

FINAL REPORT TO  
NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN RESEARCH

TITLE:

Nicolae Ceausescu and the Romanian Political Leadership:  
Nationalization and Personalization of Power

AUTHOR:

Mary Ellen Fischer

CONTRACTOR: The President and Fellows of Harvard College

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Adam B. Ulam

COUNCIL CONTRACT NUMBER: 626-10

May 1983

The work leading to this report was supported in whole or in part from funds provided by the National Council for Soviet and East European Research.

Nicolae Ceaușescu and the Romanian Political Leadership:  
Nationalization and Personalization of Power

Mary Ellen Fischer

Executive Summary

|      |  |    |
|------|--|----|
| I.   | Introduction . . . . .   | 1  |
|      | Personalization  |    |
|      | Nationalization  |    |
|      | The New Romania of the 1980s   |    |
|      | Nationalization and Personalization:<br>The Interrelationship                      |    |
|      | Ceaușescu's Leadership   |    |
| II.  | Ceaușescu's Background and Early Career: 1918-1965 . . . . .                       | 8  |
| III. | Succession and Consolidation: 1965-1969 . . . . .                                  | 11 |
|      | Policy Compromise and Ambiguity  |    |
|      | Personnel Manipulation   |    |
|      | Institutionalization of the Political Process:<br>Constitutionality and Legality   |    |
|      | Participatory Reforms and Populism   |    |
|      | Succession and Consolidation: A Summary  |    |
| IV.  | Supreme Ruler: The Search for Authority Becomes A<br>Cult of Personality . . . . . | 25 |
|      | The Cult   |    |
|      | The Need For an Idol   |    |
|      | Ceausescu's Priorities and Personality   |    |
|      | Techniques of Rule   |    |
|      | A Decade of Rule: The Balance in 1979  |    |
| V.   | Crisis and Stalemate Since 1979 . . . . .  | 39 |
|      | Response to the Crisis   |    |
| VI.  | Conclusions: Ceaușescu's Future and US Policy . . . . .                            | 44 |
|      | Ceaușescu's Future: Elite Opposition?  |    |
|      | Mass Revolt? Workers and Intellectuals   |    |
|      | Dilemmas for Romanians   |    |
|      | The Dilemma for US Policy  |    |
|      | Notes . . . . .  | 53 |

Nicolae Ceaușescu and the Romanian Political Leadership:  
Nationalization and Personalization of Power

Mary Ellen Fischer

Executive Summary

President Nicolae Ceaușescu is in trouble. He is facing multiple economic crises involving foreign trade, agriculture, and the need to shift from extensive to intensive growth. However, Ceaușescu is a brilliant politician. He has gained and maintained control of the Romanian political system despite internal and external opposition, personalizing political power around himself. Ceaușescu holds the top offices in Party and state, his personal decisions determine policy and personnel appointments, he is credited with all successes (while any failures are blamed on others), and his extended family plays an important role in the political process.

The Romanian President has faced crises before and survived. Now he is scrambling to keep himself, his family, and his friends in power. Whether he will surmount the current difficulties remains in question. But he maneuvered very effectively in 1981 and 1982, ending the trade deficit and preventing overt opposition despite a severe drop in living standards. Nevertheless, he has not moved to solve long-term economic problems and so the present situation in Romania is at a stalemate.

Ceaușescu's background, priorities, and leadership techniques are crucial to an understanding of current Romanian politics. His ability to implement or resist change will determine the outcome of the current impasse. This Final Report summarizes parts of a continuing study of Ceaușescu and his leadership. Begun in the early 1970s, this analysis originally planned to document the institutionalization of the Romanian political process under Ceaușescu. Instead it demonstrates the personalization of that process and the sometimes frantic maneuvering required of an individual at the pinnacle of a communist party in power.

Nationalization and personalization of power: Romania is well known for its autonomous foreign policy, an anomaly among members of the Warsaw Pact. The country is equally famous for the cult of personality, the tight internal control imposed by President Nicolae Ceaușescu and the intense praise accorded him as the omnipotent and omniscient leader of the Romanian nation. In Romania these two policies--personalization and nationalization of power--have been mutually reinforcing due to Ceaușescu's personal nationalism and the Romanian national tradition of personalized politics. But the relationship goes even deeper.

Certainly the Soviet leaders tolerate Romania's foreign policy in part because the tight internal control prevents a serious threat to communism within the country. Equally important, personalized power has made national autonomy feasible by enabling the Romanian Communist Party (RCP) to depress the domestic standard of living and simultaneously maintain high rates of investment for autarkic economic growth. Depressed consumption was not popular and required tight political control, but without this internal source of funds the RCP would have been forced to lower growth rates or rely on Soviet support. On the other hand, nationalism has contributed to the personal power of Nicolae Ceaușescu since his most successful appeals for popular support stress his role in keeping Soviet troops out of Romania. Either policy would be very difficult to maintain without the other.

By the end of 1967 Ceaușescu was strong enough to act, and in 1968-1969 formed a new Party leadership around himself. His promises to introduce a new legality into Romanian politics helped him to denounce and remove a major rival, Alexandru Drăghici, Minister of Interior since 1952, and the participatory rhetoric encouraged many Romanians to hope for substantial changes. But his most successful bid for popular support was based on Romanian nationalism: Ceaușescu became a national hero by criticizing the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. A year later, the Tenth Party Congress in August 1969 marked the final demise of collective leadership in Romania: all speakers began and ended their remarks by praising the General Secretary.

Supreme Ruler: Authority Becomes a Cult, 1969-1979: Before 1969 Ceaușescu had been forced to compromise in order to consolidate his power. After 1969 his own priorities began to emerge sharply in his own speeches and in regime policies. From 1969 to 1979 Ceaușescu personally was the source of all policy initiatives in Romania. He announced a major program for rapid industrialization with high rates of investment later revised upward. Political techniques changed as well. Promotion of his supporters turned into circulation of officials. Institutionalization became personalization of the political process. Participatory organizations provided forums for ritualized mass worship and group endorsement of Presidential policies instead of arenas for discussion. The genuine authority of 1968 turned into a cult of personality.

The extreme adulation accorded Ceaușescu is a real cult with an iconography, a Bible, and an infallible leader. An "authentic" leader shares interests and goals with his followers and, if he senses a difference between his wishes and theirs, can instill his beliefs in them through persuasion. Ceaușescu did not have the ease and confidence in his relationship with the masses that is a prerequisite for authentic mass leadership. Once the gap between his priorities and popular expectations became clear to him, the cult began. Ceaușescu and his colleagues had to create an image which could mobilize the support threatened by regime goals and Ceaușescu's personality; they had to create an idol to be obeyed.

Ceaușescu's Priorities and Personality: Ceaușescu is a dedicated Marxist in that he defines civilization in terms of industrialization. He is a first-generation revolutionary, an activist, eager to speed history by force if necessary. His only education was revolutionary experience in the 1930s inside Romania. It is not surprising that his policies all reflect one goal: the rapid industrialization of socialist Romania. He demands heavy sacrifices from everyone toward that goal. No intellectual himself, he recognizes the need for argument, for discussion in creative activity, and for contacts with foreign culture. But his calls for exchanges of opinions are based on the dialectical process in which contradictions produce synthesis, and there is enough of Lenin's distrust of spontaneity within Ceaușescu's Marxism-Leninism to convince him that the Party must determine the content of any synthesis.

Ceaușescu is a self-made man, a socialist Horatio Alger, a self-motivated over-achiever with boundless energy who demands as much from others as from himself. He has tremendous faith in centralized planning, high rates of accumulation, and agitprop: voluntarism harnessed by the Party activist and bolstered by correct education. A pragmatist, he permits economic reforms so long as they do not interfere with centralized planning: an egalitarian, he encourages material rewards only if severely limited and directly related to improved production. But nothing may threaten the primacy of the RCP or the personal control of Ceaușescu.

Just as important as Ceaușescu's Marxism is his nationalism. Economic development must be autarkic, independent of outside aid from East or West. Ironically this means that Romania has followed the Soviet model: rapid industrialization gained not by external borrowing but by suppressing the internal standard of living. This policy may be acceptable to the Party elite, cushioned from hardship by special privileges, but it does not endear Ceaușescu to most Romanians. Nevertheless, as late as 1979 Ceaușescu seemed to be in an unassailable position and had accomplished his major goals for Romania for the 1970s: his personal power remained intact, industrial growth was rapid, and Soviet troops did not enter Romania.

Crisis and stalemate since 1979: By 1981 the previously autarkic Romania was deeply in debt to Western banks, a debt caused mostly by temporary structural imbalances in the international petroleum market. Simultaneously, Poland's potential default for different reasons created a crisis of confidence in East European economies, and Romanian agriculture fell short of its production goals and could not help the trade deficit with exports. Ceaușescu has been able to end the trade deficit by drastic reductions in living standards. But the basic crisis facing Romanian industry and agriculture is the need to shift from extensive to intensive growth. Such a shift would require a number of important changes: a sophisticated incentive structure to replace coercion; flexibility in prices and decision-making to reflect costs and respond to demand; and a long learning process for labor and management.

In responding to the crisis, Ceaușescu has not returned to the rhetoric of collective leadership so prominent in 1965 during the last regime crisis: instead the personality cult is stronger than ever. Ceaușescu remains infallible and omniscient. Mistakes are the fault of those who have not followed his instructions. He is promising change in many sectors, raising hopes once again, and taking some steps to support his rhetoric: more high officials have been removed in disgrace than in any other period of his rule except 1968-1969. The circulation of posts has speeded up, and the shifts are arbitrary, evidently depending on the whims of Ceaușescu. Hence he has abandoned any pretense at institutionalizing the political process, but rather has intensified its personalization. He has also increased his use of participatory populism. Conferences, visits, dramatic gestures have occurred at a frenzied pace. Finally, his nationalism has become more extreme. He has stressed the need for autarky in maintaining economic growth, and has been more firm than ever in rejecting outside efforts to influence his human rights policies. What he has NOT done has been to move toward long-term solutions to the fundamental economic problems. However, since he has also managed to prevent open opposition to his rule the crisis has evidently become a stalemate.

Ceaușescu's Future: It is possible that Ceaușescu will be removed by colleagues in the political elite, but his personnel techniques are so skillful that it is difficult to see how any coalition might form in opposition. If such a coup did occur, we might in retrospect find signs of Ceaușescu's impending doom. In advance, it is not likely that we would see more than what is visible today: his frantic moves to strengthen his position. Ceaușescu and his family would surely see any signs visible to foreign observers and take steps to preserve his power. A successful coup against Ceaușescu from within the political elite therefore seems unlikely, though not impossible, and would probably not be visible in advance.

A revolt against Ceaușescu from below seems equally unlikely. In communist Romania there has never been the cooperation between workers and intellectuals that took

place in Hungary in 1956 or in Poland after 1970 and that seems to be the prerequisite for mass revolt in Eastern Europe. Ceaușescu has preempted or dealt effectively with any trade union activity. Intellectuals have challenged him indirectly in several instances, but most Romanian intellectuals are paralyzed by their nationalism: to criticize Ceaușescu is to betray the nation. Ceaușescu mixes threats and promises and manipulates citizens' fears, their selfish interest in economic rewards, and their altruistic nationalism, to neutralize any opposition and prevent the alliance of groups that has produced mass revolt elsewhere in the Soviet bloc.

Romanian dilemmas: Ceaușescu must find a way to break out of the current stalemate without weakening his political control. Ceaușescu's colleagues must decide whether he has the skills necessary to continue as supreme ruler and, if not, how to oppose him without threatening their own positions. Finally, there is a dilemma for all Romanians: dissent within the RCP might increase Soviet influence in Romanian politics. Thus Soviet proximity contributes to popular passivity and keeps the anti-Soviet Ceaușescu in power. The personalization and nationalization of politics have cut ties to the USSR but have made Romania follow the Soviet model more closely than any other East European state. The famous Romanian contradiction of an independent foreign policy and a Stalinist domestic policy is thus not a contradiction at all. It is a necessary combination of strategies used by Ceaușescu in the pursuit of power and the ever receding utopia of communist Romania.

US Policy: If Romanian policy continues to be characterized by tight political control, economic stalemate, and a covertly anti-Soviet foreign policy, what should be our attitude toward Ceaușescu? He has certainly blocked projects in Comecon and punched a hole in the southern flank of the Warsaw Pact. But we must remember that Ceaușescu is NOT friendly to the US. All anti-Soviet leaders are not pro-American. Ceaușescu is a nationalist dictator and will remain so. He defines Romanian interests as he sees them and acts accordingly. We must remember that our ability to influence internal Romanian politics is very limited. US hostility toward Ceaușescu threatens Romanian pride and solidifies his internal support, while private pressure can simply harden Ceaușescu's own resentment.

US foreign policy choices regarding Ceaușescu are not very attractive. His internal policies are disastrous for Romania, but we cannot bring about his downfall. Indeed, his removal might temporarily increase Soviet influence. So we must live with him. His foreign policy has both advantages and disadvantages for the US. In the past his covertly anti-Soviet actions have brought economic and military disunity to Comecon and the Warsaw Pact. Now, however, his activities in the Third World often oppose US interests. He is unlikely to become a staunch supporter of the Soviet Union, since his nationalism has always regarded the Russians as the most serious threat to Romanian sovereignty. But he is easily offended, with tendencies toward autarky and xenophobia, and must be handled carefully.

Above all, we must try to keep untarnished the positive image of America held by most Romanians. Ceaușescu's successor(s) will face a period of regime weakness during which a return to the Soviet fold will be a major policy consideration. Given the internal fears of Soviet interference, they will probably try to avoid such a step. We should make every effort to help them do so when the time comes. Perhaps with our support the next Romanian leadership will be more successful in achieving the nationalization of power without the personalization.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Romania is well known for its autonomous foreign policy, a strategy in international relations that, if not totally independent of the USSR, is at least exceptional among members of the Warsaw Pact.<sup>1</sup> The country is equally famous for its cult of personality, the tight internal control imposed by President Nicolae Ceaușescu and the intense praise accorded to him as the omnipotent and omniscient leader of the Romanian nation.<sup>2</sup> What is not fully understood is the extent to which these two policies have changed the Romanian polity since 1965, and the degree to which personalization and nationalization of power are mutually dependent. This paper examines the evolution of political leadership in Romania since Ceaușescu assumed the post of First Secretary, the priorities and personality of the leader himself, and the implications for US policy.

