Liberation War into a people's revolution was played by the revolutionary line followed by the Communist Party of Albania towards the great anti-fascist world coalition.

The Anti-fascist National Liberation War of the Albanian people was a direct component of the Great Anti-fascist World War. As such, its fate was linked with the destruction of fascism on a world scale as the common enemy of all peoples. Proceeding from this stand, the CPA determined its own strategic and tactical attitude towards the Anti-fascist World War and towards the participants in this war.

The Communist Party and the National Liberation Front, immediately after its creation, issued the call «we must link our National Liberation War as closely as possible with the just war of the Soviet Union, Britain, and the United States of America, as well as with the war of all peoples oppressed under the heel of fascism»¹ and in the first place, «with the heroic war of the Soviet Union, which is on the forefront of the liberation struggle against fascism»².

Even before this, the Albanian communist, democrats and patriots, fighting against the fascist danger which threatened Albania, had expressed their solidarity with the nations attacked by the fascists; with the Chinese people when Japan attacked China, with the people of Ethiopia when Italy invaded Abyssinia, with the Austrian and Czechoslovak peoples when Germany occupied these countries. The progressive and peace-loving forces of our country condemned the betrayal of the peoples by the «Western democracies», which reached its climax with the shameful Munich Agreement. The anti-fascist feelings

1. The PLA, Principal documents, vol. 1, p. 85, (Alb. ed.),

2. Idem, p. 31.

of the Albanian revolutionaries and patriots were especially apparent in defence of the revolution of the Spanish Republic, which was attacked by Italy, Germany, and the Spanish fascists. Scores of Albanian volunteers, many of whom laid down their lives in the war against fascism, fought shoulder to shoulder with the Spanish people and the anti-fascists of the International Brigade.

After invading our country, fascist Italy tried in every way to drag the Albanian people in behind it against those countries on which it had declared war. But our people have never, on any occasion, reconciled themselves to an invader. On the contrary, they have risen even more fiercely against them and linked their liberation war more and more closely with the war of the oppressed peoples. They reacted particularly strongly when the Italian troops, starting from occupied Albanian territory, committed their aggression against the Greek people, as well as later on when the German and Italian armies attacked Yugoslavia. Our freedom-loving people foiled the plan of the Italian enslavers to transform Albania into a calm and secure bridgehead for the invasion of the other countries of the Balkans. Albania became a land on fire, its soil burning under the feet of the Italian aggressors.

The perfidious attack of Germany against the Soviet Union was not only received with great indignation in Albania, but it also gave fresh impetus to the liberation war of the Albanian people, who, as comrade Enver Hoxha says, now «felt that their blood would not be shed in vain»¹.

The Communist Party and the National Liberation Front, making a very correct assessment of the anti-fascist coalition of the people and of the alliance of the Soviet Union with Great Britain and the United States of America as a historical necessity which was dictated by

1. Speech at the Meeting of the Presidium of the National Liberation General Council, April 15, 1944. Central Party Archives.

the circumstances for saving the world from fascist bondage, worked with might and main, all through the war years, to strengthen the linking of our anti-fascist war with the Anti-fascist World War, and made the insurgent Albanian people one of the most active participants in the coalition of the Anti-fascist World War.

In proportion to its very small population and territory, insurgent Albania made a valuable contribution to the common victory over fascism, by fully engaging in this war 15 Italian and German divisions and inflicting heavy losses on the enemy. It did not permit the Italian and German occupiers to send even a single small detachment of Albanian mercenaries to fight on the Soviet Front or any other front outside the country. On the contrary it sent thousands of fighters of its National Liberation Army to aid the valiant Yugoslav peoples and the Albanian brothers of Kosova, Macedonia, and Montenegro, in the heroic fight they were waging together against the German nazis.

Twenty eight thousand martyrs laid down their lives for the liberation of the homeland and for the common cause of the war against fascism. The active role of the Albanian people in the great anti-fascist war is already recognized throughout the world. Only some bourgeois-fascist and revisionist politicians and historians, have for evil purposes sought to play down and deny this contribution, to obscure this truth.

Of course, the contribution made by our people, as participants of the anti-fascist coalition, is only one aspect of the links of our National Liberation War with the Anti-fascist World War. The other aspect is the great assistance which our insurgent people found in the common war of the great allies and the enslaved peoples against fascism. This war was a powerful support, both for all the other enslaved peoples and for the insurgent Albanian people, because it hastened the inevitable doom of fascism and opened prospects for the final liberation of these peoples, including our own.

An especially important and decisive role in the destruction of fascism was played by the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people and by the Red Army led by J.V. Stalin, a role which the Përmet Congress assessed as «the greatest aid ever given our people throughout history»¹.

The Albanian people have never denied and will never deny such assistance. Although the Red Army did not come to Albania, the Albanian people consider the victory of the Soviet Union over Hitlerite Germany as the decisive external factor of their historic victory, in the sense that, by bearing the brunt of the Second World War and playing the chief role in destroying fascism, the Soviet Union created the appropriate conditions for our people to wage such an heroic and revolutionary war and to achieve the complete liberation of the country and the establishment of the people's power, through their own struggle.

But it would be an ugly distortion to pretend that the war of the great allies in general, or the war of the Soviet Union in particular, constitutes the only principal factor in the liberation of Albania, and more over in the victory of our people's revolution, as is being said in the present day social-imperialist Soviet Union and elsewhere by some politicians, militarymen, and others who have betrayed Marxism-Leninism and the common anti-fascist war, for which some millions of people laid down their lives.

Although it was linked with the destruction of fascism on a world scale, the fate of our Anti-fascist War, was to be decided here, in Albania. We do not say this just today. The CPA, and the National Liberation General Council, calling on the people to unite and rise as one in war against the occupiers and traitors, pointed out to them that «our future depends on this war», «the fate of the country depends on the issue of the war we are waging,

1. Declaration of the Përmet Congress, May 1944. Documents of the Supreme Organs of the Power..... p. 155 (Alb. ed.).

and the more fiercely it is waged against the occupier, the nearer the day of liberation»¹.

The principle of self-reliance which had found its expression in the slogan «Freedom is won through bloodshed and war and does not come as a gift», ran through the entire policy and activity of the CPA, the National Liberation Front and the National Liberation Army, throughout the people's uprising. It was precisely the consistent and determined implementation of this principle which ensured that Albania would achieve its liberation and such a profound revolutionary victory through its own efforts, without the need for the Red Army or any other friendly army to set foot on its territory.

The implementation of the principle of self-reliance was of vital importance not only for the liberation of the country from the occupiers, but in the first place for the fate of the people's revolution, for the future of Albania, as a fully independent and sovereign country, for the destruction of the landowner-bourgeois order, and for the construction of a new democratic order.

However, the British and US imperialist circles did not want to understand that «the old times had gone for good, that history would not be repeated, as they wished, that Albania would no longer be a chattel to be bargained over»². The imperialist great powers have always used, and still try to use, the small countries as tools predestined to serve their predatory interests exclusively. This logic runs through their entire policy and activity towards Albania in the period of the Second World War and after. While reading the British-US documents or the war years concerning Albania, one finds nothing but continued efforts on their part to establish complete control over the National Liberation War and the entire political, social

1. Call of the CC of the CPA, April 1943. PLA, Principal Documents, vol. 1, p. 149 (Alb. ed.).

2. Enver Hoxha, Speech at Përmet on the 20th anniversary of the Përmet Congress, «Zëri i popullit», May 27, 1964.

and economic life of our country, to prevent the war from taking a turn to the «left» and the Communist Party from emerging at the head of the war as the leader of the insurgent people. Their main concern was to bring into the leadership the landowners, tribal chieftains, and the reactionary bourgeoisie with the organisations representing them, the «Legaliteti» and «Balli Kombëtar», to save these organizations (even though they were closely collaborating with the fascist enemy) from the danger of defeat and death, to stop Albania from entering the zone of «Soviet influence», and to bring it within the zone of «British influence». The British and Americans thought that the Albanians could do nothing without the aid of the allies, and that «after the war Albania will not be in a situation to stand on its own feet. It will have to consent to British or American tutelage»¹.

This accounts for the tense and very difficult relations existing between the General Council and the General Staff, on the one hand, and the British and American military missions and the Mediterranean High Command on the other. The Communist Party, the General Council of the Front, and the General Staff, did not accept orders, control, or the imposition of strategy from abroad, but carried out only their own orders, policy, and strategy. They did not tolerate any interference in the internal affairs of the National Liberation War, were not embarrassed by the lack of supplies from the British and Americans, or their failure to recognize the Democratic Government, and did not interrupt, even for a moment, their revolutionary war and work for the complete liberation of the country, and the establishment and consolidation of the people's power. They regarded the presence of the Anglo-American troops in Albania as quite unnecessary and did not permit it. Comrade Enver Hoxha and the General Staff of

1. Secret Document of the Foreign Office, NO R 1753/39/90, June 1943. Public Record Office.

our Army refused the request of the Anglo-Americans to land their forces in Albania allegedly to aid us in the war against the Germans, because they were clear about the latter's imperialist aims, and were convinced that the National Liberation Army and the freedom-loving Albanian people were entirely capable of liberating their own country.

All these things show that self-reliance ensures the victory of the revolution. This does not imply that the support given by external revolutionary forces should be disregarded. Any negation or undervaluation of the support by external revolutionary forces does great harm to the revolution. But, overestimation of external support, and failure to carry out fully and with determination the principle of self-reliance, inevitably leads the liberation war and the revolution to catastrophe, as has happened in a series of countries.

* * *

It emerges from the aforesaid that the Albanian Anti-fascist National Liberation War, as a people's revolution, assumes a more profound significance than that generally given previously to a people's democratic revolution, and differs in content and in its outcome from many other anti-imperialist democratic revolutions.

Our people's revolution not only embraced the overwhelming majority of the people, among which the poor of town and countryside occupied the main place, but, while solving anti-imperialist democratic tasks, while never going beyond the national liberation framework, was carried out under the sole leadership of the Communist Party, that is, of the working class; it was carried out by profoundly revolutionary methods and means, planted and nurtured in its bosom the seed of the socialist revolution, led to the complete victory of national independence and the establishment of the people's power, of the dictator-

ship of the proletariat, detached Albania from the world capitalist system and put it on the road of socialist development. As such it became an inseparable part of the world proletarian revolution.

Because of this significance and this content of the people's revolution in our country, the word «people's» was retained even after liberation: «the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat was named «The People's Republic of Albania», and our proletarian state power is usually called «the people's power». In both cases the word «people's» implies the broad basing of the proletarian, socialist character of the power and the state, on the masses of the people — on the working class, the labouring peasantry, and the socialist intelligentsia, under the leadership of the party of the working class.

By completing all its strategic anti-imperialist and democratic tasks, the Anti-fascist National Liberation War prepared all the conditions for the uninterrupted development of the revolution, for the defence and further development of the victory achieved in this war, and for its transition to the socialist stage.

Unlike what had happened formerly with the national liberation and democratic movements in 1912, 1920, and even in 1924, when, although they fought and shed their blood, after the victory the masses of the people were forced to lay down their weapons, while the power remained in the hands of the ruling and exploiting classes, and unlike what happened in many European countries after the victory over fascism, this time the insurgent people in Albania, led by the Communist Party, retained their weapons so as to ensure not only national liberation but also social emancipation. The war was not yet over, when in May 1944 the 1st Plenum of the CC instructed: «We should do away with the idea that with the departure of the Germans we have done the whole job, and are only waiting for this to lay down our arms and go home. We should make it clear to the comrades of the army that we

are never going to lay down our arms until our country and the Albanian people have won full freedom»¹.

Immediately after liberation, the state of people's democracy, emerging from the Anti-fascist National Liberation War, was proclaimed a People's Republic by the Constituent Assembly according to the will of the people. This was a state of the dictatorship of the proletariat. At the same time, all-sided measures were taken for the defence, consolidation, and improvement of the people's power.

