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ZONES ALONG RUMANIA'S BORDERS WITH HUNGARY, YUGOSLAVIA

Until 1948 the easiest escape route from Rumania was through Hungary. But then Rumania and Hungary drew up an agreement stipulating that all Rumanian refugees caught in Hungary were to be delivered to Rumanian Border Guard units. The 370-kilometer Rumanian-Hungarian border was fortified on both sides. A border strip 30 kilometers deep was declared a prohibited area. Inhabitants of this strip were given special identity papers. Entry into the prohibited area is very difficult. Those entering the area must present special permits or special papers, employment books, ration cards, party or union membership cards, and soldiers' pay books.

Since two large cities, Oradea-Mare and Arad, each with a population of 100,000, are located in the prohibited area, travel from the interior of Rumania has become extremely difficult. As a result, there has been an economic recession in these cities. This recession has not affected those in power, however.

All those living within 5 kilometers of the Rumanian-Hungarian border have been evacuated since 1950. This has affected such large and prosperous villages as Curtice and Salonta. In this area barbed wire entanglements 4 meters wide and 1.5 meters high, watch towers equipped with machine guns, and searchlights have been set up. Mines and alarms have been placed at border points formerly most frequently used for illegal crossings. Patrols guard the area with police dogs, day and night. In addition, numerous listening posts cut the possibility of undetected approach to the border.

Further security measures are applied inside the 30-kilometer border zone. No railroad conductor or vehicle driver can sell a ticket to an individual unless the individual has a special permit. Permanent inspection units of the Militia, wearing mufti, are assigned to hotels and restaurants. Check points are maintained at all intersections and bridges at the entrance to the border zone so that unauthorized entry is now practically impossible. Safety precautions are further aided by numerous agents and agents provocateurs. Information on these security measures has been confirmed by many refugees who have succeeded in reaching the West.

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It is noteworthy that these measures were taken along the Hungarian border, although Hungary too is a people's republic. Until Tito's break with Moscow the Rumanian-Yugoslav border was not especially guarded. However, at present the area along the Rumanian side of the Yugoslav border appears completely abandoned. The prohibited zone is 50 kilometers deep. In 1950, the Banat Germans of the Baragan steppes were deported to Eastern Rumania. This was followed by deportations of "untrustworthy elements," including Rumanians, Serbs, and Bulgarians. Finally, inhabitants of the prohibited zone lost about 80 percent of their assets. Today many villages are empty or occupied by Soviet and Rumanian soldiers. Schools, large farms, and churches are used as barracks, arms and ammunition depots, and military repair shops. Fertile land is used for drilling. Approximately 60 percent of the Rumanian Army is stationed along the 400-kilometer Rumanian-Yugoslav border. The soldiers receive political training and are selected for political reasons. No trustworthy troops or Border Guard units are currently being replaced. The zone where the Danube forms the natural boundary is just as closely guarded as the areas where no natural boundary exists. The Danube port of Orsova resembles an army camp. Civilians are rarely seen except for port and dock workers.

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