

# Independence in the face of the Soviet threat

by Webster G. Tarpley

Reasons of history and geography in the era after the Second World War, and certainly not elective affinities, brought on Romanian membership in the Comecon and the Warsaw Pact. The Romanians have staunchly insisted that the Warsaw Pact is only a defensive alliance, and that the Comecon has no supranational right to dictate the economic policies of its members. In practice, the hallmark of Romanian policy has been the quest for increasing degrees of independence to pursue an industrial development policy and a foreign policy oriented towards the developing sector, Western Europe, and the United States.

The postwar Soviet occupation of Romania lasted until June 1958. In 1959 Romania approved a Six-Year Plan of rapid industrialization, the radical turning point toward heavy industry.

In 1962, Khrushchev demanded that Romania revert to a policy of agricultural exports, only importing industrial goods from the U.S.S.R., the D.D.R., the C.S.S.R. This he termed "Socialist Division of Labor." The Romanians refused to change course.

Instead, taking advantage of the aftermath of the 20th Soviet Party Congress and the Sino-Soviet split, Romania issued on April 22, 1964 a sweeping declaration of intent to pursue a sovereign policy in internal and external affairs. Calling for independence and national sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs, observance of territorial integrity, equality of rights, "mutual advantage, comradely assistance, and proletarian internationalism," Romania began to refuse to participate in the maneuvers of the Warsaw Pact on the territories of other states, or to allow such maneuvers on her territory. In 1965, Ceausescu, the designated successor of Gheorghiu-Dej, was elected General-Secretary at the Ninth Congress of the Romanian Communist Party, which confirmed the course of heavy industrialization. Soon after, Ceausescu called for the end of the opposed military blocs in Europe.

In 1967 Bucharest defied Moscow on two counts: the Romanians were the first Warsaw Pact state to set up diplomatic relations with West Germany, attracting critical tirades from East Berlin, and were the only Warsaw Pact state to keep diplomatic relations with Israel after the Six-Day War in the Middle East. Later in 1967 there were rumors of a Soviet attempt to overthrow Ceausescu. The Soviets were

most blatant in their attempt to sabotage the steel mills Romania had built at Galati; they withheld iron ore and coal, and Romania responded by concluding an exchange of Chinese coal for increasingly scarce Ploesti oil. In 1970, there were floods along the Danube, and when the Russians refused credit for flood relief, Romania turned again to China for help.

In August 1968, Romania was the only state of the Warsaw Pact to refuse to join the Soviet and satellite invasion of Czechoslovakia. Ceausescu vehemently condemned the invasion, demanding the immediate withdrawal of invading troops and the restoration of Czech sovereignty. Shortly after Soviet tanks began to roll, West German Foreign Minister Willy Brandt telegraphed through the Western press that Romania would be next to go. Ceausescu warned that charges of "counter-revolution" might soon be used to justify a Soviet attack on Romania.

Speaking on the morning after the Soviet move to 100,000 people in Bucharest, Ceausescu announced the creation of an armed militia, the Patriotic Guards.

By the middle 1970s this militia has a strength of some 700,000 men, above and beyond the regular army. During this period, Ceausescu met on several occasions with Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia, setting off speculation that the two states were planning joint defense, including joint partisan warfare, against further Soviet imperialist moves in the Balkans. Romania and Yugoslavia joined in the building of the twin-jet Orao fighter-bomber. Yugoslav-Romanian cooperation was cemented by the building of a large hydroelectric project.

In 1972 the Romanian Grand National Assembly provided for an "all horizons" defense of the country—including against Soviet and satellite invasion. The bill, similar to an earlier statute in Yugoslavia, expressly forbade capitulation to an invader, thus confronting the potential (Soviet) aggressor with the prospect of endless guerrilla warfare in the perfect partisan terrain of the Carpathians and Alps. The following year, Ceausescu visited the United States, and, in 1975, President Ford visited Romania.

In 1980, Ceausescu attended a Warsaw Pact summit but refused to sign a statement pledging increased military spending. Instead, Romania implemented a 20 percent military spending cut, equivalent to some \$500 million.

In the Euromissile crisis, Romania has supported the U.S. Zero Option, calling for the scrapping of the Soviet SS-20s in exchange for the non-deployment of Pershing and cruise missiles. Failing this, the Romanians support an interim solution, to be mediated with the help of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi or other Non-Aligned leaders.