Thirty years have passed since the day of liberation and the triumph of the people's revolution. This has been the period of a triumphant march in all fields of the country's life. The revolution which triumphed in the political field on November 29, 1944, continuing without interruption, triumphed in the economic field, too, with the building of the economic base of socialism both in the town and in the countryside. Now this revolution has entered the new stage of the building of the complete socialist society, in which, along with the strengthening and improvement of the political superstructure and the economic and material-technical base, and the improvement of the relations of production, the aim is to achieve victory in the ideological field as well.

Albania, formerly the most backward country in Europe from the social, economic, and cultural aspect, has succeeded in establishing the most advanced political and economic-social order, socialism, which is inevitably the future of the entire world society. On this foundation, an unparalleled development has been ensured in the economy and culture, in the material-technical base, and in raising the wellbeing of the people.

The colossal revolutionary advances and transformations accomplished in the last 30 years in Albania speak of the historic importance of the victory achieved on No-

1. Enver Hoxha, Report to the 1st Plenum of the CC, May 1944. Works, vol. 2, p. 204 (Alb. ed.).

ember 29, 1944, bear out the correctness of the political line of the Party, and the ever fresh transforming and mobilizing vitality of Marxism-Leninism, and demonstrate the inexhaustible energy, creative ability and unbreakable strength, to be found in a people which is led by the revolutionary party of the working class.

The PLA has never believed that the revolution is won once and forever. The persistent continuation of the struggle to climb all the lofty steps of the revolution, to achieve victory in all its fields and, at the same time, to defend these victories, is more important and more decisive than any of the partial battles to ensure the victory on one or the other front at this or that stage of the revolution.

Just as the revolution can be won, it can also be destroyed. It can be destroyed by direct armed intervention by the internal and external enemies, but it can be also wiped out by peaceful means, when, in the face of the strong pressure of international imperialism and bourgeois reaction, added to the internal bourgeois pressure, its leadership capitulates and betrays Marxism-Leninism and the revolution. This is what happened in Yugoslavia, this is what happened in the Soviet Union and in some other former socialist countries, where, as is known, the revolution had once triumphed.

Now the October Revolution in the Soviet Union and the victories of the socialist revolution in the other countries where the revisionist cliques hold sway are used only as masks to cover the betrayal of the revolution and Marxism-Leninism, to hide from the masses the deviation from the road of revolution and socialism, to hide the re-establishment of capitalism under a «socialist» cloak.

Both the attempts at armed intervention and counter-revolution by the external enemies, the imperialists and revisionists, and by the internal enemies, the landowners, tribal chiefs, and the bourgeoisie, and the attempts at annihilating the revolution by peaceful means, have failed in Albania. This means that the dangers with which

the revolution and socialism are threatened can be avoided. What happened in the Soviet Union and in some other formerly socialist countries by no means shows the weakness of socialism and Marxism-Leninism, as the bourgeois ideologists try to present the matter, but it shows where deviation from the principles of Marxism-Leninism and socialism leads. From this bitter experience our Party has drawn conclusions of great value and has adopted a series of measures to ensure the uninterrupted continuation of the revolution and of socialist construction, and to achieve the complete and final victory of the socialist road the capitalist road of development.

The thirty years that have elapsed since the victory of November 29, 1944 indicate that any country, even a small one like Albania, can march triumphantly ahead on its own feet along the road of revolution and socialism. The internal and external enemies, however savage, big and powerful are not in a position to crush the revolution when it is led by the party of the working class which stands loyal to the people, socialism, Marxism-Leninism, and proletarian internationalism, when this leadership preserves and strengthens steel links with the masses of the people, and makes its political line and the revolution itself the concern of these masses, on the basis of profound revolutionary political and ideological convictions.

Comrades,

It is a great honour to me to present the report at the opening of this Conference today, on a day beloved and dear for all us communists and citizens of our People's Republic, on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of Albania.

November 8, 1941 brought about November 29, 1944, the liberation of the country and the triumph of the people's revolution.

The steel-like foundations of the achievements of these 30 years we are commemorating in these festive days were laid during those three glorious years of the National Liberation War, when dating from when our heroic Party was born on November 8, 1941.

They were foundations laid on the blood and bodies of our comrades who gave their lives for freedom and the happy days we are enjoying now, they were laid through the struggle and sacrifices of an entire nation under the wise and courageous leadership of the Party with comrade Enver Hoxha at the head, therefore our revolution has made great progress and is constantly forging ahead, powerful and invincible. Just as in the fiery days of the great Anti-fascist National Liberation War, having our freedom-loving, hardworking and revolutionary people always by its side, today, too, our Party and its Central Committee with comrade Enver Hoxha and its comrade-in-arms at the head, are holding aloft, unlowered and unsullied the glorious banner of the people's revolution, as they did yesterday facing these bitter and powerful enemies, the Italian and German fascists, and as they do today facing the US imperialists and the Soviet social-imperialists, as well as all their stooges and agents, traitors whom our people have at any time rejected with disgust and thrown on to the rubbish heap.

Long live the heroic Party of Labour and its wise leadership loyal to the people, who forge and guard the victories of the Anti-fascist National Liberation War and of the Socialist Revolution!

Glory to Marxism-Leninism!

THE UNITY OF THE PEOPLE AROUND THE CPA IN THE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT

(Report)

The problem of the union of the masses of the people in the liberation war and in the revolution is a major key problem which constitutes a decisive factor for the fate of the war and the revolution.

There can be no correct solution of this problem outside the concrete conditions of this period in which the liberation war or the revolution is being carried out, outside the aims of the class forces concerned in the overthrow of the oppressing political and economic social order, and in the solution of the decisive, antagonistic social contradictions impeding the development of a country, a people or a nation.

Therefore, in the difficult historical periods, the solution to the problem of uniting the masses of the people will be different. In this key question what is common to every period is that without unity there is no victory.

This has been reaffirmed by the history of liberation wars in Albania. Whenever the Albanian people have succeeded in uniting, they have been invincible to their enemies, however great, powerful and savage they

may have been. The Albanians, united around Scanderbeg, ensured themselves immortal glory by smashing the repeated onslaughts of the great army of the Ottoman Empire, the strongest army of the time that had struck terror into the heart of Europe. Without unity the Albanians would have been unable to rise in the struggle for freedom in the past century and at the beginning of this century, under the great leaders of the National Renaissance, and they would not have won their independence, nor succeeded in creating the Albanian national state in 1912.

But such a strong and stable unity of the Albanian people as that which was attained in the Anti-fascist National Liberation War under the leadership of the Communist Party of Albania (CPA) had never been known before in the many centuries of Albanian history.

The unity of the people in their war against the Italian and German occupiers and the local traitors was embodied in the National Liberation Front.

The union of the Albanian people in the National Liberation Front could not but bear the brand of the objective and subjective historical-social conditions under which it was realized.

The circumstances of the low level of development of Albania of that time, as a semi-feudal agrarian country, determined that the major place in the Front and the decisive role in the war belonged to the peasantry which constituted more than four fifths of the population (77 percent of them poor peasants), and preserved in its bosom deep patriotic traditions and great revolutionary energy, created in the struggle for freedom and land in the course of centuries. In the Communist Party the peasantry found its resolute defender and fighter for its political, economic, and social interests, therefore it embraced the Party's political line 'en masse' and recognized it as the sole leader in the war.

The character of the National Liberation War as an anti-fascist, anti-imperialist democratic revolution and,

in conformity with this, the strategic slogan of the CPA for the union in the National Liberation Front of all the patriotic and anti-fascist forces of the country without distinction as to religion, region, class or political conviction, conditioned the broad social basis of this union.

Albania was a country oppressed and exploited by foreign enslavers for centuries on end. Liberation from the foreign yoke, freedom and national independence, have been a dream and an aspiration not only of the poor, but of the entire Albanian people, with the exception of the big feudal landowners, the tribal chiefs and the handful of rich bourgeoisie who have always served as tools of the foreign rulers, and became lackeys of the fascist invaders, too.

The occupation of the country by fascist Italy deeply hurt the national sentiments and the interests of the broadest social strata of the country. In the political line of the CPA and its struggle to carry out this line, these strata found the assurance of the fulfilment of their demands and desires for the driving out of the occupiers and the building of a free, independent, and democratic Albania.

This brought about that not only the working class and the labouring peasantry, which constituted the main forces, but also the petty and middle bourgeoisie of the city, the patriotic intellectuals, as well as a number of anti-fascist and democratic elements from the upper strata all united in the National Liberation Front under the leadership of the CPA.

The youth in particular, who constituted the most vigorous force of the movement, poured into the Front. In the beginning the working and school youth joined in, then the peasant youth. In the political line of the Party and in the program of the National Liberation Front the youth found the prospect of fulfilment of their burning material and spiritual desires for freedom and independence, for economic, educational and cultural development and progress, for a prosperous and happy

life. The Communist Party not only ensured a very broad participation of the youth in the National Liberation War, which was unprecedented in the past, but created all the conditions for the youth as a principal factor of this war. It was not by chance that the National Liberation War of the Albanian people was called «the war of the youth».

A new phenomenon in the union of the people in the National Liberation War was the broad and active participation of the women. Unlike the other liberation wars, in the last war the woman did not play the role of a mere auxiliary to her husband, but she took part, shoulder to shoulder with him, in all forms of the struggle, including the armed fighting. For the women the war had a two-fold liberating revolutionary character: for the elimination of both foreign and internal domination, and of the age-old enslavement of the women themselves.

The sole and undivided leadership by the CPA determined the deeply revolutionary and militant character of the union of the people in the National Liberation Front, the realization of the leading role of the working class and of the unbreakable alliance of this class with the peasantry, which constituted the steel-like foundation of this union, the high level of political consciousness, the guarantee of the victory of the people, and for the people alone.

* * *

The union of the Albanian people in the National Liberation Front was not achieved easily or all at once. It was created and strengthened in the life-and-death struggle against the external and internal enemies and it has passed through several phases, has overcome many difficulties and dangers threatening it at every step.

Prior to the founding of the Communist Party the Albanian people were not united in struggle against the

invaders due to the lack of a genuine revolutionary leadership which would realize this union on the basis of a clear program, a high level of political consciousness, and sound organization.

However, the premises for unity existed.

The broad masses of the people had in common the feeling of love of country, which had struck deep roots in the hearts and minds of men through the centuries, and especially in the period of the National Renaissance. This feeling was greatly strengthened following the proclamation of independence and the creation of the Albanian national state in 1912 in the struggle for the allround improvement of the appearance of the Albanian nation, for the preservation and consolidation, of the national independence and sovereignty of the Albanian state against the greed of the imperialist powers and the chauvinistic rulers of the neighbour countries, as well as against the tools of the foreign powers within the country. With the occupation of Albania by fascist Italy, the Albanians' love for their country was deeply aggrieved. No kind of demagoguery or terror was able to close the great wound inflicted on Albanian patriotism by this occupation.

As a result, what the broad masses of the people had in common were: complete non-acceptance of the regime of the fascist occupation, resistance to the policy and activity of italianization and fascistization of the country which the occupiers pursued, readiness to rise in a great liberation war.

The Communist Party seized on these common elements to unite, organize, and mobilize the people in struggle against the fascist occupiers and the traitors.

However, there was one very great obstacle which had to be overcome. The broad masses, especially the peasantry, which comprised the majority of the population, did not know the newly formed party of the working class. The big landowners, the bourgeoisie, the clergy, fascism spread the most monstrous slanders aga-

inst communism and the communist parties. The CPA had inherited very weak links with the masses from the communist groups from which it had emerged, and these almost entirely in the cities.

No kind of genuine or stable unity could be achieved if the masses were not convinced of the correctness of the political line of the CPA, the leading nucleus of this unity, and of the ability to carry out this line. This conviction was the indispensable prime factor of the unity of the people.

The Party set to work with might and main to win the confidence of the masses in the correct road it showed them for the liberation of the country and the construction of an independent, democratic, people's Albania. By means of its fiery words of truth, but especially through the revolutionary action and the example of courage, correct behaviour and honesty of the communists, it succeeded in overcoming the obstacles and difficulties and attained extraordinary successes within a relatively short time, establishing the first sound links with the masses, gaining very great authority, and becoming in this way the axis around which all the insurgent, patriotic, anti-fascist forces of the country would be united.

