BORDER AND TERRITORIAL DISPUTES

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A Keesing's Reference Publication

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INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of June 1982 three major wars were in progress in different parts of the globe, each demonstrating in its particular way the fundamental importance of territorial dispute as a cause of conflict between states. In the South Atlantic British forces were repossessing the Falkland Islands from a country, Argentina, which two months previously had asserted its claim to sovereignty over the islands by force of arms. On the Arabian Gulf Iran appeared to have gained the upper hand against the Iraqi forces which some 20 months previously had crossed the recognized border between the two countries in active prosecution of longstanding territorial claims. Elsewhere in the Middle East a further round of the century-long Arab-Jewish struggle for supremacy in the land of Palestine was being fought out, this time with Lebanon as the battle-ground. Each of these conflicts has its own special ingredients and its own particular historical and geographical characteristics; but all three have the common theme of being essentially disputes over territory. In this sense they are three of the most critical instances of a problem which continues to generate strains in relations between states in all parts of the world, notwithstanding the considerable efforts made in the post-war era to create international or regional channels for the peaceful resolution of border and territorial disputes.

The aim of the present volume is to present concise accounts of currently unresolved border and territorial issues between states around the world, arranged alphabetically in five sections covering broad geographical areas. Each account seeks to explain the historical background of the particular dispute and to pinpoint the territorial elements involved, as well as to cover more recent exchanges and negotiations between the interested parties insofar as they relate to the dispute. The 70-plus situations dealt with in the following pages are those deemed to be of territorial and/or political significance and do not, for example, include simple boundary demarcation problems (i.e. those which do not involve important territorial claims by one state against another). Nor does the book cover the growing number of disputes between states specifically over maritime boundaries and jurisdictions —an increasingly complex question which would require a separate volume of its own.

A particular word should be said about the problem of defining what constitutes an unresolved or current territorial dispute. In the introduction to his masterly work on African boundaries[1], Prof. Brownlie takes certain earlier writers to task for including in their lists of current African disputes several which had already been settled or which have never existed under a proper

[1]Ian Brownlie, *African Boundaries—A Legal and Diplomatic Encyclopaedia* (G. Hurst & Company, London; University of California Press, Berkeley & Los Angeles; for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, 1979).

legal definition of the concept of a "dispute" between states. The present volume is doubtless not immune from similar criticism, to the extent that a number of the situations described do not currently involve the active prosecution of claims at inter-state level and others have been declared to be resolved by the governments concerned. However, in defence of some of the judgments made in the following pages it should be noted that if a book on current border and territorial disputes had gone to press in early September 1980 it would not, under strictly legal criteria, have included a section on the Iran-Iraq territorial issue, since this had ostensibly been settled by the governments concerned five years previously; yet by the end of September the two countries were at war over territorial issues. It should also be noted that territorial claims which appear to be dead or dormant are notoriously liable to acquire unexpected new life, especially where regional political alignments are unstable or where internal political conditions are susceptible to rapid change.

On these grounds the present volume contains accounts not only of existing official disputes between states but also of a number of situations where no dispute exists at government level but where other factors suggest that aspirations to territorial change cannot be regarded as having completely disappeared. In some of the latter cases the degree of currency hinges on whether existing agreements will prove to be durable; in others it is related to the extent to which actual populations may be dissatisfied with territorial arrangements made by governments, and the potential which such dissatisfaction may have for affecting the attitudes of governments in the future. In other words, the book has been compiled not from a legalistic perspective but as a contribution to greater political understanding of the strains in relations between states arising from territorial factors of several different types.

