

Political involution in Romania during the first half of 1948 depicted in a Review of the United States Minister

*Marian-Alin Dudoi
Dumitru-Valentin Pătrașcu*

Rezumat

Involuțiile politice din prima parte a anului 1948 în România reflectate într-un raport al ministrului american

Anul 1948 a însemnat, pe lângă schimbarea formei de guvernământ, și consolidarea puterii pentru adepții Moscovei. Aceste involuții sunt reflectate pe larg în raportul periodic al ministrului Legației S.U.A. la București, Rudolph E. Schoenfeld, adresat în 24 august 1948 secretarului de stat (din 1965, cele două state au convenit la ridicarea relațiilor diplomatice la rangul de ambasadă, reprezentată prin ambasador, n.n.).

În ceea ce privește denumirea țării noastre în limba engleză, americanii au folosit “Rumania”, britanicii “Roumania” – sub influența franțuzescului “la Roumanie” – până la începutul anilor '60, când opțiunea regimului comunist pentru “Romania” a devenit precumpănitoare și pe plan internațional. Mai observăm însă și astăzi, la unele competiții sportive, folosirea prescurtării în limba engleză ROU.

Substituim partea concludivă a raportului, în traducerea noastră, rezumatului propriu-zis (Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale, Microfilme S.U.A., Rola 666, cadrele 837-839):

«Perioada începută în martie 1945, când regimul Groza a fost instalat ilegal de Andrei Vișinski, și până în 30 decembrie 1947 a reprezentat o perioadă de tranziție în pași mici, dar fără a apărea nicio piedică în calea acaparării puterii de către aripa internațională a Partidului Comunist Român. Perioada 30 decembrie 1947-1 august 1948 a însemnat consolidarea puterii acestuia, schimbarea structurii statului român pe baze egalitariste și o încercare hotărâtă și nemiloasă de a îndepărta viața privată și publică a românilor, ca și mintea lor, de orice influență a ideii de libertate, așa cum este înțeleasă în Occident. Consolidarea puterii de către partid este practic completă, iar atenția se îndreaptă spre eliminarea din partid a elementelor considerate naive sau lipsite de loialitate. Noua constituție oferă baza pentru schimbări majore în organizarea statului și, acestea din urmă, se află în momentul de față în faza de formulare. Politica de îndepărtare a ideilor occidentale nu s-a bucurat întrutotul de succes, însă reprezintă o politică pe termen lung și va fi susținută cu același zel nemilos, folosit și pentru acapararea

întregii puteri de către un mic grup de comuniști.

În momentul de față, România a ajuns în situația în care o denumire vagă, cunoscută sub numele de „Partid”, a devenit cel mai important element de referință pentru viața cotidiană a țării cu 16 000 000 de locuitori. „Partidul” reprezintă subiectul unei propagande educative susținute în presa guvernamentală, instituții de învățământ, radio, întruniri publice etc. Denumirea oficială a acestei organizații este „Partidul Muncitoresc Român”, dar din ce în ce mai mult publicațiile sale se referă la el numai cu termenul „Partidul”, ceea ce determină ca el să fie cunoscut doar în modul acesta. Sub aspectul intențiilor și scopului, România este un stat cu partid unic, iar această caracteristică este întrutotul veridică. Deoarece această idee este complet nouă, va mai trece timpul până când poporul se va obișnui, mai ales că, [doar] din punct de vedere legal, există și alte partide. Legația consideră drept cert în viitorul apropiat intensificarea ideii promovate că „Partidul” reprezintă pentru țară o sursă de iluminare și un model pentru fiecare de a-ți trăi viața, iar celelalte grupări politice fie vor fi absorbite, fie vor dispărea. Baza educației politice, referitoare la organizarea și îndatoririle „Partidului”, este reprezentată de dogma clasică marxist-leninistă și se apropie tot mai mult de sursa sa legitimă, Partidul Comunist (Bolșevic) al Uniunii Sovietice. Nu a devenit deocamdată unica organizație, așa cum este ultimul, deoarece s-a promovat până de curând ideea unei noi ordini în România care să atragă în rândurile partidului un număr considerabil de membri cu scopul de a propaga ulterior dogma (de către noii-veniți) tuturor (nemembrilor). Situația s-a schimbat radical în momentul de față și noii membri sunt supravegheați, iar o parte din vechii membri, pe a căror loialitate nu se poate miza cu certitudine, sunt excluși. În încercarea dublă de a cristaliza organizarea și ideologia „Partidului” și de a face de asemeni public caracterul „democratic” poporului român, în momentul de față partidul se află deopotrivă în situația oribilă de „critică de sine”, cât și de propagare fără încetare a doctrinei luptei de clasă. Atenția se îndreaptă și spre țărani, care până acum au dat dovadă de orice, însă nu de spirit proletar sau colectivist, și care au fost avertizați că trebuie să se lase conduși în lupta de clasă de către „Partid”, care este desigur „ocrotitorul maselor populare”. Aceste tendințe sunt așteptate să se deruleze în continuare până când organizarea impusă de partid va ajunge până la cel mai mic nivel, iar țărani vor fi acceptat nu numai rolul „Partidului” în viețile lor, ci și vor fi obligați să participe la sistemul agricol colectiv sau semi-colectiv.

Guvernul român devine din ce în ce mai mult un subordonat al „Partidului” și rolul său se reduce treptat în publicațiile propagandei comuniste. „Partidul” și numai „Partidul” decide ce se întâmplă în România în calitate de reprezentant „al voinței colective a maselor populare”. Personalitățile, atât guvernamentale cât și de partid, nu mai au puncte de vedere proprii în fața interesului colectiv al „Partidului” și chiar practicile sovietice tradiționale referitoare la prezentarea în cursul manifestărilor publice a tablourilor enorme ale personalităților de frunte

au devenit acum un tabu la București. Până când fiecare român nu va recunoaște dominația completă a conceptului de „Partidul”, este improbabilă apariția unor schimbări majore ale acestei practici. O dată ce ideea va fi acceptată de toți și organizarea partidului desăvârșită, se presupune că fruntașii partidului se vor bucura din nou de atenția publică.

„Partidul”, în modul în care a fost caracterizat în cursul raportului, nu este decât un oficiu al ramurii sudice al preocupărilor actuale ale Moscovei și trebuie să nu se uite că de aceasta depinde situația politică prezentă și viitoare a României. România este viguros ancorată în sfera sovietică și nu există nicio posibilitate de deviaționism. Aici nu pot apărea evoluții de tipul celor recent apărute în Iugoslavia și România poate fi considerată în rândul celor mai loiale și umile supuse stăpânului său sovietic până când condițiile pe plan internațional vor favoriza o schimbare. Conducătorii Partidului Muncitoresc Român și ai guvernului român sunt în toate preocupările și acțiunile întreprinse funcționari sovietici și țin seama de interesele sovietice în orice situație.

În ceea ce privește România însăși, și aici pot apărea modificări, nu numai în interiorul „Partidului”. Precum ne-am referit deja la constituția din luna aprilie a acestui an, aceasta stipulează posibilitatea unor modificări fundamentale, care nu au fost aplicate până în momentul de față în totalitate. Naționalizarea și „reforma” bisericii și educației au avut deja loc, însă modificări ale întregului sistem administrativ, colectivizarea agriculturii, naționalizarea proprietăților orășenești [probabil Legația S.U.A. avea în vedere naționalizarea micilor ateliere meșteșugărești și a prăvăliilor, a spațiilor de locuit facil transformabile în spații pentru activități economice sau comerciale, a mijloacelor medii și mari de transport etc., n.n.] și o viitoare implicare a statului în micile activități meșteșugărești și comerciale în spiritul Legii Naționalizării din 11 iunie reprezintă mai mult decât o posibilitate. În momentul de față, în România este liniște, dar în niciun caz nu se poate spune că s-a impus o stare de pasivitate. Schimbările majore din ultimii trei ani au luat sfârșit, însă au rămas urme ale trecutului care nu pot fi tolerate. Totodată, nu există niciun motiv pentru grăbirea proceselor și guvernul, mai degrabă se poate afirma „Partidul” sau sovieticii, se află în situația de a amâna deocamdată, fără teamă, instalarea în țară a socialismului tipic sovietic pentru ca populația să fie, dacă nu mulțumită, atunci supusă. Anumite schimbări sunt sigure, însă ele doar vor completa anumite scăpări ale politicii comuniste de până acum și vor fi lipsite de caracterul revoluționar al celor din ultimii ani. Revoluția este completă, dar nu are deocamdată mijloacele care să îi asigure o stabilitate în timp. Tocmai aceasta reprezintă ținta în care liderii români s-au implicat în ultimele săptămâni și asupra căreia se vor concentra în viitor. Aflată sub dependența sovietică, România va proceda în politicile interne la realizarea statului colectiv și în pseudorelațiile internaționale la susținerea vederilor și dorințelor Uniunii Sovietice, fără a-și exprima niciun interes propriu».

