
Interview: Qibrie Hoxha

Rugova is the elected President of Kosovo

Mrs. Qibrie Hoxha is a leader of the Kosovo Democratic League (LDK), the party of the elected President of the Kosovars, Ibrahim Rugova. She was interviewed by Feride Istogu Gillesberg and Umberto Pascali on Aug. 17, in Stockholm.

EIR: Could you describe for us your role within the LDK organization?

Hoxha: I am a member of the board of the LDK, for Sweden. I am responsible for the information sector here in Sweden. The main aim of the information sector is to inform the Swedish population about the development of the situation in Kosovo during the past years, since we were here. This was my role and my program.

I came to Sweden in November 1989 with my family—my husband and my two children—because we were persecuted by the Serbian regime in Kosovo. My husband and I were active politically, and were in the trade union, especially since the end of 1988, at the time that the miners went on strike in Trepca, and in 1989, when we organized demonstrations against the change of the Constitution carried out by the Milosevic regime.

EIR: You just came back from Pristina, after having gone there immediately following the halt in the NATO bombings. Could you describe the circumstances of your arrival and the reasons for your departure?

Hoxha: I went to Kosovo at the end of June, and arrived back in Sweden on July 30. I have not been there for 10 years, and I went there in connection with Kosovo getting its freedom. After the Serbian military finally left Kosovo—for which we longed for such a long time—it was appropriate to visit a Kosovo that was finally free.

We went to Kosovo as an organized group from Sweden, representatives of all the groups which fought for 10 years together.

When we arrived in Kosovo, it was an unforgettable experience. When we came over the border, we immediately felt the change: There were no Serbian police or military troops on the streets of Kosovo. This was, for the others and myself, an indescribable happiness.

On the way to Pristina, I saw houses destroyed and burned down, and new graves along the road, graves of the people

who were killed by the Serbian police, military, and paramilitary troops.

Pristina was not so destroyed—only the objects NATO targeted, the Serbian Army buildings, as well as the old main post office. Some little factories and shops, which were privately owned by Albanians, were burned to the ground by Serbian police and military as revenge, when NATO began bombing.

Nevertheless, we experienced a dream that was fulfilled, especially the first days in Pristina, a dream which all Albanians had, to see a free Kosovo, without the use of force by Serbian police and military. The people were freely walking in the streets of Pristina. The young people were out in the evening, taking walks to enjoy the freedom.

I felt fine, until I had a not-very-pleasant occurrence. I was summoned by some people who describe themselves as members of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), and they were following me wherever I went. They summoned me to their military police station, and they wanted me to answer several questions. They wanted me to hand over the keys to my apartment in Pristina. In 1985, the Serbian police forcibly threw my family and me out of the apartment. I got this apartment from the factory and the [trade union] organization for which I worked for 11 years, to use it for my work. From that time on, we were constantly persecuted by the Serbian regime until we left Kosovo.

Now, after I came back to Pristina, I was interested in my apartment. I went to the apartment, with the KFOR troops behind me. There were people living there, but they didn't have the right to stay there, and because of that, KFOR housed me there. After a while, my family also arrived in Pristina, and KFOR gave us the right to live in the apartment, after we showed them documents that the property belonged to us.

Unfortunately, some suspicious people went to the Serbian who was living there before, to make a deal with him. They came to us, and ordered us to leave the apartment, even though they didn't have any legitimate claim to it. We contacted KFOR for help, which they provided. The persons demanding the flat came back again, this time with a person who represented himself to be a commander of the KLA. They wanted us to leave the apartment, and to hand over the keys to them. We didn't do so. Therefore, they summoned us to their military police office, twice. They wanted information about who we are, where we are from, where we had worked during the ten years when we were living outside the country, and other, similar questions which were threatening and provocative. I understood that that person who interrogated us did it for political reasons. He mentioned a person living in Sweden, a person who has obstructed our work and had been slandering us over the last ten years, because he didn't like our institutions and our way of fighting for an independent Kosovo. Milaim Zeka is his name.