The authors of the various chapters are all present or former members of the writing staff of *Keesing's Contemporary Archives* and every effort has been made to achieve KCA-style objectivity in the presentation of conflicting claims of the governments concerned in a particular dispute. In addition to the resources of the KCA editorial office, extensive use has been made of official documentation received from government departments, as well of the International Boundary Study series published by the Geographers of the US State Department. As listed in the selected bibliography at the end of the book, published works dealing with border and territorial questions in particular regions have also been drawn upon for historical background, in which context especial acknowledgement is due not only to Prof. Brownlie's book on African boundaries but also to Husain M. Al-Baharna's *The Arabian Gulf States: Their Legal and Political Status and Their International Problems* (2nd revised edition, Beirut, 1975), *The Changing Map of Asia* edited by W. G. East and others (5th edition, London, 1971) and Gordon Ireland's *Boundaries, Possessions and Conflicts in South America* (Cambridge, Mass., 1938). Thanks are also due to the KCA indexer, Richard German, for the index to the present work and to Alan Lamb of Longman for the maps.

June 1982 A.J.D.

Contents

1. EUROPE

Introduction

In the course of history the continent of Europe has been the scene of countless territorial disputes between dynasties and states, with the result that until very recent times the political map of Europe has been subject to a continual process of change. However, nearly four decades have now passed since the last major territorial adjustments were made at the end of World War II, and Europe today probably has the lowest incidence of inter-governmental dispute over territory of any continent in the world. In this context, it should be noted that the general acceptance by European governments of the post-war status quo was officially enshrined in the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) signed in Helsinki on Aug. 1, 1975, by all European sovereign states except Albania and also by the United States and Canada. In Article III of a "Declaration on principles guiding relations between participating states" contained in Basket One, the Final Act specified that the signatories "regard as inviolable all one another's frontiers as well as the frontiers of all states in Europe" and therefore "will refrain now and in the future from assaulting these frontiers"; accordingly, the signatories undertook to "refrain from any demand for, or act of, seizure and usurpation of part or all of the territory of any participating state".

Nevertheless, there remain among the 34 sovereign states of Europe a number of unresolved issues which can be defined as having a territorial element notwithstanding the signature of the Helsinki Final Act by 33 of them. The Northern Ireland question has as one of its central ingredients the Irish Republic's aspiration to the unity of Ireland, while the United Kingdom is also in dispute with Spain over the latter's claim to Gibraltar. There are also issues, such as the Trentino-Alto Adige (South Tyrol) question, which are not fully resolved to the satisfaction of all interested parties notwithstanding the dropping of actual territorial claims. And in south-eastern Europe traditional territorial rivalries between Greeks and Turks underlie the current dispute between Greece and Turkey in the Aegean Sea and also the unresolved question of Cyprus.

As regards the post-war territorial changes in Eastern Europe, many of them cannot be regarded as involving any current inter-state dispute. For example, the Soviet Union's absorption of the formerly independent Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, although not formally recognized by a number of countries, is not a direct issue between sovereign governments; and Finland's cession of territory to the Soviet Union is regarded as final by both sides. On the other hand, the post-war territorial changes involving Germany, Poland and the Soviet Union—under which the Soviet Union acquired large tracts of former Polish and German

territory, while Poland's western border was moved to the Oder-Neisse line in former German territory—remains contentious in West Germany notwithstanding the Bonn Government's signature of bilateral and multilateral agreements recognizing current frontiers. Moreover, the demographic dimensions of some 20th-century territorial transfers in central and southeastern communist Europe, notably in the Balkans, continue to involve the governments concerned in strains which reflect historical territorial antagonisms. It remains an open question, therefore, whether a transformation of existing power relationships in Eastern Europe would leave post-war territorial arrangements unchallenged.

Albania-Greece

A dispute between Greece and Albania over the southern part of Albania inhabited by ethnic Greeks has been referred to in Greece as "the Northern Epirus question", implying that the disputed area should be regarded as part of the Greek region of Epirus on both historical and ethnic grounds. Although the question is officially regarded as settled by the Governments of the two countries, it has remained a factor in relations between the states of the region.

