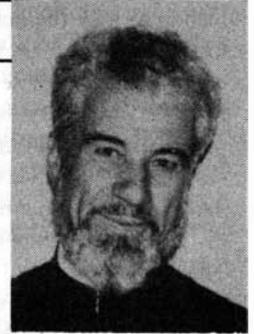


Interview: Father Georghe Calciu



Romanians want liberty, not 'human' communism

The following interview was conducted by EIR correspondents Webster Tarpley and William Jones at the Romanian Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross in Alexandria, Virginia on Dec. 27, 1989. Father Calciu's organization welcomes donations, which may be sent to the Romanian Relief Fund, 5150 Leesburg Pike, Alexandria, VA, 22302.

EIR: Father, maybe you would want to say a few words to give our readers a brief introduction to who you are, what your past has been as an opponent of the Communist regime, which now, to a certain degree, has fallen.

Father Calciu: My name is Father Georghe Calciu. I was imprisoned for 21 years by the Communist regime during two different periods. The first time was between 1948 and 1964. I was then a student and I opposed, with other students, the introduction of communism in the country. Our country was invaded by the Russian Army and they introduced by violence and crime, communism. In our country there were very few members of the Communist Party, but by the invasion of the Russians, they imposed the Communist Party with members who were completely foreigners to our country. They were not Romanians. They were from Russia. They exported to Romania many important leaders of the Communist Party from Russia. They treated the Romanian people like a subject people. We made this opposition, it was not a violent opposition, but a spiritual and philosophical opposition. I was a student then. During the months of May and June of 1948, they arrested more than 15,000 students in the country. Between 1948 and 1964, they arrested more than 1 million people, with 2 or 3 million people assigned to house arrest.

We had a very difficult time as prisoners. In 16 years we never received a letter from our families. We never wrote a letter to our families. We are like dead people for our families. I saw hundreds of my friends dying around me. After our incarceration more than 250,000 or 300,000 people died or were exterminated by hunger, cold, forced labor, and torture during this time. I was a student of medicine, but during this period of imprisonment, I was in touch with many priests. And these priests helped us. They gave us consola-

tion. They gave us medical assistance. We had no official medical assistance. They gave absolution to the dying people and they consoled all of us. And I decided to become a priest. In fact, I made this vow to Jesus Christ, and when I was released, I tried to study theology, but the Communist government would not allow former prisoners to study theology. After two or three years, I was able to meet the Patriarch, who was a good man. And he allowed me to study theology secretly. I was doing my last year of studies, and was appointed professor in the French language and the New Testament in Bucharest. In that way I was in touch with the students, with the young people, and realized that they could believe in nothing. They didn't believe in communist principles. Communism had also failed—politically, economically, socially—and as a doctrine, a theory. And they believed in nothing. They had no orientation. And so I decided to address myself to the youth from the Church.

And I had a big group of students, and they started to make a big propaganda for me and the intellectuals from Bucharest and the students from other universities were coming around my church. I then started a cycle of seven sermons addressed to the youth, and entitled them "Seven Words to the Romanian Youth." In these sermons I fought Marxism, materialism. I told the young people that they were slaves in this materialistic conception. They were not free human beings. They had no possibility of choice. They had no responsibility. And I was coming before them to tell them the other way, the way of the soul or spirit, the way of human dignity. And so by knowing both ways of understanding the world, the basic notions.

EIR: In what year was this?

Father Calciu: In 1978. I was ordained a priest in 1973. All this time I was preaching the word of God, but now this time I decided to fight communism directly. I had a very great audience—700-800 people, young people, students, who came to the church. After my sermon there were questions and answers. The secret police were very afraid. Also my superiors, because the hierarchy was collaborating all the time with the Communists. The secret police ordered my

bishop to lock the door of the church, and so, I was forced to speak in the churchyard. This was in March 1978. After having finished my sermons, I was expelled from the school, from the university, by the bishop, the patriarch. The former patriarch was dead and the new one decided to collaborate completely with the Communist Party. I was expelled and deprived in this manner of speaking.