In this way the Party laid the foundations for unity in the joint struggle before the 1st National Liberation Conference which was held in Peza. It was precisely this success which made possible the convening of this historic assembly called to help the Party, and organized and led by the Party.

At the Peza Conference the political and organizational basis was laid for the unity of the Albanian people in the struggle «for a free, undivided, independent and democratic Albania»¹.

1. Resolution of the Conference of Peza, September 16, 1942. Documents of the Supreme Organs of the Revolutionary National Liberation Power, Tirana, 1962, p. 13 (Alb.ed.).

The political platform which was approved at the Conference by the representatives of the anti-fascist democratic forces of the country, constituted the political basis of this unity. This platform was, in fact, the minimum program of the CPA.

The General Council, set up by the Conference, and the national liberation councils, which were simultaneously organs of the National Liberation Front, and of the insurgent and revolutionary people's power, constituted the organizational basis. It was written in the Resolution of the Conference of Peza that, as organs of the Front, «the councils unite all the people's liberation forces... In order to rally the wide groupings of the people, the councils will be councils of the broad masses».¹ Comrade Enver Hoxha has described the national liberation councils as «the first step towards the creation of the National Liberation Front in the form of an organization»².

The term «the National Liberation Front» was not used at the Conference of Peza. But this does not prevent us from asserting that it was there that the Front, as an organization, was founded.

The main thing is that, while defining the essence, the unity of the people in the war against the occupiers, which was a strategic task, the Conference also created the organs, the General Council and the national liberation councils, in which this unity would be embodied.

The creation of the Front as an organization, constituted a tactical task.

Usually it is not possible for the forms of the war

1. Resolution of the Conference of Peza, September 16, 1942. Documents of the Supreme Organs of the Revolutionary National Liberation Power, Tirana, 1962, pp. 12-13. (Alb. ed.)

2. E. Hoxha. Report at the 1st Congress of CPA, Works, vol 5, p. 277 (Alb. ed.).

and its organization, which belong to the sphere of tactics, to be completely defined at the same time as the fundamental strategic tasks. To find the most appropriate forms of the war the organization of the masses requires great experience which is gained in the course of the war, of the revolution itself. Such experience cannot be accumulated immediately.

In fact, the term «National Liberation Front» was used as early as the meeting to found the Party, in November, 1941, but it was used indirectly in the task laid down by that Meeting to «expose the government of the traitor Kruja and its manoeuvres to split the National Liberation Front of the Albanian people»¹. The idea of the National Liberation front emerged in this way, too, at the first Consultative Meeting of the Communist Party of Albania, in April 1942, in the task set by that Consultative Meeting «not to permit any deviation or misunderstanding on the question of a common National Liberation Front of the Albanian people»². The direct task of the «creation of a common National Liberation Front» is mentioned for the first time in the directives of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Albania in June 1942³. But in the three cases, the idea of the National Liberation Front is used in the sense of uniting the people, and not in the sense of an organisation. Only after the Conference of Peza was the National Liberation Front fully created created as a concrete form and expression of the unity and organization of the masses of the people in the struggle for national liberation and the establishment of the people's state power. In November 1942, comrade Enver Hoxha wrote in «Zëri i popullit», «the Albanian people have united as one against the occupier and the

1. PLA, Principal Documents, vol. 1, p. 28 (Alb. ed.).

2. PLA, Principal Documents, vol. 1, p. 64. (Alb. ed.)

3. Ibidem, p. 78.

National Liberation Front has been formed and is becoming steeled in struggle»¹.

During this period, from the Conference of Peza up to November and December 1942, the union of the people around the National Liberation Front experienced a really vigorous extension, a great quantitative leap. This vigour was the outcome of the extraordinary response which the decisions of the Conference had among the masses of the people.

However the situation was greatly complicated by the emergence of the «Balli Kombëtar», at the end of 1942 as a reaction against the National Liberation Front. As is known, it proclaimed that it did not recognise the Conference of Peza and its decisions, and began extensive activity to split the unity, to divide the masses of the people from the Communist Party and to destroy the National Liberation Front.

Political confusion was noticed among various strata of the people. Through demagoguery and intimidation, the Ballist chieftains managed to win over part of the population, especially in the countryside. A number of waverers broke away from the National Liberation Front and went over to «Balli». Under these extremely complicated circumstances, Comrade Enver Hoxha gave the instruction: «Very great care is needed. We are at a turning point of our history, a dangerous turning point, and if we emerge successful, then our cause has triumphed, but if we slip, we'll break our necks»².

The period from January to September 1943, when the 2nd National Liberation Conference was held at Labintot, was a period of organizational strengthening of the Front with the creation, within its framework, of broad social political organizations, the anti-fascist Youth Union and the Anti-fascist Women's Union. It

1. Enver Hoxha, Works, vol. 1, p. 76 (Alb. ed.).

2. Enver Hoxha. Letter addressed to the Gjirokastra Regional Committee, February 23, 1943. Works, vol. 1, p. 199. (Alb. ed.).

was also a period of its political strengthening through a very fierce political struggle with fascism and especially with the «Balli Kombëtar», which had pinned all its hopes on, and committed all its forces, to destroying the National Liberation Front and the national liberation councils, and preventing the outbreak of the people's general uprising. The Party and the Front emerged victorious in this struggle, despite the betrayal of Ymer Dishnica and Mustafa Gjinishi at Mukje, where they signed the infamous agreement with «Balli», which, for a moment, seriously endangered the cause of unity and the question of the power of the national liberation councils.

The struggle, both armed and political, against fascism and the political struggle against the «Balli» tempered the National Liberation Front politically, brought about a good sifting out of its ranks, and at the same time differentiated all the social political forces in the country. This differentiation was accelerated and deepened greatly, especially after the occupation of Albania by Hitlerite Germany, when the Zogites with Abaz Kupi broke away with the Front and created another traitor organisation, «Legaliteti», as a reaction against the National Liberation Front, as well as when the «Balli» and «Legaliteti» went over to open armed struggle against the National Liberation Front, together with the German occupiers.

In the Autumn of 1943, two blocs of opposing forces, mortal enemies, stood face to face as never before. **On the one side:** the insurgent people - the working class, the poor and middle peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie, and the bulk of middle bourgeoisie of the town, the patriotic intellectuals, individual elements from the upper strata — united around the National Liberation Front, under the leadership of the Communist Party of Albania. The Front was based on the armed forces, having as its main striking force the National Liberation Army and as its external support the anti-fascist world war, in the

first place, the Great Patriotic war of the Soviet Union. **On the other side:** reaction — the landowners, the reactionary bourgeoisie, the tribal chiefs, the bulk of the rich peasants, the professional bourgeois politicians, and the intellectuals with anti-communist and fascist tendencies, a relatively small section of misled people from the lower and middle strata gathered in a motley of organizations and groups, with no sound links between them. Reaction was based on the «state apparatus» which had been set up, with the help of the occupiers, on the quisling gendarmerie, on the mercenary Ballist and Zogite bands and those of the traitorous gentry and especially on the German Wehrmacht. In fact, it did not comprise an independent bloc in itself. It was part of the Hitlerite front and was kept in existence mainly with the aid of occupiers.

The period which followed, the winter of the years 1943-1944, was the period of the great test for the unity of the people around the National Liberation Front, just as it was for the National Liberation Army and the national liberation councils. The National Liberation War knew no greater difficulties and dangers than it experienced in that period, during which the outcome of the war was decided. Precisely at that time, it was proved how powerful and unbreakable was the union of the people around the Communist Party in the National Liberation Front, how high the people's consciousness and readiness to face the extraordinary sacrifices required for the sake of victory.

Of course, there were vacillations, and it could not be otherwise, among certain strata and individuals, especially among the nationalists. There were even some who abandoned the Front because they could not withstand the pressures, terror, and deception of the enemies. But these waverings and resignations were insignificant compared with the all-round tempering and training which the union of the people around the party gained

in the fierce battles and the grave sufferings of the Winter of 1943-1944.

From the spring of 1944, not only was there a further strengthening of the National Liberation Front, but there was an ever greater extension of the Front, which reached its culmination in the October-November period of that year, when the traitor organisations and armed forces of the «Balli Kombëtar» and «Legaliteti» had been destroyed. Seeing the victorious advance of the National Liberation War and coming to understand, some sooner and others later, the mistake they had made by taking the traitorous road of the «Balli», «Legaliteti» and the reactionary «gentry», the majority of those who had been misled abandoned this road and joined the Front.

The outcome of the National Liberation War had now been decided: the final victory was expected day by day. The National Liberation Front had reached its culmination. The all-round strengthening of the people's democratic state power presented itself as the key problem to the preservation of the victory and the further development of the revolution. The Anti-Fascist National Liberation General Council and the national liberation councils, which had, until now, also carried out the political functions of the National Liberation Front, but which had affirmed themselves mainly as organs of the people's democratic state power, would have been hindered in carrying out the functions of the state power if they had continued to keep the functions of the Front. On the other hand, the circumstances which had arisen called for a stronger organization base for the Front. For these reasons, upon the recommendation of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Albania, the second meeting of the Anti-fascist National Liberation Council, held at Berat, in October 1944, decided to relieve the national liberation councils of the functions of the Front, which from now on, would be a separate organisation with its own special councils.

As can be seen, despite the extraordinary difficulties,

obstacles and dangers it had to overcome, despite any zig-zags, waverings or resignations by individuals or separate groupings, the union of the Albanian people in the National Liberation Front, under the leadership of the Communist Party, has mounted steadily higher and higher, has been constantly extended and become stronger and has shown itself to be unbreakable, thus serving as a decisive factor in achieving the final victory over the fascist foreign enemies and internal reaction.

. . .

Which were the main factors that made the union of the people around the Albanian Communist Party in the National Liberation Front, unbreakable and a decisive weapon for victory?

First, the **common ideal**, the liberation of the homeland from the occupiers, the winning of national independence and the democratisation of the country. The Communist Party instilled this ideal in the minds and hearts of the people, relying on the common feeling of patriotism and the common interests of the broad masses of the people. It made the people fully conscious, convincing them from their own revolutionary experience, of the absolute necessity for the armed struggle, and for struggle by all other means and methods, of the extraordinary difficulties and obstacles which had to be overcome, the innumerable sacrifices needed to achieve victory over the enemies. Never before in the history of the previous liberation struggles of the Albanian people, had there been such profound political conviction, so uniform, and so widespread, as existed in the Anti-fascist National Liberation War. Never before have the people felt such great confidence and certainty of victory. Never before had they been so sure that they would reap the fruit of this victory themselves and that it would not be wrested from them by the others, the beys, the gentry,

the merchants, the feudal chiefs, as in the past. At the same time, never before have the masses of the people been so clear about the prospects of the country's development and progress in the future. The common ideal, the same political convictions, the basic questions of the program of the Front, infused into the consciousness of the people, were the steel fibres which bound together the social political forces, the patriotic, democratic, anti-fascist classes and strata around the revolutionary leadership — the Communist Party. The common political, anti-fascist and revolutionary ideal and convictions, neutralized or routed the old reactionary, political, moral, religious, customary beliefs of the masses who participated in the National Liberation Front.

This high level of political consciousness and ideas was attained because, as comrade Enver Hoxha says, «the program of the Front which in fact, was the Party's minimum program, was a clear, comprehensible militant and revolutionary program»¹, because the Party knew how to implant in the minds and hearts of the masses, the concrete ideas and tasks of this program, while, at the same time, exposing the profoundly anti-national and anti-popular character of the political platforms, the ideology and propaganda, of the fascist Italian and German occupiers and the various reactionary trends and organizations, tools of the occupiers.

Second, the union of the people in the National Liberation Front was based on the common struggle. Unity had to be achieved, and was achieved, in war and only in war. The talks of Communist Party and the national liberation councils with the nationalists of various trends about the question of unity could not solve this questions. They only helped everybody to understand that without taking part in the war against the occupiers and their flunkeys there could be no unity.