Personalization: Political power in Romania under Nicolae Ceaușescu has become personalized in a variety of ways. First, Ceaușescu himself holds the top offices in Party and state. He has been named head or titular head of a plethora of councils and commissions established since 1965, the office of President of the Republic was created in 1974 especially for him, and he has become the object of a cult of personality as extreme as those which idolized Stalin or Mao. Second, Ceaușescu's personal decisions and preferences have determined policy directives and cadre appointments in this period. Third, Ceaușescu is not only omnipotent but also omniscient; no one can make a speech or write an article in the Romanian Socialist Republic (RSR) without crediting Ceaușescu as the source of knowledge and inspiration. Finally, he has personalized power still further by appointing members of

his family to high posts: cousins, brothers, sisters, in-laws, one of his sons (now a Secretary of the Central Committee of the Party youth organization and appearing more and more often with his parents in public), and especially his wife. Elena Ceaușescu is a member of the Party Bureau and Permanent Executive Committee, and First Vice-President of the Council of Ministers. She appears with her husband on most official occasions, and even her birthday has become a day of national rejoicing second only to that of her husband.<sup>3</sup>

Nationalization: The "Ceaușescu Era"--and Romanians themselves have now started to use that terminology for the post-1965 period<sup>4</sup>--has seen political power in Romania become nationalized as well as personalized. While Soviet troops remained in the country from 1944 until 1958, officials in Moscow were the final arbiters of the Romanian political process. Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, Ceaușescu's predecessor, managed to establish his personal control of the Romanian Party in the 1950s, but he was not in a position to reject Soviet plans for Romania until after the Soviet army left in 1958. As early as 1960 Moscow and Bucharest were expressing different views of Romania's future and, after a number of verbal skirmishes in the early 1960s, subtle differences in public statements about development priorities gave way in April 1964 to a Romanian "declaration of independence."<sup>5</sup> To increase Romanian autonomy from the USSR, Gheorghiu-Dej made use of (1) his personal control of the Party, (2) Romanian economic advantages such as energy sufficiency and the ability to export raw materials in exchange for hard currency imports of goods and technology, and (3) favorable international conditions, in particular, the Sino-Soviet dispute. By 1965 foreign trade had been largely reoriented away from Comecon, and the Romanian population had responded with enthusiasm to the regime's cautious derussification measures

and unstated appeal for domestic support in the face of Soviet pressure. Romania's "new course" in foreign policy began under Gheorghiu-Dej, but Ceaușescu has carried it much further than his predecessor.

Ceaușescu has isolated his country from the Soviet Union politically, militarily, economically, and culturally. Perhaps most significant is the isolation in cadre selection, civilian and military. Personnel appointments and promotions are decided in Romania--at higher levels by Ceaușescu himself--not in the Soviet Union.<sup>6</sup> In addition, Romanian military doctrine separates Romania from the Warsaw Pact by focusing on a defensive "People's War," similar to the guerrilla doctrine of neighboring Yugoslavia. Such a doctrine is appropriate against an invader, but except for Yugoslavia Romania is surrounded by Warsaw Pact members. Romanian doctrine therefore fails to contribute significantly to the offensive doctrine of its "allies," and even seems directed against them. "People's War" has two major advantages from the Romanian viewpoint aside from military defense: it is relatively cheap, employing small arms and so reducing military costs, and it enrolls a large proportion of the population into the "People's Guards," contributing to Ceaușescu's participatory techniques of mass mobilization.<sup>7</sup> The low cost helps Romania maintain its economic insulation from Comecon influence. Ceaușescu's economic strategy of "many-sided" development is essentially an autarkic policy which avoids dependency by diversified trade patterns and depressing consumption to provide investment funds rather than obtaining foreign loans or subsidies. Yet another factor separates Romania from its East European "allies": ideology. Ceaușescu continues to assert his loyalty to the world communist movement, but he has raised Romanian national traditions and the concept of the "nation" to an ideological status equivalent to and inseparable from Marxism-Leninism.

The New Romania of the 1980s

The extent to which personalization and nationalization of power have altered the Romanian polity since 1965 is not sufficiently recognized by observers in the East or the West. The continued centralization of political power and adherence to Marxist-Leninist ideological categories both tend to obscure changes in the Romanian political process. Ceaușescu's personalized politics and autarkic strategies for industrialization (which find strong echoes in Romanian national tradition) have preempted economic cooperation within Eastern Europe, reduced internal living standards, skewed the educational system still further toward technical specialities, and shifted the paths of economic and political mobility to support a "New Class" based on personal service to Ceaușescu as leader of the nation.

Ceaușescu himself is deeply Marxist in his assumption that civilization equals industrialization, and his Marxism makes his nationalism more acceptable to the Soviet leaders. But Ceaușescu is so deeply nationalistic that the increase in his personal influence has reinforced nationalist and even xenophobic tendencies in the Romanian polity. History is being re-written,<sup>8</sup> cultural activity is turning inward,<sup>9</sup> and groups which refuse to identify with this new nationalism (certain of the national minorities, for example) are implicitly threatened.<sup>10</sup> This xenophobia has been especially apparent in the period since 1979, when Romania's ambitious development plans and diversified trade patterns have brought economic difficulties. The international price structure of petroleum products and agricultural shortages produced a temporary hard currency crisis just when Poland's problems had destroyed confidence in the East European economies.<sup>11</sup> Foreign banks have been pressuring the Romanians to repay their debts, and the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have demanded information and

reforms in the Romanian economy. Ceaușescu has responded with concessions sufficient to reschedule loans and even gain approval for some new projects. But he has also begun to verbalize a more extreme nationalism that is anti-West as well as anti-Soviet.

Nationalization and Personalization: The Interrelationship

In Romania the personalization and nationalization of power have been mutually reinforcing due to Ceaușescu's personal nationalism and the Romanian national tradition of personalized politics. But the relationship goes still deeper. It is frequently pointed out that Soviet leaders tolerate the "independent" foreign policy because there is no threat to communism within Romania, that some flexibility in foreign policy is palatable to Moscow as long as the Romanian Communist Party (RCP) maintains tight control of the internal situation. This interpretation is basically correct, but it is too simplistic. The two policies--tight domestic control and autonomy in foreign policy--go together because of the nature of each policy. Each reinforces the other. I hesitate to say that each requires the other, because that is overstating the relationship. But either policy would at least be very difficult to maintain without the other, and this has important implications for US foreign policy choices regarding Romania.

Personalized power and tight control have made national autonomy feasible not just by preventing Soviet interference but also by allowing the regime to impose economic autarky on the population. The RCP has found investment funds by depressing the domestic standard of living, not by Soviet subsidies or borrowing from the West.<sup>12</sup> Such a policy has not been popular and has required tight control. Just as personalized power has facilitated the "independent" foreign policy and economic development strategy, so nationalism has contributed to the personal power of Nicolae Ceaușescu. Ceaușescu consolidated his power by criticizing the 1968

invasion of Czechoslovakia, making himself a national hero. And his most successful appeals for popular support have focused on Romanian nationalism: implicit resentment of the Soviets and explicit pride in Romanian achievements over two millennia. Ceaușescu is a new Stephen the Great keeping the Russians out of Romania.

The mutual dependence of personalization and nationalization of power in the Romanian polity makes it exceedingly unlikely that Ceaușescu would abandon his nationalism, which has proved so strong a pillar of his personal power. He may, of course, add anti-Americanism to his implicit anti-Sovietism, and turn even more toward the Third World and the OPEC countries as trading partners. A good harbinger of such a shift might be deteriorating relations with Israel whose friendship has symbolized Romania's anomalous position in the Soviet bloc. But as long as Ceaușescu remains in control, there is not likely to be a basic reorientation of Romanian foreign policy toward the Soviet Union or a major decentralization in the political or economic system. Indeed, his personal power probably would not survive either change.<sup>13</sup>

#### Ceaușescu's Leadership

The reasoning behind the above conclusions rests largely on my detailed study of Ceaușescu and his political leadership since 1965, a continuing project parts of which are summarized in this Report. The analysis focuses on the interaction between Nicolae Ceaușescu and the political environment which he seeks to control. It is not a biography, because there is very little personal information available, and what is made public is usually tainted by adulation or castigation. It is not even a political biography in the usual sense, since no access to the internal policy-making process is possible. Rather this is a study of policy articulation, personnel

manipulation, and political techniques over two decades in an effort to understand Ceaușescu's priorities, his strategies for implementing those priorities, and the limits placed upon him by the political environment and by his own chosen instruments, both organizations and individuals. Begun in the early 1970s, this analysis originally planned to document the institutionalization of the Romanian political process under Ceaușescu. Instead, it demonstrates the personalization of that process, and the sometimes frantic maneuvering required of an individual at the pinnacle of power.

Since Ceaușescu's background and priorities are so crucial to an understanding of current Romanian politics, Section II summarizes his personal and political experience before 1965 and the implications of this experience for his subsequent choices. Section III examines the early period of his rule, the consolidation of his personal power from 1965 to 1969, and the political techniques which he developed to gain control of the Party and political system. Ceaușescu's own goals emerged most clearly during the decade from 1969 to 1979 when he ruled virtually unchallenged<sup>14</sup> and felt little need to compromise or camouflage his intentions. Section IV discusses these priorities, the personality behind them, and the techniques used to implement them during the 1970s. Section V then describes the post-1979 period of crisis and stalemate, when Ceaușescu has once again been forced to compromise and maneuver to maintain himself in power. The final section summarizes the findings and their implications for Romanian politics and US policy.

## II. CEAUȘESCU'S BACKGROUND AND EARLY CAREER: 1918-1965

Born in 1918 in Scornicești, a small village set in low rolling hills halfway between two regional capitals, Nicolae Ceaușescu was the third of ten children in a peasant home. Five of the seven boys eventually left the village to find work in the city, and in 1929, aged 11, Nicolae went to Bucharest and became a shoemaker's apprentice.<sup>15</sup> We know little about Ceaușescu's childhood in Scornicești except that his parents were poor peasants and so Ceaușescu can credibly claim to have known the oppression first of feudal landlords and later of capitalists.<sup>16</sup> We have no information on his first few years in Bucharest until he was arrested in 1933 for his involvement in leftist activities. This began a pattern of arrests for distributing pamphlets or inciting strikes. In May 1936 Ceaușescu was tried for communist activity and protested so vehemently that he was ejected from the courtroom and six months were added to his eventual two-year sentence. A contemporary newspaper account described him as small and dark, with sparkling eyes "like two peppercorns." He "spoke clearly, a bit too fast, as if he wanted to get all his words out at once." The reporter, now a well-known poet in Romania, was favorably impressed by the youngster's appearance and personality, and expressed in print the hope for a light sentence.<sup>17</sup>

Just as Ceaușescu was being sent to prison, the Romanian authorities decided to put all the communists together in order to control them more efficiently. Of course, the result was precisely the reverse. The prison, Doftana, later became known as the "Marxist University" since the prisoners were allowed visitors and reading material and could communicate secretly among themselves. Ceaușescu was released in 1938, and the years had not been wasted. His fellow prisoners in Doftana had included Gheorghiu-Dej,

and that small group of Doftana "graduates" later formed the core of the Romanian Communist Party and ruled Romania for two decades following World War II.<sup>18</sup>

After his release Ceaușescu continued his work for the Party and within a year had become head of the Union of Communist Youth. Tried in absentia by a Bucharest court, he managed to avoid arrest until 1940, but then spent the years until the Soviet Army entered Romania in 1944 in various prisons, ending up in the internment camp at Tîrgu Jiu. Needless to say, the other communists were there also, and Ceaușescu renewed his relations with Gheorghiu-Dej. He was much younger than the inner circle of the Party leadership: in 1944 Ceaușescu was in his mid-20s while Gheorghiu-Dej and his closest friends were in their mid-40s. In fact, Ceaușescu represented a second generation in the Party leadership, but not a post-revolutionary generation. He joined the RCP during its illegal days, suffered terrible deprivations in its name, and was clearly a devoted Marxist, not an opportunist like so many of those his own age who became members after 1944.

. According to Ceaușescu's own account of the immediate postwar years,<sup>19</sup> he was involved in local Party work in Oltenia and the Dobrogea, and was first elected to the Grand National Assembly in 1946. In the late 1940s the Romanian Communist Party, with the backing of the Soviet Army, was gradually consolidating its power over the political system, not an easy task since the Party had never played an important role in the interwar period and as late as 1944 had only about 1,000 members.<sup>20</sup> So the few trusted loyalists were sent as trouble-shooters wherever they could be most useful, organizing an area, selecting new members, and assigning them in turn to complete the work while the experienced organizer moved on to new areas. Ceaușescu was briefly Deputy Minister of Agriculture during the first collectivization campaign in 1948-1949, and then moved into another crucial sector of Party work: he

attended the Military Academy for a crash course in 1949-1950, and then served as Deputy Minister of the Armed Forces from 1950 to 1954. Here he played a major role in rebuilding the military in accordance with Party priorities and established for himself a power base which has been useful ever since. Finally, in 1954, aged 36, he was brought into the top Party leadership as Central Committee Secretary, a position he retained for the next eleven years until the death of Gheorghiu-Dej and his own election as First Secretary. In 1957 Ceaușescu evidently replaced Miron Constantinescu as CC Secretary for cadres, and this enabled him to make the Party apparatus a major source of support. During his consolidation of power from 1965 to 1969 he promoted many individuals from local Party posts and the CC apparatus in Bucharest, individuals whose earlier careers he had at least approved, if not facilitated. This group forms a coterie of Ceaușescu loyalists that is still prominent throughout the Romanian political system in early 1983.<sup>21</sup>

As a result, by 1965 Ceaușescu had very strong practical experience in Party work at lower levels and at the top, as well as four years overseeing the Party organizations in the military. He had had no formal education, not even in a technical subject such as engineering. He had spent his entire career within the borders of Romania, unlike most other East European leaders whose rise in their respective parties necessitated extended schooling in the Soviet Union. Romania, after all, was the only East European member of the Warsaw Pact in which the home communists--those who had spent the war years at home rather than in exile in the USSR--had gained control of the local communist party. In the rest of Eastern Europe, it had been the Soviet-trained communists who had won out in the postwar struggles for power. In 1965, then, the new Romanian leader was rather young, a first generation Marxist revolutionary with no formal education, broadly experienced in practical politics within Romania, and not tied to the USSR.

### III. SUCCESSION AND CONSOLIDATION: 1965-1969

Succession struggles in communist systems have certain common features which were present in Romania in 1965-1967 and, incidentally, are visible in the USSR in 1982-1983. Such a period of change and uncertainty tends to weaken the regime at least temporarily. Caution and compromise are the projected virtues in domestic policy, and preferred in foreign relations also unless a direct challenge is perceived as a test of will and so requires a firm response. The most obvious steps taken by surviving leaders to assure an orderly transition include a temporary emphasis on collective leadership and policy continuity with simultaneous promises of consumer satisfaction and reassurances to the military-industrial complex--in other words, overtures to all major social groups and promises instead of threats.<sup>22</sup> In foreign relations this implies reassurances to allies, olive branches to rivals (though not from weakness--any uncertainty must be hidden), and an expansion (perhaps temporary) of activity on all fronts to bolster the prestige of the new leaders.