During this time people tried to get in contact with me. There was a group of intellectuals and workers who wanted to found a free trade union. They came to me asking for my assistance, because there were many attempts by Communist members to denounce these efforts. And they were coming to me to get my ecclesiastical authority to assert that they were good men. They were really the founders of a new trade union, and I gave them my authority and support. The new trade union was formed, and we announced the formation of a new trade union for Romanian workers. This was in 1979. We were castigated because some of our people had some connections to Radio Free Europe. Nearly 1,000 people were coming to help in that organization. After two weeks, hundreds of us were arrested, and sentenced to a variety of punishments. I was considered a very dangerous opponent of Ceausescu and the Communist regime. I was sentenced under a special article, but because my case was well known in the West by humanitarian and Christian groups, who intervened on my behalf, they changed the article, and deprived me of freedom under another article. I was sentenced to 10 years of imprisonment.

This time they tried to kill me, to exterminate me, to brainwash me, and tried all kinds of tortures, psychological and physical tortures. But I survived. Now the people in the West protested more and more, and advised their governments to intervene with Ceausescu on my behalf. As a result, I was released in August 1984, but kept under house arrest with my son and my wife. I spent one year in house arrest, kept under constant surveillance by the secret police, with dogs and cameras. There were 120 agents in three shifts watching the building. Nobody could enter the building without being searched by the Securitate. Nevertheless, our neighbors helped us very much. And many of these people were coming for me. But they also knew other neighbors in the building, and they would get into the building saying that they were going to visit these other neighbors.

So I succeeded to send abroad many letters describing the situation, telling people in the West what had happened in Romania, the crimes of Ceausescu, how he was trying to destroy the churches, how he was killing people. In the winter of 1984-85 he ordered the electrical power to be cut off. One friend of mine who was a doctor in the pediatrics hospital in Bucharest told me that 93 newborn babies died in incubators because of the cold. This information was absolutely true; I got it from a good friend of mine. But there were hundreds of hospitals like that. We can probably never know how many people died because Ceausescu wanted to save electri-

cal energy. We had no heat in the houses. We had no food. The situation was growing worse and worse every month. With regard to my own situation, protests were raised by many governments on my behalf. Even Bush was there in Romania for me. Also England and Germany. Ceausescu was very embarrassed. He didn't want me to be free, but he had no courage to fight with the Western countries, especially when Reagan threatened not to give him Most Favored Nation status. He then decided to expel me; he did that in 1985, with my son and my wife.

Naturally, coming here I never stopped the fight of reason. I was invited to the Department of State, where I told them what had happened in Romania. It was very strange, you know. Mr. [Edward] Derwinsky [former State Department counsel] told me, "Father, you have to stop calling Ceausescu a criminal, because he is the chief representative of Romania. He represents the official government and we are working with him. We try to save some people. So it is necessary to have good relations with him."

EIR: So, this was Derwinsky in the last 12 months?

Father Calciu: No, it was in 1985. And I was very upset, because in my country, I was crying against Ceausescu. I didn't fear the Securitate, and now here, in a free country, I have no right to speak about Ceausescu. I cannot understand these politics. I never was a politician. I was an honest man. I have always tried to tell what I was thinking and express my own feelings without masking what I was.

EIR: If you had to estimate how many people were killed by Ceausescu in the 25 years before these recent events, how many political executions do you estimate have been carried out?

Father Calciu: Thousands. Nobody knows, because Ceausescu has been a very, very clever disciple of Satan. For instance, I was not suppressed because I was calling for freedom, but because I gave my support to the free trade union. I was sentenced first to death, and then to 10 years in prison, because I started to undermine the official Communist government of Romania. If someone was smuggling Bibles to Romania, they were sentenced for smuggling contraband. If somebody, for instance, was preaching the word of God, then Ceausescu would sentence them for provoking trouble, for economic parasitism.

There was a law, you know, that if somebody did not work for six months, he could be sentenced for two years and six months. But because all the institutions belonged to the state, if someone was chased from an institution, nobody would hire him. The state is the owner of all the institutions, so if someone fires you, he'll never get you back, since the trade unions prevent it. In Romania the trade union is completely submissive to the party, and the party is completely submissive to Ceausescu. And so it was very easy for somebody to be arrested. Ceausescu could order someone to

be fired, and after three months or six months, they would be arrested and put in jail.