Cuvinte-cheie: Comunism, Propagandă, Războiul Rece, Uniunea Sovietică, Totalitarism

Keywords: Communism, Propaganda, Cold War, Soviet Union, Totalitarianism

«THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
SECRET

American Legation

Bucharest, August 24, 1948

No. 493

SUBJECT: Transmitting report on the Political Situation in Rumania from
January 1

to August 1, 1948

THE HONORABLE SECRETARY OF STATE, WASHINGTON

SIR,

I have the honor to enclose a review of the political situation in Rumania from January 1 to August 1, 1948. This review is designed to draw together the many vital and revolutionary changes that have occurred in Rumania since the beginning of the present year. It traces the events following the abdication of King Mihai on December 30, 1947 and includes the transformation of Rumania into a one-party police state, the attempt to abolish all traces of Western ideas, a brief analysis of present public opinion in this country, and comments on what may be expected in the future.

Respectfully yours,

Rudolf E. Schoenfeld.

Enclosure: Political Review, Rumania, January 1- August, 1948.

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SECRET

Enclosure No. 1 to Despatch No. 493 dated August 24, 1948 at Bucharest. Re: Transmitting Report on the Political Situation in Rumania from January, 1 to August 1, 1948.

POLITICAL REVIEW, RUMANIA

JANUARY 1- AUGUST 1, 1948.

A. Internal Political Developments – Recapitulation

New Year's Day 1948 found Rumania in the throes of one of the last of the

great constitutional changes that have turned the country in three years from a constitutional monarchy on the Western model with a few oriental trimmings into a Communist police state of the most ruthless and vicious sort. It was on December 30, 1947 that King Mihai abdicated under duress and the Romanian “Popular” (or more properly “People’s”) Republic was proclaimed. While the abdication does not properly fall within the scope of this review, it forms an integral part of the chain of developments which have occurred since and merits passing attention.

The monarchy was an anomaly that sooner or later had to be removed before Rumania could become a state organized and managed for and by international Communism. It lasted as so long as it did largely because of an unfounded fear on the part of the Rumania’s not always too courageous leaders that the removal of the popular young king would cause civil disturbances on a major scale. By not actively opposing the regime, King Mihai had been able to maintain his position as a symbol of his people’s hopes and as figurative head of the Resistance until the moment when Soviet plans for the tightening of its Eastern European organization called for the disposal of such superfluous trimmings as Kings and Courts. More than any other single act of the Groza Government, the deposition of King Mihai had a profound psychological effect on the Rumanian people and made them realize probably for the first time, the utter determination of their country’s present masters irrevocably to break with the past and to bring Rumania solidly into the Soviet scheme of things. The departure of the King left the people without any figure or institution to which they could look for guidance or for hope of a better life in the future.

The proclamation of the Republic marked the virtual end of the Communists’ drive for complete control and enabled them to concentrate in the months that followed on altering the form of the state to permit a perpetuation of their power and to purge their own ranks of elements considered not entirely obedient to Kremlin orders. By the first of the year rabid Communists had been placed in almost all of the key positions of the Government in a series of changes following in the wake of the trial of the National Peasant Party Leaders in November and the subsequent ouster of the opportunist Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Gheorghe Tătărescu and his followers. These changes saw Rumania’s Communist matriarch, Ana Pauker take over the Foreign Ministry, the Hungarian Vasile Luca assume charge of the Ministry of Finance, and the fiery Soviet citizen Emil Bodnăraş become Minister of National Defense. With the King removed and the Party solidly entrenched in the Government the Communist regime was able to turn itself to the tasks of revising the organic structure of the Rumanian state and the consolidation of political party in the hands of one party.

While these two tasks were accomplished in a number of different ways one major development in each field was the keystone of the work accomplished.

In the political field the major event was the Congress which assembled on February 21, 22 and 23 for the purpose of organizing a single Marxist Party from the then existent Communist and Social Democrate Parties. This was done with an enormous amount of fanfare and verbiage and resulted in the creation of the “Rumanian Workers Party”. The Congress setting up the new party was a rubber stamp affair devoted almost exclusively to uninspired speeches merely paraphrasing the party line. A notable exception however was that of the Party Secretary General, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej who in an oration lasting all morning laid down the basic political creed of the new party and served clear notice that it would be purged of all lukewarm or dissident elements and it would become the single instrument of the people’s will. While Mr. Gheorghiu said other political parties would be permitted, he made it quite clear that it would be in name only and that the real political force in Rumania would be the Workers’ Party, which would be the guide and master of the peasants as well as the workers.

At the Congress it was announced (by Minister of Interior Teohari Georgescu) that the Communist Minister of Justice Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu, a loyal party member for many years but a fairly patriotic Rumanian, had been dropped from the Party for having bourgeois tendencies. His dismissal from the Government followed immediately and his arrest two months later. Pătrășcanu’s fall served notice on all Party members that they must conform to the Moscow line and conform rigorously or that they would be destroyed. That the party was to be under the exclusive control of the more virulent Communists was seen in the “election” to the Central Committee of thirty Communists and ten Socialists and to the Political Bureau of ten Communists and three Socialists although the former Socialist Party had had a much larger membership than the Communists.

It was announced at the Congress that a new political grouping known as the Popular Democratic Front would be formed to offer a common list of candidates for election to a Constituent Assembly scheduled for March 28. The front which was formed immediately included the Rumanian Workers’ Party, the Ploughmen’s Front of Prime Minister Groza, the National Popular Party, and the Hungarian Popular Union. This grouping fooled no one – they were all Communists and opportunists faithfully following Communists orders. While the membership of the Ploughmen’s Front is considerable, it is merely a rural branch of the Communist organization permitted for the sole reason that the peasants were and are incorrigibly allergic to official Communism and some coating for the pill has so far been needed. The other two parties are insignificant and to a larger extent phoney and do not merit extensive comment.

With the creation of the Popular Democratic Front, a highly publicized electoral campaign got under way made slightly ludicrous by the announcements by two “opposition” parties that they would offer a few candidates. These were the National Liberal Party (Dissident) of Tătărescu now headed by a political

hack, Petre Bejan, and the mysteriously resurrected Democratic Peasant Party led by Dr. Gheorghe Lupu. It was all too obvious that these parties were permitted to offer candidates only to give the impression that free elections were part of Government's program and the suspicion was strong that the Democratic Peasant Party was actually subsidized by the Government. The electoral campaign was featured by great deal of sound and fury and scurrying of high Government officials around the country in an attempt to convince someone, exactly whom was not clear, that they had a real battle on their hands. During the campaign the Popular Democratic Front issued a draft constitution which was presented to people as the main issue of the campaign, although there was no publicly expressed opposition to it. The provisions of the draft, which with a few minor changes became the Constitution of the Rumanian Popular Republic, will be discussed later. Election day passed quickly and the public apathy that had been a striking feature of the campaign still was present when the time came to go to the polls and the Government was reportedly forced to use a certain amount of intimidation to get out the vote. A few day after the election it was officially announced that the Popular Democratic Front had won 405 of the 414 seats, the National Liberal Party 7 and the Democratic Peasants 2. A so-called independent list which the Government had placed on the ballots containing a lot of totally unknown names received nothing. It was also proclaimed that the Government parties had received 93,2 per cent of the total vote. The actual result were, of course, extremely difficult to ascertain but on the basis of reports from a number of independent but admittedly biased sources over the course of the last few months the Legation believed the Government received at the maximum 25 per cent of the votes cast and that the votes invalidated by improper marking about 60 to 65 per cent with the remainder divided among the two so-called opposition parties.

The elections were a shoddy show in which the Communist rulers of Rumania made themselves more than slightly ridiculous. They were apparently felt necessary since for reasons best known to itself the Romanian Government felt it still had to maintain at least the trimmings of old-fashioned democratic procedure, a feeling that has at this writing all, but disappeared. The money wasted on the electoral show was appalling. The country was literally smeared from end to end with posters, banners, pictures, painted electoral insignia et caetera and the din of sound trucks and carefully arranged mass demonstrations was awesome. As mentioned above, the public's apathy towards all this was striking. When the campaign first got under way, the Government reportedly used the methods it had adopted with considerable success in the 1946 elections to screen all possible opponents from the voting lists but changed when so few eligible electors came forward to pick up their electoral cards that it became obvious there would be no large vote and resorted to all sort of methods to arouse interest. These took the

form of heavy newspaper propaganda, house to house canvasses, and finally in some instances actual threats such as loss of ration books or forced labor.

