

Report to the 4th Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Albania, October 17, 1945. Published in [Selected Works Volume I](#), 8 Nëntori Publishing House, Tirana, Albania, 1974. pp. 428-462. First published in the Bulletin of the National Liberation War, N° 52, November 30, 1945

Comrades,

At this broad session of the Plenum of the CC of the Party, many problems face us, the most important of them being the problem of the Party in all sectors of its work: the state power, the army, the Front, etc., and the question of elections to the Constituent Assembly. In accordance with the agenda, we will discuss and decide upon the convening of the 2nd Party Conference.(1) At this meeting, we will not put forward a new political or organizational line, but by listening to the comrades of the Bureau, and all the other comrades, we will try to get a clear view of the situation in which we live and work, to get an exact idea of the strength of our Party and its whole development during the war. This will help us to define the new method of work required to solve correctly the problems facing us in this situation, which is different from that of the war period.

At every meeting, and especially at the sessions of the higher organs of the Party, it has become a custom to put at the top of the agenda the item: "The external and internal political situation." This is a commendable practice if it is interpreted correctly and does not degenerate into the enumeration of simple chronological facts; but if we are in a position to define the external and internal situation on the basis of these chronological facts, and to draw correct political conclusions from them, then we will be able to orientate our work correctly, determine our political stands, and facilitate the solution of complicated problems. The party member who does not see the development of events clearly and does not make the necessary deductions, will never be able to implement the party line correctly.

How does the external and internal situation appear to us in this new post-war stage?

We would be very mistaken to think like the average man who took part in the war, and now believes that everything is fine. Things are not so simple now in peace time, any more than they were simple in war time. We fought fiercely to win the war against fascism, but now we must fight and work with determination to defend and consolidate the peace.

We threw ourselves into a great war to annihilate fascism, the most ferocious enemy of democracy, but at the same time, we also fought for a happier life, for a sounder and more progressive democracy than that which existed in Western Europe before the war. The people took to arms not only to regain the freedoms the fascists had robbed them of, but also to shake off the yoke the imperialists and reactionary cliques had imposed on them under the guise of democracy. For this reason the war was not a simple matter, because in the allied anti-fascist camp there were states which had put all their forces into the struggle to defend their genuine freedom and democracy and that of the other enslaved nations, but there were also states which interpreted and waged their war against fascism in a different way. In the anti-fascist bloc, the Soviet Union was the standard-bearer of the liberation war; it bore the greatest burden of this war on its shoulders, it was the backbone of the anti-fascist alliance, the inspirer, encourager and defender of the enslaved nations, and the major factor in the defeat of Nazi Germany. Britain and America went to war against fascism after they saw their existence threatened by Germany, but their fight never assumed the character of a total war; on the contrary, they did not make great efforts to hasten the end of the war; they held back their forces to defend and consolidate their imperialist positions, and did not throw all of them into the war; they tried to slow down the struggle of the enslaved nations, and strove to strengthen the position of reaction throughout Europe in order to have its support in the present period of peace. The development of events during the war made all the facts I have mentioned above apparent, but despite all these contradictions and diverging views which existed between the Soviet Union and

the Western allies on the anti-fascist war, Nazi Germany and the British and US imperialist cliques did not succeed in splitting the great alliance of the anti-fascist bloc, for the sole reason that the Soviet Union, through its correct policy and heroic war, foiled all the manoeuvres of fascism and reaction.

So the tasks facing the communists, and the stand they should take were clear, just as the Soviet Union's stand was clear. The communists in all the enslaved countries had to rouse their people to a general uprising and merciless war against fascism and its lackeys. Through their open war against the occupiers and against their efforts to split the bloc, they had to defend and strengthen the alliance of the Soviet Union with Britain and America. At the same time, they had to consolidate the position of democracy, strengthen the position of the people and seize the reins of power and of government.

All the contradictions and divergences in the anti-fascist bloc: different concepts of democracy, efforts to repeat the past, to strengthen the position of the reaction and to deprive the people of their power, became more evident after the defeat of Germany, and are deepening daily in the present period. So, in this stage of preparatory work for peace, matters are not so simple or easily solved. We must defend the peace at all costs, this is the concern of the Soviet Union, and should be our concern too. Just as we always orientated ourselves towards the Soviet Union over the whole period of the war, and achieved victory, now too we must look to the Soviet Union, closely observe its international stand, march along its Leninist-Stalinist path, back up its efforts and defend its interests, for only in this way will we defend the interests of our country.

What is happening in post-war Europe, what are the positions and aims of the Anglo-Americans and of the Soviet Union in the international arena, and how do the interests of peace present themselves?

On the eve of Germany's defeat we noted a phenomenon which ought not to have surprised us: while the fighting continued on the Eastern Front and at the gates of Berlin with the greatest ferocity, the Western Front had totally disintegrated, the German resistance was insignificant, and the Anglo-American armies were pressing in on Germany. On all the other fronts where the Soviet Army or people's resistance armies were fighting, the fascists fought hard. We should be clear about this. The Anglo-Americans are trying to save as much as they can of the remnants of fascism; they are trying to strengthen the position of the reactionaries, to regroup and reorganize them in order to use them as a barrier against the establishment and triumph of genuine democracy. The great "exodus" of all the fascist war criminals and quislings found asylum and support in the bosom of the Anglo-American army in their occupation zones. Besides this, wherever reaction is in a strong position, the British and Americans, the former directly and the latter indirectly, violating every democratic principle with the greatest brutality, are intervening militarily to suppress progressive movements, bring the reactionaries to power, and strengthen the positions of reaction and fascism. This is happening in Greece. Thus on the eve of Germany's defeat and its unconditional surrender, we see the first open offensive of the reactionaries to consolidate their positions at all costs, of course, to the extent that this fleeting moment allows, until they encounter the powerful resistance of the Soviet Union, and the resistance movements of all the enslaved nations in general.