There were no laws to protect the people in jail—or even people in society. For instance in 1982—it was at Easter—I was isolated in a special cell of extermination. And I heard somebody crying in front of my door. The noise was loud. It was a man who was crying that the guards were hitting him. I thought it was fake, because the guards wanted to destroy my joy at Easter. A month later I heard that this man was really killed. And it was exactly 11 days before his liberation. The law never protected the prisoners. Not any guard who killed people had to answer before the law. They had the right of life and death over us. If they wanted to kill us, they were free to kill us. If they wanted to torture us, they were free to torture us. They were not free to protect us or to give us any advantages.

EIR: We have followed news accounts of what looked like an all-out civil war, at least in some areas. How would you estimate the damage that has been done, in terms of human losses and economic devastation in the last couple of weeks?

Father Calciu: Officially, they gave the figures in the beginning of 60,000. I talked with many people in Romania, and they said that nobody can estimate, but everybody is certain that there were more than 60,000 people killed—children, young people, especially old people. And there are many people who were killed by the secret police just in their homes. There were groups of terrorists entering houses taking food and clothing, or establishing their snipers' nests to kill people in the streets. So nobody knows exactly how many people were killed in Timisoara, in Bucharest, in Sibiu, much less in the other provinces, in the mountains and in the villages, where the terrorists established points of resistance. And they killed, because they knew nobody liked them, nobody would accept them. I talked just last night with my brother-in-law, and he told me that they are very ashamed that in this government, with a pretension of being a provisional government, there are so many members of the Communist Party's Central Committee who were collaborating with Ceausescu, even as little as a few weeks or months ago. And now under the protection of Russia, they are trying to establish a new Communist government, trying to convince the people that communism can really have a human face.

EIR: I take it that this would be Ion Iliescu, the friend of Gorbachov, and Petre Roman. Our information about these is that they are the second generation of the old Comintern apparatus, that existed in Romania before the Red Army came into the country.

Father Calciu: Roman is the son of Valter Roman, who was a member of the Communist Party and a member of the Central Committee and the director of the political publishing house. Therefore, he was indoctrinating the young people. He also had the power to stop any other philosophy in Roma-

nia and to introduce by force and violence and by brainwashing the new generation with Marxism and materialism. So that Valter Roman was guilty of this poisoning of the young people with the criminal philosophy. His son, Petre, and other sons of high-ranking members of the Communist Party had special conditions. There was a special high school, in which only they had the right to study. No one else was allowed to enter this high school. They had the right to study abroad at the universities. They had all they needed and more than they needed. Some rumors have it that Roman was the lover of Zoia Ceausescu.

EIR: Ceausescu's daughter?

Father Calciu: Yes. Corneliu Bogdan, who is another member of the provisional government, was here in America some months ago, talking about how Ceausescu was a genius, and that the people were living so well in Romania. I don't know whom he was speaking to, but officially he was here to give a cosmetic cover to the Ceausescu regime.

EIR: What about Silviu Brucan?

Father Calciu: Silviu Brucan was at one time the head of the Communist Party newspaper *Scinteia*. He has had different functions, and finally he ended up in a conflict with Ceausescu, although I don't know over what issue. Somebody told me that he has a brother-in-law or cousin here in America, who had some connections to him. Perhaps Ceausescu was not in favor of that. I don't know.

EIR: Would you view this government as a group of communist retreads who have been imposed with the support of the Soviet Union?

Father Calciu: I consider it as a new Soviet imperialism. Many people don't need communism. We don't need communism with a human face. We don't need communism of any kind. The students started to cry in the streets, "We don't want communism." We want a free Romania. It's a very special position for our people because of our affinity with the Latin roots. In this enormous mass of Slavic peoples, it is just we who are European. We are not from Asia like the Russians or the Hungarians. All the Slavic people were coming from Asia. The Slavic peoples came to Europe between the fourth and the sixth centuries. The Hungarians came from Asia in the ninth century. We were all the time here. And so our languages are very similar to the Italian language. We can understand each other without studying the other language. Our culture is a European one. Our young people studied in France, in Germany, in Italy, and so on. We have nothing to do with the Asian spirit, the Slavic spirit. We don't need to import the new face of communism. We don't want to have the Russian forms in our country. We want to have the form of democracy. We were a very democratic country before the war. So we want to come back to our

democracy, where there was no persecution and where the people had food, freedom, and what they needed.