History of the Dispute

An independent state of Albania was first proclaimed on Nov. 12, 1912, during the First Balkan War which resulted in the loss, by the Ottoman Empire, of all its territory in Europe except an area around Constantinople (Istanbul). The Albanian state was recognized by a peace conference of European powers held in London in December 1912, when the delimitation of its frontiers was reserved for a future decision of the Great Powers. Agreement in principle on Albania's borders was subsequently reached at an ambassadors' conference in London in the summer of 1913.

Map 1 Present-day territorial relationship between Albania, Greece and Yugoslavia, showing Epirus and Kosovo.

During World War I Greece occupied southern Albania in October 1914 (while the northern and central parts were occupied by Austro-Hungarian troops in 1915). In the secret treaty of London of 1915, designed to bring Italy into the war at the side of the Allies, Italy was promised a protectorate over the greater part of Albania, with the north going to Serbia and the south to Greece. This was rejected by the Albanians, who declared their own independent state in 1920. After armed Albanians had attacked an Italian-held port Italy withdrew from Albania in August 1920 and recognized Albania's independence and territorial integrity. Following Albania's admission to the League of Nations in 1920, a boundary commission composed of Britain, France and Italy delimited Albania's frontiers and completed its work in 1926. A final demarcation act was signed by the above powers and also Greece and Yugoslavia in Paris on July 30, 1926.

After the advent of the Fascist regime in Italy and the conclusion of a treaty of friendship and security between Italy and Albania in November 1926, Italian influence increased greatly in Albania, culminating in the occupation of the latter by Italian forces as from April 17, 1939. From Albanian soil Italian forces attacked Greece in October 1940, but they were defeated by the Greeks who subsequently took over about half of Albania. However, in April 1941 Hitler's forces overran both Greece and Yugoslavia, and Italy again obtained control over all of Albania.

During the period of resistance by the Albanians against the Italian (and later German) occupation forces, there emerged a National Front formed by Albanian Communists and nationalists. The Provisional Government set up by the Front under the leadership of Col. Enver Hoxha was recognized by the Allies towards the end of 1945, but the Greek Government protested against the Allies' recognition on Nov. 10, 1945, and at the demand of all Greek political parties except the Communists declared its claim "for the union of North Epirus with the Greek motherland".

This Greek claim was supported by the US Senate which in July 1946 passed the "Pepper resolution" in favour of ceding "Northern Epirus" to Greece. However, when the Greek claim was raised at a Paris meeting of Allied Foreign Ministers in August-September 1946, it was removed from the agenda by James Byrne (the US Secretary of State) after Col. Enver Hoxha, representing Albania, had declared that "neither the Paris conference nor the conference of the Big Four nor any other gathering can review the frontiers of my country, which has no foreign territory of any kind under its jurisdiction". The Allies thus de facto reaffirmed Albania's 1913 frontiers.

Rapprochement between Albania and Greece

No mention of the Greek claim was made when the Foreign Ministers of Greece, Turkey and Yugoslavia (then members of a tripartite grouping which became the Balkan Pact) met in Athens on July 7-11, 1953, and agreed that "the independence of Albania constitutes an important element of peace and stability in the Balkans".

On July 2, 1958, the Albanian Government expressed its desire to establish "normal and good-neighbourly relations" with Greece, but at the same time it rejected a Greek statement to the effect that there was still a state of war between the two countries resulting from Albanian participation in Italy's attack on Greece in 1940. The Greek response to Albania's proposal was said to have included a reiteration of Greece's claim to "Northern Epirus" but also an offer to seek a settlement of this problem through normal channels. The Albanian side rejected the Greek reply on Aug. 14, 1958, denying again that there was "a state of war" between the two countries and rebutting the Greek territorial claim on the ground that "the question of Northern Epirus does not exist, as this is Albanian territory".