Thus, under cover of the anti-fascist alliance and the common victory, international reaction, headed by Britain and America, is waging a "sournoise" ["Sournoise" (Fr. in the original) — sly] and provocative war against the Soviet Union and all the people's democracies which have emerged from this liberation struggle. On the other hand, the Soviet Union and all the other countries where people's democracy has been established, as well as all the progressive nations of the world, whose guiding principle is the preservation and strengthening of the peace, and the consolidation on a sound basis of the alliance concluded in this war, are striving for the triumph of democracy in

Europe, for the elimination of fascism and its remnants, and the preparation of a just and lasting peace.

Of course it was not easy for Britain and America, at the beginning of the post-war period, to embark on an open campaign against the Soviet Union, but this campaign of slanders and denigration is gradually taking form and becoming sharper. Despite the divergencies between the Anglo-Americans and the Soviets, the Yalta (2) and Berlin Conferences were successfully concluded; but the recent London Conference ended inconclusively. Besides the innumerable difficulties which they raised there, the Anglo-Americans wanted to impose their will in the drafting of the different peace treaties, thus violating the decisions taken by the Big Three in Berlin. This was the first step towards open disagreement, not only on questions of principle. The world reactionary press launched a savage campaign against the Soviet Union, and the camouflaged fascists resorted to their usual threats and shameless provocations in their press organs.

The Anglo-Americans and world reaction are trying to bring within their grasp all the peoples who, through their struggle, succeeded in seizing state power during the war. The efforts of the reaction in this direction take first place. In many countries of Europe the fierce struggle of the people against the occupiers and their tools not only dealt a hard blow at the local reactionary cliques, but also gravely compromised the positions of Britain and America. During the war sympathy and friendship for the Soviet Union were awakened and grew strong. International reaction is now fiercely fighting to change this situation. The foreign policy of all the states of Europe which were previously occupied by Nazi Germany, especially those of Eastern and South-eastern Europe, is orientated towards the Soviet Union, which defends them and supports their efforts to strengthen democracy. In Poland and Yugoslavia the reaction tried to resurrect and bring the old reactionary cliques back to power, but it failed. The Yalta Conference solved the question of what governments these two countries would have. But this does not mean that reaction laid down its arms. The offensive of reaction against Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary, and Albania is exceptionally broad, especially now on the occasion of the electoral campaigns, which will be decisive.

International reaction is restoring and strengthening the shaky or seriously weakened positions of the reaction in each country. The organization of the reaction in various European countries is taking concrete form. The Soviet Union and all the other progressive nations and governments are opposing the rise and strengthening of the reaction. But in this fierce struggle for the triumph of democracy, the main concern of the Soviet Union and the other progressive governments is to defend the peace. We take the same stand towards the Anglo-Americans. They do not look favourably upon our government and people's democracy, but struggle against them. Up to now they have no intention of recognizing us, and in our opinion, recognition will not come easily or quickly. All our just demands in the international field have remained unanswered or have received a negative reply. They bring accusations against our government, just as they do against those of Yugoslavia, Poland, etc. But, of course, this struggle has its variations, depending on the importance they attribute to each country, and the position it occupies. The reactionary press has not yet unleashed an open campaign against us as it has done against other countries, but this does not mean that this will not happen. On the occasion of the elections an all-out offensive will be mounted against us.

The thing is that we must know how to manoeuvre so as to give the foreign and internal reaction as few weapons as possible to fight us with. This calls for a policy which is flexible without slipping into opportunism, a policy aimed at strengthening our internal and external positions. Our stand and tactics will be determined in the discussions to be held here, after considering the situation concretely, and analysing the work we have done. The strengthening of our international position depends on consolidating our internal position which, in turn, hinges on our intensive and correct activity, and the correct implementation of the party line.

In such an international situation, without saying that the interests of peace have been jeopardized, we can say that they are very difficult to defend. We must exert all our efforts to defend and strengthen the interests of genuine people's democracy and guard against provocations which have occurred and will occur in the future, both from Greece and from the Anglo-Americans. The Soviet Union shows particular concern for us. Apart from the great moral support it gives us in the international arena, it is also giving us material and cultural assistance. The doors of the Soviet Union are open to us; our officers have been admitted to Soviet military schools; the first contingent of our university students will soon be sent. Seeing our difficulties in the economic field, the Soviet government acceded to our request and sold us 20,000 tons of wheat, and deliveries have begun; we have also concluded a trade agreement. We have friendly relations with Yugoslavia and other Balkan states, such as Bulgaria and Rumania, and with Poland and Czechoslovakia. The Bulgarian, Rumanian and Polish governments have proposed recognition of our government.

This is a general outline of the external situation, and our international position, as I have said, will be further strengthened as our internal position becomes stronger.

How does the internal situation appear and where does our strength lie? Since the time of the liberation of Albania, our internal situation has become much stronger. In our country, as everywhere else, the reaction was armed by fascism. And they fought us together. Although our internal reaction had only weak links with international reaction, and especially with British and American reaction, still it enjoyed their direct and indirect support. However, internal reaction has been dealt a heavy blow both militarily and politically. Its chiefs either went into exile or were captured and tried. The opinions of those comrades who claimed that we had completely eradicated the reaction were without foundation. Even after the liberation of Albania we had to carry out an operation in the North to suppress the aggressive armed resistance of the reactionary chieftains and bairaktars who had remained inside the country.⁽³⁾ We cannot say that our reaction has been rooted out; despite the blows it had been dealt, sooner or later, under more favourable conditions, it will act and organize. Over the first period after liberation, the reaction had its claws blunted and lay dormant. Faced with our strength and our lightning actions, the remnants of the reaction lay low. Their activity consisted in spreading rumours against the government, the state power and the army.