1. E. Hoxha, Report at the 4th Congress of the Democratic Front, September 14, 1967. Reports and Speeches, 1967-1968, Tirana, 1969, p. 162 (Alb. ed.).

As early as the Conference of Peza, it was clearly laid down that «true unity can be achieved only through armed struggle, being convinced that the right of freedom and the victory can be achieved only by fighting the enemy occupier right now.¹»

The Conference stressed the words **right now**, because the pseudo-patriots, the hidden collaborators of fascism, those who later formed the «Balli Kombëtar», spoke out against the war. They said that the war should be waged only three to four days, at the most one week, prior to the victory of the Allies over Italy and Germany! Exposing the «Balli» and other opponents of the war against the German occupiers, who tried to deceive the people by pretending that they were for unity and the Communist Party did not want such unity, comrade Enver Hoxha instructed the district committees: «You must make it clear to the people that the campaign of reaction for unity is filthy demagoguery and that we stand for true unity, that we work for this unity, and there can be no unity outside the National Liberation War»².

Third, the unity in the national liberation Front was **a direct and voluntary union** of the masses of the people, and not a mere coalition of political parties and organizations. The only political party in the Front was the Communist Party of Albania and it was the leader and architect of this unity.

Thus, the unity in the National Liberation War in Albania was achieved from below. The Communist Party aroused and united the working class, the broad masses of the peasants and patriotic intellectuals around the National Liberation Front, on the basis of their patriotism and revolutionary spirit, on the basis

1. The first Call of the General National Liberation Council issued from the Peza Conference, September 1942, Documents of the Supreme Organs, etc. . . . p. 17 (Alb. ed.).

2. Enver Hoxha, Directives of the CC of the CPA, November 3, 1943. Works, vol. 2, pp. 14-15 (Alb. ed.).

of their conviction in the correctness of the Party's political line and platform of the Conference of Peza, on the basis of the struggle against the occupiers and the traitors, without the mediation of other political parties.

This does not mean that there was not some degree of mobilisation and union from above. The Communist Party, placed primary importance on mobilisation and unity from below, but it did not neglect work for mobilisation and unity from above, too. «Mobilization from above», comrade Enver said, «can be achieved by uniting with all the anti-fascist political trends.»¹

These anti-fascist political trends could be unorganised currents and groups, but could have been organised into parties. The Communist Party did not exclude co-operation with anti-fascist political parties and bringing them into the National Liberation Front, if such parties had been created. The Party proceeded from these positions in its efforts to draw the «Balli Kombëtar» and later, «Legaliteti» into the National Liberation Front, on the basis of armed struggle against the occupiers. But, as is known, other anti-fascist political parties were not formed, while instead of joining in the war against the occupiers, the «Balli» and «Legaliteti» united with the occupiers against the National Liberation Front. Thus, the Party worked to unite and did unite, the patriotic nationalists around the National Liberation Front from above, only as individuals or groups. This was achieved through talks, meetings and conference such as the Conference of Peza, the Second Conference at Labinot, the Congress of Përmet, the regional National Liberation conferences, and so on.

Among the countries of Europe occupied during the Second World War, which fought arms in hand against fascism, Albania is the only one in which the common front of the anti-fascist forces was almost entirely a direct voluntary union of these forces achieved from

1. Enver Hoxha, Directives of the Communist International, February 1943, Works, vol. 2, p. 222 (Alb. ed.).

below, and where there were no other political parties in the Front apart from the Communist Party which forged and led this union.

The experience of the union of the people in the National Liberation Front in Albania indicates that unity which is achieved mainly from below, that is, which is a voluntary and direct uniting of the masses of the people and which has a single revolutionary leadership, the party of the working class, is always stronger and more stable for the present and for the future of the revolution, than that unity which is achieved mainly from above, that is, which is created as a coalition of political parties and organisations and has no monolithic leadership.

Only unity from below ensures the broadest and most direct participation of the masses of the people in the revolutionary liberation movement, the outburst at the maximum level of the creative force and energies of the masses, as the authors of revolution and the makers of history. Not only does the single revolutionary leadership of the working class party not cripple or curtail the broad participation and direct role of the masses as the true authors of the revolution, but it is an indispensable condition for the achievement of such a thing. The experience of our revolution, not only in the stage of national liberation war, but in its later stages, refutes all the false theories of the mouthpieces of imperialism and reaction, which negate the objective law of leadership by the working class party in revolution, and regard this leadership as a hindrance to the direct broad participation of the masses in revolution, so that they can play the role of author of the revolution.

Fourth, the union of the Albanian people in the National Liberation Front was an **organized union** and not at all amorphous. Summing up the revolutionary experience of the ties and unity of the masses of the people with the Albanian Communist Party, comrade Enver Hoxha has pointed out: «To establish ties with the masses means to ally yourself with the organized

masses, and if these important organizations are under-rated by the Party, then, you are not linked with the masses¹.

Through the councils and other mass organisations, which were participants in the Front, as well as through the partisan and volunteer units, the Party carried its political line among the masses, formed and strengthened their revolutionary, patriotic, political consciousness, fought against the disruptive sabotage activity of the enemies, mobilized the masses in the war, in short, achieved the unity of the people and ensured its undivided leadership in the National Liberation Front.

This experience shows that the only unity of the masses which is solid and lasting is that which is organized on a sound revolutionary basis and equipped with a common program.

Fifth, the monolithic unity of the leading nucleus of this union, the Communist Party, around its Central Committee with comrade Enver Hoxha at the head, was of primary importance for the invincibility of the union of the people in the National Liberation Front. Without such a unity, the ties and the steel-like unity of masses around the Party could not have been created nor could they have been preserved, and the undivided leadership of the Party in the Anti-fascist National Liberation War could never have been attained. Neither during the war period nor after the war, has our Party ever regarded the question of its monolithic ideological, political, and organizational unity as an end in itself, but as an indispensable condition for fulfilling its strategic aim and programmatic tasks and for carrying out the proletarian leadership. Proceeding from this basis, it has fought the anti-Party and hostile factions, views, and elements in its midst.

1. Enver Hoxha, Report at the 2nd Congress of the PLA, March 1952, Works, vol. 9, p. 260 (Alb. ed.).

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Of all the means the occupiers and the traitors used in their efforts to destroy the unity of the Albanian people around the Communist Party, they pinned their greatest hopes at first on the «Balli Kombëtar» and later, on «Legaliteti».

Guided by their unchanging line of uniting the people around the Front, without discrimination as to class and political belief, and proceeding from the fact that in the «Balli Kombëtar» and «Legaliteti» there were many elements who had been deceived by the reactionary chieftains but who wanted Albania to be free and were ready to fight against the occupier, the Communist Party of Albania and the National Liberation Council made great efforts to have these organizations abandon their sabotaging attitude of wait and see, to prevent them from entering the service of the occupiers, and to unite them with the National Liberation Front, even giving them the right to preserve their own individuality as organizations in the Front. But the traitorous leaders who had formed the «Balli» and «Legaliteti» to fight, not against enslaving fascism, but against the Communist Party and the National Liberation Front, torpedoed all efforts to achieve unity and established increasingly closer ties with the Italian, and especially the German occupiers, with whom they lined up openly in a common front.

The armed struggle against the «Balli Kombëtar» and «Legaliteti» burst out in the autumn of 1943 and the winter of 1943-1944, as a reaction to their open collaboration with the German nazis.

This was a life and death struggle against local reaction, the tool of the occupiers, which represented and defended the interests of the main exploiting classes, the landowners, the feudal chiefs, the reactionary bourgeoisie and high ranking clergy.

As such, can it be called a civil war?

In Albanian historiography, there are various views on this question. Bourgeois historiography supports the thesis that, the war between the National Liberation Movement and the «Balli Kombëtar» and «Legaliteti» was a civil war and constituted the principal war in Albania during the Second World War.

In the documents of the Communist Party and the General Council of that time it is never described as a civil war, indeed, such a view is opposed. It was called a civil war by the German occupiers, the «Balli» and «Legaliteti», and the British together with the Americans, in whose documents this term is often encountered whenever the struggle between the National Liberation Movement and internal reaction in Albania, is referred to.

When General Wilson, commander of the Allied Mediterranean Headquarters, asked the General Command of the Albanian National Liberation Army to put an end to the «civil war», that is, the fight against the «Balli Kombëtar» and «Legaliteti», comrade Enver Hoxha answered him: «There are no internal quarrels, let alone a civil war, in Albania. **There is only one quarrel and one war: war against the occupier in the first place and against its traitorous tools**»¹.

The Communist Party always opposed the launching of a fratricidal war and the turning of the National Liberation War into a civil war, at a time when the country had been invaded and subjugated by the Italian imperialists, and later, by the German imperialists, and when the unity and mobilisation of the entire Albanian people in the fight against the occupier were indispensable. «You must expose and fight all those who criticize

1. Enver Hoxha, Answer to the note of General Wilson, July 12, 1944, Works, vol. II, p. 273 (Alb. ed.). Underlined by comrade Enver Hoxha.

the Party and the National Liberation War» comrade Enver Hoxha instructed, «always remembering that the war must not degenerate into a civil war, which the occupier is trying to kindle through its agents»¹

The Italian and German occupiers made great efforts to kindle a fratricidal war in order to split and weaken the unity of the people around the National Liberation Front, and consequently to wipe out the National Liberation Movement. Apart from the occupiers, this was also in the interests of the big landed proprietors, the reactionary bourgeoisie, the feudal chiefs and the reactionary clergy, who saw the end of their rule and privileges in the revolutionary development and the victory of the National Liberation War. Upon the instigation of the German occupiers, these classes launched a fratricidal war, imposing it on the Communist Party and the National Liberation Front. For them this really was a civil war, that is, a very fierce armed struggle against the masses of the insurgent people — the working class, the poor and middle peasantry, and all the democratic, anti-fascist forces of the country. The «Balli Kombëtar», «Legaliteti», and other reactionary groupings waged no other war and had no enemy other than the National Liberation Front, which embraced the insurgent Albanian people, and the Communist Party which led it. «For reaction and its traitor organization» explains comrade Enver Hoxha, «the main contradictions were the internal contradictions with the Communist Party and the National Liberation Front, which they converted into antagonistic contradictions by attacking us with arms, together with the occupiers», at a time when the Communist Party «tried and did everything possible to prevent the development of the contradictions with the

1. Enver Hoxha, Letter addressed to the Central Committee of the CPA for the Gjirokastra region, February 23, 1943. Works, vol. 1, p. 198 (Alb. ed.).

«Balli» and «Legaliteti» into antagonistic principal contradictions»¹

In spite of this attitude of the Party and the General Council, the class struggle grew extremely sharp, and as was mentioned above, the social-political forces of the country split into two groups, mortally hostile to each other. Under these conditions, the victory of the National Liberation War could not help sweeping away the political rule of the big landed proprietors, the feudal chiefs, and the reactionary bourgeoisie, along with the foreign domination, as it really happened.

Nonetheless, I don't think it is correct to call the war of the National Liberation Front with the «Balli» and «Legaliteti» a civil war, though it contains elements of such a war both in content and in form.

It was not a civil war because it did not constitute a war in itself, but was an integral part of the war against the occupiers.

In the present epoch, it is impossible to avoid a combination, to this or that extent, between the war for national liberation and the war for social liberation, between the war against the external imperialist-enemies and the struggle against the internal reactionary enemies. The international bourgeoisie uses all its forces and means to prolong the lifespan of the world capitalist system. Imperialism is trying every means to preserve its positions, irrespective of the new forms of domination it applies, at the same time, sparing nothing to defend the exploiting capitalist system of each separate country. On the other hand, the landowners and the reactionary bourgeoisie of this or that country, mortally afraid of the revolution, are trying every means to find a base of support in one big imperialist

1. Enver Hoxha, Report at the 4th Congress of the Democratic Front, September 14, 1967. Reports and Speeches 1967-1968. Tirana 1969, pp. 164-165. (Alb. ed.).

power or the other, paying the highest price for this support, with part or the whole of their national independence and sovereignty. For this reason it is difficult to have a liberation war or revolution which is spear-headed just against the foreign enemy or just against the internal enemy, taken separately. The struggle will inevitably be waged against both one and the other enemy simultaneously, that is, it will be a combined one.