On Jan. 9, 1962, the Albanian Government again expressed its readiness to

establish diplomatic relations with Greece, provided the Greek Government abandoned its "baseless" claim to part of southern Albania. A first trade agreement between the two countries at non-governmental level was concluded on June 2, 1970. It was followed by the establishment of diplomatic relations and the conclusion of a peace treaty on May 6, 1971, this step being understood to imply Greek recognition of Albania's existing borders. Further trade agreements or protocols were signed in later years, and on March 28, 1978, a direct airlink was set up between the two countries' capitals.

The Situation of the Greek Minority in Albania

Enver Hoxha, the First Secretary of the Party of Labour of Albania, stated in a speech addressed to the Greek minority in Albania on March 23, 1978, that no harm would come to Greece from Albania and that the Greek minority in Albania should speak and study the Greek language and maintain its Greek culture.

This minority had before World War II been estimated (by Greek consular authorities) at 300,000 (or about 20 per cent of Albania's total population). However, during and immediately after the war many Greeks left Albania for Greece, and in 1981 the minority was estimated at 200,000. According to Greek sources, 62 of Albania's 250 members of Parliament were of Greek origin or Greek-speaking (including three Cabinet ministers, two under-secretaries and one Deputy Speaker of Parliament). There was a Greek newspaper published twice a week (as the only paper published by any minority in Albania); the functioning of Greek schools and the publication of books in Greek for the use of the Greek minority were allowed in two strictly defined areas; there was also a teaching academy for the training of teachers for the Greek schools; and there were exchanges of visits by artistic and folklore groups.

Among Greek nationalists, however, the claim for "Northern Epirus" has continued to be made. In particular, the Northern Epirus Society, led by Xenophon Kountouris, and the Pan-Epirus Federation of America and Canada, led by Menelaos Tzelios, have campaigned for the cause of the Greeks in Albania, alleging that they were suffering repression, with 20,000 of them being held in prisons and concentration camps; that they were prevented from having free access to their relatives in Greece; and that the suppression of all religion in Albania (since 1967) had prevented the Greek Orthodox Church from operating in Albania. In July 1981 Greek nationalists were reported to have introduced in the Greek Parliament a motion calling on the Government to "reaffirm in all directions Greece's persistent national rights in Northern Epirus".

Alleged Albanian Aspirations to "Greater Albania"

The question of Greek-Albanian relations was again raised when a map was published in Yugoslavia in May 1981, purporting to show that the Communist Government of Albania had claims to a "Greater Albania" incorporating territories currently parts of Yugoslavia and of Greece; it was found, however, that this map had been produced by Albanian exiles in the West in 1971.

George Rallis, then Greek Prime Minister, stated in mid-1981 that the Greek Government was opposed to "any attempt to disturb the status quo in the area", while in an eight-page document issued by the Albanian embassy in Athens it was emphasized that Albania desired the continuation of good relations between the two countries, to which was added: "The healthy sections of Greek public opinion know that the so-called Northern Epirus issue is long dead and has no future."

H.W.D.

Albania-Yugoslavia (Kosovo)

Since the end of World War II relations between Albania and Yugoslavia have been periodically strained by questions surrounding the predominantly Albanian population of Kosovo, a province currently forming part of the Yugoslavian Federation. Particularly since 1968 a resurgence of Albanian nationalism has been in evidence in the province, leading to the expression of demands for the establishment of Kosovo as a full republic within the Yugoslavian Federation, but also on occasions to direct demands for secession from Yugoslavia and union with Albania. Whereas until 1981 Yugoslavia refrained from direct accusations against Albania (alleging generally that "Stalinist" and "Cominformist" elements from abroad were involved in the Kosovo unrest), in that year relations deteriorated to the point where direct Yugoslavian allegations were made of Albanian involvement, both financially and organizationally, in the Kosovo disturbances. Albania for its part has consistently denied any role in the Kosovo unrest, which it sees as a spontaneous rebellion against the allegedly oppressive rule of the Serbs in the province, and has countered the Yugoslavian arguments with claims that during the post-war years Yugoslavia itself entertained the idea of annexing Albania. (For map of Balkans showing Kosovo, see page 3.)