The creation of the Rumanian Workers' Party and the March 28 elections which properly must be regarded as parts of one basic organizational movement were followed by the adoption of a new constitution, the basic organizational changes in the structure of the state. The draft constitution of the Popular Democratic Front offered to the public within a very few days of the creation of the Front itself bore a striking resemblance to the Bulgarian Constitution and was broadly modeled on that of the Soviet Union. It promised nationalization of industry and commerce, the suppression of parochial schools, freedom of speech, worship, and assembly, if the security of the state was not jeopardized, and guaranteed to Rumania's minority groups the right to use their own languages in schools, courts et caetera and to preserve their ethnic integrity within the framework of the Rumanian state. It had been preceded a few months before by a legal reform of sweeping character whose most noteworthy feature was the creation of a corps of something known as "popular assessors" to "assist" the regular magistrates in the dispensation of justice. These assessors, whose work to date has not been entirely satisfactory to the powers that be, were chosen from the trade unions by the high command of the General Confederation of Labor. The underlying purpose was to make sure that cases at law would be decided by political expediency, rather by legal precedence or judicial discretion.

The constitution, which went into force on April 13, went through the new assembly without difficulty and with only minor amendments, probably prepared well in advance and spewed forth during the parliamentary proceedings in yet another attempt to convey impression of freedom of discussion and Western parliamentary practises. The most noteworthy amendment was to include the country's forests within nationalizable objects and without realizing quite it was getting into the Government accepted this. Immediately a storm broke when it was discovered that considerable tracts of forests lands were held by peasants cooperatives and commune on land grants dating back to the time of Maria Teresa and the Government was obliged to give assurances that the interests of the "working peasantry" would not be jeopardized.

With the enactment of the constitution the Chief of State, the High Praesidium was enlarged from five to nineteen members presided over by the senile and addled Professor C.I. Parhon and shortly thereafter a further reorganization of the cabinet took place again placing trusted Communists in Government Ministries which had or could be expected to have influence on the daily lives of Rumanian citizens. A reorganization of the Ministries also took place at this time. The old Ministry of Industry and Commerce was split into two separate ministries bearing those names, a Ministry of Forests was created, the Ministry of Arts

was abolished and its functions transferred to the Ministry of Information and three Vice Premiers were named with supervision over three broad categories of Governmental activities: economic, agricultural, and cultural. Mr. Gheorghiu-Dej became at least nominally, the economic czar of Rumania, Mr. Traian Săvulescu, the former Minister of Agriculture, became Vice Premier responsible for the Ministries of Agriculture and Forests and Mr. Ștefan Voitec, former Minister of Education, took over responsibility, again at least nominally, for the Ministries of Education, Cults, and Information. Key Communists took over the vacancies thus created, Mr. Chivu Stoica, an old time labor agitator, becoming the Minister of Industry, Mr. Vasile Vaida, with a similar background taking over the Ministry of Agriculture, Ion Vințe, assuming charge of the new Minister of Forests, Mr. Gheorghe Vasilichi, probably the nastiest Communists of all, becoming Minister of Education, and Mr. Bucur Șchiopu, officially a member of the Ploughmen's Front but actually a loyal Communist, taking on responsibility for the Ministry of Commerce.

This reorganization, which is by no means believed final, had little noticeable effect on the actual operation of the Government, but as part of the process that has been in motion during the period under review – the process of over tightening the control of the most rabid international Communists, it is highly significant. Surprise was expressed at the time that the Secretary General of the Workers Party, Mr. Gheorghiu-Dej, failed to receive premiership as he had been expected and it was then believed by usually well informed Rumanians that he had been shelved at the last moment either because of the other Party Chieftaine such as Ana Pauker and Vasile Luca felt he has becoming a bit too prominent or because of Soviet disgust at the poor electoral showing made by the Government especially among the workers. In retrospect, however, in the wake of Cominform Resolution denouncing the Nationalism of the leaders of the Yugoslav Communist Party, it is apparent that Gheorghiu-Dej, suspected of the same taint, did not enjoy sufficient confidence on the part of the Russians to be entrusted with Premiership.

With the enactment of the Constitution and the reorganization of the Government, the conduct of Rumanian affairs entered into a new phase – open and unconcealed dictation by the Central Committee of the Rumanian Workers' Party. This was most strikingly seen on June 11 when the Government obtained the approval of a special assembly of the National Assembly of a law nationalizing almost all of Rumania's industrial and commercial enterprises. The Communiqué informing the Rumanian public of this drastic undertaking announced that the request for its enactment was made the day before its passage by the Central Committee of the Party and the Legation has been informed that the Cabinet meeting which acted on the Party's request lasted exactly half an hour. The Nationalization law itself which was expected in view of the provisions of the new constitution announcing the intention to nationalize, was surprising in its scope and the

apparent determination of the Communist masters of the country to abolish with one stroke all traces of the Western idea of free, or even semi-free, enterprise. It was political in motive and application and totally ignored the economic realities at the moment. Whatever economic mess may result from this sudden and sweeping change, the Communists have attained a major goal and the economic life of the country is now as firmly in their hands as the political.

At the same meeting of the Party's Central Committee that requested Nationalization, a Resolution was drawn up and published some ten days later setting forth for the Party's organizational and ideological program. This document injected into Rumanian political life for the first time the doctrine of unending class warfare. While Communist propagandists thundered for some time against reaction, imperialism and all the rest, the class warfare theme had never been played up until this time. The resolution served notice on the Rumanian peasants that they must conform and said that the Workers Party must continue to "assist" Ploughmen's Front in its reorganization. It contained the usual polemics against the Catholic Church and the Imperialist West and attacked the party subsidiary organizations such as the Union of Working Youth for taking on themselves too large a measure of independence. The activities of these organizations began to be less publicized following the publication of the Resolution. It made a great point on the necessity of purging the Party's ranks of bourgeois and "compromising" elements and cited Pătrășcanu as example of the wrong kind of Communist.

The publication of the Cominform Resolution against the Yugoslav Communists was, from the internal Rumanian point of view, the culminating development of the period under discussion. It served to bring into focus and to show Rumanians who had previously engaged in wishful thinking as to the intentions and life expectancy of the regime exactly what was intended for their country and the rigid determination of the Soviets to permit no deviation, no matter how slight, from the line laid down in Moscow. The immediate repercussions were to place Mr. Gheorghiu-Dej under a cloud since he had a reputation among the people, which may or may not have been justified, of being more nationalistic than his colleague and to have been more than one in disagreement with the international wing of the Party led by Ana Pauker, Vasile Luca, Iosif Chișinevschi, and Emil Bodnăraș, over the extent of Rumania's absorption into the Soviet system. Gheorghiu-Dej's status is still not entirely clear and although he had retained his positions as Secretary General of the Workers Party and Vice President of the Council of Ministers, it is believed that his activities are carefully circumscribed and that he is not entirely a free agent. He still appears in public and articles attributed to him appear from time to time in Communist publications but it is widely felt that his influence is negligible.

The Cominform resolution also served notice of the future of Rumanian agriculture. Until the denunciation of the Yugoslav for permitting small agricultural

holdings, it had been believed that the Rumanian Government would continue its then existing policy of having the land divided into small individual holdings and the Constitution publicly proclaimed, "The land belongs to he who tills it". However in July the Government announced a new (and totally unnecessary from the economic point of view) forced grain collection scheme under a Commission headed by the Deputy Minister of Interior, a police official not normally charged with agricultural responsibilities. The scheme provided for forced sale of grain at prices that seemed likely to ruin most peasants and the conclusion is inescapable that this is exactly what was intended. At the moment Bucharest is full of rumors of violent resistance to collection scheme and the Government-controlled papers have been fulminating against individual acts of "sabotage". Government speakers are constantly attacking recalcitrant peasants and the workers are being told it is their duty to instruct the peasantry in the finer nuances of class warfare. The Legation has been unable to verify a single one of the reported incidents of peasant resistance and has come to the conclusion that they exist largely in the Government's imagination in an attempt to justify an impending collectivization of Rumanian agriculture along Soviet lines.

Another repercussion of both the Cominform Resolution and the June 11 Resolution of Central Committee of the Rumanian Workers Party was a wave of propaganda on the need for self-criticism within the party. Examples of the value of such criticism have been cited in various labor unions which by examining their faults have discovered ways of increasing production, have disclosed reactionary and dishonest union officials, and have given the lower ranks of the party an opportunity to express their opinion on the Party leadership. There has also been apparent recently a tendency to submerge the individual into the Party and the Legation has been reliably inform that Chişinevschi, the Party's ideological boss has given orders to his propagandist subordinates to cease calling attention to the accomplishment of any individual and to take the line that the Party in itself gives leadership to the people and accomplishes worthwhile achievements. As a result portraits of Governmental leaders have begun to disappear and it was interesting to note that during the visit of the Czech Prime Minister in July, no picture of anyone were on display on public buildings as he had been the custom during similar visitations in the past.