The attitude of the Anglo-American allies towards our government and their intervention in Greece boosted their courage. They began to extend their activity and intended to attack the institutions which were strongest and posed the greatest danger to them. They openly tried to organize desertions from the army. But we may say that all the attempts of the remnants of the reaction to arm themselves and organize in fairly broad units, and to carry out open actions have failed. Our forces have pursued such chiefs and bairaktars as Muharrem Bajraktari, Fiqri Dine, Gjon Marku and others, not giving them a chance to organize and arm themselves. It is true that they have succeeded in eluding our forces, and this should deeply concern us, but it is also a fact that their freedom of movement has been greatly restricted. Naturally, these elements are a headache to us, because in many Northern regions our work has been and still is inadequate. Sometimes their slogans catch on, and there are still people who maintain a wait-and-see attitude. Only if we do intensive political work and our state organs directly concern themselves with finding a concrete solution to their problems, will these people be closely linked with our state power. The strength of the reaction does not lie only in its armed bands; we also see it displayed in various forms among other elements who, supported by external reaction, are preparing the resistance against our democratic state power. This process of the regrouping of the reaction is not a simple development. It would be a great mistake for us, who direct the policy of the Front and state, to let bygones be bygones, and take an idealistic view of our internal situation and of our state power.

We must look at the situation realistically, and maintain close contacts with the masses, for

otherwise we will be deeply disillusioned, and the reaction will gain ground. The international situation and the unfriendly attitude adopted by the Anglo-American allies towards our government and state power favour the consolidation of the reactionary and dissatisfied elements, the Catholic clergy, confused intellectuals who previously were either on the side of the enemy or did not commit themselves, the strata of the big merchants who have been hit by the emergency taxation on profits,(4) the internal speculators, and the strata of beys and agas who have been affected by the Law on Land Reform. If we do not act correctly and do not properly implement the line of the Front, we may be sure that around these elements will rally all those uncommitted people who are not involved in politics, and who are unable to see through the manoeuvres of the reaction and understand our efforts in this difficult situation. People of this category are quickly influenced by every reactionary slogan and stand by us only if we keep continuous contact with them. All the strata I have mentioned should be carefully considered, not from the administrative viewpoint, but in order to work with them. It is not easy to work with them. It is not easy to work with the Catholic clergy. The clergy is influential in Shkodra and the surrounding region, and this influence cannot be eliminated merely by administrative measures. The Catholic clergy is a well-organized body, with strong traditions and close links with external reaction and the Vatican. Therefore we should confront its organization with our better organization, confront its policy with our correct political line, and oblige it to fight on our ground, and not on its own, or with the slogans it wants to use. We must find the correct method of struggle and appropriate tactics to use against individual elements of the clergy. There were moments when the Catholic clergy was openly at war with us, even with armed force. We replied by attacking it. But the Catholic clergy is not so naive as to insist on open struggle against our people's power at a time when its own position is weak and threatened, and the international situation is not in its favour. As our enemy, the clergy knows how to act politically, not for the good of the people, but to strengthen its own position. It would be political immaturity on our part if we did not know how to exploit circumstances and situations. We must be intelligent in our policy towards the Catholic clergy. We should never lose our sense of proportion and go from one extreme to the other, a mistake which comrades often make. The manoeuvre of the Catholic clergy will be the focal point of all the schemes of reaction, of the fugitive chiefs in the mountains, of the dissatisfied and the confused. This is where our political maturity will be demonstrated. We should know how to adapt the political line of the Front to different situations and places, to break up the concentration of the reaction, and to gain a strong position for ourselves. The strata of wealthy merchants, and the rich beys and agas, directly affected by the just laws of the state, are increasing the ranks of the dissatisfied. The rich merchants put up organized resistance in the first days of the tax collection but had to pay up because of the measures taken by the state power. That does not mean that they were won over and became the readiest of taxpayers. On the contrary, they tried to avoid paying the remainder of their tax.

The description of the internal situation would not be complete if we did not show how strong we are, where our strengths and our shortcomings lie. We will emphasize this later on, when we speak about the Front and the state power. Here let me say that, confronted by these opposition forces, which should not be underestimated, we have reached the situation existing at present on the eve of the general elections. With regard to the elections, we must work hard, and in order to win, we should know the political line of the Front well and apply it properly. To apply the line of the Front does not mean only to organize a meeting, but to implement it in practice, in various circumstances and with different categories of people, whose mentality, frame of mind, and aims should be studied attentively. To implement the political line well in practice means to understand well what the state power is and how it works, to know the laws well, to be the first to respect and apply them properly, to understand and implement the policy of the government in every field of activity, and to be in close contact with the masses of the people. We should base our propaganda and agitation on a sound foundation and make them understandable to the people, that is, we should base them on the various achievements of the state power in which the people, politically educated and enlightened, have taken an active part. It is only in this way that the Front becomes a reality, a mass organization

which defends and supports the state power. This is precisely where the enemies are directing their attacks, against the state power, the Front and the army. There is no need to go into detail in this report about the manoeuvres of international reaction at this time of the elections. Its principal line of attack is the charge that our government is a communist government, and therefore there is no democracy here, only the dictatorship of one party, i.e., of the Communist Party, and as a consequence, free elections are not being held. Relying on these false accusations, the Anglo-Americans are trying in a thousand ways to sabotage the elections, or to intervene directly.

Naturally this tactic of international reaction has become the tactic of our internal reaction. Gjergj Kokoshi's words at the last meeting of the Council (5) expose the whole program of the reaction. In Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Rumania, foreign reaction, in collaboration with local reaction, is very active, while here the reaction has just begun its work. We must not dream that, because conditions are different here, the reaction cannot act here as it has elsewhere. It is true that situations always vary, but the tactics of the reaction also vary. The first warning of the offensive of the Anglo-Americans against us on the occasion of the elections was given by Tajar Zavalani, (6) although in a somewhat veiled manner. They are flying "ballons d'essai"* such as the rumours that "Zog has gone to Cairo," that "an Albanian government is being formed abroad," etc. General Hodgson (7) wrote me his first letter and asked if we would leave all the British officers free to control the election campaign on voting day. (8) This is only the beginning, without doubt there is more to come, on the other hand Gjergj Kokoshi, who had the courage to express the point of view of reaction, is certainly on the move. He is striving to extend his influence, naturally among the strata of the dissatisfied intellectuals and the bourgeoisie, among the strata of the capitalists and merchants. Without doubt Gjergj Kokoshi and his associate Mirash Ivanaj, (9) who has just returned from emigration, allegedly known as opponents of the Catholic clergy, will try to direct this reactionary force in Shkodra against us. There are still no signs of a party being formed within or outside the Front, although rumours are being spread here and there about efforts to create parties. But in any case they are carrying out a campaign to encourage abstention from voting using the propaganda arguments I have already mentioned, saying, "There is no freedom here," etc. Gjergj Kokoshi resigned from the Front, but the question remains: did Gjergj Kokoshi not have his supporters in the Front? We should have no illusions that all the non-party nationalists in the Front are one hundred per cent on our side. There are some who are very close to us and have linked their fate with our Party, there are the waverers who, given good sound work on our part, will always stand by us, but there are also others who do not think the same way we do, and who will be our opponents tomorrow. These people do not feel strong enough to come out openly against the Front, and up to now no serious attempt to form a group or a party within the Front has been apparent.