The relationship between Albania and Yugoslavia has been particularly complicated in the post-war period by the series of fundamental changes of policy and alignment which both countries have undergone since 1945. Whereas up to 1948 both countries owed their principal allegiance to the Soviet-dominated Cominform, in that year Yugoslavia was expelled from the Cominform and adopted an independent and non-aligned policy which has frequently involved ideological and political conflict both with the Soviet Union and with Albania. Albania, for its part, broke its links with Moscow in the early 1960s to adopt a Maoist line and intensified its political and economic contacts with China; this policy was in turn abandoned in the late-1970s amid strong Albanian criticism of China's post-Mao policies and against a background of improved Chinese-Yugoslav relations. Although Albania and Yugoslavia resumed full diplomatic relations in 1971 after their breach in 1948, and although after 1976 they greatly intensified their economic contacts, a strongly nationalist and anti-Yugoslavian propaganda campaign remained evident in Albania. Thus as recently as November 1978 Enver Hoxha, the leader of the Albanian Party of Labour (ALP), published a book in which he alleged the continuing oppression and even genocide of Albanians in Kosovo and called for the overthrow of the Yugoslavian Government.

The Albanians in Kosovo have maintained a distinctive culture and in many cases have retained their Albanian dialects. The strains in their relations with the Serbs of Kosovo originate partly from specific circumstances arising from the wartime occupation of Albania and Kosovo by the Italians, but more particularly from the alleged imposition of pan-Serbian principles on the Albanian population of Kosovo. This situation changed dramatically in the 1960s, however, with the denunciation and removal of Alexander Rankovic, a strongly pan-Serbian Vice-President of the Republic, organizational secretary of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and former chief of the security police; since the promulgation of the 1963 Yugoslavian Constitution (under which Kosovo achieved the status of an autonomous province with appropriate powers), Albanian influence in the local administrative and Communist party apparatus has grown to an extent which has

even been described as oppressive by the Serbian and other non-Albanian elements in the province.

Geographical and Demographic Aspects of the Kosovo Issue

Kosovo, or Kosovo-Metohija (Kosmet) as it was known until 1968, is generally regarded as the most economically backward part of the Yugoslavian Federation. The country is partly mountainous (although agriculture is dominant in the Metohija lowlands) and copper, coal and chromite are mined. It has received a considerable proportion of the regional development assistance given by the central Government in Belgrade since World War II, but remains chronically underdeveloped in relation to other areas of Yugoslavia, a fact which has repeatedly given rise to bitter complaints from its predominantly Albanian population that it has been neglected by Belgrade. This sentiment became particularly apparent in 1968-69, when large-scale riots broke out in Pristina, the provincial capital, and again in the late 1970s, when the economic pressures affecting the national economy as a whole coincided with a wave of Albanian irredentism to provoke an increasing number of anti-Yugoslavian and anti-Tito activities in the region. These culminated in 1981 in further riots in the course of which a state of emergency was declared. Paradoxically, much of the unrest centred on the University of Pristina, the fourth largest in Yugoslavia, which was set up by the central Government with the aim of raising the general level of culture in the area (it being reported in 1963 that only about 30 per cent of schoolchildren were completing the official minimum of eight years' schooling).

Kosovo has the highest population density in the Yugoslavian Federation, with 140 persons per square kilometre (1977 figures), compared with the national average of 86. About 75 per cent of its 1,486,000 inhabitants (1977) were then Albanian, this proportion having risen steadily since the late 1960s due partly to the extensive emigration of Serbs to other parts of Yugoslavia but also to the unusually high annual birth rate, particularly among Albanians as compared with Serbs and Magyars. The results of the 1981 census showed that, whereas Yugoslavia's population as a whole had increased in size by 9.3 per cent since 1971, the country's Albanian population had grown by about 30 per cent over the same period.