EIR: So you would say then that this government that calls itself the Committee for National Salvation cannot become the outcome of the revolution? How would you see political developments going beyond the current group of people?

Father Calciu: We think that the people will not accept this formula and a new government after the election will be installed. They have already started to form classic political parties like the Liberal Party, the Peasant Party. Just today, I broadcasted a message for the New Year to the Romanian people, and I talked to the political prisoners, who suffered

When I was in prison, they tortured me and other priests. During that time Ceausescu was invited by the Queen of England, who received him in her palace and ate with him at the same table. She honored him who was a criminal, an honor she never gave to a prisoner from Romania.

so much in prison, who have for 16 years, for 20 years in prison. I told them that you have the right to be at the head of this government. Even the Communists don't accept you. You have to start a new political party. And I'm sure all the people will be with you. I talked with them on the phone and they asked me to broadcast such an appeal with a very precise anti-communist attitude. They have to build a party which does not flirt with communism. It should be a national party with a very clear anti-communist attitude. All over the world, in Africa, in Asia, in South America, where communists always start, criminals appear. The system in itself is criminal, not the people. And because of this, I think there many people who will not accept a communist regime in Romania with a human face.

EIR: Concerning the international scene in which these events have taken place. Many people here in the United States were shocked, puzzled, when our Secretary of State James Baker on Dec. 24 more or less invited the Soviet Union to militarily invade Romania on the pretext of restoring order. How would you view that kind of a policy?

Father Calciu: I was absolutely shocked by this. I could not understand how someone who is not a citizen of our country, can invite someone else to invade our country. When we were invaded many times by Russia, and we know

where Russians are invading, they never leave the country without committing crimes and persecutions. So our people didn't want to have the Russians in Romania. I talked with many people on the phone, and they really were very upset and opposed to this subtle invitation to Russia to invade Romania. They told me that they were able to solve their own problems without any outside help. We need aid, medicine, we need economic help, but never military help. And they proved it. Because young people, 15 or 16 years old, they gave their lives. Somebody sent me a tape where students were making a declaration, saying, "If it is necessary to fight communism again, we are ready to give our lives ten times over just to get rid of the Communists." And I trust that they will do that.

EIR: Do you believe that they are now trying to set elections early in order to waylay the formation of a strong anti-communist front?

Father Calciu: It's a communist tactic, because they know very well that in Romania there are no democratic parties. They destroyed all the leaders. It is now that new political parties have to be started. They have no possibility. They have no TV, they have no radio. They have only the means of going from person to person to tell them, "We are going to start a new party" and to let them know the program. The TV and the radio are in the hands of the Communists. All the time the people in Romania told me that they could only see the members of the Communist Party. I was very surprised to see from time to time a real dissident on TV speaking to the Romanian people. So we don't trust the TV. And the Communists know that the people are forming new parties. But we are not given sufficient time to conduct propaganda. And there are certainly many Communists who fear the installation of a true democracy. For this reason I asked that elections be postponed, for at least nine months, so that other people have the possibility to prepare their program, their policy. And to open the frontiers for the people who are here in the West. There is no open frontier for us.

EIR: So you could not get a visa to return if you wanted to?