As of August 1, 1948 the organization of the Party was virtually complete and the Party's control of the Government beyond any and all dispute. There remain many things to be done and they are presently in the mill. The administrative structure of the Government had not been changed, the only basic reorganization has been to replace hostile or lukewarm officeholders with ardent party members. Reorganization has been completed in a few of the less important ministries but by and large the old bureaucracy remains down to the smallest village and commune units. Sweeping educational and religious laws were decreed early

in August in the present campaign which will be discussed in more detail later to bring Rumanian thinking into the proper lines. While the key positions in the Government are all in the hands of trusted Party members, the cabinet still contains non-party members who it seems reasonable to suppose have outlived their usefulness and will eventually be removed. However the major changes have been accomplished. The one party police state is a fact and a new constitution along Soviet lines is in force. All opposition has been suppressed and driven into hiding and elements within the ruling party not willing to follow the Moscow line in its entirety are being purged. The monarchy has been abolished and Western governmental practices eliminated. The revolution has in fact been accomplished and there remains to be done nothing more than tying together a few loose ends and convincing the Rumanian people that there is no chance for a change and that they must conform or perish.

B. Rumania's Foreign Relations – Recapitulation

The outstanding feature of Rumania's foreign relations during the period under review was the signing of a series of mutual aid pacts with its Communist neighbors including the Soviet Union. These pacts which were proclaimed with an enormous amount of fanfare all followed the same general pattern and were designed to create for the Soviet Union a tight system of alliances to be used in the event of war.

Although the wording occasionally varied, the treaties usually provided for the two parties to come to each other's help in the event of an armed aggression by Germany or another party associated to Germany. The details of the agreements are not pertinent to this report and undue space need not be devoted to them. However, while they need not occupy much physical space in this particular review, their significance cannot be over-emphasized. The treaties put Rumania inescapably under the military control of the Soviet Union. Treaties were signed with Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Hungary, the Soviet Union, and Czechoslovakia in that order. The Yugoslavian, Bulgarian and Czechoslovak Treaties were signed in Bucharest and with the exception of the latter, they were marked by an extraordinary amount of propaganda, demonstration, and just plain noise. The hullabalo was apparently designed to convince both the Rumanian people and possibly the rest of the world of the solidarity and determination of the new "popular democracies" to stand together against the imperialist and predatory West.

The first seven months of 1948 saw Rumania veering even more sharply from all friendly, or even correct, relations with the West. In the Government owned and controlled press and in the supposedly independent papers which must conform to stay alive, no calumny against the West, especially the United States, is too great or too unfounded to print. The vituperation extends to all subjects having the

slightest American aura and the attacks on American personalities are libelous, stupid, and disgusting. The violent anti-American propaganda that the Rumanian Government has seen fit to indulge in has a noticeable effect in the Legation's relations with the various officials of the Government and its officers are without exception met with hostility, prevarication, and unbelievable procrastination on even matters of the most routine nature. The hostility in some cases, such as that of the Foreign Minister, Mrs. Ana Pauker, is unquestionably genuine and in others assumed merely because it is the only safe pose to assume at the moment. But whether genuine or not, it exists and the Legation is confronted with a deliberate attempt as the part of the authorities to make its activities as difficult as possible. This hostility has been met by other Western representatives such as the British, French, and Vatican and has been encountered in numerous petty incidents to individual Westerners usually involving requisitioning of their residence quarters and the like.

Another major phase of Rumanian foreign policy during the winter and spring of 1948 was the campaign for aid to the Greek guerrillas of General Markos. This campaign which the Government was careful not brazenly to represent as official, but which enjoyed the open support of prominent Government personalities was marked by several mass meetings featuring accounts of the horrible atrocities committed by the Greek "monarcho-fascists" under American direction and appeals for money, food, clothing and medicine. The result of the campaign were not, insofar as the Legation is aware, overly impressive but the manner of collection was interesting to say the least. According to many different sources workers wages, which are minuscule in any event, and in various industrial enterprises and in the Government bureaus were deducted a certain percentage each month for the fund and it was publicly announced in the press from time to time that workers at a given plant had donated a day's work for "Aid to Greece". This donation consisted of their being obliged to work Sundays and holidays without pay, the wages allegedly being tossed into the Markos kitty. Despite all this maneuvers and intermittent collection campaigns by labor organizations and such Communist subsidiary groups as the Union of Democratic Women, the campaign was sporadic and lacked any real drive, it has now largely fizzled out although it crops up again from time to time.

Throughout this period the Legation made attempts to confirm rumors of the despatch of Rumanians to Greece to take part in the fighting but failed to find any conclusive evidence to this effect and now believes that if any Rumanians in fight left for Greece, they were few in number and were not trained troops. On April 23 the Rumanian Government suddenly published the text of a note it had delivered to the Greek Government protesting against an alleged persecution of an alleged Rumanian minority in Greece. For a few days the press was full of imaginary accounts of these purported atrocities which it claimed affected 500

000 Rumanians and then the incident disappeared as suddenly as it had arisen. The reason for this transient incident are obscure but its propaganda nature was obvious. The Legation is now inclined to believe that the note represented merely an isolated part of a general Soviet propaganda drive to discredit the present Greek Government in the eyes of the world. While there may have been a purely Rumanian aspect to it as well, such an attempt to arouse public support for the aid to Greece drive, the suspicion arose that it was entirely a Soviet decision since there had been absolutely no advance press campaign in Rumania.

On February 10, 1947 Rumania signed a Treaty of Peace with the Allied Powers and the Treaty came into force on September 15, 1947. The Treaty obliges Rumania to assure to its citizens basic human rights, limits its military forces, and contains economic clauses designed to compensate allied nationals for war damage and restore their interests to their pre-war status.

There has been no sign to date that the Rumanian Government has not made the slightest pretenses of even giving lip service to this treaty obligation and has answered both British and American representations on the subjects with insolence and prevarication. The Government rejected as unwarranted interference in the internal affairs of Rumania the representations of the British and American Governments over the rigged trial and sentencing to long prison terms of Mr. Iuliu Maniu and other leaders of the now suppressed National Peasant Party. An attempt on the part of the two Western allies to investigate Rumania's fulfillment of its military commitments was blocked by the refusal of the Soviet Ambassador to cooperate. The war damage claims provisions of the Treaty are still undecided since the claims have yet to be submitted but all indications are that they will be ignored.

Rumania has been able to take this arrogant position in its foreign relations solely through its rather close association with the Soviet Union and it is these relations that determine all phases not only of Rumania's foreign but also its domestic policy. The degree of Rumanian dependence on the Soviet Union is striking and while observation at only one post is apt to be narrowing, it is felt safe to say that Rumania is by far the most docile and obliging of all the Soviet satellites and the only one that would under no circumstances argue or challenge a Soviet decision. Rumors have been current in Bucharest (although they originated abroad) for some time that Rumania is slated for incorporation into the Soviet Union as a component republic. The Legation has been unable to find any substance to these rumors and, while anything is possible in the Soviet scheme of things, it is inclined to doubt them for the simple reason that the Soviet appear to have everything they desire here without incurring the odium in the eyes of the world that would be brought on by swallowing a nominally independent nation. Rumania's economy is either in Soviet hands through the joint "Sovrom" companies or is now owned and operated by the Rumanian Government who will

extend to the Soviets any privileges and concessions they may seek. Politically, Rumania is completely and now brazenly subservient to its Soviet masters. Militarily, Soviet troops are still in the country and are likely to remain for long time to come.

It is difficult therefore to see what possible advantage there would be to the Soviet Union in formally incorporating Rumania into its body politic since to all intents and purposes it is there now.

There have been four major public developments in Soviet-Rumanian relations during the first half of the year which have drawn Rumania ever more firmly into the Soviet web. These were: (1) The negotiation and conclusion of a new commercial agreement which tied the Rumanian economy into a compact package for the Soviets to take at will (a parallel economic report is in preparation at present and no details of these agreements will be discussed here) and provided for the creation of still further joint enterprises; (2) The mutual aid pact with its secret military and industrial protocols providing for the virtual control of Rumania's armed forces and heavy industrial enterprises by the Soviet Union; (3) The announcement on June 9 that the Soviet Union had agreed to a fifty percent reduction in Rumanian reparations as of July 1, 1948; and (4) The publication of the Cominform Resolution against Yugoslavia and its consequent enthusiastic endorsement by all Rumanian authorities of any consequence.