At the present time, Romania is effectively blocking a Comecon summit desired by Andropov. On the occasion of the most recent Warsaw Pact summit in Moscow, Ceausescu granted an interview to *Aftonbladet* of Stockholm in which he once again rejected any Warsaw Pact maneuvers, especially on Romanian territory. On Afghanistan, Ceausescu

spoke out "for the withdrawal of foreign troops." To top it off, Ceausescu appeared one day later at the Plenum of the Central Committee to note that "the unity of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, of Palestinian organizations, with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat at their head, is more necessary than ever." Thus Ceausescu moved to support Arafat, whom he had received in Bucharest some weeks earlier, while Andropov and Aliyev were fully mobilized to bring the PLO leader down.

## Looking to America for trade and technology

by Konstantin George

Romania desires as a national policy priority a vast expansion in trade licensing and technical cooperation with the United States. This desire, was conveyed repeatedly to *EIR* correspondents by government officials, throughout our stay in Bucharest.

A senior trade ministry official told *EIR*, regarding U.S.-Romanian trade: "We wish to create vast cooperation in many, many fields . . . our economies allow for a large increase in cooperation. What we've done so far is only marginal. Our goal is to reach the \$3 billion level in two-way trade by 1985." The same official continued in a summary review of the trade pattern till now; "Till 1981 trade grew steadily, then, starting in 1981 it began to decrease [reflecting the credit embargo and Volcker's usurious interest rates]. We wish to correct this and return to normal, steady growth."

As one official told *EIR*: "We pay special attention to our relations with the U.S." Romania's desire to expand trade and remove the obstacles impeding this expansion formed the center of discussions in Washington in May between the Romanian foreign ministry delegation, led by Foreign Minister Stefan Andre, at the State Department. During that time, parallel talks were held in Washington at the Department of Commerce with officials of the Romanian trade ministry. The delegation also held talks in New York, including one meeting with 90 people from the business community.

### Removing the impediments

The May talks in Washington led to ensuring that Romania's Most Favored Nation (MFN) status in trade relations with the United States would continue, though MFN was not granted on a permanent status, as requested by Romania. Other serious obstacles to expanding U.S.-Romania trade and ties remain, both as a legacy of the policies practiced by Reagan's predecessor, Jimmy Carter, or as a testimony to plain ignorance and stupidity in some U.S. government cir-

cles, which stereotype Romania on account of its Warsaw Pact membership, and, ignoring even the most basic reality principle, make policy blunders of the most incredible magnitude.

Two critical U.S. governmental bottlenecks to expanded trade are the United States's refusal to grant Export-Import Bank credits to Romania, and the stoppage of low-interest Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) loans to Romania for necessary feed grain and other commodity imports—a vindictive measure enacted by Carter in 1980, for no valid reason.

### Romania agriculture

To understand the depth of pro-American sentiment in the country, we can refer here to talks with senior officials of the Ministry of Agriculture, who listed existing protocols and agreements with U.S. firms and institutions in the farming domain. These include two joint projects with Cyrus Eaton World Trade Corporation, one involving 25,000 hectares in the Danube Delta devoted to fattening pigs, cattle, and lamb, with all meat products destined for export. The second project is in the Oltenia region, where an integrated poultry complex will be built, plus modern slaughterhouses for poultry and cattle. Alongside this will be a specialized seed farm, for corn, soybeans, and clover. Other projects under discussion with Cyrus Eaton include a rabbit farm and a geese farm, with products destined for export. On July 15, Cyrus Eaton specialists arrive in Bucharest for talks.

Other agreements with the United States include protocols with the University of Nebraska for research in improving pig rearing; with the University of Iowa on corn growing with the U.S. Grain Association, the U.S. Soybean Association and with the U.S. Feed Grain Council; with the U.S. Department of Agriculture on agronomy and study of results from methods applied to U.S. farming. For example, on July 2 a Romanian team left for the United States to study U.S. sunflower production and yields.

Romania is following U.S. methods to boost livestock and poultry production. On pig farms, the Romanians are establishing giant units, such as the functioning 1 million head pig complex in the Timisoara region in South West Romania. More such pig complexes are planned. Giant integrated poultry units of a similar size have also been established.

The officials we met think and act "American." "We use the American experience as a model: large, mechanized farms; planting the best quality hybrid seed . . . and have a low percentage of the population on the farms, earning a high income," they told us.

They would like much more from the United States. Romania is eager to start buying, once credit is available, U.S. pesticides, soybeans for their ambitious livestock programs, more hybrid seed, and other products. As the officials summed it up: "We're not at the level of California, but we'll be closing more and more the gap between Romanian farmers and American farmers."