Zeka is a follower of the Enver Hoxha regime [the late dictator of Communist Albania]. He is a journalist for the

radio station here in Sweden, where he gives the news in the Albanian language. The KLA commander said that he knows Zeka well, and therefore our names were suspicious to him. [In Pristina] I was followed everywhere I went. This was very difficult. One time, when my family and I were walking in the street, this commander stopped us, and stuffed us into his car, to interrogate us again. They brought us somewhere to an information place, where also our children experienced this treatment. They screamed at us. They said that we were making a mistake to go into our apartment with the help of the KFOR troops. They ordered us to deliver them the keys, that they wanted to give it to someone who, in their opinion, has helped the KLA. This was not a very good experience, especially for the children.

EIR: What is the origin of the KLA? Our research shows not only the connections to organized crime, but also ideological roots that go back to the Hoxha ideology.

Hoxha: I cannot answer that, because I do not know. What can you say about the KLA? The young men and women who have been fighting at the front and have been giving their lives; them, I consider members of the liberation army of Kosovo, and I have all the respect and dignity for those who gave their lives for freedom, and for those who fought and who today have go back to normal lives, a life in a free Kosovo, which they also fought for.

But, there are some individuals who are acting in a very irresponsible and dishonest way, like in the way we were treated. Them, I consider not to be truthful. If they have fought for Kosovo, they should protect the citizens of Kosovo, and not threaten them and force people to leave their apartment and Kosovo like they did to us. This method of threatening people, because they think differently, reminds me of the 50-year dictatorship of the Enver Hoxha regime, and nothing less.

EIR: President Ibrahim Rugova is the elected leader of the Kosovars. Nevertheless, he was forced into a lesser position in Rambouillet by the KLA and its leader Hashim Tachi. Tachi received support from certain Western leaders. Now, Rugova has announced that he intends to assume the role that his responsibility as the elected President mandates. On the other side, nobody in Kosovo elected the KLA. Can you explain this paradox to our readers?

Hoxha: Yes, the population of Kosovo twice elected President Rugova, therefore he is the legitimate President of the republic of Kosovo. And I think that the people of Kosovo should have a government they elect themselves, because it is they who should choose the people who lead them. The present government is the present government, but I only consider any leadership as the government if it is elected by the will of the population. I hope that in the first election, we will get a new government whose candidates are elected by the population, because only a government elected by the

population is a legitimate government of Kosovo.

EIR: Lyndon LaRouche and the founder of the Schiller Institute, Helga Zepp-LaRouche, called for a new Marshall Plan for the reconstruction and development of the Balkans. Unfortunately, this does not seem to be the priority now for the main Western powers. What is the position of the LDK on this? How do you see the battle for reconstruction in Kosovo and the Balkans?

Hoxha: The entire LDK leadership just concluded a meeting on Aug. 11 where the most important questions were discussed, such as the economic reconstruction of Kosovo, which will also be the most important policy of the LDK. We want to have cooperation with all international organizations that could help to make the reconstruction possible. I brought up some parts of the Marshall Plan proposed by the Schiller Institute when I was in Kosovo, and it was received as an important proposal. I cannot say so much about the details, but Mr. LaRouche's proposal was well received. The main activities of the LDK will be concentrated on reconstruction.

EIR: A sort of "reverse ethnic cleansing" is now going on in Kosovo.

Hoxha: These acts in Kosovo are completely unacceptable, because we should not allow any ethnic cleansing against any population in Kosovo.

There are some people who cannot control themselves. The repression existed in Kosovo for ten years. The world knows mostly what happened in Kosovo for the last past month, and not the last decade. People, only because they were Albanians, were fired from their work, students were denied the right to learn, there were so many people who lacked the elementary things to live. Many people were killed or imprisoned over the last ten years. I'm not saying this to excuse the acts against the Serbians, because these acts are unacceptable. I just want to say that there are so many people who had such an indescribably tough time that there are some who cannot control themselves, especially during the time when they found out about the death of their family members. But, as I said, this is unacceptable, especially if you think about the innocent people, who have no blood on their hands. It has to stop right away. We cannot tolerate another ethnic cleansing in Kosovo.

EIR: What is the potential for collaboration between the forces around President Rugova and the movement around LaRouche?

Hoxha: I want to speak for myself in this case: As a member of the LDK, I will continue my collaboration with your organization. I often meet with members of your organization and discuss so many different things. There are things on which we agree with each other, and other things we don't. But, we definitely discuss themes which are important and in the interest of Kosovo.