When Ceaușescu was elected First Secretary of the RCP in March 1965, his personal priorities (as described below in Section IV) were not at all clear. He was only 47, the youngest Party leader in Eastern Europe, and not a well-known figure inside or outside his native country. His cadres background in the CC Secretariat would enable him to promote his clients into high positions,<sup>23</sup> but his job had not given him wide publicity. It was not obvious that within two years he would head both Party and State hierarchies and go on to become omnipotent and omniscient in the 1970s. In fact, from 1965 to 1967 he appeared to be but the most important third of a triumvirate which included Chivu Stoica, Chairman of the Council of State, and Ion Gheorghe Maurer, Chairman of the Council of Ministers. Then in December

1967 he replaced Chivu Stoica as head of state and began to move overtly against his rivals, consolidating his personal control of the political system in 1968 and 1969.

Leaders of communist parties have made use of various sources of strength to establish and maintain themselves and their movement in power. Three of the most important bases of power have been prestige (or charisma) as THE LEADER of the revolution, violence (and perhaps terror), and foreign support. Revolutionary prestige has been important to a number of rulers after their own revolutions: for example, Lenin, Mao, Tito or Castro. Violence, and sometimes terror, has been more widespread. The key name which comes to mind here is of course Stalin, but few communist leaders have been able to keep themselves and their Parties in power without the repeated use of this technique. The third potential source of strength, foreign support, was crucial in Eastern Europe where in most cases the Soviet army enabled the local communist party to seize and retain political control.

All three of these sources of power were used by Gheorghiu-Dej. In the early days of Party rule in Romania occupation by the Soviet Army had undoubtedly been decisive. This foreign support had been accompanied by terror, and Gheorghiu-Dej until his death had maintained his personal control over the Romanian secret police through his subordinate and protegee, Alexandru Drăghici. Finally, although the RCP had not actually had an independent revolution, Gheorghiu-Dej had been an important Party leader in the interwar period and was one of the few ethnic Romanians who had played a major role in the indigenous communist movement. Hence he did have a limited personal prestige at least within the ranks of the Party.

None of these sources of power was available to Nicolae Ceaușescu when Gheorghiu-Dej died in 1965. Despite his years of Party activity, there

were others with greater seniority so he could not claim to be THE LEADER responsible for placing Romania on the path to socialism. Nor could he make use of terror to establish himself firmly in control of the political system. Despite his influence in the military hierarchy, it was one of Ceaușescu's major rivals within the RCP, Drăghici, who controlled the Ministry of Internal Affairs and hence the secret police. And Ceaușescu certainly could not use Soviet support to implement his policies, for by that time the independent course in foreign policy was firmly established, and many of Ceaușescu's international priorities would turn out to be anti-Soviet. Eventually, much of his success would be facilitated by his opposition to the USSR, resulting in increased internal support for him personally and for the RCP. But that would not be clear until the Czech invasion of 1968.

Since revolutionary prestige, terror, and foreign support were not sources of strength to him in 1965, Ceaușescu resorted to a combination of four political strategies: (1) policy compromise and ambiguity within the new collective leadership; (2) personnel manipulation, especially promotions; (3) moves toward institutionalization of the political process, both Party and state; and (4) participatory reforms and populism, direct appeals for support to the Romanian masses through political mobilization techniques stressing participatory democracy and nationalism.

#### Policy Compromise and Ambiguity

From 1965 to 1967 the new collective leadership enunciated policies characterized by caution and ambiguity. It was quickly announced that the basic lines of foreign and domestic policy would continue as under Gheorghiu-Dej, but there were also promises of discussion and reform. Ceaușescu was by far the most visible of the leaders, authoritatively addressing various professional and Party groups, but he always spoke in the name of the collective leadership and so became primus inter pares gradually and without

appearing overly ambitious. He asserted that economic policy would continue to stress industry and central planning, but promised "big investments" in agriculture and more "initiative" for workers and enterprises. He "challenged" writers and artists to "place their talents at the service of socialist construction" but encouraged them to decide for themselves "how to write, how to paint, how to compose." His calls for open discussion and reform encouraged individuals to speak openly about their goals and needs. Ceaușescu could then identify his potential supporters and opponents. Intellectuals, proponents of economic reform, minority groups, all hoped for changes in the political system, while conservatives took heart from his promises of continuity.<sup>24</sup>

After two years of promises a number of reforms were enacted at the December 1967 Party Conference and the April 1968 Central Committee Plenum. There were several political "reforms," most notably the administrative-territorial reorganization described below. The other political changes were rather minor and helped Ceaușescu in maneuvering against his rivals, but there were no major shifts in economic or social policy. An economic "reform" involved no significant change in the centralization of planning or the high rate of investment. Additional success indicators were added to the plan at the enterprise level to increase efficiency, and "collective" management bodies were created to broaden participation in decisions. That "participation" really came to mean discussions on how best to fulfill the central directives, discussions which drew the participants into acceptance of those directives and the measures found to implement them. Finally, despite the "collective" bodies individual responsibility was to continue, and even intensify at all levels, for a single director remained at the head of each enterprise and Party and state posts in a given region or sector would henceforth be held by one person.<sup>25</sup> Centralized control and participatory rhetoric would become characteristic of Ceaușescu's rule.

Other sectors also were marked by continuity. Agricultural policy stressed centralization plus improved indicators and material incentives for plan fulfillment. An educational reform emphasized pragmatic problem-solving over memorization of Marxist-Leninist classics, but continued the technological emphasis and growing nationalism of the Gheorghiu-Dej era. Indeed, the major policy tendency during the entire 1965-1969 period was growing nationalism. Each of Ceaușescu's major speeches increased the glory of Romanian traditions, stressing both national independence and social revolution. Foreign policy continued the Gheorghiu-Dej line of subtle resistance to economic and military integration in Eastern Europe with intermittent crises in Soviet-Romanian relations resulting in a frosty stalemate.<sup>26</sup> Policy in this period of succession and consolidation was marked by caution, continuity, and unfulfilled promises of reform. Major organizational and personnel shifts did occur after December 1967, but for the most part political and economic change was a matter of style rather than substance.

#### Personnel Manipulation

One issue on which Ceaușescu's pronouncements in 1965 were not ambiguous was the leading role of the Party. Although the RCP had been important under Gheorghiu-Dej, the frequency of references to the Party in the press increased dramatically from March 1965 on, and the new Party statutes enlarged the responsibilities of Party organizations in a number of areas.<sup>27</sup> The Party apparatus was Ceaușescu's power base since he had been CC cadres secretary for about eight years, and political changes in 1965-1967 enhanced the Party's role in society. Within the RCP Ceaușescu's strength was at middle and lower levels while his rivals were members of the top Party body, the Politburo.<sup>28</sup> Hence Ceaușescu effected revisions during 1965 which weakened that body while enhancing the power of the Central Committee, its apparatus, and local Party officials.

The Ninth Party Congress in July 1965 replaced the nine-member Politburo by a seven-member Presidium and an Executive Committee of fifteen full and ten candidate members. Ceaușescu claimed that the Presidium would be small enough to allow "collective" decision-making on a daily basis and so would prevent one individual from concentrating decisions in his own hands.<sup>29</sup> However, since the Presidium was composed of seven former Politburo members, it was almost as unwieldy as the Politburo had been. Indeed, this first reorganization set the pattern of personnel change for the next two and a half years: promotions, not demotions. From July 1965 to December 1967, the three top Party bodies--the Presidium, the Executive Committee, and the Secretariat--did not lose a single member.<sup>30</sup> Instead, each was repeatedly increased in size, evidently to assure Ceaușescu of a majority in all three since the incoming members tended to be from Ceaușescu's power base. Seven of the twelve newcomers to the Executive Committee in 1965 came from the ranks of regional first secretaries and two from the CC apparatus. Eight of the fifteen elected from 1966 to 1969 were or had been regional Party officials, while three came from the CC apparatus. These Party officials then began to move into high posts in the state hierarchy, a tendency that would become even stronger after 1969. Ceaușescu used this same pattern of promotions to gain control of the Central Committee.<sup>31</sup>

As Ceaușescu was promoting his supporters into high office, he was simultaneously weakening his rivals. As part of the stress on collective leadership in 1965, Article 13(b) of the new Party Statutes forbade officials to hold more than one full-time position. This hurt several of Ceaușescu's Politburo rivals, most notably Alexandru Drăghici, Minister of Internal Affairs since 1952. Drăghici gave up that position in 1965 to move to the CC Secretariat. He must have regarded the Secretariat as crucial in the forthcoming power struggle, and perhaps intended to oversee security affairs from

his new post. His decision appeared quite reasonable--he and Ceaușescu were the only Politburo members to be CC Secretaries--but the move turned out to be a serious miscalculation. At the 1967 Party Conference he left the Secretariat to become vice-chairman of the Council of Ministers and, cut off from his power base for the second time in two years, Drăghici proved unable to defend himself when he was denounced and removed from all political offices in April 1968.<sup>32</sup> Once Drăghici was gone, other demotions began to take place. By the Tenth Party Congress in 1969 over half of the Presidium members and almost half of the Secretariat and Executive Committee members had resigned or had been excluded in disgrace. Only Ceaușescu, Maurer, and Emil Bodnaraș remained from the Gheorghiu-Dej Politburo.<sup>33</sup> In 1968-1969 a new Party leadership was formed around Ceaușescu.

This turnover in the top leaders was accompanied by a territorial-administrative reform of the entire country carried out during 1968.<sup>34</sup> The dual level system of regions and districts was replaced by a single intermediate level, the județ (county), a return to prewar (and therefore Romanian rather than Soviet) terminology. Ceaușescu made use of the changes to promote his clients. For example, eleven of the sixteen regional first secretaries in March 1965 had by mid-1968 moved into the top Party organs or the CC apparatus, and the other five remained as county first secretaries. The thirty-five new county first secretaries came from the Party apparatus and owed their promotion to Ceaușescu. The 1968 reform also enhanced the role of Ceaușescu's Party in society. At each level, the relevant Party official was henceforth to administer directly the state organs. Each county first secretary, for example, became President of the county People's Council. Party and state were to be tied together by a single responsible official not only at the top (Ceaușescu) but also at the county and local levels. Article 13(b) was rescinded at the 1967 Party Conference. It had served its purpose well.

In summary, Ceaușescu's personnel policies from 1965 to 1969 aimed at increasing the power of the Party in society and promoting his own clients at lower and intermediate levels within the RCP while undermining the positions of his rivals in the Politburo. Until December 1967 change took the form of promotions,<sup>35</sup> increasing the size of the Central Committee and the top bodies. Only after the 1967 Party Conference was the turnover in leadership accomplished. Drăghici, Chivu Stoica, Gheorghe Apostol, and other members of the Gheorghiu-Dej group were removed from the top leadership, and the 1968 administrative-territorial reform brought significant lower-level changes. The December 1967 Party Conference marked the beginning of the end of collective leadership in Romania; the Tenth Party Congress in August 1969 brought its final demise.

Institutionalization of the Political Process: Constitutionality and Legality

New leaders usually promise improvements over the performance of their predecessors and Ceaușescu was no exception. However, since policy continuity was a major premise of the collective leadership he did not overtly criticize Gheorghiu-Dej but stressed a number of new initiatives which could be regarded as historical continuities. For example, the Ninth Party Congress changed the name of the Romanian Workers' Party back to the Romanian Communist Party. This signaled a return to pre-1948 terminology, but also recognized the social and economic progress under socialism which justified a new constitution and a new name for the Romanian People's Republic: the Romanian Socialist Republic. This gained Romania equality with the more developed socialist states, including the USSR. Ceaușescu could imply that a new era was beginning but it was an era that grew out of the preceding period rather than rejecting it.

Ceaușescu also began to stress the need for strict observance of the new constitution. The Grand National Assembly (GNA) and the People's Councils were to be major forums for "discussion and participation" (but not

policy formulation) and have increased responsibilities.<sup>36</sup> A new constitutional commission was to oversee new laws, and other standing or ad hoc commissions were to take part in the legislative process. In December 1967 Ceaușescu continued this rhetorical emphasis on the constitutional process, calling on the GNA commissions to play a still larger role in drafting laws and even in overseeing their implementation, and insisting that important laws be discussed and passed by the GNA rather than issued as decrees by the Council of State. This indirect criticism of the Council of State reflected on its chairman, Chivu Stoica, while the entire campaign for "constitutionality" threatened Drăghici and his former colleagues in the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The need for legality was most pronounced in statements about the Party. As early as the April 1965 CC Plenum, Ceaușescu gave "Party democracy" equal emphasis with the "leadership role of the Party" in society. Each of these themes was consistent with his need to increase the influence of his clients at lower levels of the Party apparatus and also with his political mobilization techniques. Many changes in internal Party organization in 1965-- Article 13(b), the increased size of Party organs, the greater influence of the Central Committee--were justified on the basis of inner Party democracy defined by Ceaușescu in 1967 as "the active participation of the Party members in the elaboration of all decisions in all the Party bodies and organizations."<sup>37</sup> The democracy had limits. It was to be democratic centralism. Discussions had to be "within... Party bodies," and "once the political line has been established and decisions have been endorsed with a majority of votes, the decisions become binding for all the Party members..."<sup>38</sup> And in 1967 Ceaușescu's discussion of Party democracy specifically denounced factionalism past and present just as he was preparing to move against his rivals.

Meanwhile a number of individuals who had been removed from office or arrested under Gheorghiu-Dej were quietly rehabilitated in the 1965-1967

period, and Party historiography stressed the need for a reevaluation of the past.<sup>39</sup> The "new" history had begun as a search for continuities from pre-communist Romania, and included indirect criticism of Comintern (Soviet) interference in the 1930s. In 1967 revisions began to extend to the postwar communist regime with potentially disastrous results for Drăghici. Signs of his pending downfall were visible in 1967. For example, there was a significant contrast between Ceaușescu's positive assessment of the Ministry of Armed Forces in May 1967 and his discovery of "abuses" and "negative phenomena" six weeks later in the work of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.<sup>40</sup> But only in April 1968 did Ceaușescu denounce Gheorghiu-Dej and then proceed to implicate Drăghici and the Ministry of Internal Affairs in his mistakes.

The April 1968 CC Plenum discussed a number of important issues from education to foreign policy. But certainly the most dramatic session, described in the agenda as "the rehabilitation of some Party activists," involved the denunciation of Gheorghiu-Dej for "transgressions of legality" which included the arrest and execution of Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu. Pătrășcanu, a founding member of the RCP, was dismissed as Minister of Justice in March 1948, "abusively arrested" the next month, and finally executed in April 1954.<sup>41</sup> The parallels between Ceaușescu's denunciation of Gheorghiu-Dej and Khrushchev's anti-Stalin speech of February 1956 are striking.<sup>42</sup> Ceaușescu, like Khrushchev, admitted that his predecessor had merits, but those merits were not sufficient to excuse the abuses. Ceaușescu, again like Khrushchev, insisted that the blame was to be placed on individuals, not on the system or the Party, that such "abuses" were not the "inevitable companion of socialism," but stemmed from the personal character of those involved: Gheorghiu-Dej and Drăghici. The latter's involvement points to still another parallel with the Khrushchev case: the advantage derived by the new Party leader over his colleagues in the Party leadership. Ceaușescu had joined the Politburo and Secretariat

just two days after the Pătrășcanu execution and so could claim innocence, unlike the other major figures in the 1968 Presidium and especially Drăghici who as Minister of Internal Affairs in 1954 had been personally responsible for the death, the "organizer and executor" of the crime, as Ceaușescu put it. Due to his "direct responsibility," Drăghici was removed in 1968 from all of his high positions in the Party and state.<sup>43</sup>

By denouncing his predecessor Ceaușescu, like Khrushchev, not only removed or weakened major rivals while preserving the Party's infallibility, but also promised to initiate a new age of legality in the Party and constitutionality in the overall political process. Thus all citizens, but especially Party members themselves, looked to Ceaușescu as their protector and hope for the future.