This is what happened in our National Liberation War, too, during which, the fight against the Italian and German occupiers became combined with the struggle against the local reactionary classes.

But no matter how profound it may have been, this combination did not change the over-all national liberation character of the war. From start to finish, the occupiers remained the main enemy. The local enemies, even though they did not represent just individual elements and groupings, but entire social classes and strata such as the landowners, the reactionary bourgeoisie, the feudal chiefs, the well-to-do peasants, were not fought as exploiting classes and strata, but always as traitors, as tools of the occupiers. The Communist Party and the National Liberation General Council never considered it correct to change the political platform of the Conference of Peza and to put forward slogans for war against the beys, against the bourgeoisie, against the tribal chiefs, and so on. They regarded any attempt at changing this platform and any distortions of it at grave errors. They never allowed the main enemy, to be forgotten or put aside, or the National Liberation war to be turned into a civil war, in the sense that the spearhead of the war could be shifted from the occupier to the local reaction. While waging the fiercest possible struggle against the Ballists, the Zogites, and other reactionary groups, always as traitors and lackeys of the occupier, they never, for a moment, ceased their efforts to have anyone, irrespective of his class, strata, or political convictions, who had come to understand that he was on the road of treachery

and was willing to abandon this road, break away from the ranks of the «Balli» and «Legaliteti» and other collaborationist forces.

Bearing in mind that the main enemies were the fascist occupiers and not the local reaction, that the main spearhead of the war was directed against the occupiers and not against local reaction, that the war against local reaction was conducted as a war against traitors, against the lackeys of the occupiers, and not against the exploiting classes, that the struggle against the local enemy was subordinate to the struggle against the foreign enemy, it can be concluded that the war against the «Balli Kombëtar», against «Legaliteti» and other reactionary grouping should not be called a civil war.

It could have been turned into a civil war only after the fascist occupiers had been driven out, if the «Balli», «Legaliteti» and other reactionary groups had not been routed prior to November 29, 1944, and had continued their armed resistance to restore the feudal-bourgeois political order. In this case, too, the war with local counter-revolution would certainly have been combined with the war against foreign enemies. This time, the foreign enemies would have been the British-United States imperialists, who had worked out a special plan intended to prevent the victory of the National Liberation Front and the people's revolution in Albania, and to support in every way the struggle of the Albanian exploiting classes and reactionary forces to restore the feudal-bourgeois order.

Despite this combination, the main enemy would have been local reaction (counter-revolution) so long as the British-American armies had not occupied Albania.

The Party, the Front, the National Liberation Army, and the Democratic Government were prepared for this eventuality, too. But as is known, this did not come about. The «Balli» and «Legaliteti», the two biggest organisations of reaction, were routed as early as September-October, 1944. All the endeavours of the Anglo-Ameri-

cans to rescue the home reaction from disaster came to nothing. Any direct interference on their part in the internal affairs of the National Liberation War and every attempt at landing and stationing their military forces in Albania, were defeated. The frantic efforts made by the British and American governments after liberation to revive the defeated home reaction and to throw it into a civil war against the victorious revolutionary democratic forces and the people's state power led by the Communist Party, were smashed, too.

* * *

While ensuring for the Albanian people the historic victory of November 29, 1944, the Communist Party of Albania, at the same time, gained a great tempering and experience, very valuable for the later stages of revolution. The unity of the broad masses of the people around the Party was to serve as a decisive weapon in achieving the strategic objective of these stages too, just as it did in the Anti-fascist National Liberation War.

After the war the Party used the great experience of the National Liberation Front, to organize the Democratic Front as the most suitable form, as the embodiment of the unity of the broad working masses under the new conditions.

During the thirty years since the day of liberation, the experience in uniting the people around the Party has been further enriched. The roots of this unity, which developed during the Anti-fascist National Liberation War, penetrated even deeper, always on the basis of the common ideal and interests of the masses of the people, of their profound conviction in the correctness of the Party's political line, of the broad, active and direct participation of these masses in the revolutionary activity for the development of the economy and culture, for the socialist transformation of the society, for the

governing of the country and the defence of the Homeland.

This steel-like unity has withstood every test and weathered all the storms and tempests of history. It has served as a decisive weapon to smash the plans and activity of the external imperialist and revisionist enemies, as well as of the internal enemies, and has ensured the development of the country at a rapid pace, on the road of socialism. Always united around the Party, always led by its proletarian policy and ideology and by the Marxist-Leninist teachings of comrade Enver Hoxha, the Albanian people will remain invincible and will always score victories.

VEHBI HOXHA
NDREÇI PLASARI, Profesor

**THE ARMED UPRISING OF THE ALBANIAN
PEOPLE IN THE ANTI-FASCIST NATIONAL
LIBERATION WAR**

(Report)

The Albanian people have learned from the many centuries of their history that no enslaved nation can win freedom and independence, no social revolution can triumph without fighting, without armed uprising.

Many different occupiers, one after the other, have violated Albanian territory, have wanted and striven to suppress and exterminate the Albanians with fire and steel. But the aims and efforts of the occupiers have always failed for the sole reason that on every occasion the Albanians have risen, sword and rifle in hand, against the foreign enslavers and their local stooges; through armed struggle, blood-shed and innumerable sacrifices, they have not allowed themselves to be wiped out as a people and a nation, until finally, on November 29, 1944, they succeeded not only in winning complete freedom and national independence, but also in doing away with the tyranny of the blood-thirsty local tyrants and rulers — big landowners, tribal chiefs and the bourgeoisie.

Among all these armed struggles waged by the

Albanian people, which have always been just liberation wars, the most glorious, the one that crowned the fiery aspirations and all the age long efforts of the Albanians for freedom, national independence and progress, is, without doubt, the Anti-fascist National Liberation War.

This war differs greatly from the previous struggles in its proportions, organization, content, and the forms and means by which it was waged. No struggle in the past has had such a level in any of these directions, such overwhelming and creative force, such a profoundly democratic, popular, and revolutionary spirit, and, above all, such a triumphant conclusion of vital importance to the destiny of the homeland and the Albanian people. The lofty virtues of our people, their love of country, bravery, self-denial and fighting spirit, born and tempered in the course of their endless liberation struggles in the past, not only stood out more forcefully than ever before in this latest struggle, but were imbued with a new, profoundly revolutionary content.

The main factor that conditioned the high level of the armed uprising of the Albanian people against fascism and the traitors was the revolutionary leadership of the Communist Party of Albania, headed by comrade Enver Hoxha. Our people had known no such leadership in all their previous wars. It was this Party that gave the uprising its unprecedented revolutionary breadth and depth, that gave it its perfect organization and ensured its final triumph over the fascist occupiers and the traitors. The Party knew how to assess correctly and to utilize the objective national and international circumstances that created favourable conditions for a powerful outburst of the people's uprising against the occupiers and the traitors.

Italian fascism aimed at eliminating the Albanian nation and italianizing Albania. Our people could never allow such a thing. They were ready to fight with all their strength against the foreign enslavers for freedom

and national independence. In fact they began their struggle against the occupiers right from the first day of the aggression by the Italian army, in April 1939, and did not cease it for a single moment. This struggle was developed as a legitimate resistance against the foreign enslavers through anti-fascist demonstrations and protests, through strikes, sabotage and refusal to observe the laws and regulations of the occupation regime, in particular cases even by armed resistance.

The Albanian people were not to be alone in their struggle. The fascist states had invaded many other countries. Hitlerite Germany had attacked and aimed to destroy the first socialist state, the Soviet Union. The entire world was faced with the threat of fascist enslavement. To avert such a danger the nations and peoples of the world, had risen in a great anti-fascist international war, united in a big anti-fascist coalition to liquidate the fascist tyranny. The Albanian people found sure and powerful support in the anti-fascist world war, the vanguard of which was the Soviet Union led by J.V. Stalin.

Relying on such favourable national and international circumstances, right from its founding, the Communist Party defined the uprising against fascism as «the genuine road to liberation»¹ and laid down the task: «We must implant the idea of a general liberation uprising through joint actions... We must prepare the people politically and militarily for the general armed uprising, rallying all the patriotic and anti-fascist forces to the struggle»².

While the general armed uprising was chosen as the main form, the other forms of the struggle, such as sabotage, economic and political strikes, anti-fascist demonstrations and protests, exposure of the enemy by word

1. Resolution of the Meeting of the Principal Communist Groups of Albania. PLA, Principal Documents, vol. I (Second edition), p. 14 (Alb. ed.).

2. Ibidem, p. 26 (Alb. ed.).

of mouth or through printed material, etc., were not neglected either. But the principal aim of all these means of struggle was the preparation of the people for the armed uprising.

The organization of the armed uprising also demanded, as an indispensable condition, the preparation of the armed forces, of the National Liberation Army. Without the creation of a genuine people's army, powerfully supported by the insurgent people, an army capable of dealing crushing blows to the enemy, of destroying the political order and the armed forces of occupation, a general armed uprising could not be thought of.

The general armed uprising, which was presented by the Party as «the genuine road to liberation» would be a component part of the people's revolution. As such it was organically linked with the creation of the common National Liberation Front and with the establishment of the new democratic people's state power. At the same time, it would be the principal means for the triumph of this revolution, i.e., for the achievement of the strategic objective in the National Liberation War laid down by the Party.

For the same reason also, the National Liberation Army would be set up as a **regular** people's revolutionary army, since only such a army could carry out such important strategic tasks as the complete liberation of the country by its own efforts, the victory of national independence, the establishment of the people's democratic state power, and become the armed support of this state power. There can be no lasting state power, including the revolutionary state power, without armed support.

In the concrete circumstances, our general uprising would not be an immediate outburst, and the regular National Liberation Army would not be formed all at once, just as the people's democratic government would not be formed at once. These objectives would be achieved step by step. The uprising would be a more or less protracted people's armed struggle. The partisan

movement, the guerrilla units, «the war waged by detachments as the truest expression of the will of the Albanian people to be liberated from fascist slavery and to live free»¹ would serve as a real basis for the preparation of the general uprising and the creation of the regular liberation army.

The armed uprising was a very difficult task. Our Party clearly understood that the armed uprising constituted a task of very great responsibility. It could not be trifled with. Consequently, it demanded extensive, thorough, and all-sided preparation. Its organization required political clarity, determination, and maturity, great care and patience, tireless political and military work. Once begun it had to be carried right through to the end. Any wavering, opportunist stand, just as any sectarian and adventurist stand, would lead to the failure of the uprising.

The armed uprising needs arms, funds, cadres, great experience. The Party chose the only correct revolutionary road leading to victory: it called on the people to throw themselves immediately into the fight, being in the forefront itself, and to secure everything needed for the armed uprising — arms, cadres, experience, and everything else, in the heat of the struggle.

First of all, the armed uprising demanded the political preparation of the masses of the people, strong reliance upon them for the combat actions and the fighters that would carry them out, a steel-like bond between the leading body of the uprising and these masses. At first, such a reliance and bonds were limited. In this direction, too, the only way was to begin the combat actions, immediately, to begin the political preparation of the people for the uprising by fighting the enemy, and to establish sound links with the masses in the heat of the armed struggle.

1. The first Call of the CC of the CP of Albania, November 1941. PLA, Principal Documents, vol. 1, p. 31 (Alb. ed.).

So the Party did not and could not wait. «The infant that was born from the womb of the people on November 8, 1941 in Tirana,» says comrade Enver Hoxha, «did not wait even for a single day, but raised its iron fist and struck mercilessly at the fascists and the traitors.»¹

Of course the choosing of the road of armed struggle by no means meant that the slogan of the general uprising was to be launched immediately. «The general uprising, as stated above, would be prepared step by step and would constitute the final stage of the armed struggle.»²

* * *

As is said in the «History of the PLA», the armed uprising as a people's war, and the creation of the people's armed forces as a regular army of the Albanian people, went through three main phases which were determined by the development of events and things.