The new commercial agreement generally followed the agreements of 1945 and 1947 and gave the Soviets sweeping concessions in many phases of Rumania's economic life. From the political point of view it is interesting for its demonstration of the craven subservience of the Rumanian Government to the Soviets and the determination of the Russians to so integrate Rumania, once one of the wealthiest countries in Europe, into its sphere that deviation will be suicidal. It is interesting also to note that the Rumanian Government has never dared print the complete text of any of the economic agreements it has signed with the Soviet Union despite the rigidity of its control over the population. While the country's leaders are at the moment engaged in boasting of their complete loyalty to their Russian masters, they still apparently have enough respect for the public opinion to conceal the way in which they have blithely handed over the country's wealth.

The details of the confidential provisions of the mutual aid pact which are not pertinent to the present review further extend the rigid control of the Soviet Union over Rumania's political and economic life. The reparations reduction was a propaganda gesture to its former enemy satellites of little real economic significance in the case of Rumania since the country has already been milked dry by Soviet reparations depredations but was of considerable political advantage. This sort of gesture is always a godsend to Soviet propagandists and apologists and frequently impresses the gullible. It was played to the hilt here.

The Cominform Resolution for the first time openly proclaimed the fact that countries with Communist Governments must adhere to the Moscow line and must adhere to it firmly and obediently. There had until that time been a belief in certain quarters in Rumania that certain nationalist elements within the Government, such as Gheorghiu-Dej, would be able to maintain a semblance of Rumanian independence until the day came when external events would permit a change in the regime. There had also been a number of opportunists who believe they could save their own skins by playing the Communist game although they did not believe in the principles of international communism. The belief is now shattered and the opportunists are feeling the pressure of a party purge of all Communists who are not considered absolutely and unquestionable reliable. The revelation of Soviet control contained in the Cominform resolution confirm the utter subservience of such satellites as Rumania to Soviet Union and showed that it cannot be said to have a foreign policy of its own in any given matter, no matter how small or insignificant.

In lesser matter relating to foreign policy, Rumania concluded new commercial agreements with its neighbors, attended the Conference on Freedom of Information at Geneva and the present Danube Conference at Belgrade, recognized the new State of Israel, and denounced the Concordat with the Vatican. It was apparent in all of these matters that Rumania was not a free agent.

C. The Attempt to Destroy the Western Ideas

Throughout the period under discussion the Rumanian Government took vigorous measures against all elements, persons, institutions and ideas capable of offering effective opposition, not only in an attempt to consolidate its political position but also to destroy wherever possible of all traces of the ideals and tradition of Western civilization. This campaign has been seen in ruthless police measures against the population, in the purging of Governmental, business, educational, cultural and religious institutions, in the rigid curtailment of any vestiges of freedom of speech and expression, and in the removal from Rumanian economic and cultural life all of Western capital and personnel.

On January 1, 1948 the Communists were, as mentioned at the beginning of this report, in complete control of the apparatus of the state but the opposition was existent if latent and Western traditions and ideals still prevailed even in the physical structure of the Government, a parliamentary system modeled roughly on the French. The organized political opposition was then broken but it was necessary for the Government, once its position was unassailable, to move even further to suppress without mercy all persons who in the past had been anti-Communist or associated with the Western idea or either *laissez-faire* capitalism or doctrinaire Socialism. Accordingly the period was marked by the greatest wave of political arrest this unhappy country has probably encountered.

Accurate figures on the number of persons arrested for political reasons are, of course, impossible to obtain and only a relatively wild guess of about fifteen to twenty thousand since the first of the year can be hazarded. Having no direct sources of information on the subject, the Legation has been forced to rely on reports by various Rumanians, themselves members of the group subject to arrest. The Legation knows for a fact the names of certain prominent individuals who are now under confinement but further than that it must treat the numerous reports it has received and on which the following summary is based with a certain measure of reserve even though they, by and large, are probably reasonably accurate.

The three legal opposition parties which offered candidates in the parliamentary elections of November 19, 1946, the National Peasant Party of Mr. Iuliu Maniu, the National Liberal Party of Mr. Constantin I.C. Brătianu, and the Independent Social Democrat Party of Mr. Constantin Titel Petrescu have now been broken by arrests and fear of arrests and do not exist as political entities although the two latter have never been officially suppressed by the Government and may retain their structural organization albeit quietly. The suppression of the National Peasant Party and the arrest of its leaders was largely complete by the end of 1947 and only scattered remnants of its membership have been apprehended since that time. The National Liberal Party leadership has largely escaped arrest with the exception of the former Minister without Portfolio in the second Groza Government, Mr. Mihail Romniceanu. Lesser members of the party have reportedly been arrested including students in the University, the sons of National Liberal Party members who according to several sources were inveigled into an anti-Government "plot" by an agent-provocateur and the party is quiescent to say the least. It did not dare (according to Romniceanu before his arrest) offer candidates in the March 28 elections. It no longer exist as an organization in the remotest way capable of offering opposition, effective or otherwise to the present regime. The leadership of the Independent Socialist Party has, according to reports believed reliable, been arrested. The leadership of this party and his man Friday, Adrian Dimitriu, who in fact ran the party and they have both been locked up. This party, therefore, no longer can be said to have any real existence and failed to offer candidates in the elections mentioned before.

The Government however was not content with destroying merely the three opposition party of the 1946 elections and moved against other political groups which had tried to cooperate with it in an attempt to save their political lives and their economic interests. The most important of these Dissident National Liberal Party of Gheorghe Tătărescu, a group of rich capitalists motivated largely by a desire to protect their fortunes and forgetful of the old saw that he would sup with the devil must have a long spoon. The Tătărescu spoon was lamentably short. There have been, as far as the Legation is aware, few arrests of prominent of

this group although many have fled abroad or have gone into hiding. Tătărescu, himself, has been under house arrest since his fall from the power last fall and the party is fairly well scattered. As mentioned earlier in this report a remnant of the party of the party under the Leadership of Petre Bejan offered candidates in the March elections and was given seven seats in the new assembly. This "Party" however is rather ludicrous and its "opposition" to the Government is extremely invisible.

The Government parties themselves have felt the hot breath of the Security Police (Siguranța) and the Secret Police (and MVD subsidiary headed by the Defense Minister Bodnăraș) and arrests have been made in the ranks of the Plowmen's Front, the former Socialist Party and even the Communist Party itself as shown in the incarceration on Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu. Reports of the arrests within Government bloc are frequent and occasionally convincing but the Legation has nothing it can regard as valid evidence of wide scale arrests among these groups. It seems clear that all those regardless of party affiliation who do not toe the Moscow line and who are considered sufficiently intelligent and influential to be of danger to the regime eventually lose their liberty but the number who have met this fate is unknown.

Aside from the political parties the authorities have, during the past six months, moved against other groups and organizations who might possibly be the nucleus of an effective resistance. Among the groups particularly singled out have been the officer corps of the Rumanian Army, especially those purged during the past three years for political unreliability. Among the more notable military personalities reportedly arrested have been General Niculescu and Potopeanu and Admiral Pais. Another group that has attracted the attention of the security authorities has been the former associates of King Mihai who were unable to leave the country with him last January. The most prominent of these now in prison is Mr. Savel Rădulescu, probably the former King's most intimate adviser on all political matters. The business community has also felt the pressure usually in the form of arrests for "economic sabotage" an all-inclusive charge which have been most convenient for the Government is arresting suspect elements and still being able to go through the motions of a judicial process. Economic sabotage can be practically anything. An excellent example of its scope was seen in the regulations covering the Rumanian census of January 1948 which provided that anyone showing "ill will" to a census taker was liable to prosecution under the economic sabotage law. Those arrested for economic sabotage, however, are reportedly better treated than the ordinary political prisoners, are given a trial which on occasion has had the rudiments of fairness, and are permitted the advise of a counsel.

Arrests have also been made within the ranks of professional civil servants, teachers, the legal

profession, and the professional classes in general. Despite numerous reports the Legation has received to the contrary, there does not seem to be any particular pattern to political arrests and they appeared designed to keep the population in a constant state of affair in order to avert the formation of resistance groups with any real degree of organization or hop for real success. At this writing there appears to have been a slight let-up in the pace of the Government's political arrests although unconfirmed reports are rampant of wide scale arrest among the ranks of untrusted Communists and in military circles. By and large, the Legation feels the arrest campaign has served its purposes and the Rumanian population has been placed in a position where no one dare express an independent idea or to associate in any way with non-Communist foreigners or Rumanians with a "reactionary" background. The Government cannot arrest the entire population but it can, by sudden arrest spread throughout all ranks of the people, create such a feeling of terror that the same end is accomplished. In destroying Western idea the use of brute force has been an effective weapon.