Father Calciu: I think not. I don't think I could get a visa, because I have been demonstrating here in front of the embassy. The ambassador here is named Stoichici. He is a collaborator of Ceausescu. He refused to open the embassy to us. He kept the emblem of Ceausescu over the embassy until the day when they announced his execution. He obviously expected Ceausescu to regain power. Afterwards, because international law was protecting foreign diplomats, and American police were preventing us from entering the building, they started to burn documents. We saw that they had seven bags containing the ashes of documents. One of our parishioners took a bag of ashes. Now we have it here in the church. And so the new government gave the possibility to all the ambassadors in the West to burn documents and to

cover their own crimes. The FBI had earlier told me last November that 10 killers were introduced into the U.S. by the Romanian embassy to kill some important exile Romanians. I was the first on the list. For this reason, they asked me to leave Washington, D.C. I found another place somewhere in America, where I stayed for two weeks in order not to be killed. And I'm sure that Stoichici knew very well the names of these people. The FBI did not know the names of these people. But they knew that the 10 killers were here, sent by Ceausescu, but they didn't know who they were.

EIR: Then the U.S. government did not really protest against that, did they?

Father Calciu: I don't know.

EIR: But they made no public display against this?

Father Calciu: No.

EIR: In the course of the Romanian events, are there other countries in Western Europe that did something that was more constructive than James Baker to help Romania?

Father Calciu: Yes. It's very curious. Hungary, Yugoslavia, and even Bulgaria have been sending help. Yugoslavia is now giving equipment for TV stations. When the terrorists occupied the TV station for some hours, they took all the machinery. And now Yugoslavia has given equipment for three TV studios. They gave food, they sent people there to help, even when the Romanian airports were blocked by the Securitate.

EIR: What is the situation now with medical aid? Has the Red Cross done what they could to help?

Father Calciu: Yes, we had some problems with the Red Cross. They raised some opposition to us with regard to sending medicine and hospital supplies. They said that they would have nothing to do with us because they have their own institution and they have to direct all their supplies to them. At the same time, somebody told us that from this \$500,000 was given by the government, which was really shameful, a mere \$500,000.

EIR: It's very small, a token sum.

Father Calciu: Yes, when children are dying of hunger. When people are trying to establish real democracy, they only receive \$500,000. But a lady was protesting that some of these organizations who are receiving the funds to help are retaining half of the funds, and only half are being sent to the people in need. And I think from this \$500,000, the Red Cross retained a big sum for themselves and the rest was sent to Romania. We are a volunteer organization. We need nothing from the money we receive from the people. Perhaps we would take something to pay for the telephone. We have to pay \$2,000 for the telephone. I call Romania. I call Australia. I have to talk to many people to help us, to help Romania. We are absolutely

poor people; \$2,000 is very much money for us. We are newcomers here. We don't know how to cover this payment.

EIR: What should the United States government and what should the West European governments do? What kinds of humanitarian aid are most required?

Father Calciu: I have some information from Western Europe, from a branch of our organization there, and they told me that Western Europe was very helpful to them—Sweden, France, Switzerland, West Germany. They immediately sent food, medicine, and doctors, and all kinds of things. America was very slow, really very slow. Even the businessmen in

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Western Europe invited me to talk with them, which I will do on Jan. 7, to discuss with them about establishing an organization with European businessmen to invest capital and to help restore the economy of Romania. And I think perhaps American businesses will do the same thing. They are speaking so much about Jesus Christ, of humanitarianism, and the like, and now they have the opportunity to act according to the principles they are declaring publicly. I am very interested in finding out whether businessmen in America are willing to follow the principles they are asserting publicly.

EIR: In the Soviet Union there is a Moldavian Republic, comprising the old province of Bessarabia in Romania. From what we have been able to see, in the course of the overthrow of the Ceausescu regime, there is a great desire among those Romanians living in Moldavia to finally be reunited with the rest of Romania. Does it seem as if this will actually happen? Will there be an independence movement in Moldavia along the lines of what you have in Lithuania or Latvia or Estonia?

Father Calciu: Bessarabia was annexed by Russia in 1944 through the betrayal of the Western powers, because according to the Atlantic Charter, the frontier had to be the frontier from 1938. In spite of this, the United States and England allowed Russia to take the Romanian province of Bessarabia. And at the same time, they gave all the Eastern countries into the hands of Russia. Since the declaration of revolt, I was always in touch with the Popular Front. I sent them typewrit-

ers with a Latin alphabet. I sent the money which I had been able to collect. I sent them a fax machine, a xerox, and all kinds of technical utilities. They want to be a free country. They want independence and want to be united with Romania. As long as the Communists were in power, as long as Ceausescu was in power, we could not accept to be united with them. Now I have lost contact with them, because I am interested only in Romania, but I'm sure after this period of trouble, when real democracy is installed in Romania, we'll have our greater Romania, as we called it. After the First World War, all our territories were taken from us. We called it the greater Romania. I am sure we will have that again, with Bukhovina and Bessarabia, and the parts of Romania given by the German people to Bulgaria.

