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United States Department of State

Washington, D. C. 20520

March 14, 1991

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BRIEFING MEMORANDUM
SS [initials]

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'91 MAR-14 7:12 PM

TO: P - Mr. Kimmitt
FROM: EUR - R. G. H. Seitz RS (Calk)
SUBJECT: Meeting with Dr. Salih Berisha and Gramoz Pashko
March 15, 1991
Your Office
10:00 a.m.

I. SETTING AND OBJECTIVE

- o Berisha and Pashko are here to establish contacts in the U.S. and to encourage greater U.S. engagement in Albania.
- o Underscore U.S. support for democratic reform and respect for human rights in Albania and provide a balance for your meeting with the Foreign Minister.

II. AGENDA

- o U.S. - Albania Relations: Voice our support for the restoration of ties with the Albanian people and signal our interest in establishing contact with the country's strongest challenger to the ruling party in the March 31 elections.
- o Democratization and Human Rights: Stress U.S. support for democratic reform in Albania, including the holding of free and fair multi-party elections. Affirm the importance the U.S. government attaches to respect for human rights and the achievement of political goals through peaceful, democratic dialogue.
- o Humanitarian Assistance: Express U.S. concern for the current economic and refugee situation in Albania and note our encouragement of the provision of humanitarian assistance by American nongovernment organizations and individuals to the Albanian people.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: ERIC W. FLEISHER
DATE/CASE ID: 2 APR 2002 200100835

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MAR 15 1991

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-2-

- o Regional Security: Urge Berisha and Pashko to lead their party in supporting solutions to the security situation in the Balkans through internationally accepted CSCE principles regarding international borders.

III. PARTICIPANTS

U.S.

The Acting Secretary
EUR DAS Kamman
EUR/KEY: JNSwihart
EUR/KEY: JRHooper
EUR/KEY: Notetaker

Albanian

Salih Berisha
Gramoz Pashko

IV. PRESS COVERAGE

Photo Opportunity

Attachments:

- Tab 1 - Talking Points
- Tab 2 - Background
- Tab 3 - Biographic Information on Salih Berisha
- Tab 4 - Biographic Information on Gramoz Pashko
- Tab 5 - CSCE Criteria for Free and Fair Elections
- Tab 6 - Criteria for G-24 Economic Assistance

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Drafted: EUR/KEY: KLEnstrom
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AK
Cleared: EUR/KEY: JRHooper
EUR/KEY: JWSwihart
EUR: CKamaan *AK*
P: RNorland
PA: GBoggs
NSC: RHutchings
HA: Tarias
S/P: JFox
D/EEA: JCurtin *AK*

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~TALKING POINTSU.S. - Albania Relations

- Friday will mark an important moment in the history of U.S. - Albanian relations. We welcome you to the U.S. and look forward to building a lasting and close relationship with the Albanian people.
- We greatly appreciate the efforts of American Albanians who have helped to facilitate this occasion.
- The U.S. is interested in establishing constructive ties with the Democratic Party of Albania and with all parties in Albania that support democracy.

Democratization

- The U.S. supports the establishment of democracy with full respect for human rights and the rule of law in Albania. We believe that the resumption of diplomatic relations can help to encourage these reforms.
- We will look to continued respect for internationally recognized human rights as evidence of Albania's commitment to establishing democracy.
- We intend to support efforts by American nongovernment organizations such as the National Democratic and Republican Institutes to offer political assistance and training to all independent political parties, press, and civic organizations.
- We strongly support fully free and fair multi-party elections in Albania and will be watching developments closely in the coming weeks and months. We continue to encourage all political parties to pursue their political goals through peaceful, democratic dialogue.
- We are very interested in the timely processing of visa applications for foreign election observers, in particular the National Democratic and Republican Institutes, and would appreciate any information that you might have regarding cases where visa applicants have been denied entry.

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-2-

- We are also interested in hearing your views regarding the process of democratization in your country and would appreciate any suggestions on how the U.S. can further promote the process of free and fair elections.