#### Participatory Reforms and Populism

Ceaușescu's final strategy for enhancing his political power was aimed mainly at the broad masses of Romanians. He attempted to mobilize them politically by increasing their participation in the political process and by playing on their strong feelings of national loyalty. His techniques for mobilization were essentially populist, for his rhetoric appealed over the heads of local officials to create an image of consultation with interested groups and individuals in all sectors.<sup>44</sup> One form of such consultation was the creation of collective management bodies discussed above. However, the participation did not reflect influence over policy priorities or budgets; such choices remained centralized.<sup>45</sup>

Ceaușescu's most successful populist appeal was to Romanian nationalism. He continued and intensified the derussification measures of the early 1960s, and began to rewrite Romanian history once again. His first efforts in this direction attempted to create a place for the RCP and other leftist

movements in Romanian history, and as such involved for the most part research on neglected topics rather than the flights of fantasy which were to become characteristic in the late 1970s. But the major cause of his success in mobilizing Romanian nationalism to support his personal rule was his response to the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

Less than four months after the denunciation of Gheorghiu-Dej, Ceaușescu was able to establish himself as an authentic national leader based on this single issue: at least temporarily Ceaușescu became the defender of the Romanian fatherland (patrie). When troops entered Czechoslovakia in August 1968, Ceaușescu's reaction was public and vehement. A rally was held in the Palace Square in Bucharest and the Romanian leader described the invasion as "a great mistake and a grave danger to peace...a shameful moment in the history of the revolutionary movement." The rally in Bucharest was followed by rallies throughout the country and visits by the RCP leaders to many localities. At the time, there were rumors throughout Romania that a Soviet invasion was imminent, and that shots had actually been exchanged across the USSR-Romanian border. Whether the Soviet leaders ever considered using force against Romania in 1968 is highly questionable. The border incident could have been mere rumor or the result of mistake or confusion. Whatever the truth about Soviet intentions, the Romanian population perceived danger, and Ceaușescu received the credit for averting invasion.<sup>46</sup>

The most important consequence of August 1968 for Romania was the immediate (and long-term) increase in Ceaușescu's popularity. His defiant stand gained him the personal stature which no amount of economic achievement or diplomatic success could have given him. As soon as the immediate shock of the move into Czechoslovakia was over the Romanian leader returned to his more usual tactics of maneuver and compromise rather than confrontation with the Soviets. He even began to hint at increased cooperation in Comecon.<sup>47</sup>

Yet Ceaușescu's public anti-Soviet stand had consolidated and legitimized his own rule and that of his Party. For the next decade, Romanians disillusioned with other aspects of Party policy would point to August 1968 as the major reason for supporting the RCP. In 1974, for example, many Romanians could not understand the Watergate crisis. "Why," they asked repeatedly, "should Nixon resign? His foreign policy is good. Look what we put up with at home for a good foreign policy!"

#### Succession and Consolidation: A Summary

The months from the death of Gheorghiu-Dej in March 1965 until the Party Conference of December 1967 were in many ways typical of communist successions. Ceaușescu stressed collective leadership and was deliberately ambiguous in policy pronouncements, making overtures to all major social groups to maximize support and minimize dissatisfaction. He manipulated personnel change so as to promote Party officials whom he originally had appointed to posts at intermediate and lower levels of the Party apparatus during his eight years as CC cadres secretary. By 1967 he had brought in enough supporters to begin to remove his rivals and in 1968-1969 effected a turnover in the top Party leadership. Two other political techniques contributed to Ceaușescu's consolidation of power. First, he promised to institutionalize the political process, to ensure constitutionality and legality and prevent a return to the "abuses" of the Gheorghiu-Dej era. Second, he made populist appeals to the Romanian masses, requiring them to "participate" in the political process and so accept responsibility without gaining real input. His most successful populist appeal was to Romanian nationalism. Indeed, his impassioned defense of the Romanian nation against Soviet interference brought the final consolidation of his power (and temporarily his authority) in August 1968. Ironically for the Soviets, the move into Czechoslovakia strengthened Ceaușescu and so minimized Soviet

influence in Romania for the next decade and a half.

The Tenth Party Congress in August 1969 signaled Ceaușescu's final victory. Every speaker felt compelled to begin and end any remarks by praising the Party leader and many referred to him in almost every paragraph, crediting him personally with the great economic achievements after 1965. Ceaușescu had become the undisputed leader of Party and state and would soon be the fount of all knowledge in Romania. But in 1969 he was not yet the object of a cult. He was then a genuine leader, his popularity at an all-time high in the aftermath of Czechoslovakia. He had created a strong measure of popular support for his regime based on foreign policy, and was in a position to increase his popularity by choosing development strategies which would raise living standards and so be acceptable to most Romanians. But Ceaușescu did not choose such strategies. Indeed, given his background it would have been surprising had he not acted as he did. On the other hand, if he had chosen to introduce serious reforms--an emphasis on consumption or a decentralization of political or economic decision-making--he might have split the Party (like Hungary in 1956) or released popular dissent (like Czechoslovakia in 1968), bringing Soviet intervention in either case. However, Ceaușescu did not make such a choice and we have in Romania today the continuing combination of nationalized and personalized power.

IV. SUPREME RULER: THE SEARCH FOR AUTHORITY BECOMES A CULT OF PERSONALITY, 1969-1979

During the era of succession and consolidation from 1965 to 1969 Ceaușescu was forced to compromise in order to gain and maintain power. After 1969 his personal priorities began to emerge much more sharply in his own statements and in Party policies. In retrospect, the priorities are visible in the earlier period but, except for his nationalism, he was much more ambiguous before 1969 when he needed to attract support and preempt opposition. In the decade from 1969 to 1979 Ceaușescu personally was the source of all policy initiatives in Romania. Caution, compromise, and collective leadership had disappeared. Other political techniques changed as well. The promotion of his clients within the Party apparatus turned into a circulation of officials. Power became personalized rather than institutionalized as constitutional requirements for legislating and appointing personnel were more and more frequently ignored. Perhaps the most dramatic difference between the era of consolidation and the era of Ceaușescu's absolute rule involves the participatory and populist techniques. While participatory organizations proliferated in the 1970s--permanent councils for consultation at various levels, or periodic conferences for specific economic or social sectors--such forums became occasions for ritualized mass worship and group endorsement of presidential policies rather than arenas for discussion. The genuine authority of 1968 turned into a cult of personality.

The Cult

The extreme adulation accorded Ceaușescu has frequently been termed a "cult of personality," and it is a real cult with an iconography, a Bible, and an infallible leader. Icons (portraits of Ceaușescu) are found in most public places and private offices (though not as yet in most homes). The Bible of Romanian communism (Ceaușescu's collected speeches) has appeared in over twenty volumes and a series of subject concordances has also been

published.<sup>48</sup> The Romanian President is infallible in his own country. Successes are attributed to him, failures to organizations or individuals that have not correctly carried out his suggestions.

These characteristics of the Ceausescu cult--icons, scriptures, and infallibility--are reminiscent of the Lenin and Stalin cults in the Soviet Union. Ceausescu, like the Soviet leaders, is portrayed as a great revolutionary who, despite lowly origins, rose to become a national hero through hard work, courage, and intellectual ability. But these communist leaders had a special source of guidance in their achievement of worldly success. Unlike religious leaders, charismatic in the original sense of the world, these socialist heroes derive their infallibility not from divine guidance, but rather from a "scientific" belief, Marx's philosophy of history. If the term "charismatic" is extended to include a "call" based on such a "science," then these men might be deemed "charismatic" leaders.<sup>49</sup> However, charisma also implies a close relationship between leaders and followers which enables the leader to inspire the followers. Stalin's charisma is therefore questionable since his relationship with the masses was never direct. In fact, he created an image of himself that was so idealized, so far from reality, that he shrank from spontaneous contact with large groups. He became an "idolized" leader, not an "authentic" leader, with no "true relationship...characterized by deeply held motives, shared goals" between idol and followers, and the followers became mere "spectators." Indeed neither of the Soviet cults--Lenin's or Stalin's--was charismatic if charisma is an "authentic" type of leadership requiring a "true relationship" between leader and followers.<sup>50</sup>

The creation of a cult does not necessarily preclude authentic leadership. Mao Tse-tung, for example, was both a cult figure and an authentic leader. Such a leader must, however, resolve two major difficulties in order to maintain a true relationship with his followers. First, he must be certain

that his own motives and goals continue to be shared by his followers and, if he senses a difference--that his own perception of needed change differs from that which is taking place--he must be able to instill in his followers beliefs similar to his own. He must mobilize them, persuade them, and woo them by the force of his own personality, and not merely by projecting a false image of himself or claiming special anointment by his predecessor. He must lead the masses, but not fool them. Second, the leader must retain an accurate picture of his own strengths and weaknesses. This permits an accurate estimate of the limits (as well as the possibilities) of his leadership.

An authentic leader must also have a dual sense of confidence: in himself, and in the intelligence of the individuals he is leading to understand his goals and be persuaded by his arguments. Stalin absorbed Lenin's elitism--his distrust of mass spontaneity--rather than Mao's confidence in the capacity of the masses to effect needed change. Hence the cults which Stalin and his colleagues established (that of Lenin and later his own) were intended to fool the masses by setting up an idol to be obeyed. Mao's cult as well as the Cultural Revolution itself, kicked off by his famous swim in the river, appealed to the population by setting up an example to be imitated.<sup>51</sup> But Stalin lacked both confidence in the masses and faith in his own abilities. He did not have available to him one essential source of self-confidence possessed by leaders such as Mao, Tito, and Castro: Stalin had not led a successful revolution. Stalin's road to leadership had never required an authentic relationship with the masses, and therefore he had no confidence in his ability to do so. He found the position of an idol demanding obedience more comfortable than that of a role-model eliciting imitation. A distinction can be made among leaders of revolutionary parties between the first and second generations, between those who have achieved supreme power by leading their own revolution and those who gain that top position during post-

revolutionary political competition. These two types of individuals would be expected to have contrasting qualities, both personal and professional. But the second generation of leaders would also be less likely to have that dual sense of confidence which can be produced by the crucible of revolution and which, in turn, can promote authentic leadership.

Where, then, does Nicolae Ceaușescu fit into this picture? Does he have that dual sense of confidence less likely in post-revolutionary leaders? He is clearly the object of a cult, but is he, like Mao, an "authentic" leader or, like Stalin, an "idolized" leader? Is he an example to be imitated or an idol to be obeyed?

#### The Need for an Idol

During his consolidation of power in 1965-1969 Ceaușescu was given credit for a number of basic policies including national autonomy, participatory reforms, respect for "socialist legality," and rapid economic development. To the extent that these policies expressed the needs and desires of a large proportion of Romanian society, Ceaușescu had the chance to become an authentic leader, worthy of imitation, with whom the citizen felt a close bond. Indeed, by late 1968 his positions on the first three issues had gained for him a genuine popularity based on citizens' views of his policy priorities. In the 1970s Romanians looked back on the late sixties as their country's "Golden Age."<sup>53</sup>

Yet the decade following 1969 saw the creation of a leadership cult around Ceaușescu rivaling those of Stalin and Mao. Unfortunately, Ceaușescu's popularity in 1968 rested as much on expectations as on reality. He was perceived as willing to bring about a much greater departure from past practice on all four issues than was ever achieved. After the Tenth Party Congress, Ceaușescu's priorities began to diverge more and more sharply from the personal goals of many Romanians. The crucial area of disagreement was the economy.

Ceaușescu continued to impose high rates of investment in heavy industry rather than increasing current consumption or investment in consumer goods and services. He justified his choices repeatedly in terms of future consumption, so he must have been aware of the discontent his policies would elicit. Nevertheless, he initiated a campaign to fulfill the 1971-1975 Plan in four-and-a-half years, and further intensified popular disappointment in 1974 when the Eleventh Party Congress brought a still higher investment rate (thirty-three percent of national income, in contrast to twenty-eight percent in 1969). Again, this was justified in terms of future consumption, acceptable to Ceaușescu, but not to the majority of Romanians.<sup>52</sup>

Starting in 1969, therefore, Ceaușescu needed to shape and direct public opinion, to increase his authority so as to persuade the masses, to "woo them by the force of his own personality" into changing their expectations. Here he ran into difficulties. Ceaușescu's skills are not those of a Trotsky, or a Mao, or a Castro. He has evidently been able to gain the respect of those with whom he deals on an individual basis, but he does not move crowds by his oratorical abilities. He appears impressive on television during a crisis, issuing directives to local officials as they deal with floods or earthquakes. But in such a situation, he is handling individuals and making quick decisions. When Ceaușescu faces a large crowd he becomes awkward and retreats into formality, reading speeches in a monotone, and underlining crucial phrases by unrhythmic fist-pounding with the stress all too often falling on the wrong word. He may have total faith in his own abilities and his own decisions, but he does not have the ease and confidence in his relationship with the masses that is a prerequisite for authentic mass leadership. He may be a first generation revolutionary, but the Romanian masses never followed him to revolution.

Once the gap between his own priorities and the expectations of the masses became clear to him the cult began--and a variety of indicators such

as absenteeism or low productivity would have revealed the lack of support. Ceaușescu and his colleagues had to create an idol to be obeyed, an image which would mobilize the popular support which regime goals and Ceaușescu's personality could not produce. Ceaușescu could not maintain his authentic leadership and had to become an idol.

#### Ceaușescu's Priorities and Personality

Ceaușescu is a dedicated Marxist in that he defines civilization in terms of industrialization, specifically the rapid growth of heavy industry rather than consumer goods and services. Since a very early age, his entire life has revolved around the collective experience of revolutionary and post-revolutionary activity within the Romanian Communist Party. His only education was in the small circle of underground Marxists active in Bucharest in the 1930s, and he spent his entire life within the borders of Romania. It is no wonder that his policies all reflect one goal: the rapid industrialization of socialist Romania. He views any reform, any organizational change, as a means toward economic development. He permits economic reform measures so long as they do not interfere with centralized planning and high rates of accumulation. He encourages material rewards only if directly related to improved production, but investment in the consumer sector remains too low to provide the incentives necessary in a developed economy. He approves contacts with the West if they aid the development of Romanian scientific and technical expertise. But none of these changes can be allowed to threaten the primacy of the RCP in the political system or the personal control of Ceaușescu. Measures vital to economic development receive priority, and policies in every sector are determined by this ultimate goal.