In the first phase the foundations were laid for the general armed uprising and the organization of the regular National Liberation Army, the general moral-political and military preparation of the masses of the people for the uprising was achieved.³

The first school for the armed uprising were the guerilla units, which were formed at the end of 1941 and the beginning of 1942 in the main cities of the country, while from the beginning of 1942 they were active in all the cities and in many of the occupied regions.

1. Enver Hoxha. Report at the 4th Congress of the PLA (Alb. ed.).

2. Cf. The Resolution of the Peza Conference. Documents of the Higher Organs of the National Liberation Revolutionary Power, p. 13 (Alb. ed.).

3. History of the PLA, p. 520. (Alb. ed.).

The guerrilla units carried out various small-scale combat actions: killed fascist leaders, officers, N.C.O.'s. and spies, burnt and destroyed depots and other objects of the enemy, seized arms and other material useful for the liberation war, freed political prisoners, etc.

It is of great importance that no action was carried out without the approval of the party regional committees and without being studied with the greatest care. Actions were carried out in order to achieve, political gains, first of all, and then military and material gains. According to this criterion, combat actions, while harming the enemy, first of all established new links between the Party and the masses. Therefore only such actions were carried out as were acceptable to the masses, that fostered in them love for, and confidence in, the Party that organized and led these actions. The careful choice, the perfect organization of the combat actions of the guerrilla units, and the leadership of the party organization, gave their actions a character, different from those usually carried out by anarchists, putschists, adventurers, and bandits of various types.

Unlike adventurist and terrorist actions, with the impression they made and the influence they exercised on the people and among the enemy ranks the actions of our guerrilla units, however small as fighting actions, had the importance of a battle. As comrade Enver Hoxha says, «they were an inseparable part and the beginning of the armed uprising», «from which the genuine leaders of our people emerged»¹, «they were linked with the aspirations of the masses and were an expression of the determination and confidence, not only of the Party, but also of the people, in final victory»².

The guerrilla units were set up in the cities. This

1. Enver Hoxha. Report at the 1st Congress of the CP of Albania, November 1948. Works, vol. 5, p. 268 (Alb. ed.),

2. Enver Hoxha. Report at the 1st Congress of the CP of Albania, November 1948. Works, vol. 5, p. 269 (Alb. ed.).

was not accidental. This happened because at the beginning the Party's links with the masses of the people were almost entirely with those of the towns. Without the support of these masses the guerrilla units could not have been formed and neither could they have carried out their combat actions so successfully. In fact the actions were not just the deed of the members of the guerrilla units, but of the masses of the people who protected and defended the fighters of these units, at every step, regardless of the dangers.

But while creating the guerrilla units, the Party always had in mind higher forms of the armed struggle — partisan units. «The comrades should not have a shallow grasp of the question of guerrillas», it instructed. «Wherever possible partisan units should be formed... without waiting for another directive for the formation of the units.»¹

The formation of the units was linked, first of all, with the creation of the bases of the Party and of the National Liberation War in the countryside.

The countryside, especially in our conditions, was of decisive importance to the uprising. Without arousing the peasantry against the occupiers and the traitors there could be no talk either of the general armed uprising or of the triumph of the revolution.

The peasantry made up the overwhelming majority of the population of the country, therefore it would also be the «source of the main forces of the present war» the Party instructed².

But it was not only for this reason that the peasantry had to become the source and the main force of the liberation armed struggle. Apart from this, in its bosom it preserved very deep patriotic traditions, a fighting

1. The directive of the CC of the CPA, June 1942. PLA, Principal Documents, vol. 1, p. 78 (Alb. ed.).

2. Resolution of the 1st National Conference of the CPA, March 1943. PLA, Principal Documents, vol. 1, p. 113, (Alb. ed.).

spirit and great revolutionary energy gained during the centuries in the struggle for freedom, independence and land. It hated the fascist occupiers and was burning with desire to see Albania free and independent.

There was also another reason that increased the importance of the decisive role of the peasantry: the geographical factor. The bulk of our countryside is mountainous. The mountains presented very favourable conditions for the people's partisan warfare. As comrade Mehmet Shehu says, «our mountains have always been the principal ally of our people»¹. In the Anti-fascist National Liberation War, too, our mountains became the principal base of uprising, the secure nest of the partisan fighters, because, in the first place, the population of the mountain regions linked its fate with the Communist Party, joined the National Liberation Front, and showed unprecedented readiness and self-sacrifice in struggle, sparing nothing for the victory over the foreign enslavers and the local traitors. This does not mean that the Party did not attach any importance to the plains. On the contrary, it kept the peasantry of the plains in the centre of its attention, just as it did the population of the mountains and the cities, and had established sound bases for the development of the uprising in the plains as well.

It was not easy for the Party to win over the countryside. The main thing was that the Party was convinced that the masses of the peasantry would embrace its line on the National Liberation War and would turn into a great decisive force of the armed uprising. Comrade Enver Hoxha instructed the Party to address itself especially «to the village poor, the semi-proletarians, of whom there were many in our country. We should mobilize the peasantry around our Party, since only our Party

1. Mehmet Shehu, On the experience of our National Liberation War and on the development of our National Army. Tirana 1962, p. 68 (Alb. ed.).

is a fighting party and the people today want to fight». ¹

First of all, the peasantry was convinced of the correctness of the political line of the Party, of its ability to lead the struggle, and accepted the Party as its leader, on the basis of its deeds. Such deeds, which exercised a great influence among the peasantry, as well as among the entire Albanian people, were the courageous actions of the guerrilla units and, later, of the partisan units, the unprecedented heroism of the communists in these actions. The Albanian peasant has an especially great and profound respect for valiant people, for he has always had valour in his veins, just as he has honour. Such brave and courageous people, honest and determined fighters against fascism, as the communists, who, at the same time, emerged as the most resolute defenders of the interests and rights of the peasantry, could not fail to arouse their love of, and trust, in them.

In this way, the Party gradually won the confidence of the peasant, and set up its bases and those of the National Liberation War in the countryside. From the spring, or particularly from the summer, of the year 1942, the centre of gravitation of the uprising shifted to the countryside. The countryside became the principal base of the uprising and the peasantry became its main force. This occurred precisely when the Party had won over the peasant masses and had prepared them for the liberation armed struggle.

On this basis the partisan units were set up, and increased rapidly. By the end of 1942, they numbered about 30, with more than 2.000 fighters in their ranks. The first nucleus of the partisan units consisted of communists, communist youths, sympathizers, workers and students from the towns trained in the guerrilla war, whom the Party sent to the mountains to organize the armed

1. Enver Hoxha, Report at the 1st Consultative Meeting of the activists of the CPA, April 1942. PLA, Principal Documents, vol. 1, p. 31 (Alb. ed.).

struggle. These nuclei were increased with the admission of peasants. The countryside became the source and base of the partisan units. At the same time workers, artisans, students and teachers were sent from the cities to join the partisan units.

The regular partisan units were the embryo of the regular National Liberation Army. But in addition to the regular units, village territorial units on a voluntary basis, were formed. They were armed detachments for the people's self-defence and served as a powerful reserve of the regular partisan detachments, both for combat actions and for the replenishment of their ranks with new fighters. The total number of the people who militated in the territorial volunteer units was three-four times greater than that of the partisans of the regular units. In the spring of 1943 the total number of fighters of the regular partisan units, the volunteer units and the guerrilla units, had reached about 20,000. Through the setting up of the territorial units in every liberated village and region the Party carried into life the idea of the arming and participation of the broad masses in the armed uprising, the idea of the people's liberation war. The most typical examples of the embodiment of this idea, which demonstrated the ever-mounting people's uprising, were the combat actions in Skrapar (September), in Peza (October) and the Gjorm Battle (December 1942).

The partisan units carried out intense military and political activity: attacked and destroyed military posts and small garrisons of the enemy, and fascist punitive forces, attacked enemy columns, destroyed or impeded enemy communication, cut enemy telegraph and telephone lines, burnt depots and other objects of the fascists, tracked down spies, etc. Above all they aimed at clearing entire mountain regions and zones of the enemy, in order to set up free bases for the partisan movement. Without such liberated regions and zones they could not live and carry on their activities. Besides the combat actions carried out in Skrapar, Peza, and Mesaplik (Gjorm), in

1942 and at the beginning of 1943, a great influence was exercised on the broadening of the armed struggle by the 24 July action for the destruction of the enemy telegraph and telephone lines throughout the country, some heroic actions in the cities, and the battles of Voskopoja, Snosëm, Patos, Libohova, Rrogozhina, and Selenica, etc.

It is of importance to stress that all the military actions of the units had a great political meaning. They undermined the occupation regime, mobilized the people in struggle, aroused the confidence of the masses in their own efforts, enhanced the authority of the Communist Party.

But the units also carried out direct political and organizational work of extraordinary importance. They carried out large-scale political activities to clarify the people, propagated the line of the Party and the political program of the Peza Conference, ensured the unity of the peasantry in the National Liberation Front, destroyed the old state machinery of the fascists and traitors and helped the peasantry to build the new democratic state power of the national liberation councils. In collaboration with these councils they maintained order and tranquillity in the liberated areas, in this way also carrying out important functions of the state power.

In this way the new Albanian army, which was being built in the fire of the National Liberation War, was born and strengthened as an army of the people, an army of the revolution, a defender of the vital interests of the workers, peasants, and all the democratic revolutionary forces. For the first time, the masses of the people saw in the partisan detachments their own army which was being created and increased from their flesh and blood. That is why they gave this army their all-round support and aid.

From the military viewpoint, the combat actions of the units were actions on a tactical scale. It was still not possible to speak of our operations. However, the sum of the combat actions of the partisan detachments, adding to

them the actions of the guerrilla units in the occupied towns and areas, gave results of a strategic scale, such as the general insecurity and concern caused by these actions among the ranks of the occupiers and traitors, the disorder and confusion brought about in the entire military-political and state system of the enemy. A strategic result of the combat actions of the partisan units was the setting up of the bases for the organization of the regular people's army, and the political and military preparation of the people for the general uprising.

In order to cope with the irresistible general rise of the armed struggle of the Albanian people, the Italian fascists organized a whole series of operations of various levels, employing large, regular military forces and accompanying these operations with savage terror in towns and regions. However, nothing could quench the flames of the uprising which were spreading at lightning speed.

With the proliferation of the units their organization and armament also continued to improve. In the course of the struggle they gained valuable military and political experience. The need arose to merge two or three of them into larger formations, into partisan battalions, which began to be set up from May 1943. With the creation of the battalion it became possible to carry out combat actions more coordinated and on a larger scale, with the participation of several units and battalions, as well as to undertake some military operations such as the second battle of Selenica in April, the Leskovik battle in May, in the context of which the first blow against the German army was struck at Barmash of Kolonja. It became possible to cope successfully even with the large scale operations carried out by the Italian Army, such as the Peza and Mallakastra operations in June 1943.

It is of importance to emphasize that with the shift of the epicenter of the uprising to the countryside, the Party further developed and strengthened the insurgent

movement in the cities as well, linking it organically with the uprising in the countryside, as a single uprising. Although occupied, in the years of the National Liberation War our towns were seething with the revolutionary movement, with the combat actions of the guerrilla units which made the cities unsafe for the enemies and always kept high the morale of the population not only of the towns but also of the village, which kept the links of the Party with the masses strong, and strengthened their general confidence in victory.