Humanitarian Assistance

- The U.S. is deeply concerned about the harsh economic situation in Albania at present and the recent exodus of refugees.
- We continue to encourage contributions of humanitarian assistance by American nongovernment organizations and individuals.
- As you know our own ability to provide any form of assistance has been limited by the lack of diplomatic relations between our two countries. Some humanitarian assistance may now be considered.
- Before the U.S. can provide economic assistance, the reform process must move forward and significant steps must be taken concerning democratic and market reform. We urge all Albanians to work together to construct a prosperous and democratic society, which is the only lasting way to lessen the pressure for emigration.

Regional Security

- The U.S. respects basic human rights and territorial integrity for all states in the Balkans.
- We are concerned by reports that your party supports the annexation of Kosovo with Albania. Talks of this kind could have dangerous repercussions in the region.
- We are pleased to see that your party platform endorses CSCE principles. As Albania emerges on the European stage, we will expect you to abide by all CSCE principles, in particular those concerning borders and strongly urge you to lead your party in this direction.
- We also are interested in hearing your views regarding the current situation in the Balkans.

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BACKGROUNDo U.S. - Albania Relations

-- Once relations are official, we intend to send a small team to Tirana to observe and report on the situation in the country and the elections. The team also intends to view U.S. facilities there to assess the potential problems of re-opening Embassy Tirana.

-- We do not anticipate that Embassy Tirana will be operational before next fall.

-- The U.S. can play a constructive role, as it has in other countries in the region, in encouraging democracy and respect for human rights in a country that has had virtually no historical association with a democratic process.

o Established three months ago, the Democratic Party of Albania has become the rallying point for many independent and opposition figures who want democratic and economic reform.

o Many of its leaders, predictably, are former members of the Communist Party.

o The Democratic Party in Albania will probably be the ruling party's only serious rival in the March 31 elections, although we do not expect it to win these elections.

-- Berisha and Pashko's visit to the U.S. has been privately funded. During their stay in D.C. they will also be meeting with Assistant Secretary Shifter, Congressman Joseph Kennedy, Chairman of the Democratic Party Ron Brown, the National Democratic and Republican Institutes, and the American Albanian Community in Detroit.

o Democratization

-- Your meeting with Berisha and Pashko will symbolize U.S. support for democratization in Albania on the eve of restoration of diplomatic relations.

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-2-

- o With only three months experience behind it, the Democratic Party is in an embryonic form but appears genuinely committed to democratic principles. Their understanding of democratic ideas may reflect their lack of experience with democratic models.
- o The party's agenda is sound. Its election platform provides guarantees for basic human rights, including freedom of expression--as well as postal and telecommunication secrecy, freedom of assembly and the right of association, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, and freedom to freely move within the country or travel abroad.
- o During the recent refugee crisis in Albania, Democratic Party leaders appealed to fleeing Albanian citizens to remain in the country and work together toward a more prosperous and free society.
- o The Democratic Party also called upon protesting Albanians to refrain from the use of violence and acts of vandalism during the most recent periods of unrest in Albania.
- We are exploring with nongovernment organizations, such as NDI and NRI, how to provide political assistance and training to all independent political parties, press, and civic organizations.
- We understand that both the NRI and the NDI have received permission to travel to Albania to observe the elections and intend to have representatives in Tirana throughout the election campaign.
- o Humanitarian Assistance
 - Berisha and Pashko will probably press for a U.S. commitment concerning humanitarian assistance for Albania.
 - o The situation in Albania is at a near-crisis-level. Sources in the country report that water and food supplies are low. Ships carrying food imports have not been able to deliver their cargo due to the increased threats of hijacking by fleeing refugees in Albania's major ports. Water that is available in Tirana is reportedly contaminated.

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-3-

- o We are currently exploring the possibility of providing disaster relief assistance.

-- Leaders in the Democratic Party seem to realize that the current crisis as well as the failing economy can only be overcome through outside assistance and a commitment to economic reform. The Democratic Party's election platform calls for the acceleration of economic reforms.

o Regional Security

- The level of tension in the Balkans is high due to Yugoslav internal strains and Serbia's repression of the ethnic Albanian inhabitants of Kosovo.
- A pillar of the new Europe we are trying to establish is the principle enshrined in CSCE that border changes can only take place by agreement and through peaceful means.
- We are concerned by the Democratic Party's past endorsement of the annexation of Kosovo with Albania.

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