Most of those people will remain in the Front until the elections are over, in order to have themselves elected to the Assembly under the banner of the Front. They will certainly form a group or a party, an opposition within the Assembly. There seem to have been disagreements on this point between Gjergj Kokoshi and the other wavering and hostile elements which are still in the Front, i.e., they disagreed on tactics. As the electoral campaign develops, it will become clearer what tactics (10) the reaction is resorting to in order to undermine the state power and sabotage the elections. Faced with this situation, our Party should mobilize all its forces, and the Democratic Front should become a reality. We have many times laid down the political line of the Front, so I will not repeat it.

To work in the Front, which is the duty of every communist, means to work with the people, to go beyond the bounds of your duties in the state organs or the army, to carry out the special work of the Party, the work which is most crucial — the education of the masses. Unfortunately some party members have viewed this in a very narrow way. Let us start from the political work with the masses of the people. Work in the Front has been interpreted like this: go and make a speech every fifteen days, and you have completed the task the Party has charged you with. This is only small

part of the work, but unfortunately even this small part is not carried with the seriousness with which communists should work. The lower the political level of the comrades who hold meetings, the less they prepare themselves. They think the public is obliged to listen to the blather they prepared only half an hour before. This has had the result that no one wants to attend meetings, and we should not seek the cause in the passivity of the masses, but in the ignorance, negligence, and underestimation of the masses by the speaker, and if he is a party member, the mistake is inexcusable. But how can we prepare a good speech? I am convinced that many comrades have not yet understood this, for otherwise, they would find it simple, and the meetings would be more interesting. Speeches are not prepared by piecing together newspaper articles or other people's reports. I can understand this if a speech of a scientific nature is being prepared, but if it is a question of agitation and propaganda among the masses of the people, as most of our meetings are (unfortunately we have done nothing about scientific meetings), the speaker will find the themes of his speech, the thoughts he will expound to his audience, only in the life of the people, and not in newspapers and magazines. But this source of knowledge, from which he will learn how to become a good agitator, is neglected, he does not live with the people, he does not know their problems or their complaints; he is up in the clouds and his speech harps on the same phrases. But the masses of the people are not satisfied with words alone. The masses will be pleased to listen to a good speech, but the things that are said there, they want to see realized in practice, they want concrete results. This is a characteristic of the masses. The strength of our Party lies in its deeds. Here I am not trying to tell you how to prepare a speech, but to point out what half-hearted methods we use to educate the people. Party members are often heard to say: "I have no time, I am up to my neck in office work, I can't go there, I can't do that." I say categorically on this point that in ninety per cent of cases this is not true. All of us, from me down to the rank-and-file party member, if we revise our sense of duty towards our work, will see that we can find time. It is impossible that a party member should have no time to do the job the Party charges him with on top of his official duties; but even if he has no time, he must find it; he can take it out of his sleep. That is the sort of people we should be. I have good reason to emphasize this. This is a serious weakness which we should fight because it harms us and is the source of all political laxity and mistakes. I understand and respect the party member who is up to his neck in work and on his own, but who never fails to carry out his special party work. But this does not happen with everyone. With such a mentality and such a spirit we cannot make progress. On the pretext that they are very busy, comrades shirk their duty, or worse still, what they do they do not do properly. If you ask such-and-such a political secretary of a regional committee, he will answer, "I've got a lot of work to do," but at the same time many unpleasant things of an anti-Party nature occur in the organization he leads, and he sees them, just as all the people see them; a general secretary of a ministry says that he is snowed under with work, but when asked to explain something, either he is not in a position to tell you anything, or produces false and unverified statistics. This is point one. Point two: our comrades do not make efforts to learn and raise their level; in general they are marking time. The people working in the state organs, and in the first place our comrades, do not know and do not try to learn the laws of the state.

Astonishing things happen, which it would take days to list. A subprefecture, allegedly because it is self-governing through the people's council, accepts neither the directives of the region nor those of the centre, but becomes an "independent republic"; in another region, subprefectures spring up like mushrooms only to disappear in three months' time. One collects taxes in this way, the other in another way, one respects the law, the other completely violates it and cancels all taxes, because he considers this "reasonable" in his region. Such things are not unusual. But there are even more critical cases where the state power is not respected and government orders are disregarded. The centre may send twenty telegrams to a region without any reply. Why does this happen? It happens because some comrades have still not understood what the state power is, what centralism is, how the Party leads the state power, and what their responsibilities to the Party and the state power are.

