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Background Report
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NEW AGRICULTURAL COLLECTIVIZATION DRIVE IN

ALBANIA

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Judging from recent statistical data published in TIRANA it seems that a fairly large agricultural collectivization drive is under way in the smallest Soviet satellite -- Albania.

An ATA report of April 29 quoted the Albanian Ministry of Agriculture as stating that "the number of agricultural cooperatives in Albania now amounts to 1,285, embracing 33 per cent of the peasant farms and 40.8 per cent of the cultivated land the Albanian peasantry possesses".

The report of the Albanian Ministry of Agriculture further said that "thus the socialist sector of agriculture -- State farms and agricultural cooperatives -- embraces at present 44.7 per cent of the arable land of the republic.

"From the beginning of this year alone, 404 agricultural cooperatives have been set up. During the period from 1956 to spring 1957 the number of agricultural cooperatives quadrupled as compared to the situation existing at the end of 1955..."

According to the report there are districts in Albania in which "there are cooperatives in all villages". "Many districts now have more than half their villages collectivised", the report said.

Another ATA report yesterday (see CNR item B-63 of May 3 -- Albanian Monitoring) said that "State farms in Albania now total 23". It adds that "four of them were set up last year. Compared to 1955, last year they delivered to the State 47.3 per cent more bread cereals, 86.4 per cent more cotton, 84 per cent more tobacco and large quantities of milk, meat, fruits and vegetables."

The significance of the latest Albanian agricultural data can be better understood if statements made last year by the

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leading Albanian Communists are taken into consideration.

On August 7 1956, the Albanian Statistical Directorate published a communique on the fulfillment of the 1956 half-year plan. The communique said that "during the first half of 1956 the tempo of agricultural collectivization advanced rapidly. The workers of the countryside", the Communique said, "realizing the great advantage of collectivized agriculture, are constantly joining agricultural cooperatives. By the end of the first half of 1956 (i.e. on July 31 1956) the number of agricultural cooperatives reached 218 per cent" (i.e. from 318 agricultural cooperatives by the end of 1955 to 694 on July 31 1956.)

According to Mehmet SHEHU, Albanian Prime Minister, who spoke at the 3rd Party Congress held in TIRANA between May 25 and June 3 1956, there will be 1,800 agricultural cooperatives covering about 70 per cent of the land by 1960. He said that at the beginning of 1957 the number of agricultural cooperatives increased to 810.

If we now view the increase of agricultural cooperatives in Albania in a schematic way the following picture appears:

By the end of 1955	there were	318	kolkhozes
On July 31 1956	" "	694	"
At the beginning of 1957	" "	810	"
On April 29 1957	" "	1,285	"

This means that 376 new kolkhozes were formed during the first six months of 1956; another 104 kolkhozes were created in the latter part of 1956. However, from the beginning of 1957 to April 29 -- i.e. for the period of only four months, 475 (the report of the Albanian Agricultural Ministry said only 404) new kolkhozes were formed in Albania. If the present tempo in the creation of the agricultural cooperatives in Albania is retained, it seems that there will be more than 3,000 kolkhozes in Albania by 1960, rather than 1,800 as stated by Mehmet SHEHU.

If we now compare such a large collectivisation drive in Albania with the newest agricultural policy in Yugoslavia providing not only for the complete abandonment of the Soviet methods of forcible collectivisation of the countryside but also for giving incentives to individual farmers in order to increase their production, we can get the clear picture of the fully opposite attitudes toward agriculture taken by the Yugoslavs and by one of the most faithful members of the Soviet bloc.