Ceaușescu is also a first generation revolutionary. Therefore he is an activist, impatient with slow processes of development, eager to speed the

course of history by force if necessary. Like Khrushchev and Mao, Ceaușescu has great faith in the efficacy of agitprop: voluntarism harnessed by the Party activist and bolstered by correct education. One of Ceaușescu's first responses to the gap between his goals and those of the Romanian population was the "mini-cultural revolution" of 1971. Education would be pragmatic and closely tied to production, and ideological activism would overcome all obstacles. Ceaușescu is unquestionably a self-made man, a socialist Horatio Alger, who displayed tenacity and intelligence in overcoming the poverty of his childhood by hard work. Even his most bitter critics agree that his energy is boundless. Yet he expects as much from every citizen and here is a difficulty. His plans for economic development have proven too ambitious when no significant incentive system has yet been offered the population. Ceaușescu's strong stance as a Romanian nationalist mitigated discontent for a number of years, but patriotism does not forever provide a satisfactory substitute for sugar and meat. A self-motivated overachiever himself, Ceaușescu finds it hard to understand the majority of the population who are not.

Ceaușescu's attitudes toward intellectuals can be explained by his early experiences. Not formally educated, he has no patience with individuals who wish to devote themselves to personal creativity--the poet who "creates" for himself or for a small circle of friends, and who makes no effort to reach the "people" or make his work comprehensible to them. Artists and writers should raise the educational level of the workers and peasants so that all contribute more effectively to the socialist development of Romania. As a materialist and pragmatist, Ceaușescu expects culture to serve the masses and all citizens to be instruments in the creation of socialism in Romania. His major departure from the prepared text in his speech to the Eleventh Party Congress in November 1974 was a fist-pounding reminder to intellectuals to "place all creative capacities...at the service of the people." No one should

become complacent or assume adequate knowledge: "Today's intellectuals must be educated in order to educate others."<sup>54</sup>

No intellectual himself, Ceaușescu recognizes the necessity of argument and discussion in creative activity, and also of contacts with foreign culture. But his calls for a diversity of views are based on the dialectical process in which contradictions produce synthesis. And there is enough of Lenin's mistrust of spontaneity within Ceaușescu's Marxism-Leninism to convince him that the Party must determine the correct content of any synthesis.

Ceaușescu must be extremely proud of his peasant background which gives him a special claim to contact with the masses and understanding of their needs. But he is also rather sensitive to his lack of education. He includes a few intellectuals in his inner circle, and uses their expertise in diplomacy, economics, and education. Yet at the same time he seems more comfortable addressing a conference of workers, cooperative peasants, or Party secretaries than a meeting of the Writers' Union. He was granted an honorary doctorate on his fifty-fifth birthday, indicative of his sensitivity at having no formal academic credentials, but honorary degrees are a source of prestige in the academic community only if they follow real intellectual achievement. Ceaușescu's experience in the RCP has undoubtedly taught him more about the Romanian political system than any pure academic could ever hope to learn, but it does not gain him the respect within the Romanian intellectual community to which he aspires. The result is defensive scorn on both sides, combined with a pragmatic recognition that it will always be necessary for the Party and the creative unions to compromise and work together for the different goals vital to both.

Of course, there are divisions within the intellectual community as well. Some writers and artists hold even more conservative views than does Ceaușescu himself. In practice, therefore, the discussions are carried

on within the creative unions with the Party (and Ceaușescu) standing above the fray, taking sides only when necessary, and using sparingly the power to distribute material rewards and publishing privileges. These under normal circumstances are controlled by the various unions themselves, but they are ultimately the prerogative of the political leadership.

Another aspect of Ceaușescu's personality which relates to his political style is his "middle-class morality," yet even this strong emphasis on personal integrity is pragmatic. His strict attitude toward family life--condemnation of divorce, abortion, adultery, or any other acts which might be considered detrimental to the nuclear family--is part of an attempt to increase population growth. His stress on the "work ethic" and protection of state property is directly connected to increased economic efficiency.<sup>55</sup>

Ceaușescu is a Marxist revolutionary, impatient to achieve rapid industrialization; demanding heavy sacrifices from all citizens toward that goal, puritanical in his personal life, mistrustful of intellectuals, yet confident that correct attitudes (ideology and education) can achieve any goal. In addition, and perhaps most important of all, Ceaușescu is a nationalist. He aims at the socialist development of the Romanian nation, and it is to this goal that all citizens must contribute. Economic development must be autarkic, accomplished independently of outside aid, whether from East or West. Ironically, this means that Romania has followed the Soviet model: rapid industrialization gained not by external borrowing, but by suppressing the internal standard of living. This is not a policy likely to endear Ceaușescu to the majority of Romanians--perhaps to the Party elite, whose special privileges cushion them from the worst hardships, but not to most Romanians.

Techniques of Rule

Ceașescu's political techniques changed significantly during the 1970s.

Policy was no longer cautious and ambiguous, nor was collective leadership maintained even as a facade. Decisions were made by Ceașescu himself and reflected his personal priorities. Heavy industry, high investment, and centralized planning continued to form the basis of an extensive development strategy of increased inputs (land, labor, capital) rather than intensive development (more efficient use of those inputs).

Personnel manipulation changed from promotion to circulation of Ceașescu's supporters. Individuals moved back and forth between the Party Secretariat and the Council of Ministers, and also from Bucharest to regional posts or the reverse. The horizontal circulation of top officials enabled a relatively stable group to remain on the Party Executive Committee.<sup>56</sup> The Secretariat and Council of Ministers, in contrast, have seen frequent turnover.<sup>57</sup> The other type of elite circulation--the interchange of cadres between Bucharest and outlying areas--began at a CC Plenum in February 1971 to "combat excessive centralism" and "strengthen the ties between the leading organs and the masses." At least thirteen changes in the next two years involved "interchange" between county first secretaries and Bucharest, and dozens of current officials reflect this process in their careers.<sup>58</sup> The forty-one county first secretaries are "little Ceașescus" directly administering Party and state hierarchies at that level. Ceașescu uses the posts to train and test people on their way up and also to move others away from the center temporarily. Such exile is not necessarily a demotion, since Ceașescu may be entrusting a crucial region to a competent subordinate. It is often impossible to tell the difference until the individual's next career move.<sup>59</sup>

Several factors about personnel manipulation during this period are important to note. (1) Changes often seem arbitrary. Individuals in the circulating elite tend to be generalists, Party activists, who may focus on a particular sector such as agriculture, culture, or foreign trade, but who are just as likely to shift from one sector to another. They are presumably valuable to Ceaușescu for their personal loyalty, and also for their ability to mobilize and motivate others rather than for their technical expertise. (2) Changes are frequent. Two to four years seems to be the usual length of service in any one office. No one has time to build a power base from which to challenge Ceaușescu.<sup>60</sup> (3) A new location for training and testing cadres has emerged: the post of Presidential Counselor. At first a small ad hoc group of individual advisors from a variety of sectors and backgrounds, the counselors are now identified more frequently as such and move from that position directly into the Secretariat or Council of Ministers (or out to a county).<sup>61</sup> (4) Loyalty to Ceaușescu is usually rewarded in the long run. Given the rapidity of personnel shifts, Ceaușescu's coterie has been remarkably stable. Very few individuals have been removed in disgrace. Instead they are retired to a minor position (often with ministerial status), remain members of the Central Committee, and live out their days in relative luxury.

In short, the arbitrary and rapid shifts in personnel contribute to the personal power of the prime mover, Ceaușescu. He uses both his Presidential advisors and the Party apparatus as a source of new proteges, and local Party posts serve the additional function of storage area for officials who hope to be recalled. These hopes are fulfilled often enough to preempt dissatisfaction and thoughts of opposition.

Institutionalization of the political process from 1969 to 1979 turned into personalization. The formal decision-making bodies now function largely as coordinating bodies for policies set by Ceaușescu himself with the

ad hoc help of his personal counselors. The Executive Committee is unwieldy: its meetings, reported in print, often include guests and presumably are formal. The Bureau seems to be a more important body, but its membership is less clear and ostensibly conveys no formal status or prestige (its members are not usually identified as such). As the decade progressed decrees appeared more and more often from the President himself, rather than from the Council of State, and were issued without having the implications worked out and solutions provided in advance. The Presidential solution to almost any problem was a new decree or perhaps a major new campaign, often so extreme as to produce complications which had to be resolved by a new campaign.<sup>62</sup> Regulations proliferated, invading all economic sectors and the personal lives of citizens.<sup>63</sup> Ceaușescu responded to any need with increased coercion, regulation, and centralization. But for many years these responses were quite successful. Throughout the 1970s Romania maintained by far the highest growth rate in Eastern Europe (and among the highest in the world), and did so largely without foreign loans. At the end of 1979 Romania's debt service ratio was the lowest in Eastern Europe.<sup>64</sup>

Participatory and populist techniques continued throughout the decade but, except for intermittent appeals to Romanian nationalism, these did not arouse the spontaneous support that had been so widespread in 1968. Among the new participatory techniques introduced by Ceaușescu were multi-candidate elections to the Grand National Assembly in 1975 and 1980. Unfortunately, since the nomination process remained tightly controlled by the Party, many Romanian citizens saw little reason to exercise their right to choose between candidates; instead they merely dropped an unmarked (and therefore positive) ballot into the box, signaling both submission and indifference.<sup>65</sup> Ceaușescu's visits within Romania continued and increased, but the mass demonstrations

enthusiastically endorsing his rule had to be carefully orchestrated. Except in times of Soviet threat, Ceaușescu could not mobilize the support of the masses; he had ceased to be a genuine leader and had become an idol to be obeyed.

A Decade of Rule: The Balance in 1979

Despite the incongruity between Ceaușescu's goals for Romania and the goals of most Romanians, he remained firmly in control of the political process in 1979. There had been failures in achieving certain of his aims. Most such failures related to his chosen instruments for economic and political mobilization: the Party and state bureaucracies, or New Class. Despite his personal life style Ceaușescu expresses egalitarian values and during the 1970s tried to introduce several reforms to reduce social stratification. Ratios between highest and lowest salaries were officially reduced,<sup>66</sup> but this increased corruption, bribery, and the importance of the "second economy." Those with property from before 1945 were threatened by a campaign to "protect" the "national heritage" by a census of all "historical" items possessed by citizens; any property not declared was subject to confiscation.<sup>67</sup> But perhaps the most important of the egalitarian reforms involved education and had crucial implications for conveying elite status from one generation to the next. The educational reforms were by intention pragmatic, relating studies more closely to production in a variety of ways, and also assuring that merit measured by examinations (rather than influence) be the only criterion for admission to higher education.<sup>68</sup> Evidently Romanians have been quite successful in avoiding most potentially harmful effects of the new entrance requirements for the New Class by methods familiar in other political systems, methods ranging from tutoring to ingenious techniques for corrupting the examination process.

By the end of the decade Ceaușescu had not created a more egalitarian society, nor had he eliminated corruption which had actually intensified from

the ministerial level down to the local kiosk operator. His chosen instrument in effecting economic development, the New Class, had blocked his efforts to bring about a New Society. In selecting among his priorities Ceaușescu, like Stalin in the 1930s, had chosen economic growth and allowed social stratification to continue. He would allow the new political elite to maintain its privileges and not threaten them as Khrushchev mistakenly had done in the USSR with his educational and bureaucratic reforms. But Ceaușescu would not go so far as to extend substantial incentives to the masses. And as late as 1979 he had no need to do so. After all, his three major goals for Romania during that decade of rule were accomplished: his personal power remained intact, industrialization took place with great speed, and Soviet troops kept out of Romanian territory.

## V. CRISIS AND STALEMATE SINCE 1979

In 1979 Romania entered a period of economic crisis. The immediate cause of the difficulties was a shortage of hard currency due largely to structural imbalances in the international petroleum market. The Romanians had long specialized in petroleum-related products and had developed a major refining capacity. As the needs of their domestic industries grew, they began in the late 1960s to import larger and larger quantities of oil. The 1973-1974 rise in international oil prices was not disastrous because the price of their exports--refined products--also went up. In 1978, however, whereas the price of crude oil jumped again the value of refined products did not. The Romanians were caught in a price-scissors. Then their supply problems were exacerbated first by the Iranian Revolution (Ceașescu had worked out a favorable barter arrangement with the Shah), and later by the Iran-Iraq war. Since 1979 the Romanians have even bought oil from the Soviet Union, though evidently they must pay in hard currency or equivalents (which at least avoids dependency). A map of Romanian foreign policy initiatives and Ceașescu's foreign trips in the last several years provides an excellent picture of the major and minor oil-producing states throughout the world.

By 1981 the previously autarkic Romanian economy was seriously in debt to Western banks, a debt caused almost entirely by the unfavorable balance in oil trade.<sup>69</sup> And in that same year Poland's potential default (for quite different reasons--the Poles had borrowed heavily in the early 1970s<sup>70</sup>) created a crisis of confidence in all the East European economies on the part of Western bankers and made it difficult for Romania to obtain extensions on its loans.

Simultaneously Romanian agriculture, which had in the past been a source of exports and so might have helped the balance of payments, was falling short of its production goals partly as a result of several years of bad

weather but also from long-term structural problems which reached crisis proportions only in 1979. Romanian agriculture had been long neglected in favor of industry, but the country's rich soil, favorable climate, and large (though inefficient) agricultural labor force had continued to feed the population and produce a surplus for export. However, the economy was structured to encourage labor to move into industry and left little incentive for the ever-shrinking agricultural work force to raise productivity. Those who remained in villages tended to be old, less qualified, or tied to their homes by children. Seventy percent of those working in agriculture are now female. After 1970 investment did increase substantially, but it was so rapid as to be inefficient since productivity of land and labor grew more slowly. By 1979 the combination of bad weather and low productivity in a shrinking labor force brought major shortfalls in planned production for internal and external markets.

The international structure of oil prices improved somewhat in 1981 and 1982, and eased the hard currency crisis somewhat for the Romanians. But, for the most part, Ceaușescu has evened the balance of payments in the same way that he found investment funds: by depressing the domestic standard of living. There were reports of food shortages throughout 1981, and in 1982 Romanian food supplies were more scarce than they had been since World War II. Prices of available foods had tripled in little more than a year. Restaurants were empty because Romanians could not afford to eat out. Even the peasant markets with supplies from private plots were often empty. Bread, sugar, and oil were rationed, eggs would disappear for weeks at a time, and meat was usually not available. Gasoline for private cars was strictly rationed, and driving was pleasant because there were few cars on the road. Ceaușescu was able to impose such stringent controls that the trade balance for 1981 showed a slight surplus, and will reportedly improve further in 1982.<sup>72</sup>

The short-term balance of payments crisis may have eased, but the fundamental crisis facing the Romanian economy is the need to shift from

extensive to intensive growth. Such a shift requires a number of important changes: close links between effort and reward, in other words a strong incentive structure rather than coercion; a price structure closely aligned to costs of inputs as well as outputs; flexibility in decision-making so that responses reflect and adjust to demand; and a long learning process on the part of both labor and management. There have been recent decrees and campaigns to link labor and income more closely, but the stress has been on penalties rather than incentives, tighter labor discipline, and more regulations.<sup>73</sup> Ceausescu introduced price reforms, as demanded by the International Monetary Fund,<sup>74</sup> but the other requirements are more difficult for him and his colleagues to accept.