To make sure that no Western idea filter through and to make control as easy as possible, the Government during the past six months by one device or another has greatly reduced the number of newspaper and periodicals appearing in Rumania and it is believed that further reductions are contemplated. At the moment the only papers appearing in Bucharest are the two officials of the Rumanian Workers Party, SCÂNTEIA and LIBERTATEA; ROMÂNIA LIBERĂ, an unofficial Communist paper, VIAȚA SINDICALĂ, the official organ of the General Confederation of Labor; UNIVERSUL, a Government owned-paper occasionally used for planted Soviet editorials which do not appear elsewhere; FRONTUL PLUGARILOR, official organ of the Plowmen's Front; NAȚIUNEA, official organ of the National Popular Party, and the two supposedly independent papers, SEMNALUL and ADEVĂRUL. The two latter are occasionally permitted to attack the regime on minor issues and are then resoundingly reprimanded by SCÂNTEIA but no one is fooled for very long by such shame although it is probably that the Government will shortly suppress both of them on the grounds they no longer give lip service to the idea of a free press. There are other papers of a minor nature, usually official organs of such groups as the Jewish Democratic Committee, the Union of Working Youth, the Voluntary Labor Brigades, the Union of Rumanian Students et caetera, but they are unimportant. The only news therefore available to the Rumanian public is a sickening rehash of the Communist line without relief and without variation. The foul-mouthed diatribes against everything Western are the monopoly of no Rumanian journal and restraint is unknown. So-called "literary" publications are no better and other channels of information such as the radio and the theater are rigidly controlled. For news of the outside world Rumanians must listen to the BBC or the Voice of America which they do whenever they can.

To break the hold of non-Communist culture and way of thinking it has, of

course, been necessary for the Rumanian Government to take strong action in all question of religion and this it has done during the period under discussion. Until the beginning of 1948 freedom of religion still existed in Rumania although it was being weakened steadily by the slow installation of Communist stooges in the higher echelons of the Rumanian Orthodox Church. Since then there has been a rapid a ruthless drive to make religious bodies conform to the new ideals – or lack thereof – and to make religion in Rumania little more than a hypocritical echoing of Communist dogma. The Orthodox Church, a state organization under the old Constitution and a favored but nominally independent one under the new, presented few obstacles in the Government's drive against the deep religious feelings of the masses of the Rumanian people. The most notable accomplishment was the election of the Metropolitan Justinian Marina of Moldavia as Patriarch following the death of Patriarch Nicodim who, while willing to cooperate with the Government as far as his conscience would permit, never could have become a strident stooge such as Marina. Marina, a priest with a spotty past, has been perfect for the Government's purposes and his patriarchal admonitions to the faithful have been full of the usual Communist vituperation against the West and have defended with considerable bombast every policy decision of the Government. He was quite active in proclaiming the advantages of the new constitution at the time of the elections and his voice has usually been added to that of prominent Government leader whenever any major step has been taken likely to be unpopular with the Rumanian people.

The Orthodox clergy have been brought into line in the customary manner – the threat of dismissal or arrest. While the Legation has no exact figures on those dismissed or taken into custody from the ranks of the clergy, it has been given to understand the number has been considerable and that every priest must now watch his every word and action with the greatest care. A labor union for priests has been formed known as the "Union of Democratic Priests" and this body has been quite active in issuing resolutions urging support for the Greek guerillas and the like. A recent case brought to the Legation's direct attention by the individual concerned is a rather good example of the status of Orthodox clergy at the moment. Two priests known to have had connections with the Americans and British were recently approached by the Patriarch as requested to undertake extensive tours throughout Rumania preaching to various congregations the doctrine of Western imperialism and warmongering, since their known appreciations with Westerners would lend their arguments force. One of the priests did not receive these instructions directly being out of town but the other was personally informed by the Patriarch that the latter knew how to obtain his consent. Very shortly thereafter the police called at the absent priest's house. It was not difficult for the Government to turn the Rumanian Orthodox Church into a docile instrument. The Roman Catholic Church, however, was a different

story and it has been necessary for the Government to resort to extremely strong measures to bring the Catholic population into line, an accomplishment not yet fully achieved, and it may be doubted whether it ever will be. Anti-Catholic propaganda began on a major scale shortly after the New Year and has reached heights of nauseous slander seldom excelled even in the usual attacks on the United States. The principal aim has been to draw the Catholic congregations into the fold of the Orthodox Church and considerable attention has been given to the so-called Uniates or Greek Catholics who form the bulk of the Catholic congregation. The general line has been that Uniate Church was founded by Austrian tyranny and perpetuated by the Vatican acting as the agent of American imperialism in an attempt to keep the free people of Rumania in bondage to Western capitalism. Such attacks, however, appeared to have little or no effect on the Catholics of Rumania and the Government finally resorted to force. The new constitution forbade the existence of parochial schools and permitted freedom of religion to all sects as long as the security of the state was not jeopardized thereby. Foreign schools were closed on July 23 and all privately owned schools were taken over by the state on August 3 when a new educational law was proclaimed forbidding the existence of any but Governmental schools. While the provisions about the security of the state being jeopardized has not to date been used against the Catholic Church, the Government has a weapon which it will not hesitate to use it if the Catholics remain obstinate. On July 19 the Government denounced its Concordat of 1927 with the Vatican in a completely illegal and insolent manner and on August 3 decreed a new Religious Cults Law putting all religious sects under extremely rigid control by the Ministry of Cults virtually denying them the right to practice their faith in any manner but that prescribed by the state.

Lesser sects such as the Lutherans, Baptists and Unitarians have all felt the pressure, by and large, have conformed. The Jewish Community, numbering some 350 000 has been subjected to terrific pressure and both politically and religiously its recognized organizations have had to toe the Government line. A new Chief Rabbi was appointed on June 20, a man unknown among the Community and one whose rabbinical status is open to considerable question. In the face of this pressure the Jewish desire has been to get out and with the assistance of various international Jewish charitable agencies thousands have left.

Along with its attempt to bring religious thought into Communist channels, there has been a similar and more successful drive in the educational field. Until the summer of 1948 the Government was content with a program of purging the faculties of the universities, lycees and elementary schools, with organizing students and school children into Communist run unions, and in seeing it that every state educational institution carried proper Communist indoctrination courses in its curriculum. Early in August, however, a sweeping new educational law was

decreed drastically changing the previous system of bringing education directly under the control of the ideological directors of international Communism. Since this report covers only the period up to the first of August, a full discussion of the details of the new law is unwarranted. However, its importance for the future is so great that it merits mention even though its chronology technically disqualified it for inclusion in this particular report. Basically it places education in Rumania on a purely technical footing and the old idea of a liberal arts education is abolished with the exception of two lycees throughout the entire country. Private schools are not permitted and education through the first four grades is compulsory. The subjects taught will be under rigid control of the Ministry of Public Instruction now run with a iron hand by Gheorghe Vasilichi one of the most rabid and unbending Communist loose in the world today. Rumanians hostile to the regime, which includes ninety-five per cent of the population, view this law with more horror than almost anything previously committed by the present Government since they feel and are probably rightly that the poison that will be now instilled in young minds will take years or tens of years to remove and they doubt their own ability to counteract at home the doctrines their children absorb at school since the dangers of such an undertaking are too great.

Along with enacting educational "reforms" the Government has worked on pliant young minds in many other ways. Mention was made above the forcing of school children and students into unions under benign aegis of the General Confederation of Labor, device designed to make sure that leisure hours are used for indoctrination rather than recreation. Youths have also been obliged by threats of not being admitted to higher classes to join "voluntary" labor brigades engaged in reconstruction work throughout the country and all sporting and athletic activity has been placed under the Organization for Popular Sports. All sorts of recreational facilities have been built and seized for youth organizations and for workers and it must be admitted that many Rumanians have had for the first time the opportunity of engaging in activities and visiting resorts previously unknown to them and also of receiving political indoctrination for hour after hour every day of the week.

In passing brief space might well be devoted to the Voluntary Labor Brigade mentioned above. The organization of those brigades began last summer and reached their maximum height during the months of March and April of the present year. The whole scheme smacked of totalitarianism and was, according to competent observers very similar to practices carried out in Nazi Germany ten years ago. The announced intention of the program was to repair and rebuild various bridges, railroads, tunnels et cetera that had either been damaged during the war or had fallen into disrepair, a few new construction projects such as a railroad to Lake Snagov, a resort of sorts near Bucharest, but in general it was to be a repair and maintenance project. In fact, according to information reaching

the Legation, the work of the brigades on these various project was incompetent in the extreme with the result that technicians often had to be called in to re-do the work performed by the brigades and there were high incidence of accidents resulting in some loss of lives. In fact the idea was to make sure that the youth of the country would not be permitted a free moment in which they could absorb reactionary ideas and to instill in them a feeling of camaradie under the flag of international Communism. A description of the life of a voluntary labor brigadier recently came to the Legation at first hand and clearly shows the motives behind the program.