And, above all, a dangerous mentality is beginning to appear which should be swiftly combatted:

once admitted to the Party, the communist becomes conceited. He becomes authoritarian, works less than others, and considers that he is untouchable and can do anything he likes. I am saying these things so that we may think deeply about them and eliminate such faults, because if we do not improve, the Front will be weak and the state power likewise. The Front is not something detached from practical reality. The political line of the Front becomes a concrete reality in the work of the state power, in the achievements of the state power. If we do not properly understand the political line of the Front, it will be difficult for us to properly understand the policy of the government in all the fields of activity, and vice-versa. The policy of the Front and the policy of the government are two things that go together. We have said that we should broaden the Front, convince the dissatisfied, and activate the entire people. We have not done this in the proper way, or to the correct extent; sectarianism and hackneyed methods exist in our work, people persist in obsolete methods which may have been appropriate two years ago, but do not keep pace with time and the development of events. We forget that now questions can no longer be solved with partisan methods; we forget that the method of work should change, not only in form, but also in essence; we forget that the people now demand many things, the things we have promised them; they have begun demanding in a year things which they have never had in hundreds of years; the most remote village wants a school, and it wants electric power, for there is a stream close by. We fought and liberated the country, and this is a great achievement for us. This is our strongest recommendation, but it is not enough; now we must work hard in the correct way, for otherwise our laurels will wither. Apart from the important questions of the Front, the Party has been confronted with a host of problems. The important problem of the state power, and the implementation of government policy in the various fields of social and economic activity have been dominant throughout this period after liberation, and always remain on the agenda. Everything will be solved in the best way when our Party is strong, and we can see improvement in it from day to day.

I will deal in general outline with the question of the state power and the policy of the government. With the state power we will be able to solve all our problems, and this is where our strength lies. We should know how to perfect the state power and make the best use of it. Our Party leads the state, and it is self-evident that the stronger the Party the stronger the state power. Before we go deeply into the question, the comrades should understand one thing: our Party leads the state power through its people whom it has everywhere in the key positions of command. All the decisions are worked out in the Party and implemented by the organs of the state power. The party members transmit these decisions of the Party to the state power. It depends on the party members how these decisions are presented to the people in the state power, to those in the Front. From this it becomes apparent how well we have understood the party line, and how we are implementing it in the Front and in the organs of the state power. Besides this, the party member should be conscious that the Party is there, wherever he is working, and that he is responsible to the Party and to the state power simultaneously, to his superiors in the state power, whoever they are, whether party members or not. The ability of a party member is recognized and evaluated in the work he does in the position the Party has appointed him to. That is where it is seen how capable he is, how disciplined and how loyal to the Party. Misunderstanding this question leads to such mistakes as: failure to respect the authority and the hierarchy in the state power, breach of the law and failure to fulfil tasks; and hence sectarianism, both in the Front and in the state power organs. These shortcomings exist among our comrades, and for this reason our state power is not as strong as it should be, and mistakes are made.

In the first place, the bases of the state power in the village, the people's councils, are still weak, because they are not elected according to sound criteria, and still do not properly understand their role in the village. These councils, especially in the North, are not given the necessary help by our comrades.

In form, the state power in the North appears to be more or less the way we want it to be but in

practice work carries on in the old way, that is to say, the subprefecture councils show very little, if any, interest in the work. Laws and regulations hardly reach them. Likewise, the press, agitators and propagandists very seldom go to them. This weakness of the grass roots councils inevitably causes shortcomings in the district and subprefecture councils. Some regional councils are not in a position to properly guide the whole region, all the councils of the sub-prefectures. There are no strong contacts between them, and the work is not coordinated. Our comrades are young, they lack experience and foresight, and they are not very good organizers. They often take a narrow and rigid view of things, get tied up with trifling matters and forget major questions. The comrades do not make serious efforts to learn and to raise their ideological level; many of them do not know the laws or know them only superficially. They do not study the local problems with the due seriousness, and the centre receives very few suggestions or proposals from them. In general, they are not abreast of the situation, because their contacts with the centre are purely formal, and thus the plan of work in their region is not well coordinated with the general plan of the government. They often slip into the position of one section of the people, through a wrong interpretation of the spirit of the law and create baseless and unnecessary administrative divisions; they view issues and problems in a parochial spirit without considering problems as a whole. All these shortcomings make the state power weak in some centres. On account of this the people are not properly mobilized around the organs of their state power, and this prevents them from becoming the most important support for these organs, especially at this moment when the economic and financial situation is not at all prosperous. This leads to bureaucracy, lack of responsibility and work being left undone. Our comrades have not understood the importance of the state power, the importance of organization, the importance of leadership. There is a process developing, which may turn to our disadvantage if we go on dreaming; the state power could slip from our hands, if we are not skilful.

A sectarian spirit exists in many cadres of the state power. Many people, who have had scientific training but are not communists, are not made good use of. They are engineers, doctors, agronomists and technicians of various kinds, without whom the state machine cannot function. It often happens that the organs of the state power are filled with communist comrades who are incompetent and incapable and who, in order to conceal their incompetence, treat these cadres badly. Such a situation cannot be tolerated. The communist should be in the place he deserves, he should show himself more capable than the others in deeds and not in words, for words are only wind. Without correcting these mistakes we cannot have a strong state power, because the state power is not something infallible, ideal, and beyond reproach, but is a reality which improves with the improvement of work. Nevertheless, we have achieved many things through this state power, which I will not analyse here one by one; I will only put forward in broad outline some major problems of the government and its policy in the most important state sectors. The state organs will apply this government policy in the various, complicated and difficult circumstances which face us, and the whole Party should be mobilized to solve these problems, a task which will be properly carried out when the Party is in the lead, and when the state power is strong.

It is not the first time that the Party, and when I say the Party, I imply the government too, has defined its policy for the different sectors of state activity. This policy has been defined through the various laws approved by the Anti-fascist Council which have been worked out in advance in the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Party. During this period, the government has also laid down the program of work for the various sectors, a program that has been carried out with the good results and shortcomings which we have often spoken about.

At the Berat Plenum, (11) decisions were taken in broad outlines on the urgent measures dictated by the situation, but later, under the new circumstances created with the complete liberation of Albania, these decisions were better defined. We now have more experience in solving problems, and we are in a position to define our economic and social policy better and more clearly.

What are the major problems which we should devote our attention to solving? In our opinion, the

main problems are: the question of the economy, agriculture, education, finance, reconstruction, and the army, but this does not mean that other government questions cannot also be discussed here.

