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News Background

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SINO - HSINHUA CARRIES ALBANIAN COMMENT ON MANUAL LABOR

Munich, November 12 (Collins) -- The Red Chinese news agency, Hsinhua, carried today the commentary of the official organ of the Albanian Communist Party "Zeri i Popullit" (November 11) on the recent Albanian CC Decree on the necessity of one-month manual labor tours for all Albanian Party and state officials. (Cf. CNR M-51).

Hsinhua quoted the official Albanian paper as saying that the decree had "great significance" and that it was a "pre-requisite for guiding the working people in the building of socialism". *

According to the press review broadcast by Radio Tirana, the title of the "Zeri i Popullit" commentary was "Physical Labor is a Glory and Honor for all". (Cf. Albanian Highlights, November 11-12, M-48). The article was signed by the Secretary of the Albanian Central Committee, H.Toska.

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Communist China is, however, not the first country of the Sino-Soviet bloc to carry the news of the Albanian decree. Radio Kossuth in Budapest carried a short news item on November 8 (the same day the Albanian Decree was announced) containing the essentials of the CC decree.

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According to Hsinhua, Toska stressed that when the leading members of the Party and government and all members of the administrative staff took part in physical labor "they would be able to come closer to the masses of people in agriculture and industry". Hsinhua also quotes Toska as declaring that the decision of the Albanian CC would not only make possible a closer link with "life and practice in socialist construction... (but)... would gradually eliminate the difference between mental and manual work".

Toska urged all Party members to set a good example in physical labor so as to consolidate the Party's prestige among the people and rally them around the Party, Hsinhua said.

* For an analysis of the Albanian CC Decree, see R.R.G., "Manual Labor for the Albanian New Class: Who Will Be Next?", Background Information USSR, PAO, 11 November 1958.



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Hsinhua also singled out Toska's reference to the "experience of the Chinese Party in setting up "experimental farms" on state farms and in agricultural cooperatives." This latter statement would seem to imply that the Albanian Communist Party is not only following in the footsteps of the Chinese Communist Party as regards "manual labor" for Party functionaries but also that the Albanian Communists are learning from their Chinese comrades in the matter of collective farming as well. The fact is, however, that experimental farms in the present Soviet bloc setup are characteristic not only of China. They have been an integral part of KHRUSHCHEV's agricultural program in the Soviet Union and in other socialist camp countries as well. Nikita KHRUSHCHEV has continuously used the "pilot farm" technique to test new agricultural measures before recommending that they be introduced throughout the Soviet Union. His latest "experiment" is the intensive cultivation of vegetables in the immediate vicinity of MOSCOW. If the pilot project proves successful it will be introduced in the districts surrounding other large Russian cities.

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But the connotation that Albania is following the example of Communist China is nevertheless present. Significantly, Toska's citation of the Chinese experiences in this respect follows on the heels of yesterday's announcement that Albania has now practically 75 per cent of the arable land in the socialist sector of agriculture and seven of Albania's 27 districts are 100 per cent collectivized. (Cf. General Desk Report No.498, "Albanian Collectivization Campaign Progressing; More on Mobilization of 'Voluntary' Labor." 11. Nov 1958.)

There is, however, no evidence to date that the Albanian Communists are planning "mergers" of collective farms or that they contemplate setting up administrative units similar to the peoples communes in China.

The whole question of who is following whom in respect to these newest developments in the Sino-Soviet bloc is by no means clear cut. The "merging" of collective farms in the Soviet Union began as early as 1950, some 18 years after collectivization was completed. In Bulgaria the merger of collectives began in earnest sometime in the middle of 1958 about a year after 90 per cent collectivization had been achieved.

The North Korean Communist Party and its most recent measures as regards collectivization and the subsequent "mergers" of collective farms is a case in point. Like China this Communist Party proved conclusively that the "necessary technical base" for "collectivization" need not be present to bring about the "socialist transformation of the countryside".

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The North Koreans completed collectivization in August 1958 and started the "amalgamation" of collectives in October this year. According to available data on this development it appears that the North Koreans are following the Soviet model of enlarging existing collectives rather than pattern set by Mao's communes.** The only feature in the collective farm merger in North Korea which is similar to the organization of the Peoples Communes in China is, however, a significant one: the chairman of the amalgamated cooperative is also to be chairman of the district people's committee.

Thus in a country which is placed by some experts in the Chinese "sphere of influence" within the Sino-Soviet orbit, North Korea, there is a development in a crucial sector which is more like the Soviet structure than the Chinese organizational pattern. On the other hand, Albania, a European member of the socialist camp, has taken over the manual labor movement for leading Party and state functionaries which originated in China and not in the Soviet Union.

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** For a discussion of recent developments in the North Korean Communist Party, cf. H.R., "Kolkhoz Amalgamation in North Korea," Background Information, USSR, PAO, November 12.