

Albania

Response to Information Request:	Number: ALB9801.ZCH
Date:	9 March 1998
Subject:	Albania: Questions on the Movement for Legality Party and the SHIK
From:	INS Resource Information Center, Washington, DC
Keywords:	Albania/Police/Security Force/SHIK/Legality Party/Socialist Party/Movement for Legality Party/Tirana/Shkoder

Query:

Political Parties

- What is the Legality Party and when/where was it established?
- What is the relationship between the Legality Party and the Socialist Party since the July elections?
- Was there a referendum for restoration of the monarchy?
- Have there been large Legality Party demonstrations in Shkoder or Tirana?

Security/Police

- What is the function of the SHIK?
- Did the security or police force under Berisha carry over to the new government?

Response:

The Movement for Legality Party The Movement for Legality Party (PLL) was founded in 1991 as the political wing of the monarchist movement, which has marginal support in Albania but some following among Albanians living abroad. The movement's 50th anniversary celebrations in Tirana in November 1993 were briefly attended by Leka, son of the late King Zog, who fled the country in 1939. The leaders are Agustin Shashaj, President, and Nderim Kupi, Chairman (*Political Handbook of the World 1995-1996* 1997, 14). Several press accounts list others as leaders of the party:

- An April 1997 *Associated Press* story mentions Guri Durollari as the leader of the Legality Party (*AP* 10 April 1997).
- An October 1997, *Deutsche Presse-Agentur* story mentions Spartak Ngjela as a leading member of the Movement for Legality Party. He is a well-known lawyer and he was a Minister of Justice in the provisional national conciliation government during the period of January to June 1997. He was also appointed to a parliamentary commission looking into the anarchy and chaos of this period (*Deutsche Presse-Argentur* 7 October 1997). Leka returned to Albania in April 1997 for his first full-fledged visit since 1993. He lives in South Africa with his wife and son, Leka II. During his visit, the former President Sali Berisha approved a public referendum on the future form of Albania's government. The referendum was voted on June 29, 1997. Voters rejected restoring the monarchy with 66.74 percent of voters in favor of remaining a republic and 33.26 percent in favor of a monarchy.

In October 1997, Pashk Tusha, a senior Albanian police official, accused Leka of planning to stage a coup four days after the general elections of June 29, 1997. On July 3, 1997, Leka led a group of armed monarchists against the offices of the Central Election Commission in an apparent attempt to destroy the ballot results. One person was killed in this clash with the police. A few days later Leka left Albania for South Africa (*Deutsche Presse-Argentinur* 12 October 1997). The monarchists alleged that the Socialists, who prevailed in the parliamentary election held parallel with the referendum, had stolen pro-monarchy votes (*Dow Jones News Service* 14 July 1994).

Sali Berisha has been accused of playing the monarchy card to create chaos around the elections as the monarchists are considered staunch allies of Mr. Berisha.

Demonstrations in Shkoder or Tirana

There were no reports of large scale protests or demonstrations in Shkoder or Tirana specifically by the Legality Party, however, there was an outbreak of violence at Shkoder on Sunday February 22, 1998. It was reported that about 20 gunmen attacked the city seizing and burning the city hall, banks, court buildings, the university and private shops. The gang also stormed the main police station and freed about 30 prisoners accused of murder and armed them; however, no deaths were reported. The interior ministry forces gained control of the town on Monday. It is not known whether the violence was politically motivated. In January 1998 the same station was attacked by 20 fired policemen in protest of the newly appointed police chief. Shkoder is a stronghold of both the Democratic Party and the Royalists (*Financial Times* 24 February 1998).

The National Intelligence Service (SHIK)

The SHIK was Albania's secret police created by the Albanian parliament in 1992. A high proportion of its security officers were reportedly from President Sali Berisha's native northeastern region. On April 1, 1997 the Prime Minister, Bashkim Faso, announced the suspension of SHIK activity in Albania effective March 31, 1997. All funds for SHIK were blocked and President Sali Berisha accepted the resignations of SHIK Director Bashkim Gaidede and his deputy, Bujar Rama. President Berisha's goal was to give the agency a new image and to restructure the agency (*Deutsche Press-Argentinur* 1 April 1997).

On May 30 the President named Arben Karkini as the new head of SHIK (*Intelligence Monitor* 1 August 1997). After the Socialists won the July 1997 parliamentary elections Fatos Klosi was appointed the Chief of the SHIK. The US Central Intelligence Agency sent a team of experts to Albania in October to assist the government in restructuring the SHIK during a three-month training course required for all agents (*Agence France-Presse* 26 October 1997). Jane's Intelligence Review reported on December 1, 1997, that on the evening of 22 September 1997, the former chairman of SHIK, Shkelgim Agolli was murdered in his home in Athens by professional assassins (*Intelligence Review* 1 December 1997).

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