News Background

X + 180 - EURO - YUGOSLAVS HUNTING ALBANIAN SPIES

Munich, January 19 (Stankovic) -- If in 1960 there were "only" 29 Albanian spies caught and sentenced in Yugoslavia, it seems that in 1961 this number would grossly increase. The Yugoslav newspapers of January 18 are full of long reports, pictures and photostats dealing with the trial of the latest Albanian spy caught in Yugoslavia, Bayram Gilich. Gilich is a Yugoslav citizen who defected in October 1960 to Albania and several days later was sent back to Yugoslavia to collect military information.

Gilich claimed at the trial in Titograd (Montenegro) that the members of the Albanian intelligence service told him: "We rely upon the Soviet Union and China and Yugoslavia relies upon the United States. Be patient, we shall liberate you very soon."

According to the Yugoslav newspapers Gilich "confessed everything". He confessed, for instance, that the Albanians gave him 100,000 dinars (about 130 dollars if one takes the new exchange rate of 750 dinars for one dollar) and promised a further 100,000 dinars for every secret trip into Yugoslavia to gather information. For every Shipetar (the name of the members of the 800,000-strong Albanian minority in Yugoslavia) Gilich was promised 50,000 dinars. Recently similar trials of the alleged Albanian spies were staged in Prizren, Pec and Skoplje.

Yugoslav papers claim that in Albania not only people for collecting various military secrets have been trained, but also "terrorists who cross Yugoslavia's border" to kill various leading politicians. So far these terrorists have not been able to kill anybody.

Yugoslav Communist Party in Exile?

The Yugoslavs so far have maintained complete silence in connection with some East German rumors that during the November 1960 Soviet bloc meeting in Moscow Albania proposed creation of a "Yugoslav Communist Party in Exile". According to these rumors the Chinese initially backed the Albanian proposal but withdrew their support after it was denounced by Khrushchev.

Along with some other minor Yugoslav anti-Titoist leaders who escaped to Albania in 1948 and later, there is also one of the most violent enemies of Tito's regime, Colonel Vlado Dapcevic. Colonel Dapcevic attempted to flee to Rumania in
August 1948 together with Tito's former Chief of the General Staff General Arso Jovanovic and Colonel Branko Petricevic, the Assistant Chief of the Political Administration in the General Staff. The attempt failed and Jovanovic was killed while Dapevich and Petricevic were captured, tried and sentenced by a military tribunal to 20 years in prison. In the period of reconciliation between Belgrade and Moscow Dapevich and Petricevic were pardoned but detained in their Montenegrin home country. In December 1958 Colonel Dapevich succeeded in escaping to Albania together with another seven Yugoslav colonels. His brother, Peko Dapevich, who was demoted from the position of Chief of General Staff in 1954 because of Milovan Djilas, was later appointed Minister of Communication but about two months ago again dismissed "in order to get another job". So far there has been no report of what has happened to him.

According to the Western correspondents in Moscow another violent anti-Titoist, General Pero Popivoda, who was Tito's military representative in Moscow at the time of June 1948 break and who since then lived in the Soviet Union, was very active during the November 1960 Moscow meeting. He boasted of being "very busy" of late. At the regular press conference in the Yugoslav Foreign Ministry on 30 December 1960, the official spokesman of the Yugoslav Government, Drago Kunc, welcomed Gromyko's friendly statements in the Soviet Supreme Soviet on 23 December 1960 in Moscow, but added that "certain negative phenomena have of late been in contrast to this (Gromyko's) attitude" because "they have seriously harmed" the aims of friendly Soviet-Yugoslav relations as quoted by Gromyko. It is believed that also activities of General Popivoda in Moscow have been meant by Kunc.

In Moscow is also former Yugoslav Ambassador in Rumania, Radonja Golubovic, who after the 1948 break declared himself in favor of the Cominform Resolution and against Tito. In the Stalin era he was very active in the common struggle against "Titoist traitors". However, it does not seem probable that in the Soviet bloc would be found a sufficient number of anti-Titoist Yugoslavs who would be capable of creating a "Yugoslav Communist Party in Exile".