The economic question is the most important for us, but it is also the most difficult, so I shall try to give a general outline of the situation and lay down our economic policy. Our economy is at a very low level, it is seriously damaged. Various sectors, such as industry, the mines, and home and foreign trade are either very weak or completely paralysed. Our country was devastated and ruined by the war, and its production is low, which creates a critical situation. The war is the main reason for this situation, and then come other factors: lack of tools, transport, capital, and foreign markets, the international situation with regard to our state power, etc.

What must we do to improve our economic situation? First, we must increase production and improve our product, rebuild the small-scale industry that existed in our country prior to the war, strengthen the state sector: especially the oil wells, the Selenica bitumen mines, and then the other sectors, and we should enliven both local and foreign trade. (12) Our state cannot be strengthened and the situation of our country improved unless we correctly tackle the question of economic reconstruction. The process of large-scale reproduction and of the industrialization of the country is closely linked with the form of our state power. In this process of development, the state sector should be constantly strengthened. In the first stage of reconstruction we should rebuild all that was destroyed by war in the economic field and reach the pre-war level within a short time. To achieve this, the small merchants and industrialists should begin work again under new conditions, obtaining, under our control, a certain profit, but being barred from speculative activity. Yugoslavia has supplied us with materials, on the basis of an agreement under which we repay Yugoslavia with the equivalent value in our products. We must meet these commitments. We have signed a trade agreement with the USSR to buy 20,000 tons of wheat and a small quantity of chemicals.

Repayment of their total value is due at the end of 1946, either in other goods which we have available, or in foreign currency. If we do not improve the economic sector, our obligations to our people and to the states, with which we have entered trade agreements, will cause us to become politically dependent. We should never forget this; we have had a bitter past. Apart from the Soviets towards whom we must act very correctly from every point of view, the Anglo-American allies do not help us because they like the colour of our eyes. (13) We know their aims.

Before the war, our state, despite its backwardness and the measures taken by Zog's regime, still managed to export something abroad. Of course, export is connected with the development of the different sectors of production: agriculture, livestock farming, the fishing, timber, and other industries. The war has done great damage to these sectors, but with better organization and through activating all the capital in the country, we can achieve satisfactory results. We have made the large state sectors operational, but they are at a rudimentary stage of development. Our country's main income comes from the output of the mines which will help us strengthen the other sectors as well. Oil is our main resource, and interests everybody. Of course, in this vital sector we will rely on the help of the Soviet Union, but we will consider the interest of our country first. Preliminary talks have been conducted, and the Soviets have agreed to send some specialists to study the question on the spot, to see what assistance they can give us and what equipment is needed for the maximum exploitation of the Kuçova and Patos oil fields.

The question of agriculture is also very important and very complex. Our agriculture is extremely backward, our peasants are very poor and their farming methods and tools are antiquated. With the changing situation of the peasantry as a result of the land reform, the nature of their work and production should also change. We should produce as much as possible, leaving no inch of land unsown, encouraging the peasants to cultivate other necessary crops which they did not previously grow, either because of ignorance or because of the difficult conditions of their existence. That will

be our policy in this field. It is imperative for us to work systematically. The question of agriculture, the land reform, and the problems stemming from them should be considered broadly. Concrete assistance should be given to all sectors of agriculture as regards seeds, tools, and draft animals, in the field of livestock farming and the setting up of small factories to process livestock products, and also to forestry and the timber industry. For this purpose it appears necessary to set up an agricultural bank to assist agriculture, and not to skin it, as was the case in former times. This bank is being set up, but we should see to it that the credits advanced to the peasants really go towards developing agriculture. We must do large-scale educational work with the peasants so that these credits will be used correctly. A good policy in this field will be one of the main factors in raising the economic level of the country. If we increase the production of wheat and maize, as well as other crops, we shall reduce the quantity of grain which we have to import from abroad, and this will enable us to import other things to help develop other sectors and increase their production.

Apart from this, the improvement of livestock will enable us to export wool and to establish an industry in our country. At present, hides are in great demand everywhere. Our timber industry has been very backward. We imported a great quantity of timber from abroad, whereas now we can set up a local wood-processing and paper industry to meet at least the needs of the country. Apart from the heavy burden which falls on the state, we can quite easily mobilize private capital, too, especially in the sector of livestock and related industrial products.

The land reform (14) was one of our greatest reforms which will certainly boost our agriculture. But first of all, we should work to implement the land reform well and as quickly as possible. Closely connected with the land reform is the question of land settlement and land improvement schemes. Will we be able to achieve this under the present circumstances? It will be difficult to do it properly, but this does not mean that we should not begin. According to available statistics and the first results achieved after the division of large estates, at present we do not anticipate that we will have much land to populate, and settlement will be limited until the large-scale land improvement schemes have begun. We must at least ensure a minimum of work tools for the peasants' families which we transfer to these newly reclaimed lands. We must see to it that the families of martyrs, soldiers, and poor peasants are the first to be settled on the expropriated land. Owing to budget problems and technical difficulties, the land improvement schemes cannot yet be carried out on a large scale. But the masses of the people have begun with great determination to dig drainage and irrigation canals. This activity should be further encouraged and assisted.

The financial question is also a great problem which should concern all of us. Expenditure — and everyone should know this — is far greater than our normal income. If we add to this the emergency taxation, then we manage with much difficulty to balance the budget. As you know, more than half of our budget comes from emergency taxation. The rest of the income comes from various taxes. It is self-evident that with trade paralysed, industry in ruins, agriculture weak, the people impoverished, and almost all direct taxation abolished, the income from taxation is small. This situation, of course, hampers various projects from being realized. Many regions complain because credits allotted to them in the budget are not forthcoming, but they do not think about where these credits are to come from. Many regions have totally neglected the collection of taxes and maintain themselves only with the funds allocated by the centre. Some regions, without giving any serious thought to financial problems, even break the law, asking to be allowed not to collect taxes at all, for in this way they would make a good impression on the people. We all know that it makes a good impression if we ask for nothing from the people, but if no one pays or does not pay the set amount, how can the work be done? How will we cope with this fiscal year? In the first place, by economizing, and when we say economizing, we should not think that we must pay thousands of civil servants who do not work and abandon our projects. We can economize by clearing out the parasites from our offices, as well as by activating the people to do voluntary work for their own good and that of the society. People must be given to understand that the situation is