EIR: Now concerning the execution of Ceausescu. The question I would have about that is the following. This was done rather quickly and it looked like there were two factors: One was the fact that there was a civil war going on and it was important to stop the civil war, but it also looked as if there were some people who were afraid of the testimony that he might give in a lengthy and public trial. Do you think it was right to execute Ceausescu immediately?

Father Calciu: You know, I made a statement about my position regarding the execution of Ceausescu. I think that even if they are invoking as a motive that Ceausescu's death would stop the war, that was enough. I think the real motives to kill Ceausescu were not to unveil the connections he had with different people in Romania and different people in the West. Because all the time the Western countries considered Ceausescu a maverick of world communism. But they knew very well that Ceausescu was a criminal.

When I was in prison, they tortured me and other priests. During that time Ceausescu was invited by the Queen of England, who received him in her palace and ate with him at the same table. She honored him who was a criminal, an honor she never gave to a prisoner. The Queen of England never invited a prisoner from Romania to honor him, but she honored Ceausescu. During this time I was under interrogation. I was beaten. I was tortured. I was in a cell in the basement of the Securitate building. When they were taking me upstairs for interrogation, there was on the wall some large pictures of Ceausescu talking with the Queen of England and taking her by the arm. There were also pictures of him sitting at the table with the Queen. I could not believe it. He was a killer, also a killer of kings. He wanted to kill King Michael of Romania. And the Queen of England was sitting with Ceausescu and yet she knew very well who Ceausescu was. The same with Nixon, Carter, and the other leaders. I could not understand how the people in the West, not the common people who are manipulated by the media, but highly educated people, political people, how can they accept a criminal just because they need some political connections. We need true politicians, politicians of honesty, and not politicians of lies.

China, in shift, rips U.S.-Soviet alliance

by Mary McCourt Burdman

The official media of the People's Republic of China for the first time denounced the U.S.-Soviet condominium arrangement directly, and accused the Soviet Union of allying with the West to commit treachery against the Third World. This was the subject of an unusual article in the Jan. 8 edition of the official weekly *Liaowang*, (*Outlook*), China's most authoritative Chinese-language news magazine.

Senior European strategists stress that the Chinese Communists are reverting to the confrontationist attitude toward Moscow that was manifest in 1964, as they sensed Nikita Khrushchov heading toward his downfall from power. Now, the Chinese sense that Gorbachov is in trouble, and are trying to make gains with his opponents in Moscow. At the same time, rightly fearing more internal upheavals, the Beijing regime is lashing out both at Gorbachov and at the new, ever-stronger U.S.-Soviet "condominium" arrangement that they fear could be used against them.

The Ceausescu treatment

The Chinese, who were the first to launch the type of free-market "reforms" later adopted by Mikhail Gorbachov as perestroika, were also the first to abandon those disastrous policies, in October 1988, as China's economy descended into chaos. Now they see the Soviet Union following the same path. Just months after Mikhail Gorbachov reestablished Sino-Soviet relations by his visit to Beijing May 15, China's leaders began sniping at him, in "private," for undermining socialism.

The overthrow of Nicolae Ceausescu in Romania was a critical point. The P.R.C. leaders are worried about Romania, but not just because of the popular revolution there. They must have recognized the role of the Soviet Union in directing the coup against Ceausescu by the Army and the new Communist leadership, and that it was the condominium agreement between the Soviets and the United States that allowed the coup to take place.

The world should not be misled by the fact that Prime Minister Li Peng dressed up in a Western suit (he prefers Mao suits) and announced that martial law was lifted in Beijing on Dec. 10. The gesture was cosmetic. Troops still surround the