In the second phase the armed struggle was turned into a general people's uprising and the National Liberation Army was organized.¹

There was no force that could extinguish the flames of the liberation armed struggle that had engulfed the whole of Albania. The impetuous development of this war at the end of 1942 and at the beginning of 1943 showed that it was progressing with sure steps towards a new phase, the phase of the general people's uprising. «The National Liberation War,» comrade Enver Hoxha stressed in February 1943, «is gradually assuming a general character. Fascism is being dealt heavy blows both in town and countryside.»²

This situation was taken up for examination at the 1st National Conference of the CPA, in March 1943, which, on the basis of the analysis of the concrete internal circumstances (the impetuous extension and deepening of the liberation war) and external factors (the turning point brought about in the course of the Second World War by the historic victory of the Red Army in Stalingrad), seized as the main link on the question of the organization of the general uprising, and launched the slogan: «To go united towards the general uprising»³.

1. History of the PLA, p. 520 (Alb. ed.).

2. Enver Hoxha, Works, vol. 1, p. 211 (Alb. ed.).

3. Call of the CC of the CPA, April 7, 1943. PLA, Principal Documents vol. 1, p. 150 (Alb. ed.).

In order to carry out the general uprising, the Conference decided to organize «the regular National Liberation Army from the partisan and volunteer units» as «the terrible force against the occupiers and the sure and powerful guarantee of the liberation of the people»¹. At the same time ever broader masses of the people had to be drawn into the armed struggle and particular attention devoted to the «large-scale mobilization of the peasant masses» and the youth «as the inexhaustible force of the National Liberation War».²

This decisions found its complete implementation in the summer of 1943, when the Party considered that all conditions were ripe for a general outburst of the people's uprising. The Party itself, the partisan detachments, the broad masses of the people were by now prepared for the general uprising from every point of view — political, moral, military, organizational. In July 1943 the regular partisan detachments had about 10,000 fighters in their ranks, organized in 22 battalions and a great numbers of partisan units. Not less than 20,000 other armed fighters were included in the territorial volunteer detachments of the liberated zones and the guerrilla units of the occupied towns and regions. The liberated zones included more than half the total area of the country. In these zones the political power of the national liberation councils had been established. Hundreds of other councils carried out their activity in the occupied towns and zones.

In these conditions, the Central Committee of the Party proposed to the General Council the formation of the General Staff and the organization of the partisan and volunteer detachments and battalions into a regular National Liberation Army. The decision of the General Council on the creation of the General Staff was an-

1. Resolution of the 1st National Conference of the CPA. p. 114 (Alb. ed.).

2. Ibid., p. 113 and 115.

nounced on July 10, 1943, the first decision of the General Staff was on the formation of the Albanian National Liberation Army (ANLA).

The founding of the General Staff and the decision it adopted on the formation of the National Liberation Army laid the foundations of the regular Albanian People's Army. In this way, conditions were created for a reliable leadership of the general armed uprising that had begun in Albania, for a more thoroughgoing and extensive implementation of the laws and rules of the people's war.

Terror-stricken by the people's general uprising, in July 1943 the Italian occupiers proclaimed all the territory of the «Albanian Kingdom» an operational zone.

In accordance with the concrete condition, the structure of the ANLA, in the second phase of the uprising, was:

— The General Staff, which had as its task to organize and completely transform the Albanian National Liberation Army into a regular army, to carry out the centralized strategic and operative leadership of the general armed uprising, and at the same time to work out the tactics of this uprising.

— The staffs of the groups (regions) and of the 1st Operative Zone had as their task to lead the partisan armed forces of the region (zone) in compliance with the orders and instructions of the General Staff.

The armed forces in the regions and zones were of three kinds: a) partisan units, battalions, and (later) regular partisan groups; b) volunteer territorial units and battalions (of self-defence); c) regional commands, local commands, partisan guards in villages which made up «the military administration of the rear».

— The shock brigade was the largest formation and embodied the road chosen for the gradual transformation of the ANLA into a regular army through the merging of partisan units, battalions and groups into brigades. Unlike the units, battalions and groups, into brigade

was not a regional or zonal unit but an operative fighting unit at the disposal of the General Staff. It fought, moved, and manoeuvred, through all the regions of Albania as the need arose.

The General Staff mapped out a special plan for the gradual merging and organization of the units, battalions and groups into brigades. The 1st Brigade, which was formed on August 15, 1943, as comrade Enver Hoxha himself wrote on the occasion of its formation, «had the appearance of a truly regular army». «This marks a date in the history of our movement,» he added, «and this example should soon be followed in all the regions of the country.»¹

After the founding of the General Staff the liberation armed struggle took a more organized, more extensive and sterner character, arousing all the masses of the people. This was expressed in fierce clashes, not only on a tactical and operative scale, but also on a strategic scale, between the ANLA and the insurgent people, on one hand, and the Italian army, that was living through its last days, on the other. Such were the battles of the second Mallakstra operation, the attacks on the fascist garrisons in Mat and Dibra, the battles in Konispol and Kardhiq, in the region of Vlora, in Vithkuq, and in Rec of Shkodra.

The capitulation of fascist Italy on September 8, 1943 and the entry of the German nazi invaders into Albanian territory, found Albania in this situation of a general people's uprising and life and death battles of the people against the enemy.

The new invader was faced with heavy attacks by the National Liberation Army and the Albanian insurgent people, everywhere, in Pogradec, Xhyrë, Konispol, Cepo, Drashovica, Kruja, Derven, and on all communication

1. Enver Hoxha, Letter addressed to the Vlora Regional Committee on August 17, 1943. PLA, Principal Documents, vol. I, p. 189 (Alb. ed.)

lines, attacks which isolated the groupings of the German army and forced them to seek shelter in garrisons and fortified strongholds. The guerrilla movement in the cities assumed an unprecedented impetus.

In order to get out of this situation of encirclement, which was extremely dangerous for its troops, the German occupier together with the entire internal reaction — the Ballists, Zogites, and all the quislings, undertook a general offensive consisting of a series of operations throughout the country with the aim of annihilating the ANLA, the National Liberation Front and the councils, and establishing the nazi-reactionary regime everywhere.

In the winter of 1943-1944 the armed uprising, the National Liberation Army, as well as the National Liberation Front and the state power of the national liberation councils, underwent their most difficult test, faced the greatest dangers of the entire period of the Anti-fascist National Liberation War. Through these tests and dangers they showed themselves invincible, emerged victorious over so strong and savage an enemy as the nazi German army together with the reactionary armed forces which, apart from all else, enjoyed overwhelming superiority in weapons and war material.

The general offensive of the enemy failed completely. The general uprising of the people became even more widespread, the ANLA grew stronger. In May 1944 it had in its ranks about 35,000 fighters incorporated in 9 shock brigades and many partisan battalions, without reckoning the territorial volunteer detachments and battalions or the guerrilla units of the occupied towns and regions. The setting up of large military units in accordance with the general plan was continued without interruption in the heat of the war.

The war waged by the ANLA through the territorial volunteer detachments and the guerrilla units in the winter of 1943-1944 constituted, on a regional and zonal scale, a successful and profoundly manoeuvrable defence of an operative character, with numerous counter-attacks

of a tactical character on the front, the flanks and in the rear of the enemy operative forces. On a national scale, this war constituted a strategic defence which inflicted heavy losses on the enemy, and, as a consequence, brought about the balancing of forces and the seizing of the operative initiative by the ANLA. In March-April-May of 1944, our army, went over from defence to strategic counter attack, which prepared all the prerequisites for a general strategic offensive of the ANLA and the insurgent people, and created the possibility of convening the historic Congress of Përmet which solved the question of the state power in favour of the insurgent people.

Both the operative and strategic defence and the strategic counter-offensive were carried out on the basis of the instructions of the Communist Party of Albania and of the General Staff, and were directly led by them.

In the third phase the people's general uprising led to the ejection of the occupiers and the complete liberation of the country, the annihilation of the reactionary organisations and forces which were tools of the occupiers, the complete destruction of the state apparatus of the fascists and traitors. The ANLA was totally transformed into a regular army of the Albanian people and state of people's democracy.¹

While laying the foundations of the new Albanian state of people democracy, the Anti-fascist National Liberation Congress of Përmet, decided that the ANLA should be transformed into a completely regular army of that state through the incorporation of all detachments, battalions and groups into brigades, of the brigades into divisions, and of the divisions into armycorps. The high command of the ANLA was unified through the nomination of a General Commander and the appointment to this task of comrade Enver Hoxha, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Albania, Chairman of the

1. The History of the PLA, p. 520-521 (Alb. ed.).

Anti-fascist National Liberation Committee (the provisional revolutionary government), founder and organizer of the ANLA, who, until the convening of the Congress, had carried out the functions of Political Commissar of the General Staff.

Along with the plan to improve the organization of the ANLA, the General Commander, with great mastery and revolutionary farsightedness, mapped out the strategic plan of the general offensive for the complete liberation of the homeland and the consolidation and extension of the people's democratic state power throughout the country. At the same time this plan was aimed at defeating the objective which the Anglo-American governments and the Anglo-American Mediterranean Command wanted to achieve, of rescuing the reactionary forces of the Zogites and Ballists from destruction and preventing the triumph of the people's revolution.

The second general offensive which the German occupiers and the traitors undertook against the ANLA in June 1944 did not prevent the implementation of the plan of the General Commander, mapped out according to the decisions of the Plenum of the CC of the party and the Congress of Përmet. During this offensive the ANLA proved that it had attained the level of a regular army, both from the military and from the moral-political viewpoint, and it compelled the forces of the nazis and traitors to retreat with great losses.

After the smashing of the enemy general offensives of the winter and of the June 1944, the balance of forces changed in our favour. In such a situation, the ANLA, powerfully supported by the insurgent people, upon orders of the General Commander, went over from temporary strategic defence to counter-offensive, and then to general strategic offensive.

On the eve of the liberation the ANLA which had reached 70,000 fighters, had been transformed completely into a regular army of the new Albanian state, with a

sound organization and high morale, armed with all kinds of weapons seized from the enemy, equipped with capable experienced military and political cadres loyal to the people.

With the complete transformation of the ANLA into a regular army there were no more regional or zonal partisan detachments and battalions. All the detachments were incorporated into brigades, the brigades into divisions, and the divisions into army-corps. For this reason, the regional and zonal staffs were no longer necessary. Therefore, they were abolished by order of the General Command.

Using the countryside as its base, such an army was quite able to drive the occupiers out of the country, to destroy the armed forces of the traitors and liberate all the cities and the entire country on November 29, 1944, without the need for the Red Army or for any other friendly army, to come to Albania to give us direct aid.

In this way the ANLA and the insurgent Albanian people not only achieved the complete liberation of the country and the triumph of the people's revolution through their own forces, but were also able to dispatch beyond the borders of their country more than 20,000 fighters who fought heroically, together with the Yugoslav NLA, for the liberation of the peoples of Yugoslavia and the Albanian brothers of Kosova.

* * *

It is a characteristic fact that the ANLA, which had to be, and was, gradually transformed into a regular army, a condition indispensable to performing the great strategic tasks it had been charged with by the CPA and the General Staff, carried out these tasks while relying mainly on the tactic of partisan warfare.

Our army was obliged to employ such a tactic and not that of frontal war because of the superiority the enemy enjoyed in numbers and weapons. The skilful use

of the tactic of partisan warfare, in accord with the conditions of the country, neutralized the superiority of the enemy and created a complex superiority for the insurgent people, made the piecemeal annihilation of the enemy forces possible, and avoided heavy losses among the revolutionary forces, in other words, made it possible for a small nation like ours to fight and defeat a bigger and more powerful enemy. For this reason, time after time the CC of the CPA, the General Staff reminded the staffs of the detachments and units of the ANLA that «we must avoid waging largescale frontal warfare and holding the front at any cost,»¹ that «the tactic of our war continues to be the same as previously, i.e. guerrilla (partisan) warfare»².

The partisan warfare employed by the ANLA, which carried out not only tactical and operative tasks, but also important strategic tasks, in this way, differs from the warfare of an auxiliary character carried out behind the enemy's lines by the partisan detachments of other countries in co-ordination with the operative and strategic plans of the commands of the regular troops fighting at the front. The war waged by the ANLA is an original partisan war. It was conducted without any dependence on, or co-ordination with, any other front of the Second World War, either from the operative or strategic angle, and, even less, from the tactical angle. It coped with quite independent tasks which were defined by the CC of the CPA or the General Staff, and no other body.