Development of the Dispute since 1944

The Constitution promulgated on Jan. 31, 1946, by the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia incorporated the region of Kosovo-Metohija within the republic of Serbia, giving it the status of an autonomous region, or oblast, with a number of administrative organs and competences of its own. The region had in fact belonged to Yugoslavia since before World War II but from 1941, the year of the German/Italian occupation of Yugoslavia, until the liberation in 1944 it had been integrated into the administrative structure of Albania (which had itself been in effect controlled by Italian economic interests since 1926 and which had in 1939 been occupied by Italy).

The period 1944-48 was marked by extensive co-operation, both economic and administrative, between the new Communist regimes of Albania and Yugoslavia, which in 1946 briefly formed a customs union; in consequence, the question of Kosovo was effectively dormant. On the expulsion of Yugoslavia from the Cominform in 1948, however, the Albanian Government adopted a hostile attitude to Yugoslavia: Yugoslavian advisers, politicians and military staff were pressurized to leave or actually expelled from Albania, and in 1949-50 a series of shooting incidents took place along the Albanian border with Macedonia and Kosovo, leading in November 1950 to the closure of the Yugoslavian legation in Tirana, the

Albanian capital. In December 1953, as the attacks along the border continued, it was agreed by the two countries to mark their communal border with demarcation posts, and relations were to some extent normalized.

The nationality issue in Kosovo was re-opened in August and September 1958, however, by the news of the death of an Albanian who was attempting to escape from a Yugoslavian detention camp. Like many others of his countrymen, the Albanian in question had collaborated during the war with the Italian Fascists and German Nazis and had spent the period since the war in refuge in West Germany, but had been arrested in Belgrade in May 1958 while returning to Albania. In this connexion the Albanian press also made allegations that up to 36,000 Albanians in Yugoslavia had been massacred by the Titoist forces directly after the liberation in 1944, and that severe repression by the Serbs still continued in Kosmet. Yugoslavia responded with a series of trials of alleged Albanian spies, claiming in a White Paper circulated to members of the United Nations on April 7, 1961, that between 1948 and 1960 Albania had sent 657 agents, mostly armed, into Yugoslavia, of whom 115 had been caught and convicted, and also that 649 frontier incidents involving 12 deaths had occurred.

In the Federal Constitution promulgated in Yugoslavia in 1963 Kosmet was elevated to the status of an autonomous province, and in 1968 the designation Metohija was dropped from its name so that it became simply Kosovo. By this time there was growing evidence of nationalist and secessionist unrest in the province which had been heightened by the removal in 1966 of Vice-President Rankovic for the propagation of pan-Serbian ideals and for the violent repression of Albanians in Kosovo through the UDBA (State Security Administration), which he had controlled. The troubles, further exacerbated by economic difficulties which followed the reforms introduced throughout Yugoslavia in 1965, led on Nov. 29, 1968, to the first major wave of rioting in Kosovo, when students at the University of Pristina led well-co-ordinated but often violent demonstrations calling inter alia for the designation of Kosovo as an autonomous Yugoslavian republic in which Albanians would have a dominant role. The demonstrations coincided with others in Macedonia and also with Albania's national day (Nov. 27). Certain Serbian members of the Kosovo League of Communists who protested at what they saw as Albanian irredentism were in turn subjected to criticism for alleged Serbian nationalism.

In addition to Rankovic, many of his associates were also removed from power, including Vojin Lukic, the Serbian Minister of the Interior, who was in 1973 imprisoned for pan-Serbianism and for describing the Albanians of Kosovo as "an unsafe element"; moreover, a major purge of the Serbian League of Communists was instituted, involving some 2,000 dismissals. Nevertheless, the tensions in the province persisted and were regarded as particularly serious in view of a general re-awakening of nationalism in various Yugoslavian republics, notably in Serbia and Croatia. In February 1973 greatly increased penalties, including the death penalty, were introduced for crimes such as terrorism and "hostile propaganda", while trials of both Albanian separatists and Serbian nationalists continued.