#### Response to the Crisis

In responding to the crisis, Ceausescu has not returned to the rhetoric of collective leadership so vehement in 1965. Instead the personality cult is stronger than ever. Ceausescu remains infallible and omniscient; mistakes are the fault of officials who have not followed his instructions. But he is promising change in many sectors and so raising hopes once again that perhaps this time (in contrast to 1965) he means to bring about such change. And he is taking some steps to back up his rhetoric: more top level officials have been removed in disgrace than in any other period of Ceausescu's rule except 1968-1969. There is no longer security for Ceausescu's appointees. In fact, the circulation of individuals has speeded up. Both the Party Secretariat and the vice-presidents of the Council of Ministers changed almost completely in 1981 and 1982, and over half of the county first secretaries moved to other positions. The ministries which have suffered most have been in the sectors of mining and petroleum, agriculture, and foreign trade, but changes have been made in other areas and criticism has not always been followed by the removal of implicated officials. Demotions are therefore

unpredictable, often arbitrary, and seem to depend on the personal whims of Ceaușescu himself. Hence he has abandoned any pretense at institutionalizing the political process, but rather has increased its personalization. An individual's security and promotion depend on placating Ceaușescu.<sup>75</sup>

On the other hand, Ceaușescu has made greater use since 1979 of the participatory populism introduced in the late 1960s. There have been national conferences in almost every economic sector, preceded in each case by local and county conferences, keeping citizens and officials occupied. As if that were not enough, he has introduced a "beautification" campaign to maintain order and discipline, keep up morale, and incidentally to make sure no free time is left for private grumbling to turn into action. Ceaușescu's personal schedule has been more hectic than before 1979, if that is possible. He has visited almost every county more than once, criticizing local officials and appealing over their heads to the population. A visit to the Bucharest markets in October 1982 demonstrates his techniques: three officials were dismissed for failing to supply the population with adequate food.<sup>76</sup>

Ceaușescu has also made a great many foreign trips, catering to Romanian national pride by his international activism. He stresses Romania's close relations with the Third World and his own prestige with foreign leaders. His attitudes and Romanian policies continue to be covertly anti-Soviet, but they have become more overtly anti-West, particularly on disarmament and Third World issues. In 1981, for example, he staged giant demonstrations against both superpowers for engaging in a nuclear arms race, pointing out his own rejection of military alliances. Such demonstrations surely served both foreign and domestic policy goals by highlighting his international prestige and his independence of both blocs. (The January 1983 stand of the Warsaw Pact favoring non-aggression and disarmament fits in well with his own priorities and so for once he can support Soviet policy.)<sup>77</sup>

In general, Ceaușescu's nationalism has become more extreme, almost xenophobic, since 1979. He has been stressing Romania's need to be self-sufficient and to find autarkic methods of continuing development and growth in many economic sectors such as energy, shipping, agriculture, to name but a few recent campaigns. He is also more firm than ever in rejecting US efforts to influence his human rights policies. For example, he is now mobilizing Third World support for the new fees to be charged Romanian emigres for education received in Romania. The fees are portrayed as part of the fight against the "brain drain" to the industrialized countries, and he has apparently received support at the United Nations from the Group of 77 for this claim.<sup>78</sup>

Ceaușescu has shifted his techniques of rule since 1979, but he has not returned to the strategies of the 1965-1969 period of regime weakness. He has increased the participatory and populist rhetoric and dramatic gestures in domestic and foreign policy; to enhance his populist image of national hero, his activities and those of his close colleagues have become more and more frenzied as visits and conferences multiply at home and abroad. Otherwise, Ceaușescu has merely intensified the methods used from 1969 to 1979: the cult of personality, the circulation of personnel, and the personalization of political power. He has not moved toward long-term solutions to the fundamental economic problems, but so far has managed to prevent open opposition to his rule. The situation in early 1983 is at a stalemate.

## CONCLUSIONS: CEAUȘESCU'S FUTURE AND UNITED STATES POLICY

Nicolae Ceaușescu has clearly been in trouble for several years. He is facing multiple economic crises and using the same old solutions to deal with them: coercion and centralized planning with increasing numbers of indicators and regulations. Ceaușescu established his personal control of the Romanian Communist Party and then of the entire political system by 1969, and during the 1970s went on to nationalize and personalize power in that East European state. The economic crises began only in 1979, and involve foreign trade, agriculture, and the more general need to shift from extensive to intensive growth. The trade deficit seems to be temporarily under control at the cost of drastic reductions in the standard of living, particularly food supplies. However, a long-term solution to the three crises will require changes in the structuring of incentives throughout the Romanian economy. Given his background and priorities, Ceaușescu and his chosen colleagues seem unlikely to develop the political flexibility to adopt such a solution. On the other hand, Ceaușescu is a brilliant politician who has gained and maintained control of Romania despite internal and external opposition. He has been in trouble before and survived. Now he is scrambling to keep himself, his family, and his friends in power. Whether he will surmount the difficulties remains in question. But he maneuvered very effectively in 1981 and 1982, preventing overt opposition without resolving underlying issues, and so creating a political stalemate.

### Ceaușescu's Future: Elite Opposition?

It is possible that Ceaușescu will be removed from office by colleagues within the political elite. Any observer who remembers the ouster of Khrushchev would be foolhardy to reject the possibility of such an internal coup in Romania. There are indirect signs in the Romanian press (confirmed

in private conversations with Romanians) that Ceaușescu has failed to generate much support for himself and his policies. Since 1979 he has intensified his use of political techniques such as the circulation of personnel, the hero worship of the cult, the rhetoric of participatory populism, and even a nationalism dangerously close to xenophobia as he stresses self-sufficiency and criticizes both superpowers with equal vehemence on certain issues. He has revealed his desperation, at times even panic, in frantic maneuvering to mitigate mass discontent and simultaneously prevent any challenge from within the political elite.

His personnel techniques are so skillful, however, that it is difficult to see how any elite coalition might form in opposition. If a group within the Party elite, perhaps with the cooperation of some military and security officers, were to carry out a successful coup, we might in retrospect be able to find signs of Ceaușescu's pending doom. But it is unlikely that we would see in advance any more signs than those visible today, that is, his own frantic moves to strengthen his position. If any signs were visible, Ceaușescu and his family surely would see them before any foreign observers and take steps to prevent a successful challenge. Indeed, that may be what happened in the cases of Virgil Trofin (November 1981) and Cornel Burtică (October 1982). The measures taken against those two potential successors, and therefore potential challengers, were so out of the ordinary for Ceaușescu that they may have been planning on separate occasions to move against him. Individuals who fail in their duties or disagree with Ceaușescu are merely demoted or circulated: the offenses of these two must have been greater.<sup>79</sup> A successful coup against Ceaușescu from within the political elite seems unlikely, though not impossible, and would probably not be visible in advance.

Mass Revolt? Workers and Intellectuals

A revolution against Ceaușescu from below seems equally unlikely. In communist Romania there has never been the cooperation between workers and intellectuals that occurred in Hungary in 1956 or in Poland after 1970 and that seems to be a prerequisite for mass revolt in Eastern Europe. Ceaușescu has preempted any trade union activity before it could start except for a strike of coal miners in the Jiu Valley during the summer of 1977. He then demonstrated his political skill by combining carrot and stick: he promised to accede to many demands, and did in fact raise living standards temporarily in the vicinity; but as soon as the miners went back to work, he arrested the major leaders and sent them to prison for long terms. This successfully discouraged further strikes by showing miners that it was disastrous to lead such an action.

In Poland intellectuals are widely regarded (and regard themselves) as defenders of the nation, or bearers of the national consciousness in times of tribulation.<sup>80</sup> Romanian intellectuals, in contrast, are all too often criticized for their passivity and unwillingness to challenge political authority before and after 1945. Vague references to a passive intellectual tradition do not explain adequately the action (or inaction) of intellectuals in Romania under Ceaușescu. First, there have been several challenges to his authority over scholarship and creative unions, but the resistance has been subtle and indirect. For example, in the period just after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, the Writers' Union was granted the right to elect officers by secret ballot. A change in rules has been resisted by the members, thus forcing Ceaușescu to compromise in selecting those officers.<sup>81</sup> In addition, the Romanian Academy refused to elect Elena Ceaușescu as its President. Her husband's response was to create other academies which he controlled and channel funds to those bodies. But the prestigious Academy did not yield. Second,

Romanian intellectuals have been politically active, but their activism before 1918 focused on the need for national unity and independence, and in the interwar period on the defense of that new unity. Given that tradition, most Romanian intellectuals in Ceaușescu's Romania are paralyzed by their nationalism. Ceaușescu's success in facilitating national development and independence is finally being seriously questioned, but his appeals to nationalism still remain rather successful. To criticize him is to betray the nation.

Two other factors contribute to the absence of unified resistance against Ceaușescu by intellectuals. There is no independent ideological institution such as the Roman Catholic Church in Poland. The Romanian Orthodox Church has reached an accommodation with the regime, and other religious groups are (for ethnic Romanians) identified with national minorities and therefore suspect in their political loyalties. Finally, Ceaușescu himself has been very clever in handling scholars and creative artists just as he has preempted opposition within the political elite or among the workers. A rather bizarre case in the spring of 1982 involving transcendental meditation illustrates his skill. Under semi-official approval a number of important officials, writers, artists, and other intellectuals in 1981 had begun to study transcendental meditation under a returned Romanian emigre. Originally posited as a means of increasing work efficiency, the technique was denounced in late April 1982 as foreign espionage. Those involved were detained and questioned at length by the security police and, while everyone was eventually released, it seemed for several weeks that this might become a broad purge of Bucharest intellectuals. The case created tremendous fear and insecurity as those implicated (and those not implicated) remembered the trials of the early 1950s. By late May, the Bucharest intellectual community was feeling relieved, but not sufficiently adventurous to engage in any oppositional activity.<sup>82</sup> Ceaușescu mixes threats

and promises. He manipulates citizens' fears, their selfish interest in economic rewards, and their altruistic nationalism, to neutralize any opposition and prevent that alliance of interests that has produced mass revolt elsewhere in Eastern Europe.

#### Dilemmas for Romanians

The move from extensive to intensive development conflicts with hierarchical, centralized control. As a Marxist revolutionary, a firm believer in centralized power and coercive solutions to his problems, Ceaușescu has found it impossible to institute the economic reforms that would increase efficiency, flexibility, and productivity. This is the dilemma for the Romanian political elite. Ceaușescu's skills have been effective in nationalizing power, but does he have the skills necessary for further development? Does he deserve their continued loyalty? But what could take its place? Ceaușescu's political acumen is so great that he seems to have moved from crisis to stalemate. But in achieving that stalemate his nationalism and his cult of personality have become more and more strident, further and further removed from reality, and less and less appealing to the Romanian population. In addition, revolutionary leaders like Ceaușescu are not satisfied with stalemate, unlike the post-revolutionary Brezhnev or Jaruzelski. Ceaușescu's future and that of Romania will depend on the methods he uses to break out of the stalemate. This is Ceaușescu's dilemma. Perhaps in 1983, after fifty years of revolutionary activity, he will abandon his commitment to social change. But that seems unlikely as long as his health and energy hold out.

Here we have the major weakness of personalized political power: the absence of an institutionalized succession. If Ceaușescu dies, or is forced out of office, the new leaders (and presumably there would temporarily be a collective leadership) might be able to make the succession as smooth as it was in 1965. Even so, the Romanian Communist Party would be weakened for a

Romanian intellectuals have been politically active, but their activism before 1918 focused on the need for national unity and independence, and in the interwar period on the defense of that new unity. Given that tradition, most Romanian intellectuals in Ceaușescu's Romania are paralyzed by their nationalism. Ceaușescu's success in facilitating national development and independence is finally being seriously questioned, but his appeals to nationalism still remain rather successful. To criticize him is to betray the nation.

Two other factors contribute to the absence of unified resistance against Ceaușescu by intellectuals. There is no independent ideological institution such as the Roman Catholic Church in Poland. The Romanian Orthodox Church has reached an accommodation with the regime, and other religious groups are (for ethnic Romanians) identified with national minorities and therefore suspect in their political loyalties. Finally, Ceaușescu himself has been very clever in handling scholars and creative artists just as he has preempted opposition within the political elite or among the workers. A rather bizarre case in the spring of 1982 involving transcendental meditation illustrates his skill. Under semi-official approval a number of important officials, writers, artists, and other intellectuals in 1981 had begun to study transcendental meditation under a returned Romanian emigre. Originally posited as a means of increasing work efficiency, the technique was denounced in late April 1982 as foreign espionage. Those involved were detained and questioned at length by the security police and, while everyone was eventually released, it seemed for several weeks that this might become a broad purge of Bucharest intellectuals. The case created tremendous fear and insecurity as those implicated (and those not implicated) remembered the trials of the early 1950s. By late May, the Bucharest intellectual community was feeling relieved, but not sufficiently adventurous to engage in any oppositional activity.<sup>82</sup> Ceaușescu mixes threats

and promises. He manipulates citizens' fears, their selfish interest in economic rewards, and their altruistic nationalism, to neutralize any opposition and prevent that alliance of interests that has produced mass revolt elsewhere in Eastern Europe.

#### Dilemmas for Romanians

The move from extensive to intensive development conflicts with hierarchical, centralized control. As a Marxist revolutionary, a firm believer in centralized power and coercive solutions to his problems, Ceaușescu has found it impossible to institute the economic reforms that would increase efficiency, flexibility, and productivity. This is the dilemma for the Romanian political elite. Ceaușescu's skills have been effective in nationalizing power, but does he have the skills necessary for further development? Does he deserve their continued loyalty? But what could take its place? Ceaușescu's political acumen is so great that he seems to have moved from crisis to stalemate. But in achieving that stalemate his nationalism and his cult of personality have become more and more strident, further and further removed from reality, and less and less appealing to the Romanian population. In addition, revolutionary leaders like Ceaușescu are not satisfied with stalemate, unlike the post-revolutionary Brezhnev or Jaruzelski. Ceaușescu's future and that of Romania will depend on the methods he uses to break out of the stalemate. This is Ceaușescu's dilemma. Perhaps in 1983, after fifty years of revolutionary activity, he will abandon his commitment to social change. But that seems unlikely as long as his health and energy hold out.