difficult. Then, above all, we must save state money, use it properly, and duly check up on it. We are lagging far behind in this, and we must take a turn for the better, otherwise we will find ourselves facing bankruptcy. The foreign goods which we bring in and sell allow us to meet the needs arising from delays in collecting taxes, but we must not forget that these sums will always remain on the debit side of the state budget. With the circulation of the new currency, the question of a new deflation also arises. While we are discussing money matters, I want to emphasize that the party comrades who work in the organs of the state power and, especially, those who are in the offices concerned with the distribution of goods, both at the centre and in the regions, should be rigorous on financial matters and keep their accounts in good order. This is no small matter. Millions are involved, and I say this because there have been abuses in different sectors, even in the army and by some people who consider themselves party members. Such things will be dealt with mercilessly, whether they are done wittingly or unwittingly. The party member should have a good head on his shoulders, and a clear conscience.

Let us look briefly at the question of reconstruction and of what we should do in this sector. All of us know how things stood. The government plan was to give urgent priority to normalizing communications, roads, bridges, and transport. We achieved great success in building bridges. Why? In my opinion we succeeded because the work was carried out conscientiously, and those responsible for this sector themselves stood in the front-line of the work. In addition, a great deal of material was found by our people and bought by the state organs. These factors contributed to the success in this sector. Almost all the power stations are now operational, but they are very out of date. After rebuilding the bridges and repairing the roads more or less adequately, the most pressing problem is that of housing, many people have lost their homes as a result of the war. Can we do much in this direction on a long-term basis? At present it is difficult. We are unable to build new mass-product houses in the various villages burnt down and ruined by the war. But we must try to see that all our people have somewhere to lay their heads. Therefore we must do everything within our means to help private or collective initiatives for the provision of huts or temporary housing for this winter. On the other hand, in this sector we should work out projects and plans for rebuilding the burnt-out villages or ruined towns, so as to start their reconstruction as soon as circumstances permit. But this important question, like the electric reticulation of the country, requires more favourable conditions than those we live in at the moment. The sector of transport is very weak. Take for example the question of vehicles. All of us know that we face difficulties which may become even worse. No one will supply vehicles, because they are needed everywhere. All of us keep saying that we should economize and maintain them carefully, but nothing is done about it. Those who drive vehicles for the state enterprises take little care of them. Those who have none criticize loud and long, but when a vehicle is handed over to them, they belt it along until they wreck it. This is not a laughing matter. Those motor vehicles we inherited were obsolete, but it is a fact that we have misused and continue to misuse them. As in any other field of activity, especially in the field of transport, the party people should without fail put things in order. On those five trucks we have, depend the people's bread, the transport of salt and kerosene, the functioning of industrial enterprises, public works and the exploitation of the mines. If we attach due importance to this major problem, then we should think in earnest about it. There is no other solution. The prospects are not bright. This is the reality of the situation.

The question of education should become the concern of the entire Party. What should be the educational policy of our Party and state? Everyone should be educated. We must fight illiteracy and make elementary schooling compulsory for all, we must try to provide the younger generation with a sound general education, channel the largest and most dependable section of the youth into the branches of agriculture and industry, train reliable cadres as teachers, and increase their numbers. We must do away with the attitude that "even without education and culture we can do everything." We are now acutely aware of what it means to have a shortage of trained people to direct the work, to have no engineers, technicians, agronomists, and others. What will happen later

if we do not begin to take the necessary measures now, and if we do not follow a sound and broad educational policy? We shall begin with what we have. We have to devote special importance to the elementary school teachers, for they have the new generation in their hands. With a correct policy towards them, we can be successful with them; it should not be forgotten that the majority of them are the sons and daughters of the people, they are poor, and close to us, close to the people, with whom they live. The teacher means everything to the villagers. But this does not mean that we should not also adopt a correct stand towards the secondary school teachers, though many among them are indifferent or still remain aloof from our state power. The demands to open schools are great and exceed our possibilities. Every village wants a school. The budget does not permit this, and technically we are not in a position to do it. Nevertheless, we should open a number of schools, and try to train young teachers in pedagogical courses which we should set up. In time these young teachers will improve and expand their knowledge. It will be difficult to draw up the school programs for this year. We are in the process of studying the programs of the Soviet secondary schools, but it will be a long time before we have translated and studied them, and then decided on a program suitable for our schools. For the time being, we are compelled to work according to the old programs, paying attention to the way history, education, psychology, and moral education are taught, because in these subjects teachers with the old mentality could easily confuse the youth, and head them not in the way we want them to go, but in the opposite direction. The opening of boarding schools, which is essential, also presents great difficulties because of the economic conditions of the country and, in particular, the lack of the material base. We have decided to open four boarding schools which will mainly admit the sons of peasants and workers, children of martyrs and fighters, and children from poor families. In addition we are trying to send some students to study at universities abroad. Here too we are handicapped by financial worries and financial relations with other countries. We have asked friendly countries to admit our students on bursaries.

The question of the army is, of course, important, and we should discuss it. In such an international situation, with everything so unstable, we should maintain a strong standing army. We have an effective army of... strong. As you see, this army is very large for our country. It is impossible to maintain an army of such numbers for long. By maintaining an army of such a size on a long-term basis, not only might we harm ourselves economically, but we could also impede the strengthening and modernization of the army itself, because we have a great shortage of army officers to educate these large masses of rank-and-file soldiers. Therefore, we are faced with the task of reorganizing the army from the point of view of the rank-and-file and cadres, and with the related task of drawing up the basis for recruitment, and for what army personnel is needed in peace time. Now we have just begun to regulate the question of recruitment, which must be done before we can proceed with demobilization and the next intake. Until we have organized the recruitment and prepared the list of personnel needed in peace time, as well as the troop effective, reserves and weapons required, we think that the existing divisions should be amalgamated into a smaller number. Of the troops left over some of them are to be demobilized and incorporated into the reserves, while another section can be transferred to the Defence (15) detachments to complete their effective force. The soldiers of the Defence detachments and those of the police will receive pay. The situation later on will show whether or not we should reduce the size of our army. The territorial organizations of our army are still quite weak, and our cadres, despite the numerous difficulties they encounter, have not yet accumulated the necessary experience of organization and responsibility. This is why we find ourselves facing a difficult situation, as for example in providing barracks and clothing for the army.