The use, for the reasons we mentioned above, mainly of the tactic of partisan war does not mean that our National Liberation Army did not know, or did not employ at all, the tactic of frontal war or elements of this tactic. In particular cases it also waged frontal war,

1. The National Liberation Army, booklet of the CC of the CPA. Central Party Archives.

2. Enver Hoxha, Letter addressed to the Vlora Regional Committee, November 22, 1943, Works, vol. 2, p. 55 (Alb. ed.).

when it considered it possible and indispensable to hold certain objectives or lines, or not to allow the enemy to recapture them, either for a given time or permanently. The elements of the tactic of frontal war became more pronounced as complex superiority was gained over the enemy, who saw the ground slipping from under their feet, up to the battle for the liberation of Tirana, in which the principles and rules used over all were those of frontal war, but of a frontal war into which elements of partisan warfare were organically blended.

The partisan warfare of the ANLA was outstanding for its spirit of attack and the uninterrupted character of its combat actions, for the speed of its movements and the masterly use of rapid manoeuvring, the use of surprise attacks, the great initiative use of the commands of all instances, and the perfect use of the terrain.

Of extraordinary importance, as the main factor, together with the masterly use of the tactic of partisan warfare to neutralize and overcome the superiority of the enemy, to inflict heavy losses on, or to annihilate their forces and to achieve victory over them, was the high morale of the partisan fighters, which was the source of the invincibility and the unprecedented heroism of the ANLA. On every occasion, in every clash with the enemy, the partisans had incomparable moral superiority over the enemy. This boundless moral force had its foundations in the high level of consciousness of the fighters. They knew what they were fighting for, they had the feeling of sacred duty towards the country and the revolution, deeply rooted in their hearts, and not only towards revolution on a national scale, but also towards the international revolutionary movement, towards socialism. They had grasped, in essence, the correctness of the political line of the Communist Party, were fully aware of the difficulties, privations and sacrifices demanded by the war, and they had unshakable confidence in the victory of the just liberation war of the Albanian people. Therefore, every cadre and every rank-and-file partisan

was ready to lay down his life for freedom, for the country, for the revolution, and for the Communist Party.

Comrade Mehmet Shehu has summed up the principal qualities and virtues of the ANLA in the following way: 1) the **readiness** of every fighter to lay down his life for the defence of the country and the freedom of the people; 2) his **boundless loyalty** towards the Party, its Marxist-Leninist line, and communism; 3) his **confidence** in himself, in his comrades, confidence in the victory over the enemy, however powerful they might seem; 4) his **profound hatred** for the enemy and **boundless love** for the people; worthy **conduct** towards the people and spiritual communion with them; 5) the **comradely and fraternal relation** between the cadres and the rank-and-file partisan fighters, eliminating any distance between them; 6) the **spirit of attack**, the uninterrupted combat activity over the whole period of war; **strong and conscious discipline, mobility, rapidity, accuracy and resilience** in combat actions; 7) the **unyielding spirit** in the face of any obstacle, difficulty, or serious situation in the course of war, however extreme; **courage** and **dauntlessness** in face of death.¹

All these qualities and virtues are, in fact, elements of the communist morality which the Communist Party had implanted deep into the hearts and minds of the fighters of the ANLA. The Party and the General Staff devoted particularly great attention to the revolutionary ideo-political education of the National-Liberation Army. The main reason for this was that this army was called on not only to serve as a decisive weapon to achieve the strategic objectives of the Anti-fascist National Liberation War, which was a great people's revolution, but also to defend the achievements of this war and to develop them further on the road of socialist.

1. Mehmet Shehu, Instead of the conclusion. «Hope for the People, Terror to the Enemy.» Tirana 1971, p. 601 (Alb. ed.).

Of extraordinary importance for the successful development and the triumph of the general people's uprising was the uncompromising and principled revolutionary stand of our Party towards the policy and activities of sabotage and hindrance pursued by the Anglo-American military missions and the Mediterranean High Command, which did their utmost to protect the bases of the reaction, and demanded on various pretexts that the general uprising in Albania should begin only when the landing of the Anglo-American forces was to take place, and, consequently, when the command of these forces issued such orders.

The Central Committee of our Party and the General Commander, comrade Enver Hoxha, accepted neither orders, control nor strategy, imposed from outside. They implemented only their own policy and strategy. They gave and implemented orders without asking permission from any foreigner.

The Anglo-Americans over-estimated the importance of their supplies of arms, clothing, and footwear, and tried to use them to exert pressure on the General Staff of the National Liberation Army so as to force it to accept their policy, strategy, and supervision. The Central Committee of the Party, the General Staff and the General Commander, had never counted on waging the war with the weapons and other material that might be sent from abroad. They never accepted any interference and any political or military condition in connection with the possible supplies of the Anglo-Americans, and did not interrupt their armed struggle against the occupiers and traitors, even for a moment, when the Anglo-American Command threatened that it «would cut off all supplies». Comrade Enver Hoxha, in a letter addressed to Baba Faja on November 21, 1943, writes: «The 'friends' (the British officers) that have come there are up to all sorts of trickery. They want to poke their noses into the affairs of our army... Do not let yourselves be deceived by their promises... They have plenty of

words, but nothing comes of them. They are giving no aid in money. The aid they have given up to now is ridiculously small.»¹

The Party and the General Staff had made every cadre and rank-and-file partisan fighter deeply aware that only self-reliance would ensure the victory of the uprising, of the people's revolution.

On the basis of this principle, all the big and difficult problems of the people's armed struggle were solved, such as the training of the military-political cadres, equipping the army and the insurgent people, supplying the fighter with arms, ammunition clothing and footwear.

The Communist Party and the General Staff possessed no ready-made military cadres, no military school to train officers. There could be no question of using the officers of the old army. The overwhelming majority of them were serving the occupiers and the reaction. There was no other way but to train the commanders and the political commissars in the heat of the stern struggle against the enemy, selecting them from among the ranks of the workers, peasants and patriotic intellectuals, from the most honest, the bravest, the ablest partisans, devoted to the people and the revolution.

With the uninterrupted growth of the National Liberation Army, the need for cadres constantly increased, too. Some partisan staffs and commands, faced with such a necessity, asked the General Staff for commanders and commissars. Here is the answer to such a request, sent to a battalion command: «These requests astonish us greatly. It seem to us that you have not as yet understood that the battalions and detachments are the genuine source for commanders and political leaders... These leaders emerge in the process of struggle and battle»².

The commanders and commissars of the National

1. Enver Hoxha, Works, vol. 2, p. 48-49 (Alb. ed.).

2. Order of the General Command to the Dumrea Battalion on November 8, 1943. Documents of the General Staff, vol. 1, p. 147.

Liberation Army that emerged in the heat of the revolutionary war proved fully capable of successfully solving the difficult tasks of the organization and development of the armed uprising.

Although lacking sufficient schooling and military training, these sons and daughters of the people proved more capable than the Italian and German officers and generals who had graduated from high military schools and academies, and defeated them.

For the arming of the army of the insurgent people the main way was to seize weapons from the enemy in actual battle. As far as food, clothing, and footwear were concerned, the partisan fighters had to rely on the aid of the population.

* * *

Like the entire Anti-fascist National liberation War, the people's general uprising was carried out and triumphed under the leadership of the Communist Party of Albania. The creation of the National Liberation Army was the deed of the Party. It was created, organized, and led directly by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Albania, its General Secretary, comrade Enver Hoxha. All the problems of the uprising, all the questions of the structure and internal life of the liberation armed forces, of the strategy, operative actions and military tactics were solved in compliance with the instructions and teachings of the Party. Comrade Enver Hoxha, who was the Political Commissar of the General Staff and, later, the General Commander, mapped out every plan, every instruction, and important order issued to the National Liberation Army, himself directly leading the entire party work in the army. Every member or candidate member of the Central Committee was deeply engaged in the solution of the problems of the general uprising. Likewise, through the regional

(zonal) staffs, the Party regional committees led all the activities of the armed struggle in their respective areas.

The Party led the army through the party cells in the detachments and companies, through the party bureaus in battalions, through the political sections and, later, the party committees, in brigades and divisions. The communists were the heart and the brain of the Albanian National Liberation Army. They were outstanding not only as dauntless, fighters but also as political leaders, as untiring organizers and propagandists, as teachers of the partisan fighters and the masses of the people, setting the example in coping with complicated situations, with the extraordinary difficulties of partisan life. All of them fought with determination and relentlessly to have the party line, its directives and decisions, carried out to the letter.

An extremely important role in carrying out the party leadership in the army was played by the political commissars who were recognised by all as the representatives of the CPA in the detachments and units and answerable, more than anybody else, for the implementation of the political line by all the cadres and fighters.

But by no means a small role in effecting the party leadership was played by the commanders, too, the majority of whom, in the heat of the liberation war, became party members and were tempered as revolutionaries determined to fight for the cause of the people, the Party, and communism.

So boundless was the love for the Party and so great was its authority in the ANLA, so deep was the conviction in the correctness of the political line of the Party, in its wise leadership, that every cadre and partisan was fully aware that he could march on the correct road, towards final victory over the enemy, only on the basis of the directives and teachings of the Party.

The people's armed uprising in the Anti-fascist National Liberation War was developed on the basis of the general Marxist-Leninist laws and principles on the revolutionary armed struggle. At the same time it bears the imprint of the peculiarities that derive from the concrete internal and external conditions in which it developed, from the genius of our Communist Party, from the creativeness and self-sacrifice of the masses of the people, from the farsightedness, the revolutionary wisdom, and leading ability, of comrade Enver Hoxha.

The extremely rich experience of our people's general uprising, of our National Liberation Army, is an inexhaustible source of valuable lessons for the elaboration of revolutionary Albanian military art and for the further development of Marxist-Leninist military science, for the political and military preparation of the armed forces and our people as a whole to defend their freedom, independence and socialism, against the savage enemies of our country and people and all mankind, the US imperialists and the Soviet social-imperialists.

Among the many lessons, the first lessons is the **sound, undivided, and effective leadership of the Party.** This leadership is the main source of the heroism and revolutionary self-sacrifice of the Albanian people against the occupiers and traitors, and of their historic victory in this war. It is the principal factor in the extent, depth, and grandeur of the people's general uprising in the Anti-fascist War. The very creation and organization of the ANLA as a regular revolutionary army, and every victory and success attained by the ANLA over the occupation armies and the reactionary forces, has its roots in the correct Marxist-Leninist line of the Party and in its wise leadership.

Today, too, such a leadership is the principal guarantee of the honourable fulfilment of the lofty duty of the defence of our socialist homeland, of the all-round

political and military revolutionary preparation and of combat readiness of our armed forces, of our soldier-people.

The second lesson is the **steel-like army-people-party unity**. In this unity lay the entire strength of the National Liberation Army, of the insurgent people, and of the Party itself.

It is precisely this unbreakable unity that is the foundation of the strength of our soldier people, the guarantee of our victory over any enemy that might dare attack the People's Republic of Albania and endanger the great achievements of the people's revolution and socialist construction.

Another lesson is **the high morale of the fighters** of the National Liberation Army and the entire insurgent people, a morale that had its foundation in the profound political and revolutionary consciousness of the masses, in their unshakable confidence in the correctness of the political line and in the ability of the Party in leadership.

Today, also, the high patriotic and revolutionary consciousness of the masses of the people, their socialist moral qualities, their determination to march on the road of the Party are among the principal factors in the defence potential of the homeland and a guarantee of the victory over the imperialist and revisionist aggressors.

A very important lesson that emerges from the experience of the general uprising in the Anti-fascist National Liberation War is that, **through the people's liberation war, a small nation can fight and triumph over a more powerful enemy.**

The Anti-fascist National Liberation War is, indeed, a great treasury of experience for the people's war our nation may be obliged to fight against the imperialist and revisionist aggressors to defend the socialist homeland and to win final victory over them, regardless of the fact that a future people's war for the defence of the country will be at a much higher level from every point of view.