Here we have the major weakness of personalized political power: the absence of an institutionalized succession. If Ceaușescu dies, or is forced out of office, the new leaders (and presumably there would temporarily be a collective leadership) might be able to make the succession as smooth as it was in 1965. Even so, the Romanian Communist Party would be weakened for a

time. Such weakness might produce policy compromise and give the population at least some influence over policy as in 1965-1969. On the other hand, a weakened regime might increase Soviet influence in Romanian politics. This is the dilemma for the Romanian population. Most Romanians, like more and more Poles, prefer stalemate to the likely result of civil disorder: Soviet intervention. Thus Soviet proximity contributes to popular passivity and helps to keep the anti-Soviet Ceaușescu in power. Ironically, Romanian autarky--the determination of the Romanian political elite to separate their nation from the Soviet Union--has made Romania a replica of the Soviet system by requiring rapid industrialization, low levels of consumption, and tight political control. The personalization and nationalization of Romanian politics under Ceaușescu have cut ties to the USSR but, at the same time, have made Romania follow the Soviet development model more closely than any other East European state. The famous Romanian contradiction of an independent foreign policy and a Stalinist domestic policy is thus not a contradiction at all. Rather it is a necessary combination of political strategies employed by Nicolae Ceaușescu in the pursuit of power and the ever receding utopia of communist Romania.

#### The Dilemma for United States Policy

If the Romanian polity continues to be characterized by tight political control, economic stalemate, and a covertly anti-Soviet foreign policy, the US faces a familiar dilemma in our relations with Ceaușescu: how should we treat a "friendly" dictator? First, we have to examine just how friendly he is. Exactly how much damage has Romania inflicted on economic and ideological unity in Eastern Europe and on the military effectiveness of the Warsaw Pact? Ceaușescu has certainly blocked projects in Comecon at times, and punched a hole in the southern flank of the military alliance. But to what extent has that damage hurt the USSR rather than

its small East European allies? After all, it is not in our interest to weaken the other small states in the region and increase their dependency on the Soviet Union. Also, Ceaușescu's recent activities have temporarily reduced his value to the US as his nationalism has turned into xenophobia and he now includes the industrialized world among his enemies.

In fact, we must remember that Ceaușescu is not friendly to the US. All anti-Soviet leaders are not automatically pro-American. Ceaușescu is a nationalist dictator and will remain so. He defines Romanian national interests as he sees them and acts accordingly. In the past, separation from the Soviet bloc was his major concern. But since 1979 his national pride has been threatened rather than encouraged in the West during the crisis in Romania's balance of payments as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and Western bankers interfered in Romanian internal affairs and Ceaușescu was forced to make minor concessions to their demands. His resentment was no doubt intensified by Marxist prejudices against international capitalism.

Ceaușescu has always sought and found colleagues in the Third World, fellow nationalists intent on economic development. In the 1960s and 1970s it was politically convenient for Ceaușescu to detach Romania from the USSR on votes at the United Nations. This symbolized Romanian independence and defined Romania as a "developing" country, eligible for certain economic benefits. But the Third World now offers the Romanian dictator still more. Politically he can become a new Tito, play a leading role in the North-South conflict, and strengthen his position at home by his international prestige. Economically the Third World is a vital trading area for Romania since Ceaușescu can find markets for the products of Romanian industry.<sup>83</sup> In addition, however, he is now using the non-aligned movement to justify his repressive internal policies from the education tax blocking emigration to the monopoly of communications by press, radio, or television. Ceaușescu

opposes the free flow of people or ideas because it threatens him and Romanian interests as he defines them.

If Ceaușescu is not friendly to the US, then what should we do about him? Here it is important to remember that our ability to influence internal Romanian politics is very limited. Public hostility on the part of the US toward Ceaușescu can solidify his internal support by hurting Romanian national pride. But private pressure can simply harden his own resentment. Our leverage from MFN renewal is greatly overrated. Despite the warning to the Romanians in 1982 their actions since that renewal have apparently been worse than before. Any threat to withhold the recommendation for renewal must be carefully made since it must be carried through if there is no compliance. And ending MFN status ends the presumed leverage. Actually, MFN status for Romania is mutually beneficial and should be recognized as such. There are other areas where our influence might be more easily exerted. Specific trade agreements, academic, scientific, and cultural exchanges, and especially symbolic gestures of support (delegations, high-ranking visitors, honors for Ceaușescu) are more easily converted into a quid pro quo. However, we have in the past tied MFN status closely to free emigration and so the emigration fees cannot remain if that status is to be renewed in 1983. Our credibility is at stake. If Ceaușescu allows those fees to remain, he is testing our resolve and will do so again and again.

One final point about human rights in Romania: a number of individual cases are referred to the US government every year. In raising cases with the Romanian government, we should try to include ethnic Romanians whenever possible to reduce Ceaușescu's association of other groups--especially Hungarians and Jews--with "foreign interference." Increasing his xenophobia would be harmful to those minorities and the US has no way to protect them. It is a difficult

dilemma for Americans. We must continue to speak for members of these groups, but recognize that the results may be negative rather than positive, particularly during economic hardships which intensify existing hostilities.

US foreign policy choices regarding Ceaușescu are not attractive. His internal policies are disastrous for Romania, but we cannot bring about his downfall. Indeed his removal might temporarily increase Soviet influence. So we must live with him. His foreign policy has both advantages and disadvantages for the US. In the past, his covertly anti-Soviet actions have been lauded in the West and brought economic and military disunity to Eastern Europe. His dissenting voice in Comecon and the Warsaw Pact continues to be important. Now, however, his activities in the Third World often oppose US interests, and this should be considered in assessing his value to us. Also, he is unlikely to become a staunch supporter of the Soviet leaders for both they and the Romanian people would reject him afterwards. His nationalism has always regarded the Russians as a serious threat to Romanian sovereignty. He needs the US more than we need him and this should be kept in mind during negotiations with him. On the other hand, he is easily offended, with tendencies toward autarky and xenophobia, and must be handled carefully. Above all, we must try to keep untarnished the positive image of America held by most Romanians. Ceaușescu's successor(s) will face a period of regime weakness during which a return to the Soviet fold will be a major policy consideration. Given the internal fears of Soviet interference, they will probably try to avoid such a step. We should make every effort to help them do so when the time comes. Perhaps with our support the next Romanian leadership will be more successful in achieving the nationalization of power without the personalization.

## Notes

1. This foreign policy has been extensively documented in the last decade; see, for example, Ronald H. Linden, Bear and Foxes: The International Relations of the East European States, 1965-1969 (Boulder: East European Quarterly, distributed by Columbia University Press, 1979); Aurel Braun, Romanian Foreign Policy Since 1965: The Political and Military Limits of Autonomy (New York: Praeger, 1978); Robert L. Farlow, "Romania and the Policy of Partial Alignment," in James A. Kuhlman, ed., The Foreign Policies of Eastern Europe: Domestic and International Determinants (Leyden: A. W. Sijthoff, 1978), pp. 191-207. A superb analysis of the sources available on Romanian foreign policy will appear in Balkanistica during 1983 by Walter M. Bacon, Jr.

2. For a more detailed discussion of my views on the Ceaușescu cult, see my "Idol or Leader? The Origins and Future of the Ceaușescu Cult," in Daniel N. Nelson, ed., Romania in the 1980s (Boulder: Westview, 1981), pp. 117-41. This volume is the single most valuable survey of research on current developments in Romania.

3. On the Elena cult, see my "Women in Romanian Politics: Elena Ceaușescu, Pronatalism, and Affirmative Action," in Sharon Wolchik and Alfred Meyer, eds., The Changing Status of Women in Eastern Europe, forthcoming.

4. In 1974 my dissertation was roundly criticized in Romania for "personalizing" the post-1965 period as the "Ceaușescu era." Now such "personalization" is normal--even required--in Romania.

5. Scinteia, 26 April 1964, pp. 1-3. There have been a number of excellent studies on the Gheorghiu-Dej period and the shift in foreign policy. See, for example, Stephen Fischer-Galati, The New Rumania (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1967); David Floyd, Rumania: Russia's Dissident Ally (Oxford: Ampersand,

1965); Kenneth Jowitt, Revolutionary Breakthroughs and Political Development: The Case of Romania, 1944-1965 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971); J. Michael Montias, Economic Development in Communist Rumania (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1967); and the works cited in note 1 above.

6. On political appointments see below, esp. pp. 15-18, 34-35, 41-42. Romania is an exception to Warsaw Pact practice in the training and promotion of military officers. Romanian officers do not spend months studying in the USSR at various stages of their careers, and so Soviet officers do not comment on their performance and affect their upward mobility. See Christopher D. Jones, Soviet Influence in Eastern Europe: Political Autonomy and the Warsaw Pact (New York: Praeger, 1981), esp. ch. 8. Significantly enough, the one occasion when Ceaușescu abandoned precedent and executed a Romanian military officer as a traitor, his crime was reportedly pro-Soviet activity; this was an obvious lesson for his fellow officers. The "Serb affair" was summarized in Radio Free Europe, Romanian Situation Report 7 (17 February 1972) and Background Report 6 (6 March 1972). Perhaps as a reminder Ceaușescu always emphasizes loyalty and patriotism in speaking to military and security officers. There is undoubtedly cooperation between Romanian security police and other members of the Warsaw Pact, but voluntary cooperation on projects of mutual interest or exchanges of favors is normal between allies and does not equal control over cadre selection and promotion.

7. On military doctrine see Jones, ch. 3, and Walter M. Bacon, Jr., "Romanian Military Policy in the 1980s," in Nelson, Romania in the 1980s, pp. 202-218. Bacon will also have an essay on sources on Romanian military policy in Balkanistica during 1983.

8. On the recent flights of historical fancy, see Vlad Georgescu, Politică și istorie: cazul comunistilor romani 1944-1977 (Munich: Jon Dumitru,

1981), or Robert R. King, History of the Romanian Communist Party (Stanford: Hoover, 1980). One issue of Balkanistica in 1983 will be devoted almost entirely to Romanian historiography.

9. For example, to ease the foreign trade crisis it was announced in May 1982 that Romania would no longer pay royalties in hard currency. This effectively banned foreign books, films, plays, or television programs unless the copyright had expired or the copyright holder was willing to waive the fee.

10. For discussions of the national minorities, see George Schöpflin, The Hungarians of Rumania (London: Minority Rights Group, No. 37, 1978); Trond Gilberg, "Modernization, Human Rights, Nationalism: The Case of Romania," in George Klein and Milan J. Reban, eds., The Politics of Ethnicity in Eastern Europe (Boulder: East European Quarterly, distributed by Columbia University Press, 1981), pp. 185-211; and my "The Politics of National Inequality in Romania," in Daniel N. Nelson, Communism and the Politics of Inequality (Boston: Lexington Books, 1983 forthcoming), and the sources cited there.

11. See below, pp. 39-41.

12. At the end of 1979, for example, Romania's debt service ratio was the lowest in Eastern Europe; see US Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration, Office of East-West Policy and Planning, "U. S.-Romanian Trade Trends, January-June 1981" (October 1981), p. 2. On Romanian autarky, see Marvin R. Jackson, "Romania," in U. S. Congress, Joint Economic Committee, East European Economic Assessment, Part I--Country Studies, 1980 (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1980), esp. pp. 269-70, 285, and his "Perspectives on Romania's Economic Development," in Nelson, Romania in the 1980s, esp. p. 271.

13. For a discussion of his security in office see the conclusions below, esp. pp. 44-49.

14. There evidently were some challenges, but only minor ripples came to the surface: the Şerb affair, for example (see note 6 above), and possible economic disagreements with Prime Minister Maurer in the early 1970s. There were signs that Maurer favored more moderate rates of growth, and he retired due to "health and advanced age" in 1974 (Scînteia, 27 March 1974). His 80th birthday was just recognized publicly (Scînteia, 23 September 1982) and he was also given an award (Star of the RSR, First Class; Scînteia 31 December 1982). These sudden overtures to a "forgotten" figure may indicate Ceausescu's efforts to broaden his support within the Party in resolving the current economic difficulties.

15. Halfway between Piteşti and Craiova, Scorniceşti was a typical peasant village in 1975. When I next saw it in 1982 there were huge new apartment buildings along the main street, three factories, half a dozen schools, and broad parks. Scorniceşti has become the model town of the future for Romania. Needless to say, there is also a small museum honoring the town's most famous son. Incidentally, Ceauşescu still retains a strong Oltenian accent. Since Romanian "dunce" jokes are told about Oltenians, Ceauşescu's voice does not enhance his image of omniscience.

16. Only laudatory biographers have been allowed access to (presumably selective) archival sources on Ceauşescu's life. See, for example, Michel-P. Hamelet, Nicolae Ceausescu (Paris: Seghers, 1971), or Donald Catchlove, Romania's Ceausescu (London: Abacus, 1972). Hamelet, for example, cites an elementary school teacher's memories of Ceauşescu as "an attentive, disciplined pupil, gifted with a very broad memory, brilliant in mathematics," and a sister who asserts that Nicolae was the child "who endured hardships with the best humor" (p. 10). Unfortunately we must rely on such descriptions and official Romanian summaries of his life.

17. The article appeared in Cuvînt liber, 6 June 1936, and is one

of the very few contemporary sources on his revolutionary activity. The reporter was Eugen Jebelleanu and, needless to say, his career has not suffered under Ceaușescu. For more details on the 1930s see Hamelet and Catchlove.

18. On Doftana, now a myth of the Romanian revolution, see Z. Sălăjan, "Doftana--Bastion al luptei revoluționare...", Anale de istorie 16, No. 6 (1970), 30-42; and Ion Ardeleanu, Doftana: Monument al trecutului revoluționar (Bucharest: Editura pentru turism, 1974).

19. As told to Hamelet.

20. On the interwar period see Ghita Ionescu, Communism in Rumania, 1944-1962 (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), and King, History of the Romanian Communist Party.

21. On Ceaușescu's use of the Party apparatus as a source of supporters see my "Political Leadership and Personnel Policy in Romania 1965-1976," in Steven Rosefielde, ed., World Communism at the Crossroads (Boston: Martinus Nijhoff, 1980), pp. 210-33. Those promoted from the CC apparatus in Bucharest include Petre Lupu, Paul Niculescu-Mizil, Dumitru Popescu, and Virgil Trofin; current high officials who were regional first secretaries before 1965 include Iosif Banc, Maxim Berghianu, Ion Cîrcei, Constantin Dăscălescu, Dumitru Popa, Ion Stănescu, and Ilie Verdeț.

22. For a recent study of Soviet succession, see George W. Breslauer, Khrushchev and Brezhnev As Leaders: Building Authority in Soviet Politics (New York: Allen & Unwin, 1982). The sources cited provide a bibliography of earlier studies. There are signs already in the Brezhnev succession that Andropov is ending the brief "continuity" and establishing a separate identity with new priorities, heightened discipline, and veiled threats. Perhaps the long paralysis under the ailing Brezhnev demands quick action. So far the changes are rhetorical, but if implemented they would be a departure from past practice.

But then Andropov's power base differs from those of Brezhnev and Ceaușescu.

23. On "clientelism" in the Soviet Union and communist systems, see the symposium papers in Studies in Comparative Communism 12 (Summer-Autumn 1979): 159-245. Appointees do not always remain loyal to those who choose them, but Ceaușescu's record of instilling loyalty remains excellent in early 1983.