In this direction things are bad, to say the least of it. Our soldiers still sleep in the open, or we are obliged to adopt measures which are not suited to the present time. The problem of clothing for the army should be solved locally, and the soldiers should always be supplied with clothing and footwear. We must not imagine that their enthusiasm will last for ever, if we do not know how to nurture it and keep it alive. The party comrades should exert all their energies and pay great

attention to this question, for many things depend on it. We must work hard to improve the political and educational level of the young cadres. We are lagging behind in this. Without trained officers, we cannot have a modern regular army. Of the old partisans, some have become officers, some have entered the state service, and others will be demobilized, because they cannot be kept in the army all their life. They will pass into the reserve army. In this way, our army will be renewed with the new age-group whom we must educate in a new way, instilling love for the army in them, and training them properly. This will be done when we have good, well-trained cadres and officers, or otherwise our army will be like Zog's army, in which ignorance reigned. We note with satisfaction that the officers emerging from the war, whom we have sent to the Soviet Union to study, are keen to learn and are making good progress. So we have a generation of officers who promise a fine future for our army. We should also work to improve training in our country, by improving the existing schools, the various courses, and the entire method of education in the army. This education should not be superficial, but thorough.

In this internal and external situation, with this state power and this program of work, the Party faces the great test of the impending elections for the Constituent Assembly, to determine the form of the regime and of the Founding Constitution of the state. The elections are not a simple operation, and in them the strength of the Party, its leading role, will become evident, and the ability of every party member will be evident. The values of the Party will be put to a test in this election campaign, and this great test will serve as a guide in the distribution of the party cards. (16) The work for the elections does not consist solely in holding some meetings. Success in the elections will be ensured through carrying out the work program, constructing roads and houses, making a fair distribution of maize, wheat, salt and kerosene; success will be ensured through the proper implementation of the Election Law, the strengthening of the state power, and the participation of all the people in the voting. The people should see concretely that those who liberated the country from the occupiers and traitors are able to govern, are able to reconstruct the country and to improve its economic and social life. The comrades should come out of the election campaign with great experience, it should be a school for them, and should arm them to solve other great problems which we shall face.

Notes

1. After the discussions, the Plenum decided to call the 1st Congress of the CPA, and not the 2nd Party Conference.
 2. The Yalta Conference (Crimea-USSR) of the heads of governments of the USSR, the USA and Great Britain, with the participation of the ministers of foreign affairs and chiefs of staffs, was held from the 4th to the 11th of February 1945. After drawing up the plans for the final destruction of Hitlerite Germany, the Conference laid down the principles of the allied policy for achieving lasting peace and organizing a system of international security.
 3. This refers to the suppression of the armed resistance and the annihilation of the bands organized by the clan chiefs and the other war criminals who were fugitives within the country.
 4. In January 1945 the Presidium of the Anti-fascist National Liberation Council issued the Law on Emergency Taxation of War Profits, which was levied on all merchants and industrialists who, during the time of fascist occupation, had realized profits over 500,000 Albanian franks. The taxes were progressive from 15-80 per cent of the amount over 500,000 Franks.
 5. At the 5th sitting of the 3rd meeting of the Anti-fascist National Liberation Council (September 1945), Gjergj Kokoshi, the mouthpiece of the reactionary forces within the Democratic Front, opposed the Law on the Elections to the Constituent Assembly, labelling it as anti-democratic. As came out later, he and a group of traitorous deputies, with a certain Shefqet Beja at their head, had set up a reactionary organization, which was nipped in the bud by the organs of People's Defence.
 6. Speaker of the Albanian section of the BBC, a pseudo-democratic bourgeois intellectual who had placed himself at the service of British imperialism.
- * "Ballons d'essai" (Fr. in the original) — test balloons.

7. General D.P.E. Hodgson came to Albania in March 1945 in his capacity of head of the British military mission.
8. The US government also made such a demand. It consented to recognize the Democratic Government of Albania, provided the liaison officers of the US military mission in Tirana were allowed to supervise the election campaign, and all agreements the USA had entered with the Zog's regime were recognized, which had been clearly repudiated by the Congress of Përmet. The CPA turned down these demands.
9. Former minister of education and later on, in the period of Zog's regime, chairman of the State Council. He left Albania in April 1939 to return in October 1945. He was engaged in hostile activity in the service of British and US imperialism.
10. The hostile tactics of internal reaction towards the people's power to sabotage the elections surfaced in two forms. Part of those in the Front, in order to make a sensation, stepped out of the Front demonstratively on the eve of elections, while the rest, under the guise of the Front, was aiming to be elected to the Assembly and undermine the power from within, through a group, a "legal" opposition, or a separate party.
11. This refers to the 2nd Plenum of the CC of the CPA called in Berat on November 23, 1944
12. The first measure adopted in foreign trade was the establishment of state control over it, later on it became a state monopoly.
13. The US and British imperialists planned to exploit the grave economic situation for their specific aims and hurried to offer their "aid" to Albania. The CPA rejected this enslaving "aid" and chose the road of building the country relying, first of all, on the internal efforts and the fraternal aid by the Soviet Union and the states of people's democracy.
14. The Law on Land Reform, which gave the land to the tiller and prohibited its sale, purchase, and renting, was issued in August 1945. In the beginning, as a result of Sejfulla Malëshova's opportunist stand towards the former exploiting classes, the law had some errors. After the measures adopted at the 5th Plenum of the CC, the errors were corrected, and in November 1946 the reform was concluded with success.
15. Defence detachments which had the task of destroying the bands of war criminals and diversionists.
16. This refers to party membership cards, distribution of which began in 1946, after a general revision in the Party.