According to this "brigadier", who is a first year medical student at the Bucharest School of Medicine, he was told he could not be enrolled for the second year unless he spent some six weeks doing voluntary labor in the provinces. Accordingly he was enrolled in a brigade sent to build a new railway tunnel in Transylvania where he was rudely housed in a barracks with some 300 other youths. They were awaked at three o'clock each morning, given a light breakfast, and immediately sent to work on the project where they remained without a break for twelve solid hours. At three in the afternoon they returned to their barracks where they were given their only real meal of the day consisting of some watery soup and mamaliga, the traditional Rumanian corn meal mush considered even by many Rumanians to be a sickening mess and from then until nine o'clock were subjected to indoctrination lectures. They then went to bed. According to this source, the brigadiers were treated with undisguised hostility by the natives in the locality in which they were working and morale was extremely bad among all ranks of those at the camp, even those with the most impeccable Communist background. There may be some exaggerations in this report in view of the informant's admitted bias, the Legation is inclined to believe it fairly represents the life of the "voluntary" laborers and shows the extent to which the present regime in this country is willing to go to make sure that all Western ideas are uprooted, and uprooted now.

The Voluntary Labor Campaign underwent an interesting development recently when the authorities suddenly discovered that the whole scheme had been copied from Yugoslavia where Marshal Tito has organized similar brigades. In the light of Cominform Resolution attacking Tito and all his works, this would never do and the whole program is reportedly under re-examination at the present time. The glowing accounts of the achievements of the brigadiers have disappeared from the Bucharest press and the BRIGADIERUL, the party newspaper for the brigadiers had begun to indulge in a veritable orgy of "self-criticism" promising that the movement will be "de-Yugified" forthwith. The Legation has also heard reports that the poor work and the high accident rate have also made the Government look askance at the brigades and while definite information is lacking, it is not impossible that they will wither and die during

the course of the next year.

In the cultural field, the Rumanian Government has to date adopted no clear cut plan for uprooting Western tradition with the exception of the nationalization and reorganization along Soviet lines of the Rumanian Academy, but has contented itself to date with a war of attrition against Western literature, motion pictures, drama, and to a lesser extent art and music. Bookstores have been purged of "capitalist" literature, American motion picture are no longer shown, and praise for Soviet cultural achievements fills every newspaper and magazine. The official Communist organs constantly censure bookshops, literary reviews, symphony orchestras and cinema for exhibiting ideas that could be associated with the reactionary West but to date no penal action has been taken against the offenders. The musical field has probably suffered the least but there has been activity even there. The state symphony received a severe lecturing by the official Rumanian Workers Party daily, SCÂNTEIA, last spring for playing Respighi's "Pines of Rome" which was alleged to be "fascist" and the country's most distinguished conductor (with Enescu away), Georgescu, had reportedly fallen from favor for overplaying Western music and his appearances have been extremely infrequent in recent months.

Another phase of the attempt to wipe out all traces of Western civilization has been the forced cessation of all direct contact with the Westerners. Rumanians who openly negotiate with Americans and British are apt to wind up in jail and no foreign travel is permitted except for persons on the official business of the Government. In a further measure to stop all contact with Western ideas, the Rumanian Government recently gave peremptory orders to the Swedes, Swiss, Italian, and French to close their honorary consulates in Rumania on extremely short notice. By the use of terror, propaganda, legal reform, and widespread purges in every walk of Rumanian life the present Government is midway in the course of a successful passage aimed at wiping out and wiping out for all time Rumania's tradition of Western culture and Western liberalism. It is not merely a case of ensuring the security of the regime. It is far more. It is a fairly carefully profound and ambitious attempt to purge from from Rumania all freedom of thought of expression and to convince the people that, whether they like it or not, a system of Soviet socialism has come to stay and it must be accepted.

D. The State of the Public Mind in Rumania

No review of the present political situation in Rumania would be complete without at least a brief mention of prevailing public opinion in the face of manifold pressure and basic changes described above. Even in the most ruthless dictatorship some attention must be given to the shape the citizens' thoughts are taking.

It can still safely be said that the Rumanian people are about ninety-five

per cent anti-Communist, anti-Russian, and anti-Semitic (The Jews are widely criticized for an allegedly heavy representation in the Government), and long wistfully for the happy day when they will find the Russians gone and the present Rumanian leaders dangling from the end of a rope. They are not however, willing to do anything to bring this about and their reaction to the present regime is merely one of hostile inertia. The most commonly heard Rumanian inquiry to an American when he dares talk to one is "Why don't you do something about it?" It never seems to occur to them that they might possibly do something about it themselves. Rumania's history of being conquered first by one great power and then by another with external events eventually removing the conqueror is so ingrained in every walk of Rumanian life that it never occurs to the people that a hated regime might be attacked, successfully or otherwise, from within. While no one believes the present Communist regime could be overthrown by the Rumanians alone, the Rumanian frame of mind does not envisage any but foreign action.

Occasional isolated instances of resistance to specific actions on the part of the Government, such as its grain collection program, do occur from time to time and there have reportedly been several minor but violent fare ups in the provinces during the course of the last few years. A number of so-called "resistance" groups do in fact exist but they are amateurish in nature, unorganized and without any specific plan of action. They lack leadership or any knowledge of just how to go about overthrowing the regime and the whole thing has a faint aura of "Cops and Robbers". Some of them may very well have a large membership and be capable of effective action in the event, but only in the event, of actual military hostilities on Rumanian soil. By and large, they are not a factor in the present political life of Rumania.

The Rumanian people for the moment live on rumor. No rumor is too fantastic not to be repeated as gospel truth and the gullibility of even the more intelligent and well informed Rumanian is startling. Optimistic rumors are naturally more popular than the reverse and are probably more numerous but are given much less credence than the pessimistic stories which crop up from time to time and which are believed without question. The most striking example of the latter has been the rumor prevalent for the past four or five months that Rumania was to be incorporated bodily into the Soviet Union and the first indication of this would come on August 23, the fourth anniversary of the *coup d'état* that overthrow the Antonescu dictatorship. Optimistic rumors are usually a bit on the fantastic side and are very short lived. They usually take the form of American aerial bombardment of a given point in Rumania, an assassination of Ana Pauker or Emil Bodnăraș, or the landing of the United States Marines on the Black Sea coast. These are swallowed by many Rumanians without a thought to reality and the depression which follows the revelation of their falseness is profound.

Favorable rumors have been few and far between recently and the air of gloom pervading the city of Bucharest is plainly visible.

The Rumanians want war and they want it fast. They see no other possible hope for deliverance and are openly delighted with every new incident marking a deterioration in Soviet relations with the West. For the moment they are given in to the present regime which is not regarded as Rumanian by anyone but a Soviet Government of occupation imposed on Rumania by the weight of Soviet arms. Those who can stand it no longer still try to escape but rigid measures taken at the frontiers and drastic penalties for those caught have made clandestine escape an extremely hazardous proposition at present. A considerable number managed to effect their escape last winter, largely Jews who for a while left without opposition on the part of the authorities, but the number of successful frontier passage is very small at present. Following the disgrace of Marshal Tito and his colleagues, the Yugoslav frontier rather than the Hungarian has become the popular one for escapes but there have been conflicting reports as to the reception the émigrés receive in Yugoslavia. A report from a source believed to be reliable stated that they were apprehended and returned to Rumania by the Yugoslav authorities and the Legation is inclined to attach some more credence to this story even though there are conflicting reports floating around.

As stated above the great majority of the Rumanian people hate their present masters and hope for deliverance but with the passing of the years, the firm entrenchment of the present Government in power, and the vigorous attempt by the Government to suppress all Western ideas and traditions, all will to resist will disappear completely and hatred will turn into tolerance and eventually acceptance of the new scheme of things. The constant propaganda of the Communists is bound to have some effect and it is already noticeable among less educated elements of the populations. All channels of information are strictly controlled and the only newspapers that may be purchased vie with each other is expounding the new doctrines, and constant repetition without rebuttal eventually drives home the doctrine being expounded. Unless, therefore, the Rumanian people can be given some hope of future deliverance which they are not in a position both through the force of the circumstances and the lack of the necessary will, to bring about themselves, they will in the course of the next few years become accustomed to a Communist dictatorship and will accept it without complaint.