The third Federal Constitution since World War II was promulgated on Feb. 21, 1974, and provided inter alia that each socio-political community (the autonomous provinces, the republics and the Federation) would have an assembly enjoying a considerable degree of autonomy within the context of its respective community; it also specified that 20 delegates from Kosovo were to form part of the Federal Chamber, which was to have the power to decide inter alia on any alterations to Yugoslavia's boundaries. The number of members of the collective presidency (created in 1971 in order primarily to minimize inter-republican quarrelling on President Tito's death or retirement) was reduced from 23 to nine, in which the

Kosovo representative had equal status with those of the six full republics and with the other autonomous province of Vojvodina. The ninth member was the president of the League of Communists, then President Tito, who was appointed President for an unlimited term.

In a significant development on Sept. 20, 1974, the Federal Public Prosecutor issued a statement on the recent trials of 27 persons on Kosovo and of five in Montenegro (north of Albania and directly north-west of Kosovo) who had been charged with "conspiring against the people and the state", and who had received prison sentences of up to 14 years. The statement referred to "pro-Cominform emigrés who are engaged in hostile activities abroad against our country", and who had distributed "propaganda and other material of a seditious nature". President Tito had himself described the "Cominformists" on Sept. 12 as undertaking "an attempt . . . to create a new communist party which disputes all our actions and all our successes" and which was "evidently some kind of Stalinist party". (It was known at this time that, apart from the still tense relationship with the Soviet Union, fears were being expressed in Yugoslavia that post-Maoist Albania might revert to the Soviet model of communism.)

In December 1974 over 100 demonstrators at Pristina were reported to have been detained for promoting the concept of a "Greater Albania" including Kosovo, and for directly accusing President Tito and the Government of persecuting Yugoslavian Albanians; five persons were subsequently imprisoned in January 1975 for "attempting to overthrow the constitutional order and attacking the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia". Further incidents continued to be reported in the Yugoslav and foreign press, although as relations between Yugoslavia and Albania improved in the latter's post-Maoist period the disturbances evidently became increasingly embarrassing to Yugoslavia and led in early 1980 to a highly confused situation surrounding the apparent arrest of some 50 Yugoslavian Albanians in connexion with demonstrations in December 1979.

The weekly Yugoslavian journal *Politika* reported in March 1980 that the nationalists had been charged with "crimes against the state and against public security", the trials being held, as was usual, in camera. The president of the Kosovo League of Communists, Mahmut Bakali, reacted angrily on April 4 to the *Politika* report, which he described as false and unfounded, while it was claimed elsewhere that only relatively few persons had been charged. Eight of the accused were on June 9, 1980, sentenced to prison terms of up to eight years for distributing "anti-state propaganda with conspiratorial intent".

The Albanian embassy in Belgrade, while issuing its usual denial of involvement in the disturbances, described the timing of the incident as unfortunate. In early July 1980 Nedin Hoxha, the Albanian Minister of Commerce, undertook an official tour of the Yugoslavian republics (the first such ministerial visit since 1948), including a visit to the province of Kosovo, while on July 14 the two countries signed a five-year trade agreement which provided for a significant increase in their bilateral trade.

Relations between Albania and Yugoslavia were, however, again strained in mid-1981 following a particularly severe wave of rioting which occurred in Kosovo during March and early April, and again in mid-May of that year. During the disturbances, which again centred on the University of Pristina, at least nine persons were killed, over 250 injured and over 500 arrested. A state of emergency was declared in the province (the first use of such a measure since World War II), and the area sealed off for several months to foreign reporters; information concerning Yugoslavia's measures against the insurgents has therefore been scarce, but a series of trials of those accused of involvement in the disturbances is known to have been conducted during the second half of 1981. Enver Hoxha, speaking