24. For a more detailed discussion of this period and the roles of Ceaușescu and other individuals in the leadership, see my dissertation, "Ceausescu and the Romanian Political Leadership: A Study in the Transfer and Consolidation of Power" (Harvard 1974), esp. pp. 88-214. On industry and agriculture see especially his speech to the Ninth Party Congress in Congresul al IX-lea al PCR (Bucharest: Ed. politică, 1966), pp. 21-104, and Scînteia, 29 June 1966. On writers and artists see Scînteia, 9 and 20 May 1965 and 18 June 1966.

25. See my dissertation, pp. 157-60.

26. The only change in the agricultural sector was a Congress of cooperative peasants held in Bucharest in March 1966. Ceaușescu used the occasion to address thousands of peasants in colorful costumes about the glorious revolutionary traditions of the Romanian peasantry. The Congress was one of the first examples of the political mobilization techniques for which Ceaușescu became known. See my dissertation, pp. 159-64. On the educational reform see pp. 165-68, 263-66, and on national traditions pp. 179-89, and Scînteia 7-8 May 1966, and 7 May 1967. Foreign policy has been discussed elsewhere; see note 1 above. Jowitt also analyzes this period.

27. The Statutes appeared in Scînteia, 6 June 1965, pp. 1-2. The responsibilities of the Party organs would henceforth include cultural life and morals in addition to political and economic activity, for example, and the Political Directorate of the Armed Forces was placed directly under the supervision of the Central Committee apparatus.

28. These rivals administered non-Party hierarchies such as the Council of State (Chivu Stoica), the Council of Ministers (Maurer), the trade unions (Apostol), and the security services (Drăghici).

29. See his speech in Congresul al IX-lea..., p. 732.

30. Except for Leonte Sălăjan, Minister of Defense, who died of natural causes and the Minister of Health, removed for "grave deficiencies" in the treatment of Sălăjan: Scinteia, 25, 29, and 30 August 1966.

31. On the Executive Committee and local officials, see my chapter in Rosefielde; on Central Committee turnover see my "The Romanian Communist Party and Its Central Committee: Patterns of Growth and Change," Southeastern Europe 6 Pt. 1 (1979): 1-28, esp. Tables 4 and 5. Turnover in the CC was also higher in 1969, when 68 percent were re-elected, than in 1965 when 84 percent continued as members.

32. Several other Ceaușescu rivals were also weakened by Article 13(b): for details see my dissertation, pp. 125-27. For more on Drăghici, see below, pp. 18-21.

33. Leonte Răutu (culture) and Ștefan Voitec (the nominal Social Democrat) remained in the leadership, but they had been candidate Politburo members under Gheorghiu-Dej.

34. For more details on this reform, see my dissertation, pp. 216, 223-26, 230-31, 248-55.

35. There were some indications of demotions at local levels: see, for example, "Omul potrivit la locul potrivit," Lupta de clasa 47 (June 1967): 5. The editorial reports the removal of 85 local secretaries and 240 economic officials for inadequate performance.

36. For details see my dissertation, pp. 172-73.

37. Scinteia, 7 May 1967. In English, see Nicolae Ceaușescu, Romania On the Way of Completing Socialist Construction, vol. II (Bucharest: Ed. politică,

1969), 260-62.

38. Ibid.

39. See my dissertation, pp. 187-88.

40. Scinteia, 1 June and 19 July 1967.

41. The agenda was printed in Scinteia on 23 April 1968, p. 1.

The other quotations are from the Decisions of the plenum, 26 April, pp. 1, 3.

42. Khrushchev's speech has appeared in a number of places; for example, Bertram D. Wolfe, Khrushchev and Stalin's Ghost (New York: Praeger, 1957), pp. 88-252.

43. The proceedings of the Romanian Central Committee Plenum were not published. Ceaușescu gave an extensive explanation of the decision in his talk to the Bucharest Party organization: this appeared in Scinteia, 28 April 1968, pp. 1, 3, esp. p. 3; in English, see Nicolae Ceaușescu, Romania..., vol. III, 163-90, esp. 172-73, 177-78, 181-82. For Drăghici's expulsion, see Scinteia, 26 April 1968, p. 3; he was removed from the Presidium, the Executive Committee, and the Central Committee by the Plenum which also recommended his dismissal as vice-president of the Council of Ministers. That body acted the next day: Scinteia, 27 April 1968, p. 5.

44. See Breslauer's discussions of Khrushchev's populism in Khrushchev and Brezhnev As Leaders.

45. For a general discussion of Ceaușescu's participatory reforms see my "Participatory Reforms and Political Development in Romania," in Jan Triska and Paul Cocks, eds., Political Development in Eastern Europe (New York: Praeger, 1977), pp. 217-37. I have also been able to sit in on meetings of several such bodies.

46. The Bucharest rally was described in Scinteia, 23 August 1968, p. 1, where his speech also appeared (or, in English, Ceaușescu, Romania..., vol. III, 382-85). Ceaușescu went to Brașov, the two Hungarian counties, and

Cluj; Maurer spoke in Tîrnăveni and Tîrgu Mureş, and Chivu Stoica in Craiova and Turnu Severin. Apostol went to Brăila, Bodnaraş to Iaşi, Niculescu-Mizil to Timiş, Arad, and Bihor, Trofin to Suceava and Botoşani, and Verdeţ to Hunedoara. All speeches appeared in Scînteia, 27 August-2 September 1968.

I have had numerous discussions with Romanians about the event which is stamped in their minds like Pearl Harbor or Kennedy's assassination for Americans.

47. Scînteia, 27 August 1968, pp. 1-2.

48. Parts of the following analysis of the cult appeared in my "Idol or Leader?" The terms "iconography" and "Bible" as well as "Gospel" and "shrine" have been applied to the Lenin cult by Nina Tumarkin; see her Lenin Lives! (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983 forthcoming). The first three volumes of Ceauşescu's collected works were published as Nicolae Ceauşescu, Romania pe drumul desăvîrşirii construcţiei socialiste (Bucharest: Ed. politică, 1968-69). The remaining volumes, now twenty, are titled Romania pe drumul construirii societăţii socialiste multilateral dezvoltate. The English edition now totals seventeen volumes. A series of what are essentially concordances to these speeches is called "Documente ale Partidului Comunist Român." Each volume is merely a series of long quotations from Ceauşescu on a specific topic such as socialist democracy, national defense, literature and art, agriculture, or the role of science in building socialism.

49. Under this condition, even Carl J. Friedrich reluctantly grants charismatic status to Lenin; see his "The Theory of Political Leadership and the Issue of Totalitarianism," in R. Barry Farrell, ed., Political Leadership in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union (Chicago: Aldine, 1970), p. 22.

50. James MacGregor Burns, Leadership (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), p. 248. Burns' thoughts on Lenin and Stalin were very useful to me in this analysis. The followers of the Lenin and Stalin cults may have been inspired by the cult, but they were inspired by a false image rather than by

the actual personality of the leader. This is not to say that Lenin himself was not a charismatic figure; he did in fact achieve a charismatic relationship with his followers in the Bolshevik Party (if the "scientific" definition of charisma is accepted). But that authentic leadership of the Party was not a cult aimed at the masses. Lenin, while still alive, was not a cult object. Lenin's colleagues in the Politburo created the cult after Lenin's death, and they used the worship of Lenin for their own purposes: see Tumarkin.

51. Burns implies this contrast in his discussion; see esp. pp. 248-54.

52. For more detail on Ceausescu's investment policies, see the sources by Jackson cited in note 12 above

53. Several different Romanians used the term "Golden Age" in private conversations with me to indicate the positive political and cultural policies of the late 1960s. Hopes were high, they suggested, that Ceaușescu personally would bring about a fundamental change in the system.

54. Congresul al XI-lea al PCR (Bucharest: Ed. politică, 1975), p. 78. I was fortunate to attend the Congress and so witnessed the speech. The discussion of Ceaușescu's personal qualities stems largely from my own observations of the Romanian press and television.

55. Some of the above discussion appeared originally in "Nicolae Ceaușescu: His Political Life and Style," Balkanistica V (1979): 84-99.

56. Eight full or candidate members remain from 1965, eleven from 1969, and twenty (out of forty) from 1974: from 1965: Ceaușescu, Banc, Gere, Niculescu Lupu, Radulescu, Verdeț, Voitec; from 1969 also Pană, Popescu, and M. Dobrescu; from 1974 also Bobu, Elena Ceaușescu, Ciobanu, Oprea, Păjan, Andrei, Giosan, Ursu, Winter.

57. Only Ceaușescu remains on the Secretariat from 1974, and only Banc from 1979; few ministers last more than three years in the same job.

58. Scinteia, 18 February 1971; for example, Banc, Bobu, Cazacu, Cioară, N. Constantin, Dănică, Dincă, M. Dobrescu, Drăgan, P. Enache, Onescu,

Pană, Stănescu, Trofin, and Winter, to name only those who have achieved Executive Committee status.

59. Those on their way up who do well may move to the CC apparatus in Bucharest (Cazacu, Cîrcei, M. Dobrescu, P. Enache, M. Vasile) or into the Council of Ministers (Bejan, Cocfrlă, N. Constantin, Dănică, Dăscălescu L. Fazekas, Găinușe. Nagy, Onescu, Petrescu, Ploștinaru, Winter). Those sent ambiguously into "exile" include Banc, Cazacu, T. Coman, I. Constantin, Dincă, M. Enache. Onescu, Pană, Trofin.

60. There are a few exceptions to prove this rule: Banc in the Secretariat since 1975, Agachi as Minister of Metallurgy since 1969, and Avram as Minister of Machine-Building (with intermittent reorganizations) since 1969.

61. Presidential Counselors recently appointed to high office include Bîrlea, E. Dobrescu, M. Enache, Gigea, and Pungan.

62. For example, in the fall of 1974 a decree required all foreigners (including myself) to reside in hotels, not Romanian homes; there was extensive confusion over foreign students, researchers, diplomats, or visiting relatives of Romanians. In the summer of 1979 hundreds of East European tourists were stranded throughout Romania when foreigners were suddenly required to pay for gasoline in hard currency (Scînteia, 26 July 1979). The severe floods of 1975 led to greater centralization of water policy and a campaign to regulate all waterways (Scînteia, 8 July, 16 October, 27 December 1975, 12 October 1977); nevertheless, a later campaign to increase irrigation brought emergency measures to provide drainage (Scînteia, 18 January 1975, 15 July 1976, 6 October 1982).

63. Attempts to improve livestock production led to a national animal census that included creatures as small and numerous as chickens and rabbits (Scînteia, 19 March 1982). A campaign to estimate and protect the "national heritage" led to a census of all historical (pre-1945) items in the possession of individual citizens; any property not declared was subject

to confiscation (Scinteia, 2 September 1978, 1 November 1978, 19 December 1978, and 25 November 1979). Of course, many Romanians believed that any objects which were declared would be seized. The need for periodic retraining of specialists was met by a comprehensive program covering all citizens: every employed individual must fulfill the "recycling" regulations associated with the job.

64. See note 12 above.

65. See the discussion of the 1975 elections in my "Participatory Reforms..."

66. The ratio was 5.5 to 1 by late 1980; Scinteia, 3 December 1980.

67. See note 63 above.

68. For information on education, see Ceaușescu's speeches at the opening of each academic year in late September; the examination schedules and open places published in Scinteia, usually in late June; and the following Political Executive Committee meetings reported in Scinteia: 11 December 1975; 14 April and 14 October 1976; 8 June and 22 June 1977; 7 June, 12 and 19 December 1978; 30 April 1980; 11 March 1981; and 1 June 1982.

69. For example, in 1979 Romania would have had a positive balance were it not for large deficits with Iran, Iraq, Libya, and Nigeria. See Radio Free Europe, Romanian Situation Report/4 (5 March 1981), pp. 20-21.

70. For a comparison of development strategies in Poland and Romania see my "Poland's Crisis: A Different Perspective," a paper prepared for the New York State Political Science Association, Albany, April 2-3, 1982, and the sources cited there.

71. See Radio Free Europe, Romanian Background Report/173 (18 June 1981), pp. 5-6, and the sources cited in note 12 above.

72. The comments on the situation in Romania during 1982 are from my own observations. For 1981 and 1982 trade figures, see Wharton Econometric

Forecasting Associates, "Romanian Foreign Trade...1982," Current Analyses 2: No. 89 (November 9, 1982).

73. See, for example, the summaries of the Political Executive Committee meetings in Scinteia, 24 June 1981 and 23 January 1982.

74. See the reports of Political Executive Committee meetings in Scinteia as follows: 3 December 1980, 11 March, 24 June, and 16 December 1981, 8 February, 1 June, 23 June, and 21 November 1982.

75. For one promise to make major changes, see the discussion of agriculture by the Political Executive Committee, Scinteia, 23 January 1982. High officials recently disgraced include Trofin, Burtică, and Margaritescu, to name but the most obvious. Verdeț, removed in disgrace last spring, has been named to the CC Secretariat: Scinteia, 22 May and 9 October 1982. With the exception of Burtică, he seems to be making more use of family members such as Verdeț, Gheorghe Petrescu (in the Council of Ministers), and Bărbulescu (now first secretary of Olt). Two brothers were recently promoted to Lieutenant General, one in the Army and one in the Ministry of Interior; Scinteia, 30 December 1982.

76. See Scinteia, 4 July 1982, on the "beautification" campaign, and 5 October 1982 for the visit to Bucharest markets.

77. On the demonstrations, see Scinteia, 21 November 1981; the Warsaw Pact offer was described in the New York Times, 6 January 1983.

78. For the stress on autarky, see reports of Political Executive Committee meetings in Scinteia as follows: 15 October 1980, 29 April, 4 July, 20 October and 21 November 1981, 9 April, 1 June, and 21 November 1982. The decree instituting the educational tax on emigres was published in Scinteia on 6 November 1982; an editorial on "human rights as a pretext for stealing brain power" appeared 5 December 1982; reports of activity at the United Nations were published 10 November and 16 December 1982.

79. On the other hand, Trofin and Burtică may simply have refused to take the blame on themselves. Trofin was removed as Minister of Mines, Petroleum, and Geology (Scînteia, 8 September 1981) and later excluded from the Central Committee and publicly rebuked by that body (Scînteia, 27 November 1981). Burtică was dismissed as Minister of Foreign Trade and excluded from the Political Executive Committee and the Central Committee for "grave abuses" (Scînteia, 9 October 1982).

80. On Polish intellectuals, see Jack Bielasiak's introduction to Poland Today: The State of the Republic (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1981) and the sources cited.

81. His move to abolish the creative unions during 1982 failed. See Radio Free Europe, Situation Report/8 (4 May 1982), pp. 11-14.

82. Radio Free Europe, Situation Report/9 (21 May 1982), pp. 2-5. I was in Bucharest myself for long enough to witness both the panic and the relief.

83. About a quarter of Romanian trade is now with less developed countries; see Colin W. Lawson, "National Independence and Reciprocal Advantages: The Political Economy of Romanian-South Relations" (unpublished). The "south" is also a crucial source of raw materials as I have noted above. Lawson argues persuasively that economic factors have been the main motive in Romania's turn toward the Third World.