E. Personalities

While the Soviet Union's rule over Rumania is complete and undisguised, certain Rumanian officials exercised a limited measure of authority and must be given a cursory examination in any attempt to understand the present political picture here.

1. Ana Pauker.

Ana Pauker, Foreign Minister, member of the Central Committee and Secretary of the Political Bureau of the Rumanian Workers Party is unquestionably one of the most powerful figures in Rumania, but is by no means the boss of Rumania as she has occasionally been pictured in the American press. Ruthless and cruel, she is overflowing with hatred for the United States and all it stands for and lives only to promote the cause of international Communism. She is a Soviet citizen according to all reports and she is the most hatred person in Rumania today. Her influence is great in the councils of Workers Party but as Foreign Minister she has shown on several occasions that she is not a free agent and must consult the Soviets before reaching a decision even on relatively trivial matters. She has reportedly been described in a very careless moment by the President of the Rumanian Praesidium, Dr. C.I. Parhon as a “Woman without a soul” and the worthy doctor has made a most accurate and succinct description of the lady (if in fact he ever made such a remark).

2. Emil Bodnăraş

Bodnăraş, alias Bodnariuc alias Bodnarenko, is also reported to be a Soviet citizen and universally regarded by the Rumanians as a Soviet official imposed by force on the Rumanian body politic. His power lies primarily in his control of the secret police and the army, not inconsiderable weapons, but his influence in matters of high Governmental policy is not believed to be overly great. While Bodnăraş is ruthless in obeying orders from his Soviet superiors he is supposed to have a drop or two of human kindness in his makeup, some thinking that cannot be said for most of his colleagues. He is unquestionably able and has made considerable progress in reorganizing Rumania’s armed forces and his secret police are reportedly most efficient. It is probably he enjoys considerable Soviet “assistance” in managing both of these organizations but he must receive the credit for developing two reasonably, for Rumania, efficient forces.

3. Vasile Luca

Vasile Luca, Minister of Finance, Member of the Central Committee and a Secretary of the Political Bureau of the Rumanian Workers Party, is Ana Pauker’s political soulmate and the two together represent the extreme brand of international Communism in the Rumanian Council of Ministers. Of Hungarian origin, uneducated but with crude native intelligence and a burning ambition, Luca is one of the three most important persons in present day Rumania. The operation of the Ministry of Finance is left largely to technicians and Luca’s main function is to act as a Communist bully boy in bringing fainthearted elements into line. He is the Government’s usual delegate when a violent speech to the Hungarian population of Transylvania is called for and he may be counted on to promote the Moscow line with vigor and determination. His only deviation from the beliefs of such persons as Ana Pauker is his anti-Semitism which emerges from time to time in unguarded moments. He is not a nice person.

4. Iosef Chişinevschi (ne Finkelstein)

Chişinevschi, who holds no Government job except that of deputy to the National Assembly, is believed to be the number one man in Rumania although such suppositions are speculative at best. However, there are several indications to this effect and the Legation is inclined to believe that he exercises as such, if not more, influence than any other single individual in the country. The fact that of all the prominent Communist leaders, he alone has not assumed a high position in the Government lends credence to this assumption as he does the reported incident last March when he suppressed a speech of Mrs. Pauker's and adjourned the meeting at which she had spoken since he considered she has gone much too far in denunciation of the United States in general and President Truman in particular during the course of the electoral campaign. He is in charge of all ideological matters within the party and it was on his orders, according to a usually reliable source, that party propagandists were recently told to refrain from lauding the achievements of any individual and to give credit for every accomplishment to the Party. A Bessarabian Jew, he assumed his wife's name since his own, Finkelstein, was considered a little too much for the violently anti-Semitic Rumanian people to take. He has little interest in promoting the welfare of the Rumanian people or state and can be properly considered a purely Soviet official. It is probable, although no definite information is available that he is charged with purging the party of nationalist elements and in indicating which party members are considered sufficiently dangerous to merit arrest.

5. Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej

Gheorghiu-Dej, First Vice President of the Council of Ministers, Member of the Central Committee, and Secretary General of the Political Bureau of the Rumanian Workers Party is still ostensibly the number one man in Rumania both in the Government and in the Party, but in recent weeks he reportedly has had his wings rather severely clipped in the wake of Cominform Resolution of Yugoslavia. Rumors have been legion on the subject of the status of Mr. Gheorghiu-Dej ever since the Resolution was published and it has been necessary to treat all reports with considerable caution. However, it seems reasonably certain that he is not an entirely free agent and that his influence in the party councils has been greatly diminished. Whether rightly or not, the Rumanian people look upon this character as a "Nationalist" and anyone enjoying such a reputation in the Rumania of 1948 cannot be expected to enjoy the complete confidence of the Kremlin. He still makes public appearances and articles bearing his signature appear from time to time in various Communist publications but this may be mere camouflage to present a united front to the Rumanian people who would be delighted to observe a split in the ranks of the Government and the governing political party. A recent conference of the heads of the various economic departments of the Government was presided over by the Finance Minister Vasile Luca although this is supposed

to be the specific and primary function of Gheorghiu-Dej. It seems unlikely, however, that there will be any purge of Gheorghiu-Dej and his followers since this would destroy years of propaganda work and would probably cause some disaffection among Communist workers who regard Gheorghiu-Dej as something as a hero. (This should not be taken to mean that Gheorghiu-Dej or any other Communist have any appreciable measure of popular support in Rumania but rather that among the old line Communist agitators and their immediate followers, Gheorghiu-Dej and his his close associates as Industry Minister Chivu Stoica are regarded as the old fighters for better working conditions and are much favorably regarded than the Communists of the Ana Pauker-Vasile Luca school.)

6. Simon Zeigher

Zeigher, who holds the position of Deputy Minister in the Presidency of the Council and is a member of the State Planning Commission is one of the most important persons in Rumania from a purely Governmental point of view. A brilliant Communist economic technician, he is in fact the man responsible for the Rumanian economy insofar as political directives from above permit. He is not believed to have any appreciable influence in the Party matters but his unquestioned ability in economic theory and administration makes him invaluable to the more prominent Rumanian leaders whose training in the Government and administrative ability is questionable at best.

7. Miron Constantinescu

Constantinescu, Minister of Mines and Petroleum, and a member of the Central Committee and Political Bureau of the Rumanian Workers Party, is an able and violent young (30) Communist whose influence in the past few years has been increasing steadily. A party propagandist and a journalist by trade, he is a Communist of the international type and has shown in the few months he has been in the cabinet a considerable amount of energy and ability coupled with a complete and burning ruthlessness against all possible enemies of the regime.

There are few other Rumanian in public life today with influence approaching that of the seven listed above and most Government officeholders are either loyal party hacks or opportunists retained in power temporarily until the Party is ready to take every position into its own hands. Cabinet ministers and other officeholders from the ranks of the former Socialist Party, the Ploughmen's Front, and the National Popular Party are totally without influence. Prime Minister Petru Groza, and President of the Praesidium, Dr. C. I. Parhon, are powerless figureheads with no authority nor influence whatsoever. How much longer Groza will remain in the premiership is problematical but it is felt that the Rumanian Workers Party will sooner or later drop all pretense of a coalition Government and assume charge of all Government departments including the Presidency of the Council. Groza is harmless bufoon who has obeyed orders faithfully and never interfered in matters of state but the necessity of retaining him in office for propaganda reasons seems

to have disappeared which he may also do in the not too distant future.

A tight little clique of Soviet trained Communists whose Rumanian connections are tenuous at best rules Rumania on the direct instructions of the Soviet Government and all other office holders are more puppets. While speculation on the relative importance of the various members of this clique is a dangerous proposition and may be completely unfounded, from observation over the past few years, the Legation is inclined to rank them as follows at present:

1. Iosef Chişinevschi
2. Ana Pauker
3. Vasile Luca
4. Emil Bodnăraş
5. Miron Constantinescu
6. Teohari Georgescu (Minister of the Interior)

Lower down on the scale we find such worthies as Justice Minister Avram Bunaciu; Education Minister Gheorghe Vasilichi; Gheorghe Florescu, head of the Communist youth movement – the Union of Working Youth; Alexandru Moghioroş, member of the Political Bureau and Deputy to the National Assembly; Gheorghe Apostol, Chairman of the General Confederation of Labor, although recent rumor reports him under a cloud, and Leonte Răutu, an influential journalist. Gheorghiu-Dej must be left in a separate category for the moment until his status is clarified. He was until recently near, if not at the top of the Communist heap in Rumania, but the developments in regard to Marshal Tito have made his position so unclear that no firm estimate can be made although it is not reasonably certain that his influence has waned to a considerable extent.»

*** Romanian National Archives (Central National Historical Archives), Microfilms United States of America, Reel 666, frames 806-836.